

# Mackenzie KING

William Lyon



DREAMS AND SHADOWS





Artiste: Francine Anger

William Lyon Mackenzie King, 1874–1950.

*W. Mackenzie King*



lian goodall likes to wear many different professional “hats.” She has worked as a classroom and museum educator. At present she is a children’s book reviewer, author, editor, historical researcher, and performer. She first became fascinated with William Lyon Mackenzie King’s story while she was working as a bilingual historic interpreter at King’s boyhood home, Woodside National Historic Site of Canada in Kitchener, Ontario.

lian was born in St. Catharines, grew up in Fergus, Ontario, and has lived in France. Currently she lives in Ottawa, just around the corner from Laurier House, King’s Ottawa residence. She walks past Laurier House every day and wonders where Pat, King’s Irish terrier, used to bury his bones. To find out more about lian’s first book on Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona or her current projects, go to her Web site at [www.liangoodall.com](http://www.liangoodall.com).

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# William Lyon Mackenzie King

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*Mackenzie* KING



DREAMS AND SHADOWS

*William Lyon*



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*To two women, who dreamed and worked past what their bodies would easily allow them to do. Their examples gave me the inspiration to complete this work: Cathy Pyke, a determined fighter who came back from near death, and Jean Hutchinson (1910-1997), who wrote her history books, even while ill in bed, by tapping on an electric typewriter with two pencils to accommodate her arthritis.*

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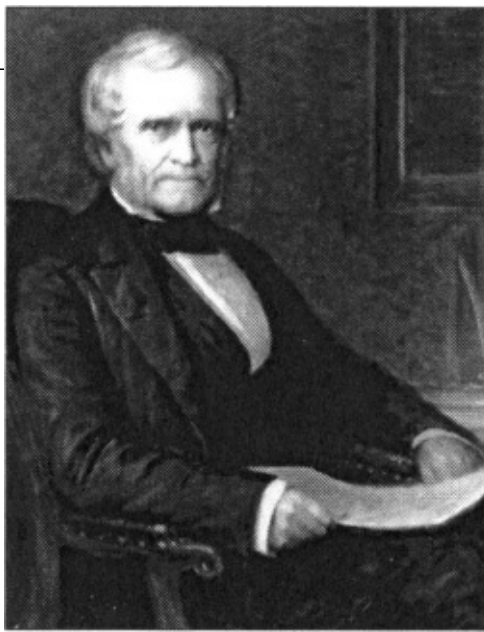
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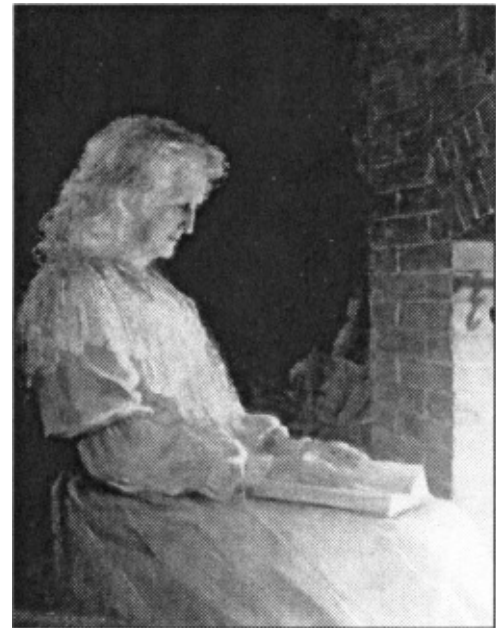
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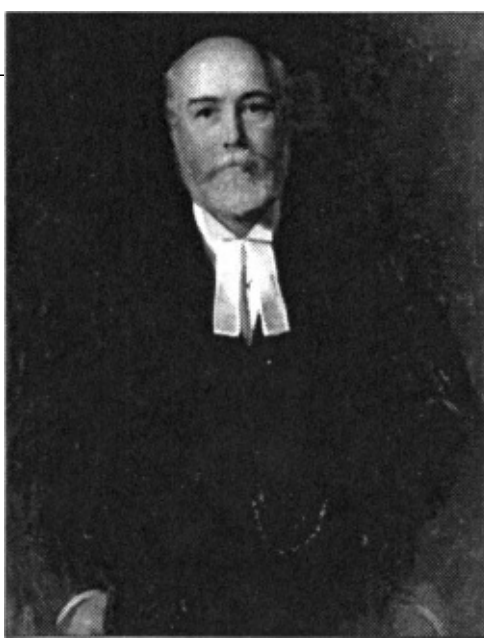


National Archives of Canada/C-11095.

