

MAJOR-GENERAL EEDSON LOUIS MILLARD BURNS was born in 1897 in Westmount, Quebec, and received his education at Lower Canada College, Montreal, and the Royal Military College, Kingston, Ontario.

General Burns was commissioned in the Royal Canadian Engineers in 1915 and served during the First World War (1914-1919) with the Signals and on the Staff. He was awarded the Military Cross in 1916. Between the wars he held various staff and regimental posts in the permanent force including that of Officer-in-Charge of the Geographical Section, General Staff, Ottawa, in which position he directed extensive experimental work in air photo survey. He was President of the Canadian Institute of Surveying, 1936-1937, and was an associate member of the Committee for Survey Research of the National Research Council. He was awarded the OBE for his services in air survey development.

During the Second World War (1939-1945), General Burns held various senior staff appointments and commands. In Italy he commanded the 5th Canadian Armoured Division from January 1944 and from March 1944 the 1st Canadian Corps during the operations in the Liri Valley when it broke through the Hitler line and during the operations on the Adriatic coast when it broke through the Gothic line and captured Rimini. Later, he was General Officer-in-Charge, Canadian Section, Headquarters 21st Army Group, in Northwest Europe.

In 1945, General Burns was appointed Director General of Rehabilitation, Department of Veterans Affairs. He became Assistant Deputy Minister of Veterans Affairs in 1946, and in July 1950 was appointed Deputy Minister.

General Burns has been active in the affairs of the United Nations Association in Canada, having been President of the Ottawa Branch in 1947 and 1948, and National President in 1952 and 1953. He attended the Fourth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 1949, as an alternate delegate for Canada and served mainly on the Fourth Committee.