

Historian tells of flesh-and-blood PM

TORONTO — Several days ago, the giants of Canadian literary criticism squeezed themselves into a mid-nineteenth century salon on a Toronto sidestreet to meet Charles P. Stacey, the hottest historian in Canadian history.

The occasion was the launching of Col. Stacey's latest book, *A Very Double Life: The Private*

World of Mackenzie King, published by Macmillan of Canada. The scene was surprisingly subdued as critics from Toronto dailies and national magazines questioned the pucky 69-year-old professor who has made history in his own field by revealing the bizarre and somewhat pathetic private life of an (until now) eminent if rather

boring scion of Canadian respectability.

To earlier accusations of "smearing" and "blackening" the image of Canada's longest serving prime minister, Stacey replied his goal was "to set out the real man."

"I wasn't trying to damage him. I wasn't trying to improve him. Essentially, I was doing a

job of reporting," he said.

Those "reports" have rocked the country.

Their contents are drawn exclusively from King's diary which spans his famous lifetime from undergraduate to death-bed.

Instead of pandering to the unimaginative narrowness of fellow historians who have long guarded their readers

from anything that might suggest humanity in their national leaders, Stacey extracted 256 pages worth of King's sexual appetites, his subculture haunts, his dotty dependency on the occult, and his pathetic lack of self-confidence.

Stacey stumbled across his best-seller four years ago in the course of researching material for a study of Canadian military policy in the Second World War.

The diary had been sitting for some time, possibly four years, open to all interested eyes in the Public Archives in Ottawa. (It is significant that King's official biographer, Dr. Blair Neatby, has not seen fit to use the spice from the diary in his arid compilation of facts about King.)

"I went back to 1919 and 1921 when Mr. King was Liberal party leader and Prime Minister," said Stacey.

He didn't find too many references to military policy in the diary, "but

lots about King's relations with women."

Intrigued, Stacey went further back to King's undergraduate days in the 1890's and his life in the Toronto "underworld" and sub-culture.

"From then on, I was hooked," twinkled Stacey. "Technically speaking, of course."

The setting for the book-launching couldn't have been more appropriate. The press teetered on 100-year old chairs in the salon of Mackenzie House, home of Mackenzie King's famous grandfather, William Lyon Mackenzie. It is just possible that King had visited the house many years earlier during his nocturnal haunts in the Toronto underworld.

An unnamed Toronto benefactor, interested in retrieving the Bond Street historical site from the clutches of bosomy prostitutes who inhabited it in the mid-1930s, drove the then Prime Minister Mackenzie King past the building, pausing to point out the merits of its historic value.

"Look," exclaimed an excited King, waving toward the second-storey windows at beckoning beauties, "They know me!"

Stacey's credentials are impeccable, with a distinguished 45-year career as historian, professor and author of six earlier military works, one of which won the Governor General's Award in 1948.

About his brave departure into the "other" side of a public

figure's life, Stacey said simply: "Taste has changed. Twenty years ago I can't imagine myself having written a book like this."

"What goes on in Ottawa isn't all politics. I think I've been able to

demonstrate that," he said, and added firmly: "I believe this book makes a contribution — even if modest — to Canadian history."

Understatement is one of Stacey's obvious literary talents.

Hospital open house includes public tour

RICHMOND HILL — Public tours of York Central Hospital Saturday will be a highlight of Hospital Week in southern York region.

To begin the week, May 8 to 14, the hospital will offer tours of the building from 1 to 3:30 p.m.

A Costly Business — But Still Your Best Value is the theme selected for Canada's Hospital Day May 12, and as a preview York Central is having open house Saturday. Parents are asked, however, not to take children under five.

Slides and displays of various hospital equipment can be seen in the lecture hall.

Health care is expensive, points out York Central's executive director James Hepburn, and it is a

concern of both the people in the community and the hospitals.

The ever pressing demand for hospital services, the medical advancement in technology and complex methods of treating various diseases and conditions and the cost of inflation are the backdrop for the theme, *A Costly Business*.

The other part of the theme, *But Still Your Best Value*, refers to restoration of the best possible level of health to those who are ill so they may be productive members of the community.

During open house hours, there will be free parking in the north and east lots at the hospital.

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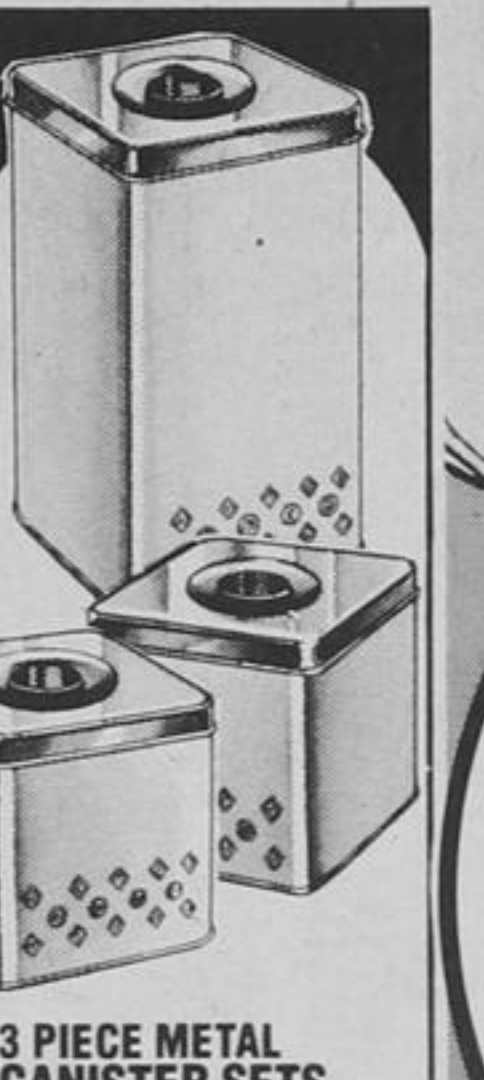
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TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL

PUBLIC MEETING WARD 3

A Public Meeting will be held in the Walter Scott Public School on Monday, May 10th, 1976 at 8:00 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to hear comments from and answer questions of the public.

H. David Schiller, Mayor

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