Grandfather. William Lyon Mackenzie



Mother. Isabel Mackenzie Kirriemuir



National Archives of Canada/C-79749.

Father. John King, K.C.

## Prologue

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Laurier House, Ottawa  
December 17, 1943

Best wishes on your birthday and God bless you and keep you in the best of health for your benefit and for the nations that have already benefitted where your name is written in their hearts and on their minds forever.

One of your loyal friends,  
Mrs. Mabel Carlesso

**P**rim Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King felt humbled to receive such a wonderful card for his sixty-ninth birthday. It was a moving tribute, a simple manifestation of trust. Yet, guiding the people of Canada so often felt like a burden, especially since the beginning of the war. With Christmas drawing nearer, King thought of the fighting men. His own nephew, Lyon King, had been killed, and King shuddered to think that many men might meet a similar fate. War raged abroad, but at home English Canadians clamoured for overseas conscription while the people of Quebec were so strongly opposed to it that King feared civil war might befall his beloved country. Although he sometimes felt unsure and alone in the position of prime minister, King knew he had guidance. He felt those he loved and who had left this earth, were still near him, assuring him that he was doing the will of God.

His life's work was to help people. King put the flowered birthday card away and called for the dispatches. It was time to start his work for the day. It was time to address the problems of the Dominion of Canada, and indeed, the world.

But before King settled into reading the official documents before him, one of his secretaries, D. James Gibson, couldn't help noticing the prime minister "beamed just a little."

It was, after all, his birthday.

## *Nest of Dreams*



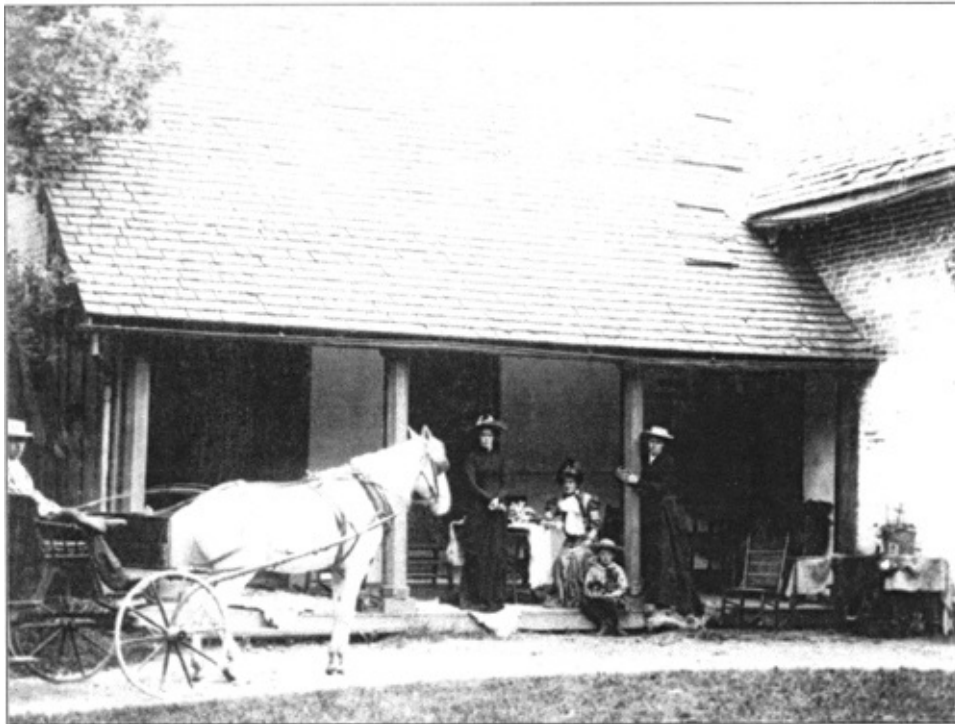
17. December, die Frau von John King in Berlin, einen Sohn.

