

To realize the debt we owe to Wolfe, it is only necessary to glance for a moment at some of the incidents of the Seven Years' War. Let us look first at the characters in the drama. On the side of Prussia, Frederick the Great, with the army which had been bequeathed by his father, "the best engine of war in Europe," and he himself the first warrior of his time, if not of all time. On the side of France, Lowendal and Marshal Saxe, and on this continent, the Marquis de Montcalme, the Chevalier de Levis, the Chevalier de Bourlamaque, Baron Dieskau, Bougainville and others. On the side of England, the Duke of Cumberland, the victor at Culloden, and in statesmanship, Fox, Carteret, the two Townshends, Mansfield, Halifax, but above and beyond all, the great commoner, William Pitt, dearly loving England, and himself described as "England incarnate"; on this continent on the British side, Brigadier Lord Howe, Braddock, Major-General Amherst, and under him the three brigadiers, Whitmore, Lawrence and Wolfe, and in the Colonial forces, with Braddock at Monongahela, and as his aide-de-camp in the expedition against Fort Duquesne, Adjutant-General George Washington of the Virginia militia, Shirley, and Robert Rogers, with his famous rangers.

With such combatants in the field, great results were to be expected. "This," said Earl Granville on his deathbed, "has been the most glorious war and the most triumphant peace that England ever knew." "The Peace of Paris," says Parkman, "marks an epoch than which none in modern history is fruitful of more grand results." "It is no exaggeration to say," writes Green, "that three of the many victories of the Seven Years' War determined for ages to come the destinies of mankind. With that of Rossbach began the re-creation of Germany; with that of Plassey, the influence of Europe told for the first time since the days of Alexander on the nations of the East; with the triumph of Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham began the history of the United States"—and he might have added, of British America.

To understand the position on this continent at the time, it is necessary to remember that before the Seven Years' War the French, to use Parkman's words, claimed all America from the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains, and from Mexico and Florida to the North Pole, except only the ill-defined possessions of the English on the borders of Hudson's Bay; and to these vast regions, with adjacent islands, they gave the general name of New France, Canada at the north and Louisiana at the south, were the keys of a boundless interior, rich with incalculable possibilities. The English colonies, ranged along the Atlantic Coast, had no royal road to the great inland, and were in a manner shut between the mountains and the sea. To break through