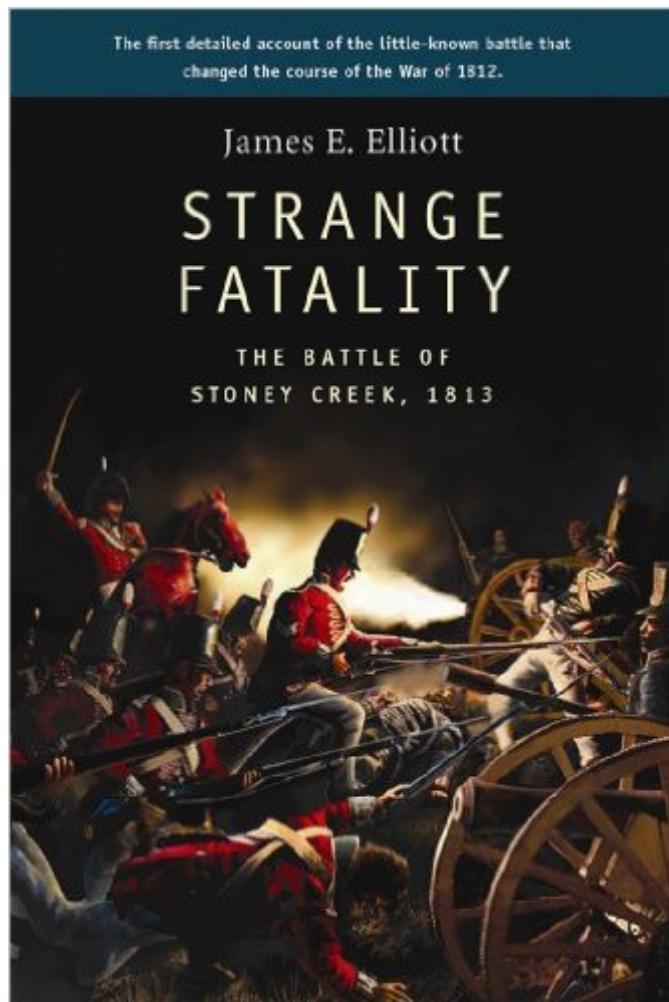


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# Strange Fatality: The Battle Of Stoney Creek, 1813



## Synopsis

In the spring of 1813, the largest amphibious force in American history to that point - 6,000 troops aboard 140 vessels - landed near the mouth of the Niagara River, routed the British garrison and captured Fort George. It was the second consecutive American victory and a sign that events of 1813 would redress the calamities of 1812. The badly mauled British army reeled westward, its leadership uncertain where, or how, the retreat would end. The American forces were poised to deliver the critical blow the War Hawks in Congress had dreamed of when they predicted a four-week war to subdue the British province. 10 days later, in a field near Stoney Creek, the promise of that triumph was smashed in a terrifying night action which hinged on a single bayonet charge that carried the American artillery and decapitated the American force. Little understood, even by Canadians, Stoney Creek was one of the most decisive reversals of fortune in the War of 1812 and determined the fate of the colony that would become Ontario.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a good, in-depth look at the Battle of Stoney Creek, a fairly pivotal battle in the War of 1812. During the war, America invaded Canada in multiple campaigns in 1812, 1813, and 1814; while none were successful (and some quite disastrous) the 1813 campaign was the closest the US ever got to "conquering" Canada (specifically, Upper Canada, now known as Ontario) and Stoney Creek was the furthest (distance-wise) any US invasion force ever got. Prior to this, I had read only a general military history of the war (Pierre Berton's two volume set, *The American Invasion of Canada: The War of 1812's First Year* and *Flames Across the Border: 1813-1814*) so I was

concerned that a whole book focused on a single battle wouldn't hold my interest, but for the most part that wasn't a problem. Why the US got no further than Stoney Creek is the specific topic of this book, but why all US efforts to invade/conquer Canada failed in 1813 is also covered as well, from the brief moments of US success (capturing Ft. George, covered in great detail) to post-Stoney Creek failures (Beaver Dams, covered briefly). My favorite part of the main text profiles the relative experience and background of the British regulars resisting the US invasion vs. the much more numerous but relatively disorganized and "green" US forces sent to face them. For anyone who's read about the US Revolutionary War, and what made the US successful then, there are paradoxes galore to explore in the 1813 campaign.

I'd been looking forward to this book since I saw an article in the Stoney Creek News several months ago. (Ironically, my brother Stateside was able to get his hands on a copy before me.) I've spent almost half my life in Stoney Creek. (I did the mental calculations just this past weekend, walking through the parts of the town where the book's battle took place.) I spent most of my formative years here. I played in Stoney Creek the actual body of water, trekked around the Devil's Punch Bowl, the Bruce Trail is a route I run as an adult, most of my screenplays have some element of Stoney Creek to them, my current novel is set here.....and through all of this, throughout my entire life, the Battle of Stoney Creek has always been there, as social underpinning, and the Monument in so many ways, (with the changes going on in the 'City of Hamilton' of which we are now -regretfully- a part) is THE visual mnemonic for the town. So it was no small surprise to read Mr. Elliott's telling of this historical event, and reap the benefits of his exhaustively researched and meticulously laid-out efforts. (Before I go any further, I do want to express my gratitude that he's spent the time and effort he has in 'getting it right'. It's no small feat that he's accomplished, gathering what he's gathered, presenting it in so cohesive and cogent a way. Having done some research myself in my own writing efforts, I can appreciate entirely what lengths he quite clearly went to in producing 'Strange Fatality'. So the most effusive kudos to him.) I'm no fan of war. And I'll stop that tack right there, before it turns into a polemic. Even having confessed this, I was compelled to read this history, and to keep reading it once I'd begun. Mr.

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