Berlin, now known as Kitchener, was in 1874 a town of 3,000 in Southern Ontario. It had such a large Mennonite population that the *Berliner*, John's uncle's newspaper, announced the news in German. The birth announcement read: 17. December, to the wife of John King in Berlin, a son.

John King almost missed the event.

That day, John was dreaming of moving towards a brighter world. The elders of society might be nodding off to memories of the glory of the British Empire, but King was seated at a meeting listening intently to a Reform Association speech. At a burst of applause, John spoke excitedly to the man beside him. "This man is a friend to liberty!"

National Archives of Canada/C-7310.



Woodside, happy home of Willie, old Bill the horse, Bella, mother Isabel (seated), Jennie, Max (seated), and Fanny (who is hiding under the table).

A lawyer, newspaperman, and active Liberal politician, King admired reformers such as the speaker. He also held his wife's father, William Lyon Mackenzie, in great esteem. Some people referred sneeringly to the leader of the Upper Canadian Rebellion of 1837 as a notorious rebel who

had incited the people. King felt, however, Mackenzie was an example of those who fought for justice. As a newspaperman, mayor of York (which became Toronto), and a member of the Legislative Assembly, Mackenzie had witnessed the actions of the British government, which he felt were unfair in dealing with the people of the colony. He saw his fellow men as enslaved and oppressed at the hands of a few privileged people he dubbed the “Family Compact.” As an editor and politician he first tried to make changes peacefully, but by 1837 the time to seek reform quietly had passed. In 1837 Mackenzie urged armed action – rebellion!

By 1874 Mackenzie had been dead for more than a dozen years. Although his brave attempt had failed, many of the reforms he believed in had come to pass. John King’s generation enjoyed the benefits of being able to vote for responsible government, but as the speaker that day pointed out there were the issues that still required change. King himself might put up his fists to defend his personal honour, but he wasn’t such a hothead that he charged about with mobs waving pikes and pitchforks. After all, he and his wife were expecting their first child, William Lyon Mackenzie King, his grandchild.

Before King could settle into listening again, he felt an urgent tapping on his shoulder.

“Mr. King, a message. It’s your wife. They’ve already sent for the doctor.”

John stood up, half knocking over his chair. Something was very wrong. Isabel was not expected to have the baby for another month. He needed to be back at Benton Street as fast as a horse could gallop to get him there.

John and Isabel already had a beautiful year-old daughter, Isabel or Bella. Bella had gone to John’s Uncle Dougall Macdougall’s house. There she would stay with her Grandmamma, John’s mother, Christina King, and his Aunt Flora. John was free to do a lot of pacing and hand wringing. It was a cold night. Fetching wood and stoking the fire in the wood stove kept him busy.

Finally, in the early hours of the morning, Dr. Bowlby appeared in the bedroom door holding a bundle. “I’d like to announce the safe arrival of a baby boy!” he trumpeted. “Mother and baby are doing well.” The doctor neared the wood stove and unfolded a corner of the blanket.

King peered at the red, scrunchy face of his newborn son. “Well, well, well,” he admired. “I have decided,” he told his wee lad softly, “and your mother agreed, that we shall call you William Lyon Mackenzie.” He glanced at Bowlby, his eyes twinkling merrily. “William Lyon Mackenzie King has a nice ring to it, an important ring, don’t you think?” And then he answered himself, “Why yes, it does.”



Although he had been born prematurely, baby Willie thrived. Soon he was toddling about the house chasing the cat and trying to mount his big wooden rocking horse by himself. His mother thought he looked simply cherubic. His innocent blue eyes were full of curiosity, his blond hair curled sweetly around his chubby face, and his plump little legs peeked out like German sausages from under his dress, the garb for both boys and girls of the day.

Two years later there was another baby in the family, when Janet (known as Jennie) arrived in 1876. During her pregnancies and confinements, Isabel might not always feel like romping across the carpet with her children and roaring like a lion. A nursemaid helped her with the children’s care, but their mother was always available for merriment! After dinner she played the piano and sang hymns and other songs. Sometimes John joined in and even accompanied her with clacking castanets. The

little family had a lot of fun before quieting down later each evening to games and stories read aloud. As both John and Isabel King were of Scottish ancestry and very devout Presbyterians, they would read the bible and hear the children say their prayers every night before they went to bed.



