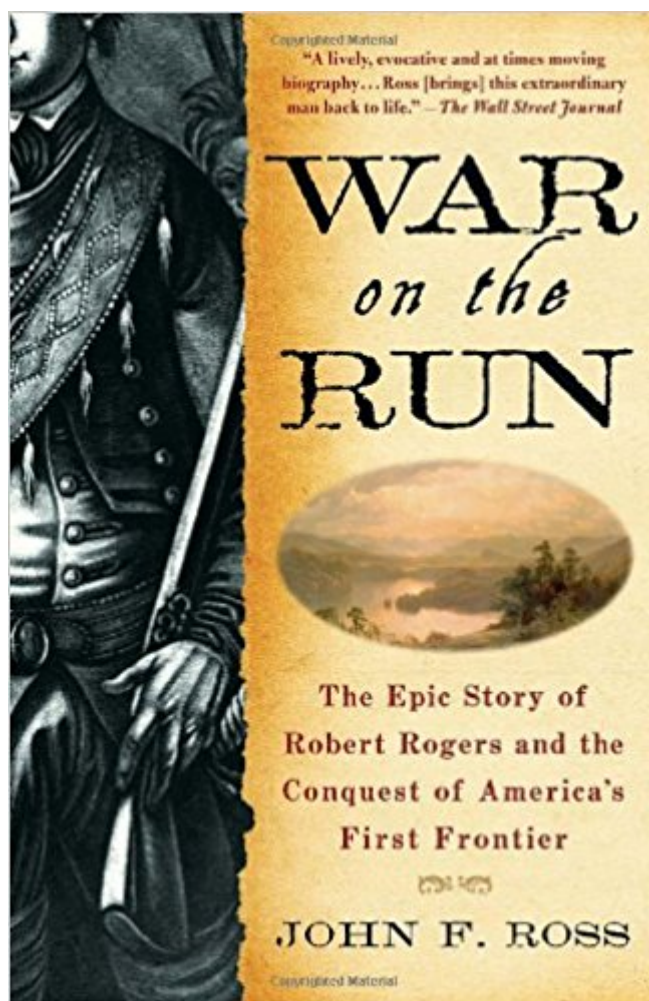


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# War On The Run: The Epic Story Of Robert Rogers And The Conquest Of America's First Frontier



## Synopsis

Often hailed as the godfather of today's elite special forces, Robert Rogers trained and led an unorthodox unit of green provincials, raw woodsmen, farmers, and Indian scouts on "impossible" missions in colonial America that are still the stuff of soldiers' legend. The child of marginalized Scots-Irish immigrants, Rogers learned to survive in New England's dark and deadly forests, grasping, as did few others, that a new world required new forms of warfare. John F. Ross not only re-creates Rogers's life and his spectacular battles with breathtaking immediacy and meticulous accuracy, but brings a new and provocative perspective on Rogers's unique vision of a unified continent, one that would influence Thomas Jefferson and inspire the Lewis and Clark expedition. Rogers's principles of unconventional war-making would lay the groundwork for the colonial strategy later used in the War of Independence and prove so compelling that army rangers still study them today. Robert Rogers, a backwoods founding father, was heroic, admirable, brutal, canny, ambitious, duplicitous, visionary, and much more like America itself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Modern practitioners of military special operations know of Robert Rogers's principles of their craft, but history readers are apt to ask, Rogers who? American Heritage editor Ross answers that query absorbingly, creating a colorful portrait of a remarkable American colonial officer of the French and Indian War. Of Scots-Irish immigrant heritage, Rogers (1731-1795) experienced

frontier raids in what is now New Hampshire in his boyhood. As a young man, Rogers acquitted himself with shrewd scouting as well as in brutal battles with woodland parties of the French and their Indian allies and was awarded an officer's commission in the British army (an honor George Washington coveted in vain). Rogers' hard-won eminence in colonial society came apart after the peace of 1763. He was court-martialed, went to debtors' prison, sided with Tories in 1776, ensnared Nathan Hale, then receded from history. Ross' recovery of Rogers from the footnotes closes a gap in colonial historiography with a sanguinary war biography that is practically a movie script unto itself. Buffs of the period will love it. --Gilbert Taylor --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A lively, evocative and at times moving biography . . . Ross [brings] this extraordinary man back to life." •The Wall Street Journal "Nothing less than a tour de force that will appeal to a wide range of readers . . . This remarkable book should go far to rescue a once-famous figure in American history." •Winston-Salem Journal "In this exhaustive book, variously scholarly and white-knuckle exciting, John Ross has done the great man justice." •The Washington Times "Rousing . . . The story of Rogers, as told by Ross, is an American tale." •Pittsburgh Post-Gazette "[A] sweeping account . . . a thrilling narrative." •The Boston Globe

This is a very good summary of the life, and the successes and tribulations, of an absolutely remarkable man. The detail is impressive, and at times almost overwhelming. The author takes as neutral a position in his writing as one could ask for, without sacrificing positive and complimentary descriptive text, or appropriate critical examination of some of Rogers' shortcomings. This is not a 'casual' read - I think you need to already be interested in the man, or interested in learning about the man, to gain full benefit from the reading. But, it does fully capture the essence - the challenges, harsh conditions, inhumanity, and brutality - of the times, and the war. Anyone interested in the history of that period, and particularly in the individual, will find this book to be a most worthwhile read.

