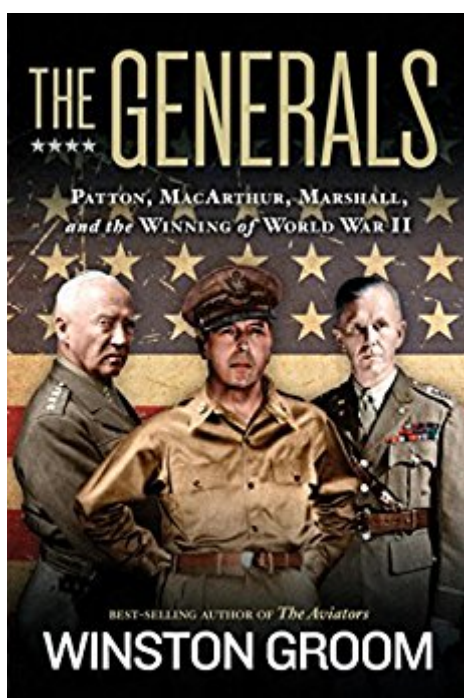


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The Generals: Patton, MacArthur, Marshall, And The Winning Of World War II



Synopsis

Celebrated historian Winston Groom tells the intertwined and uniquely American tales of George Patton, Douglas MacArthur, and George Marshall - from the World War I battle that shaped them to their greatest victory: leading the allies to victory in World War II. These three remarkable men-of-arms who rose from the gruesome hell of the First World War to become the finest generals of their generation during World War II redefined America's ideas of military leadership and brought forth a new generation of American soldier. Their efforts revealed to the world the grit and determination that would become synonymous with America in the post-war years. Filled with novel-worthy twists and turns, and set against the backdrop of the most dramatic moments of the twentieth century, *The Generals* is a powerful, action-packed book filled with marvelous surprises and insights into the lives of America's most celebrated warriors.

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Customer Reviews

Winston Groom is an excellent storyteller, whether he's writing fiction or nonfiction. His most recent books (*The Aviators* and this book) have been nonfiction histories. This book, on Generals George

Marshall, Douglas McArthur, and George Patton, is an interesting narrative on the lives, careers, and accomplishments of these great American leaders. Each of these generals have been the subject of many biographies. One might ask why a book should be written, or why should a reader be interested in, a book that provides an overview of these generals' lives? For me the answer to these questions is that Groom has a knack for telling interesting stories that capture key features of a situation. Even though I have read many biographies of George Marshall, including the 4-volume official biography by Forrest Pogue, I learned new and interesting things about General Marshall from Groom's stories. Though I have not read as much about McArthur and Patton, Groom's stories left me feeling he had painted a penetrating picture of their lives and personas. The book starts with chapters on the early lives and careers of each of the three generals, then a chapter telling the story of their experiences in World War I--Marshall an outstanding planner on Pershing's staff, Patton as a senior tank officer, and McArthur as the fast-rising combat leader of the famous Rainbow Division. In later chapters the author follows their inter-war years, their World War II achievements, and their post-World War II careers. One might ask how Groom chose these three generals rather than others--Eisenhower, for example. He does not address this question, but there is no question that Patton is a more colorful character than Ike. Americans have always venerated those they considered "fighting generals" more than those who, like Eisenhower, were perceived as political or administrative generals. While Marshall was the ultimate political and administrative general in World War II, his role was so critical that Winston Churchill called him "the Organizer of Victory." It would have been even more questionable if Groom had not included Marshall in this book. This book is an interesting read and well worth reading. I rate it four stars, with one star taken off due to technical issues. For example, the Chapter on D-Day ("Overlord") goes into a narrative of the European campaign through German's surrender. Then the next chapter goes into a detailed description of the campaign from northern France into Germany. These two chapters would have flowed better if they had followed a more chronological order. Also, though it is important to note that I read an advance copy of the text that was by no means final, it was difficult to read in places due to editing or typesetting difficulties. Also, the footnotes may not have been finalized. While sources were cited, the page numbers were not, which would make it very difficult to find cited passages. In the larger scope of things, these technical issues do not prevent this book from being an excellent read for both those widely read in 20th century American military history and for those relatively new to this literature. One final note: the subtitle makes it sound like the period covered ends with World War II, but, for Marshall and McArthur, the story continues into Korea and their activities afterwards through the remainder of their lives.

Learned a lot about 3 great American WWII generals. Groom has a way of combing through a ton of material to give the reader a v interesting overview of whomever - and the situation at the time. Never boring, or too much detail, just right as far as I'm concerned. And every one of his books has this wonderful balance. This book no exception. If this topic interests you, you will learn and enjoy the process.Outstanding.