Willie awoke to the sound of little Jennie's crying. He couldn't get back to sleep.

"Tell me the grandfather story," he demanded of his mother as she perched on the edge of his bed.

"Which grandfather story?" Isabel queried, tucking the coverlet around Willie's small frame. "You have two grandfathers, young lad. Both came from Scotland and both were very brave and important men, like you shall be one day. Would you like to hear about Father's father, Bombardier King? At the Battle of the Windmill the Royal Artillery fought off the Rebel sympathizers!"

"No, not that grandfather – *my* grandfather," the little boy insisted. He didn't mean any disrespect toward his soldier grandfather who had fought against the other grandfather's forces. But Willie wanted to hear about the person for whom *he* was named.

"Oh!" Isabel chuckled. So her father's exploits had become *the* story.

"My father, William Lyon Mackenzie, was a man with strong ideas who wanted to help people." In the lamplight she wove a story of good and evil – the brave farmers and their leader against the government and its selfish, powerful friends. "Grandfather felt he had to take more action than writing or editing a newspaper or even than he could when he had been mayor of York." Isabel's account contained many exciting details – but Willie liked best the part *after* the Rebel forces lost the battle. He was thrilled each time he heard Isabel tell about the daring escape through the countryside "just a few miles from here. There was a large reward offered for Grandfather's capture, one thousand pounds to any one who would 'apprehend and deliver' him. You've seen the very poster that many green-coated men also saw that day. However, a good man and lover of reform posted scouts, who found Grandfather before his enemies did. They took him across the Grand River and gave him shelter for the night. The next day they sent him on his way to safety across the border to Buffalo. Grandfather never forgot their kindness."

Although she made her father's life sound like an adventure story, Isabel couldn't help adding her own personal colouring in a quieter voice.

"I was born the same year as your father, in 1843. Only I was born in the United States, after Grandmother Isabel, who is an angel now, joined Grandfather in New York State. I was the youngest of thirteen children, although not all survived. Things were very difficult." She told Willie of the hardships she had known, how her father was often without work, and once even imprisoned for breach of the American neutrality laws! Her life continued to be difficult and some people snubbed them, even after a pardon permitted the family to return to York. When her father died in 1861, she had bravely struggled on. "Then your Uncle Charles Lindsey introduced me to a good and handsome student from the University of Toronto – but now we're getting into another story and it's time for you to go back to sleep!"

She smoothed his hair and kissed his face tenderly before she took the lamp and left the room.





The importance of family traditions is reflected in the names the Kings gave their four children. The first baby girl was named Isabel Christina Grace, after her mother and grandmothers. The second child, the couple's first born son, was given the name of Isabel's father, William Lyon Mackenzie. Their third child, a daughter, was Janet Lindsey (but called Jennie). Her namesake was her mother's sister, Aunt Janet, who had married Charles Lindsey. When the fourth and last King child was born in 1878, he was given the name of John's uncle, Dougall Macdougall. The young Dougall Macdougall, however, would be always known as Mac or Max.

John and Isabel had grown up in an age when it was expected that families would help each other. In the days before government programs provided any help, it was common for elderly or widowed people to be looked after by their family. John King's father had died before he was born, so he and his mother had lived with his uncle, Dougall Macdougall, a Berlin newspaper editor.

When John finished school, he returned to Berlin and opened his law practice. He and Isabel had a long courtship, but John wasn't established enough to marry her and bring her from Toronto to Berlin until 1872. Like most parents, John and Isabel created hopes and dreams for the four precious children they had. They wanted their offspring to be respected people and important citizens – the girls to have secure marriages and the boys to have important careers. Helping their children achieve these goals meant sacrifices. True, John King wanted to make the world a better place, but his first commitment was to see that his children had education, connections, and opportunities to ensure their success. The Kings did much more than provide food and shelter for their family. They opened doors to their children's futures by exposing them to important people and ideas – even when they were very young.



The crowd pressing around Willie made him hot in his suit jacket and woollen knickers. He squeezed his father's hand for reassurance. John smiled at his seven-year-old son. "Can you see?" he asked. When the lad shook his head "no," John lifted him up.

