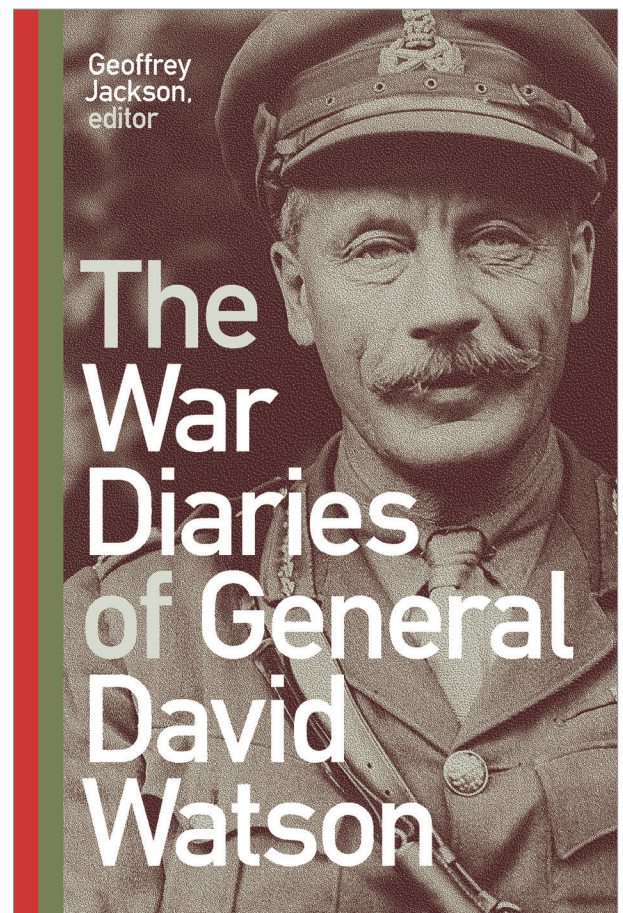


# The War Diaries of General David Watson

Geoffrey Jackson, editor

“Geoffrey Jackson’s *The War Diaries of General David Watson* brings to light an important primary source from one of Canada’s lesser-known Great War division commanders. The diaries not only speak to Watson’s personal war experience as a rising officer but also help to contextualize the command decisions that he made during key operations throughout the war. Jackson’s contention that Watson was a more capable senior commander than hitherto believed will engage the interest of military and operational historians, while the quotidian detail in the entries speaks more widely to those who study the culture of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.”

— Andrew Iarocci, Western University, author of *A Nation in Conflict: Canada and the Two World Wars*



400 pp. | \$85.00 | Hardcover | December 2021  
978-1-77112-506-2

The diary of David Watson, who rose through the officer ranks to become a major-general and command one of the four Canadian divisions in the Great War, is an exceptional document that details with candid insight the responsibilities of senior command and shows the talent required to rise through the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF).

The only published diary of a Canadian who held this rank in the last two (critical) years of the war, it focuses on the evolution of military leadership and associated challenges that Watson and his peers faced during the Great War. It recounts how he navigated not only the military battlefield in France and Belgium but also the political battlefield of the CEF and larger British Expeditionary Force. The divisional commanders played a central role in the Corps’ transformation into a first-rate professional army, a transformation that coincided with Watson’s tenure at the 4th Division.

Major-General David Watson’s personal accounts offer valuable insights into the innermost workings of the Canadian Corps at various stages during the war and in particular its emergence as an elite fighting force and the pride of a nation.

**Geoffrey Jackson** holds a PhD from the University of Calgary and teaches courses in military and Canadian history and strategic studies at Mount Royal University. He is the author of *The Empire on the Western Front: The British 62nd and Canadian 4th Divisions in Battle* (2019).



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UNIVERSITY PRESS

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