Good coverage of MacArthur and Patton, but Marshall receives grandiose testimonials in place of performance evaluations. This is for good reason. In any analysis of his performance as Chief of Staff " U.S Army(he had authority over one branch of the U.S. military, in WW2, the Airforce was connected to the U.S. Army in name only.) As C.O.S.- U.S. Army, General Marshall was directly responsible for U.S. Army arming, training and logistics and his failures are beyond dispute.In regard to arms, the U.S. Army fought the Wehrmacht with inferior weapons throughout WW2, (except for the Garand rifle adopted before Marshall's tenure). American machine gunners fired 500 rounds per minute. Germans responded with 1350 rounds per minute. The Sherman tank, mainstay of American armored divisions was no match for German armor. Tank crews considered it a death trap, calling it the "Ronson", the name of a then popular cigarette lighter. The only new U.S. Army WW2 weapon, the anti-tank Bazooka, fired shells that bounced harmlessly off German tanks. Americans had the advantage of air cover when weather allowed, other than that, they relied on initiative and courage to overcome serious weapons deficiencies. In contrast, all other branches of the U.S. military developed superior weapons as the war progressed. The above is not heresy, it is fact.In regard to training, the U.S. Army's first confrontation with the German Army, at Kasserine Pass, North Africa, turned into a demoralizing defeat. Eisenhower replaced one corps commander, a Marshall favorite, and then enlisted the British to retrain his troops. (The British commander termed them "untrained"). Later, Marshall's replacement system was criticized for sacrificing combat unit morale and the lives of green replacements in the drive across France. While the British rotated entire units out of combat to absorb replacements for dead and wounded. Americans fought until they were used up, dead, dismembered or mentally disabled. New hastily trained replacements were fed in to fill the holes. Few had more than one trip to the rifle range before shipping out. Thrust into combat situations, many died before they learned basic survival measures.In regard to logistics, After the D-day landings in France in June, 1944, and the bloody fighting through the hedgerows of Normandy that followed, American forces broke out and Patton's tanks raced across

France. It suddenly appeared Germany could be conquered by Christmas. Then it all came to complete halt. The tanks simply ran out of fuel. It was claimed a lack of port facilities in France had caused a bottleneck in the supply chain, capture of extensive port facilities in Belgium were needed. However, major French ports such as Cherbourg and Le Havre and dozens of secondary ports capable of unloading petroleum were already in Allied hands and a small diameter pipeline, across the English Channel, gushed fuel into coastal France. The only supply situation that had changed since D-Day, was the stretching of land supply lines as Patton penetrated further into Europe. Similar to the undersized pipeline, Eisenhower was given an undersized truck fleet. It was later revealed that, Russian Marshal Zhukov's armies, advancing on Germany from the East, deployed more Detroit trucks than Eisenhower's forces in the West. Belgium offered shorter trucking mileage to combat areas. General Marshall's super inflated image has stifled mention of the above. His admirers do point to rarefied subjects such as grand strategy, but they cite no contributions. His strategic judgement came into question early on, when he became totally committed to a rash, early landing in France. "Sledgehammer" was a hastily planned Allied cross channel invasion. Preliminary analysis exposed Sledgehammer as a recipe for disaster. Churchill charged it would "turn the Channel into a river of Allied blood." When Marshall's opposite number, Sir Alan Brooke, asked "do we go west, south or east after landing, he (Marshall) had not begun to think of it." The Commander of U.S. Army forces in the British Isles, General Mark Clark related "I pointed out that all we could count on using would be the 34th division then in North Ireland. The 34th however, had little amphibious training, it lacked antiaircraft support and it had no tanks." Meanwhile, the Germans had 1.3 million troops in France and the low countries. Despite all the negatives, General Marshall was unable to back down from his all-out support of Sledgehammer and it cost him. The insanity of Sledgehammer was demonstrated two years later, after a massive buildup of U.S. and British forces, the success of Eisenhower's cross channel D Day invasion was no sure thing. After Sledgehammer, General Marshall left operational decisions to Eisenhower and MacArthur. Later, when a top level meeting was conducted to decide on invasion of the Philippines or Taiwan, General Marshall did not bother to attend. The author devotes two of 500 pages to General Marshall's involvement in the process that resulted in the enslavement of 20% of the world's population by a ruler who killed more than Hitler and Stalin combined. This is typical treatment by GCM admirers for good reason. Groom states that General Marshall "Threatened the head of China's Govt. (at that time fighting communist sabotage and insurrection) with withholding \$500 million in U.S. aid. But State Dept.

documents have America's man in China, Ambassador Stuart, reporting, (after two years of Communist sabotage and insurrection); "America still delays the long promised aid on which survival of democratic institutions depends." And "The Chinese people do not want to become communists, yet they see the tide of communism running irresistibly forward." Meanwhile, in Washington, internal State Department memos reinforced the "currently approved policy" to withhold export licenses for munitions shipments to China. General Marshall was ordered by President Truman to rearm and support Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese government if his mediation failed. He flagrantly disobeyed that order. More bizarre, General Marshall's papers describe his efforts to establish a "Red West Point" for training of communist officers and his maneuvers to arm ten communist divisions. All while he blocked long promised arms to our devastated WW2 ally. These, and other, inexplicable moves by General Marshall have never been questioned. The above are a few examples from suppressed records. State Department records of General Marshall's supervision of U.S.- China relations, (1946,1947,1948) have not been referenced in seventy years of published history. We can only hope that history of other world events has been treated more ethically.

