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Sommario/riassunto	<p>For more than a century and a half, from 1607 to 1763, Britain and France struggled to master the eastern half of North America. They fought five blood-soaked wars and continuously provoked various Indian tribes to raise arms against each other's subjects for the mastery of the land. The last French and Indian War, from 1754 to 1760, would dwarf all previous conflicts in the number of troops, expense, geographical expanse, and total casualties. Placing the French and Indian War in a broad historical context, this study examines the struggle for North America during the two preceding centuries and includes not only the conflict between France and Britain, but also the parts played by various Indian tribes and the other European powers. The last French and Indian War makes for colorful reading with its array of inept and daring commanders, epic heroism among the troops, far-flung battles and sieges, and creaking fleets of warships. Ironically, America's most famous founder, George Washington, helped to spark the war, first by trudging through the wilderness in the dead of winter with a message from Virginia Governor Dinwiddie to the French to abandon their forts in the upper Ohio River valley, then a half year later by ordering the war's first shots when his troops ambushed Captain Jumonville, and finally when he ignominiously surrendered his force at Fort Necessity and unwittingly signed a surrender document in French naming himself Jumonville's assassin. Topical chapters discuss the economic, political, social, and military attributes of the participants, and narrative chapters examine the campaigns of the war's first two years.</p>