Now Willie could see the speaker on the platform. The tall, dark-haired man with a funny nose Willie knew, was Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, the most important person in Canada. That was why his father had brought him to the meeting.

"I would like to thank you," Macdonald concluded. The audience clapped, Willie very enthusiastically.

A young woman crossed the stage, curtsied, and held out a posy. The prime minister bent to receive the flowers, and the giver innocently placed a kiss on his cheek. Macdonald was enchanted. So was Willie. He would never remember what it was that Macdonald had said, but he would never forget the charming rewards that political greatness could hold.



Willie enjoyed the benefits of having parents who were well known in Berlin, but he was not growing up in a rich family. The Kings' bills exceeded John's income. However, while John and Isabel did not belong to the upper classes, they wanted to *appear* to be people of means. Even though John would never own a home, the Kings felt they should live in a place that would impress their friends and

potential clients. They needed enough room for their children, their visitors, the family members who stayed with them, and the servants they often employed. In 1886, when Bella was twelve, Willie eleven, Jennie nine, and Max seven, the family rented the last home they would live in in Berlin Woodside. They would remember it as a warm nest where they had their best family times.

Woodside was a golden-bricked showpiece just outside of town, with over five and a half wooded hectares for enjoying the pleasures of Nature. There were flower gardens to dream in; Lovers' Lane for rambles; a lily pond for reflecting; a hilltop above the orchard where the children could camp; shady nooks for sharing books of poetry, and woodsy knolls, where on sunny days, Isabel could set up her easel and paint.

Inside, Isabel began decorating and remodelling. The Kings were usually able to hire a man and a woman to help Isabel and the children with the many indoor and outdoor duties. The family still had time for a whirlwind of activities and often went out – skating, sleighing, curling, camping, attending teas, concerts, church events, and meetings. Between the gay parties at Woodside and their busy schedule away from home, the Kings' social lives sparkled with laughter and friendship.

The happy mood was tempered with duty. In addition to the gardening, cleaning, and other chores, the four King children were expected to devote themselves to the tasks of intellectual preparation. Schoolwork did not stop even after several hours of homework. John King hired a governess to assist the children with German and other subjects. Many Berliners were more fluent in German than in English. When Miss Siebert came to stay with the family, the local Presbyterian minister and family friend, Reverend Mr. Winchester, was also included in the little Woodside German classes.

When their noses weren't in school books, the Kings were always reading something else. Almost every evening the cozy panelled library was alive with discussions regarding events they had read about in newspapers or the books that lined the walls. Reading and thinking about important issues was part of the children's heritage. Grandfather Mackenzie and Great-Uncle Macdougall had edited newspapers. Their father not only wrote articles for newspapers and other publications, but also legally represented the Canadian Press Association. At Woodside, John wrote a book about his father-in-law, in which he argued that Mackenzie was a misunderstood man. The King children were encouraged to have their own opinions, and to seek to do good, to make Berlin and the world beyond a better place.



The students in the gymnasium of the Berlin High School were beginning to squirm, and Willie couldn't help but notice. Most times he'd rather be having fun by joining his classmates on the cricket or football field or engaging in some silly prank. But today he wanted them to listen. He was speaking about something important.

"The next topic addressed," King began, assailing a fresh section of his lengthy speech "concerned ..."

"Mr. King," Principal Connor was on his feet. He peered at Willie over his pince-nez glasses, and his flowing white beard touched his chest as he tilted his head. "We must proceed with the other item on our agenda. I would like to thank you for your interesting narrative on the political meeting you attended." Willie took his seat to the sound of his classmates' applause.

"That's my brother, Old Grandpa," Bella whispered to her seatmate, Emma Bauer.

“Old Grandpa?” the girl whispered back. “Is that because he’s named after his grandfather?”

“That and because he’s as serious as a little old man, always setting us on the *right* path” his sister replied.

“I think,” Zulema Seyler piped up, “that Willie King is a silver-tongued orator.” Her friend giggled.

“He may want to be a politician one day,” his friend Oscar Rumpal contributed, “but if you meet Billy in a fist fight you’ll know why we call him The Rebel.”

“Young ladies *and* gentleman!” a teacher reproached sternly.