Very good, well researched book on an important military person in the formation of our country. Few Americans today know much of the tremendous struggle between France and England for control of the American colony in the 1740-60 time period and its enormous impact on the American Revolution which followed in 1775. This book is about Rogers, an American colonist, who was a

leader in adapting British military tactics to the wilderness warfare at which the French along with its Indian allies excelled. Rogers was the expert in training and organizing small unit guerilla warfare. The British were world leaders in European warfare where large units in colorful uniforms would stand in the open and fire on each other. They literally thought hiding behind trees was cowardly. But war in the new World as Indian style, ambush and hit and run when not in a fort. Rogers was in the Braddock massacre and survived. From that and his early fights with Indians he formed small units of colonists which he called "Rangers". He trained them hard in woodcraft, small unit tactics never before seen or used in the British army. Senior British commanders looked with disdain on these units and Rogers but they turned out to be the most effective units in the war. There is a wonderful old movie called "Northwest Passage" in which Spencer Tracy plays the role of Rogers in a raid on the Abenaki Indians. It is a realistic portrayal of Rogers and his Rangers in the raid. The book validates that movie. Sadly Rogers was accused of treason with the French by jealous commanders and even though exonerated he never was trusted by his British commanders and remained on the British side during the American Revolution. But his real legacy is the art of training and operations of small units in wars. Great emphasis on "Rangers" started in World War II and is a vital function in today's Middle East conflicts. Army Rangers are an elite unit today. Those Army men with the "Ranger" tab on their shoulders have undergone hard training and represent the cutting edge like Navy Seals. They are descents of Rogers.

Robert Rogers was a regular history lesson from some undisclosed point in American Schools up and until the late 1930s, but it is conceivable that with the U.S. entering the Second World War in 1941 that the "Rogers Rangers" part of American History began to take a back seat to the current events of the nation (then) going forward. This book was fundamentally important not only of Robert Rogers and "Rogers Rangers" on the frontier when the American Frontier was nothing more than what we take for granted today in Ohio and Michigan from the borders of New England outward; but, it was equally important for a review of the cost of the French and Indian War (Seven Years War) a cost that the Crown would pay for heavily with the imposition of Acts. These "Acts" of course were an attempt to recoup the cost of the frontier war and to pay for its protection. Sir Winston Churchill would actually dub this war "the true First World War" in his memoirs later. When the British regulars joined the North American colonial militias and challenged French control both the war and victory would add unlimited spoils of resources and land mass to the Crown above what

even they must have sensed possible for the time; but, it also came at a cost. In one sense, Robert Rogers was for the American Frontier what George Washington became for the American Revolution; and, ironically as much as these two people in history have similar qualities of luck and good connections were certainly on the side for the better for Washington than it had been for Rogers. It was apparent to me that following Ross's account of the life of Robert Rogers, that Rogers where effective as an independent operator in the field of the frontier lacked fundamental ability to read the political writings on the wall at crucial points during his attempt to rise in the ranks or move toward a better financial position; none of this was important to the character of the man while he was enthralled in his warring work of the same. He had a tendency to simply ignore things that were untrue of the accusatory type upon his character; maybe by no answer at all he kept his thoughts to himself as well as his personal cards ~ to his detriment this would end up to become his character flaw that would impact him the most. I was surprised to find no reference in the bibliography of this detailed work on Rogers from the Douglas Southall Freeman's work on the any of the 7 volume set "Washington's Story". The lack of inclusion perplexes me as the arrest of Rogers by Washington played a pivotal role in Rogers return to the side of the Crown during the outbreak of the American Revolution. I have read the abridged version of the Freeman work and that book alone on Washington is nearly 900 pages. There was no reference in the abridged version to Rogers; however, I anticipate that Freeman incorporated the details on this arrest in his greater set (something for me to check into at my local library at some near point in the future). I would have liked the inclusion of more paintings of the "Dramatis Personae" that were included in the work compiled by Ross, a reference to the assassination of Chief Pontiac would have been appropriate (given the good Chief's like for Rogers on a personal level). On the plus side of course are the maps ~ the maps are highly detailed and this is one book in which for the first time the Saint-François Map of 1759 has been published in which Rogers own hand writing is included on the bottom-left of the work. In addition, I considered it a special treat to have a photo included of the Powder Horn that was once owned and used by Robert Rogers. I give this book 4.5 stars out of 5 possible on the Goodreads site. The research and the story that is portrayed is important for any student of American History and at any level.

Amazing book about a unique early American! Author has background in reporting and living in

extreme environments and it comes through in this book. Descriptions of Roger's scouts with his rangers vivid and stirring. The mystery and power of Robert Rogers comes out clearly in this work. He seems born to the task of creating and leading men at war with each other and nature. The raw, brutal frontier also emerges like a character in the drama, a foe to all yet a prize sought by all combatants.

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