



Sir John Fortescue's 'A Collision of Giants': the British Army During the War of Austrian Succession & Seven Years' War in Europe 1740- 1763

J. W. Fortescue

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The redcoats at war in Europe during the 18th century

Among British Army historians the reputation of Sir John Fortescue stands virtually without equal. His comprehensive fourteen volume history is a work of unparalleled achievement in its field. Fortescue combines thorough source material research with insightful academic observation of the conduct of the campaigns he describes and of the decisions, errors and strategic and tactical options of their principal protagonists. The Leonaur editors have carefully selected passages from Fortescue's magnum opus to create a series of books, each focusing on a specific war or campaign.

The conflicts of the 18th century created our modern world. It was a time of invention, discovery and global expansion. Nations with established power sought to hold and develop their power, just as nations aspiring to power fought to grasp it. Bourbon France and Britain vied to bring as much trade and land as possible under their respective influences, whilst Prussia, under threat from east and west, struggled to assert itself. The continent had been in foment since The War of Spanish Succession. Another question of succession arose in Austria and opportunities for exploitation of instability and threats to treaties of alliance and established trade meant war was inevitable. During The War of Austrian Succession the British Army fought battles which emblazon regimental colours to this day-notably at Fontenoy and Dettingen. Before a decade of uneasy peace had elapsed, war broke out again. The Seven Years War-possibly the first 'world war'-demonstrated the superior power of British arms and dealt blows to France from which it never recovered. The British Army earned more battle honours in Europe, including Minden, Emsdorf and Warburg and Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick, revealed himself (according to Fortescue) to be the finest commander of British troops in the field on the continent between the periods of Marlborough and Wellington. Also available in hardcover and paperback editions.

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