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING

Abandoning an Ally- by: Fitzgerald, James- (U.S./China- World War II, Mao's overthrow, Korean War- This new chronicle is drawn from previously suppressed Government documents and writings of Mao Zedong). Wedemeyer Reports- by: Wedemeyer, Albert- Henry Holt Pub. (The China situation, 1946- by U.S. CG in China) Mao: The Unknown Story- by: Chang & Holliday- (A comprehensive view of Mao Zedong). China's Special Area- (by Stalin's man in Mao's HQ)- Petr Vladimirov- Allied Pub. THE "CAREFULLY AVOIDED DOCUMENTS" MENTIONED ABOVE ARE: U.S. Dept. of State- Foreign Relations of the United States- The Far East and China-1946, 1947 & 1948 (may be listed as FRUS). U.S Senate- Committee on the Judiciary- Testimony of Adm. Cooke re; General Marshall Disarming China 10/51. U.S House Committee on Foreign Affairs- General Marshall Testimony on China, 2/20/48. U.S. CIA Docs. ORE 32-48, ORE 32-49. Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung- Vols. 1-5, Mao Tse-tung. Abandoning an Ally: The Real Story Behind 70 Million Killed in China and America's "Forgotten War"

I was very pleased with this well written and engaging book. Books of this nature can be a risk sometimes, you might be buying something that just rolls on and on without capturing your interest, that was not the case here. The author gives just the right amount of family history for each general; enough for you to get a sense of how their past impacted their performance decision making later in

life, but not so much that it gets tedious. This left me wanting more, the sign of a great book! I'm off to start reading "The Admirals" now, which I purchased because I enjoyed this book so much.

Excellent and riveting about Patton, Mc Arthur, and Marshall. Really made the miles pass quickly. I'll get some more Winston Groom to read and or listen to.

This was a thoroughly enjoyable and informative read; I highly recommend it! The writing style was easy to follow as well as engaging. The author paints a vivid picture of three very capable generals and the chemistry between them. I came away with a much better understanding of the events of both world wars and the heroic people who fought them, both on and off of the battlefield.

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The Generals: Patton, MacArthur, Marshall, and the Winning of World War II MacArthur's Korean War Generals (Modern War Studies) MacArthur (Great Generals (Hardcover)) Marshall: Lessons in Leadership (Great Generals) World War 2 History's 10 Most Incredible Women: World War II True Accounts Of Remarkable Women Heroes (WWII history, WW2, War books, world war 2 books, war history, World war 2 women) Montana's Bob Marshall Country: The Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, Great Bear Wilderness Areas and Surrounding Wildlands (Montana Geographic Series) MARSHALL ISLANDS Country Studies: A brief, comprehensive study of Marshall Islands World War 1: Soldier Stories: The Untold Soldier Stories on the Battlefields of WWI (World War I, WWI, World War One, Great War, First World War, Soldier Stories) The Korean War: How We Met the Challenge: How All-Out Asian War Was Averted: Why MacArthur Was Dismissed: Why Today's War Objectives Must Be limited Killing Patton: The Strange Death of World War II's Most Audacious General World War 1: World War I in 50 Events: From the Very Beginning to the Fall of the Central Powers (War Books, World War 1 Books, War History) (History in 50 Events Series) Lincoln's Generals' Wives: Four Women Who Influenced the Civil War--for Better and for Worse (Civil War in the North) Patton Tanks (Images of War) Blackjack Strategy: Winning at Blackjack: Tips and Strategies for Winning and Dominating at the Casino (Blackjack, Counting Cards, Blackjack Winning, Good at Blackjack, Black Jack, Card Counting) Winning Lacrosse for Girls (Winning Sports for Girls) (Winning Sports for Girls (Paperback)) Winning Softball for Girls (Winning Sports for Girls) (Winning Sports for Girls (Paperback)) Winning Basketball for Girls (Winning Sports for Girls) (Winning Sports for Girls (Paperback)) Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War The Generals: American Military Command from World War II to Today MacArthur's Spies: The Soldier, the Singer, and the Spymaster Who Defied the Japanese in World War II

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