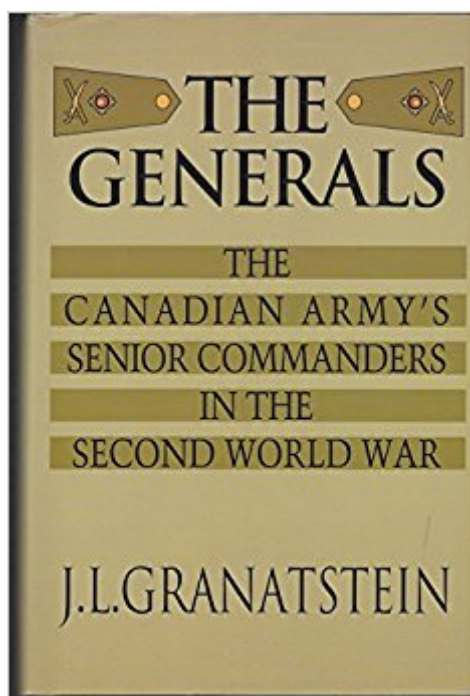


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# Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders In The Second World War



## Synopsis

Originally published in 1993, *The Generals* is a collective biography of the Canadian army's leaders in World War II, and is the winner of the Dafoe Book Prize for International Relations and the UBC Medal for Canadian Biography. The only book of its kind on this subject, *The Generals* remains an invaluable resource for academics, policy makers, and anyone interested in Canada's military history. This new edition features an introduction by Dr. David J. Bercuson, Director of the Center for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“*The Generals* is already a classic of Canadian military history and will long occupy shelf and store space as a seminal study of Canadian army leadership in the Second World War.” -- David J. Bercuson  
“This is military history at its best.” -- *Globe and Mail* --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

J.L. Granatstein has established himself as the pre-eminent authority on the history of the Canadian military. He has published extensively in such areas as defence and foreign policy, Canadian-American relations, politics, and the public service. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

When the western democracies went to war they all lacked anything close to reasonable numbers of professional officers. Canada had only one basic officer school, Royal Military College in

Kingston. This graduated only a handful each year, and post graduate studies had to be completed in Britain. For an Army that was to number two thirds of a million and command an Army Group of 400,000 in Europe, qualified leadership was in short supply. Jack Granatstein has been a respected historian and curator of the Canadian War Museum for some time. By writing a reasonably detailed overview of WW 2 Canadian Generals he provides a very readable outline. Grouping his subjects by chronology, a comparison of strengths and weaknesses is revealed. The effects of WW 1 and the changing nature of Canadian life is evident. No punches are pulled in this book. Generals were fired or never deployed due to age, infirmity, incompetence and inexperience. A comparison of German training shows how superior their leadership was, not at the highest 'one on one' level, but at the battalion, brigade and division level, where wars are fought and won. Any student of Canadian history or military history in general would find this a valued addition.

has wisely changed the login requirements, unfortunately, my old reviews are disassociated with my new profile, so I will add some further comments on this book. I stand by my earlier review. I would like to add that Granatstein does a very nice job of categorizing the generals, and discussed Francophones separately as well as the Militia officers separate from the PFs. Of course, in real life they were very much separate. The stories of all the generals are inter-related, and so there is a certain amount of crossover between the chapters - but never does this amount to repetition. Granatstein and his editors did a terrific job of keeping the prose flowing and not becoming redundant from one chapter to the next. One cannot praise this book too highly from that point of view. Lack of explanation of duties of the various officers and levels of command leave this one at a 4 star rating. Some detailed examples of command decisions would have been nice, but are probably not necessary in what is essentially a character study - and a fine one at that.

First published in 1993, *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders In The Second World War* is the award-winning, classic collective biography of the Canadian army's leaders during the second World War, and the only book of its kind to date. Written by Canadian military history expert J. L. Granatstein, *The Generals* scrutinizes the nature of the Canadian army over fifty years ago and tells the life stories of McNaughton, Crerar, Tommy Burns, Simonds, Matthews and Hoffmeister, and Pope and Stuart. A penultimate section discusses the absence of francophone generals. An extensively researched and scholarly history, now in a new edition with an introduction by University of Calgary Director of the Center for Military and Strategic Studies Dr. David J. Bercuson, *The Generals* is a keenly written, pinpoint accurate scrutiny of the personality traits of

powerful men, and their contributions to Canadian and world military history.

A great look at the political workings at the top of the Canadian Army, with insightful comments about the gulf between the PF (regular army) and the NPAM (reserve army) and how some things never change! Only criticism would be the use of terminology such as GSO II, Brigade Major etc. for officers, but no explanation of what their duties are - Granatstein presumes we know what these positions are for. That is a minor detail, however, and the meat of the text is in its profiles - professional and personal - of Canada's war time generals. The book could easily have been twice as long and retained interest, even so, the focus on the top few generals is well worth the price asked for this book. Granatstein is in his element discussing with conviction the experience of the senior officers.

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