

Unveiling the Untold Story: Lieutenant General McNaughton and the Canadian Army 1939-1943

War is an unforgiving abyss that brings out the best and worst of humanity. In the midst of chaos and conflict, leaders emerge who leave an indelible mark on the course of history. One such leader was Lieutenant General Andrew George Latta McNaughton, a remarkable Canadian military officer who played a pivotal role in shaping the Canadian Army during the tumultuous years of 1939 to 1943.

As the clouds of World War II loomed over Europe, Canada found itself thrust into a war it could not ignore. Lieutenant General McNaughton, a brilliant engineer and scholar, was appointed as the Commander of the Canadian Corps in 1939. With his extraordinary intellect and strategic thinking, McNaughton would go on to redefine the Canadian Army's role in the war, leaving an indelible impact on the course of the conflict.

One of McNaughton's greatest contributions was his focus on technological innovation. He realized that to succeed against formidable enemies, the Canadian Army needed to embrace cutting-edge technologies. Under his leadership, the Canadian military began developing and implementing innovative weapons and tactics that would give them a competitive edge on the battlefield.

Politics of Command: Lieutenant-General A.G.L. McNaughton and the Canadian Army, 1939–1943

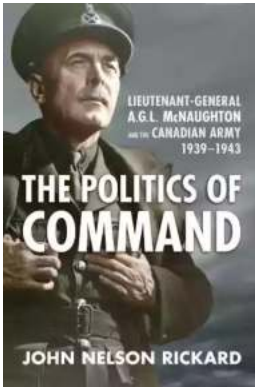
by John Nelson Rickard(Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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To ensure that the Canadian Army remained at the forefront of technological advancements, McNaughton established the National Research Council (NRC) in 1940. The NRC played a crucial role in coordinating scientific research and operationalizing inventions for military purposes. This emphasis on research and development allowed the Canadian Army to adapt swiftly to the changing landscape of warfare, equipping its soldiers with state-of-the-art weaponry and tools.

McNaughton also recognized the importance of effective training and preparation. He understood that a well-trained soldier was the backbone of any successful military campaign. As a result, he implemented rigorous training programs aimed at improving the skills and expertise of Canadian soldiers. The emphasis on training not only enhanced the soldiers' abilities, but it also instilled a sense of pride and confidence within the Canadian Army.

During his tenure, McNaughton also took significant steps to address the issue of operational command. He advocated for a unified command structure that would streamline decision-making processes and improve coordination between different branches of the military. His efforts bore fruit when, in 1943, the

Canadian Army was reorganized into an integrated corps structure that functioned effectively under a single operational command.

Despite his numerous achievements, Lieutenant General McNaughton faced his fair share of challenges and controversies. His unyielding commitment to innovation often clashed with traditional military practices, leading to friction within the ranks. Additionally, his cautious approach to military operations, characterized by meticulous planning and risk-aversion, drew criticism from those who sought a more aggressive strategy. However, McNaughton's unwavering belief in his vision ultimately prevailed, leaving a lasting legacy in the annals of Canadian military history.

As we reflect upon Lieutenant General McNaughton's leadership during the critical years of 1939 to 1943, it becomes evident that his contributions were instrumental in shaping the Canadian Army into a formidable force. His legacy of innovation, emphasis on training, and pursuit of effective command structures continue to resonate within the armed forces even today. We owe a debt of gratitude to this exceptional leader who guided Canada through one of its darkest periods, forever leaving his mark on the nation's military history.

So, let us remember Lieutenant General McNaughton and the crucial role he played in the Canadian Army during those fateful years of 1939 to 1943. His unwavering vision and dedication to excellence continue to inspire the men and women who serve our country today.

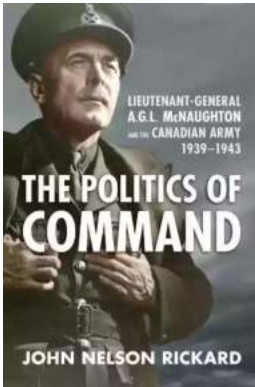
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In December 1943, Lieutenant-General A.G.L. McNughton resigned from command of the 1st Canadian Army amidst criticism of his poor generalship and of his abrasive personality. Despite McNughton's importance to the Canadian Army during the first four years of the Second World War, little has been written about the man himself or the circumstances of his resignation.

In *The Politics of Command*, the first full-length study of the subject since 1969, John Nelson Rickard analyses McNughton's performance during Exercise SPARTAN in March 1943 and assesses his relationships with key figures such as Sir Alan F. Brooke, Bernard Paget, and Harry Crerar. This detailed re-examination of McNughton's command argues that the long-accepted reasons for his relief of duty require extensive modification.

Based on a wide range of sources, *The Politics of Command* will redefine how military historians and all Canadians look at not only "Andy" McNughton but also the Canadian Army itself.



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