

camp remembered by students, such as “Proceed immediately Room 1134 Royal York Hotel” changed at the last minute to “Room 343 King Edward Hotel” must have been designed to impress — they served no useful purpose.

Despite a few minor clangers, such as the “Liberation bomber” and the “famous Vingt-Deux Régiment from Montreal,” Stafford vividly captures the wartime atmosphere. His lively style makes *Camp X* hard to put aside.

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**The Imperial Canadian: Vincent Massey in Office.** CLAUDE BISSELL. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986. xii, 361 p. illus. ISBN 0-8020-5656-3 \$24.95.

With this elegantly written book, Claude Bissell has concluded his two-volume biography of Vincent Massey. In his long career, Massey served Canada as politician, diplomat, Governor-General, royal commission chairman, and patron of the arts. His public persona was that of a member of the Canadian elite, more British than the British. Bissell successfully reveals the man behind the public figure, who shared thespian talent with his famous brother Raymond, but employed it in a different milieu.

Massey served as High Commissioner in London from 1935 to 1946, a momentous period indeed. Though he considered himself qualified to advise his government on foreign policy, and was expected to do so by the British, his ardent anglophilia was distrusted by Mackenzie King and by King's anti-British Under-Secretary, O.D. Skelton. The Prime Minister denied him a diplomatic role, even to the extent of refusing to allow him to attend meetings of all the High Commissioners. The war brought him more scope for action, and a more sympathetic Under-Secretary in the person of Norman Robertson, but his strange love-hate relationship with Mackenzie King, a relationship which seems to have been tinged with no little jealousy on King's part, hampered his ability to exploit the full diplomatic potential of his office.

In other areas of activity, however, he was more successful. He saw his primary role as the projection of Canada abroad, a process in which the arts and education were essential. In effect he acted as his own cultural attaché, bringing the attention of the English art world to Canadian painting, largely through his own collection, acting as an official representative of the National Gallery, and supporting Canadian students at Oxford. All this was a far cry from the normal role of a Canadian diplomat and was made possible by Massey's personal interests and personal fortune.

Massey was an unashamed anglophile, seeing Canada and Britain as inseparable. He was devoted to the monarchy and saw royal awards as, in Bissell's expressive phrase, “the ultimate symbolism, holy and transfiguring.” He loved the pageantry of English history, and viewed an idealized England through a mist of romance and mysticism within which the contemporary world of the industrialized cities had no part. Though his critical perceptions of England were thus blunted, he was more realistic about British politics, a field in which he had wide contacts, albeit of a solidly establishment kind. He staunchly supported Baldwin's handling of the Abdication Crisis, an episode which fanned his distrust

of Churchill, whom he considered an irresponsible freebooter. He solidly backed Chamberlain's appeasement policy, a position to which he clung tenaciously despite growing disillusionment with Germany because he felt that any settlement was preferable to war.

On the controversial issue of the admission of Jewish refugees to Canada, Massey was hardly on the side of the angels, though Bissell disputes the assertion of Abella and Troper that he was a "fringe member" of the anti-Semitic Cliveden set, having in fact visited Cliveden but once. Bissell denies that Massey was personally anti-Semitic, though admitting that he was not "incautious and heroic" enough to urge the acceptance of Jews on an unreceptive government.

Upon returning to Canada after the war and being denied any position by King other than the derisory offer of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Ontario, Massey served as Chancellor of the University of Toronto. In 1948, he produced a book, *On Being Canadian*, which stressed the need for a policy of cultural nationalism. If, as Bissell intimates, he was preaching for a call, the call came in 1949 when he was offered the chairmanship of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences. This appointment was, to Bissell, the high point of Massey's career, a task which he approached with an "almost messianic" sense of its importance. Although Bissell pays tribute to the work of Massey's fellow commissioners, notably Father Lévesque and the historian Hilda Neatby, he credits Massey's guiding hand for the amicable and expeditious way that the commission conducted its business. Certainly this commission can lay claim to being one of the most important in Canadian history, its ramifications in all areas of Canadian culture being felt to the present day. The commission's report reflected Massey's cultural nationalism, his sense that Canadian culture had to be protected from the overwhelming impact of the United States and his conviction of the surpassing importance of culture in the life of a nation.

Massey's career culminated with his appointment as the first Canadian-born Governor-General. He saw his role as demonstrating the viability of the Crown in the life of Canada and, despite his image of dignified aloofness, took great pleasure in meeting ordinary Canadians, including an arduous tour of the Far North. He widened the scope of entertaining at Rideau Hall but insisted on retaining the tradition of curtsying to the Governor-General. He may have made the Crown's representative, the Governor-General, Canadian, but he did so in a thoroughly evolutionary way.

Massey was a far more complex and interesting man than his public image would suggest. Bissell, using the voluminous Massey Papers as his primary source, reveals the affectionate, entertaining man behind the dignified mask. He details Massey's relationship with his formidable wife, Alice, and his famous brother, Raymond, his sometimes acerbic wit ("talking with Attlee is a little like a conversation with a bronze Buddha"), and his late romance towards the end of his life. This beautifully written, urbane volume reveals a life that was indeed, as the Latin inscription on Massey's tombstone proclaims, "useful to his country."

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