

# A Bard of Wolfe's Army

James Thompson, Gentleman Volunteer, 1733–1830

Earl John Chapman & Ian Macpherson McCulloch (editors)

**A**s a young grenadier serving in His Majesty's 78th Regiment of Foot (Fraser's Highlanders), Sergeant James Thompson took part in the capture of Louisbourg in 1758, the battle of the Plains of Abraham at Quebec in 1759 and the battle of Sillery the following year. Later he experienced the American blockade of Quebec by Generals Richard Montgomery and Benedict Arnold during the Revolutionary War.

Thompson remained in Quebec the rest of his long life, and in his work with the engineers' department he was involved in the construction of the temporary Citadel and improvements to the fortifications. His collected anecdotes form one of the most interesting personal accounts of soldiering during the Seven Years' War, and his journal offers an authentic first-hand view of life in Quebec in the years that followed. An astute observer with an eye for a humorous story, by the time he reached old age he was sought out by governors general and royalty to recount his stories of earlier times.

In this book, editors Earl Chapman and Ian McCulloch not only present Thompson's anecdotes in one volume for the first time (including newly discovered anecdotes never before published), but they also present a wealth of explanation and historical background that helps to bring the period to life and places Thompson's experiences in context.

**This book is published in collaboration with the Stewart Museum (The Fort, Île-Ste-Hélène, Montreal) and the 78th Fraser Highlanders.**

## Contents

Foreword : Dr. D. Peter MacLeod, Canadian War Museum

Preface: James Thompson and the Letter-books

### PART 1: A "Brother Soldier..." James Thompson and the Wolfe Legacy

#### PART 2: "Whack went the Broadsword!" The Reminiscences of Sergeant James Thompson

- 1 Raised for Overseas Service, 1757
- 2 Winter Quarters, Connecticut Colony, 1757-58
- 3 The Siege and Capture of Louisbourg, 1758
- 4 Winter Quarters, New York Colony, 1758-59
- 5 The Siege and Battle for Quebec, 1759
- 6 Winter Garrison and the Battle of Sillery, 1759-60
- 7 The Reduction of Montreal, 1760
- 8 Garrisoning the St. Lawrence, 1760-63
- 9 The American Revolution and Siege of Quebec, 1775-76
- 10 Miscellanea.

### PART 3: Biographical Notes

Appendices, Bibliography, Index

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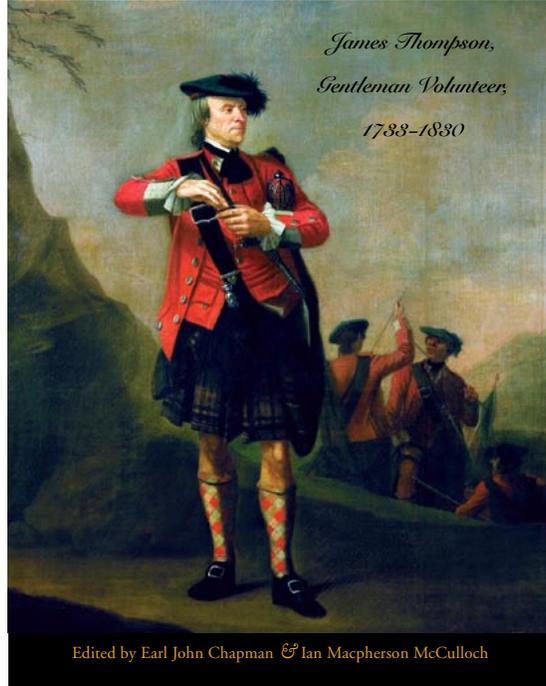
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## A Bard of Wolfe's Army

*James Thompson,  
Gentleman Volunteer,  
1733-1830*



Edited by Earl John Chapman & Ian Macpherson McCulloch

**I**n the course of his short but adventurous military career, Thompson met James Wolfe, who addressed him as 'Brother Soldier,' at the siege of Louisbourg, carried a wounded French soldier to an aid station after the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, and kept the sword of the commander of the American assault on Quebec City as a souvenir. Striking as they are, these are just three examples of a cascade of sparkling vignettes covering crime, scandal, valour, victory, defeat, honour, humour, a pet puppy and day-to-day life as a soldier." **From the foreword by Peter MacLeod, Historian, Pre-Confederation, Canadian War Museum.**

"In the rich and colourful memoirs of James Thompson we hear the authentic voice of a Highland veteran of Wolfe's army. Enhanced here by expert editorial notes, Thompson's unique 'oral history' of the campaigns that decided the destiny of North America will undoubtedly appeal to specialists and general readers alike." **Dr. Stephen Brumwell, award-winning author of *Paths of Glory: The Life and Death of General James Wolfe*.**

**Earl John Chapman** of Montreal is a member of the history and heritage committee of Canada's Black Watch and has written several books on the regiment's early years. He is also historian of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, a ceremonial regiment raised in 1965 by Montreal's David M. Stewart Museum to perpetuate the history of the old 78th Regiment of Foot. He was the 2008 recipient of the prestigious Gordon Atkinson Memorial Prize in Highland Military History, awarded annually by the Quebec Thistle Council.

**Ian Macpherson McCulloch**, a native of Halifax, is a Canadian Forces officer who has served in a variety of regimental and staff appointments in Canada, the U.S.A. and Germany. Lt Col McCulloch is on the Directing Staff of the Canadian Forces College in Toronto and is a military historian specializing in the Seven Years' War in North America. He has published numerous articles and has written or contributed to several books, the most recent being *Sons of the Mountains: A History of the Highland Regiments in North America, 1756-1767* and *Highlander in the French-Indian War, 1756-1767*. He too won the Gordon Atkinson Memorial Prize in Highland Military History, in 2009.