John King’s Law Office, Germania Block

Berlin, Ontario

August 6, 1888

“May I help you?” The young man looked up with serious blue eyes. As the teenager was costumed in a suit and tie, despite the August heat, the messenger assumed he was the office clerk.

“Give this bill for telegramming to Mr. King, will you?”

“Mr. King is in Muskoka, vacationing.”

“Vacationing, eh? That might explain why he hasn’t paid it yet. When’s he back?”

“Tuesday next.”

“Just give it to him then.”

“I will direct it to his attention immediately upon his return,” William smiled confidently.

The man left and Willie set the bill on the pile of invoices growing between the stacks of newspaper clippings and letters on the desk. Next to the telephone he had cleared a space and was writing a letter. At age fourteen, Willie increasingly took on more responsibilities in his role of the eldest son. He kept an eye out for his siblings, helped his parents, and even minded his father’s business.

He reread the paragraphs he had written under John King’s letterhead.

“Dear Papa and Mama,” he had begun, “I must answer your loving letter...” He followed with a report of duties as the man in charge.

I have protested two notes and while I was at the bank yesterday there were two notes but the one was recalled... Bella was at a small party for tea at Clara Simpson’s last night and enjoyed herself very much. There were only girls invited. I couldn’t say that Robert has done much work lately excepting talking and watching us play. Mary is a little cross to us... nevertheless we are getting along first rate...

Satisfied, he dipped his pen in the ink. It was time to get to the heart of the matter.

I can just imagine you sitting there, Papa reading the letters and Mamma sitting listening to them with eager eyes and both of your hearts full. For I know that mine was when I got your

letter and you saying what a brutal thing it was for any person to poison our dear little Fanny.

---

Willie felt a stab of pain as he remembered their dear, loving black dog, Fanny. He had been the one to receive the news from the hired man that their pet had been found dead, poisoned. Though he thought his heart would break from grief and shock, he had been obliged to organize collecting the poor contorted body.

We went the next morning and got Fan and buried her and put stones over her grave. We buried her just opposite the barn in the woods near that post and little Max every few minutes would run and sit on her grave and cry. We do miss her very much.

Willie's handwriting looped wildly. He had been as upset as Max, but he didn't show it in the same way. Poor Max believed that Fanny had died because he had committed some wicked sin. "I will be good," his little brother wailed. Bella and Jennie had cried just as much. Willie could not permit himself many tears. He tried to comfort Bella, Jennie, and Max with scriptures and prayers. A real minister would have known what to say, but Willie could only do his best. Surely God would comfort them and punish the perpetrator of the dastardly deed.

Willie resumed writing, holding his pen in firm control.

But that can't be helped. If you should see another little dog like her to bring it along with you... but I guess you would find it a hard job to get another faithful little dog as faithful as she was...

It is now nearly noon and time to go home for my dinner. I am carrying out business as well as can be done. I am keeping track of my hours, and will be able to give you a receipt for my services when you get home. I must close now giving my best love to you from me and all the others.

I remain your loving son  
William Lyon Mackenzie King

Later that afternoon, Willie was in the garden, scuffling a long row of potatoes. "Sciff scritch" went the hoe. A lone crow cawed from the big pine tree. *Where are Bella and Jennie?* Willie wondered. *I could use a drink.*

*They'll be coming soon with the bucket of cool ice water,* he thought. He decided to stop work and wait for them in the shade. He lay back in the tickly grass and watched the branches wave above slowly fanning the lazy midsummer sky.

*I miss Fanny,* Willie realized. Normally, her panting black body would be lying beside him, her pink tongue lolling out of her mouth, her tail thumping happily every time her young master spoke or patted her shaggy head. "I miss Fan," he half-whispered aloud.

Again the crow cawed. A grey squirrel scampered up a nearby maple. Willie looked once more into the pattern of the branches and the sky. Mesmerized, his mind slipped into wondering and dreaming.

*What purpose does the Creator have for me? I am sure it is to do good, to be as good a man as my father, to be as great a man as my grandfather. I feel I am meant to help others less fortunate than me but I do not yet know how. Father, in his talks, has begun to prepare me for university. Mother too, in*

encouraging me. What, what shall I be?

“Do you know?” he asked out loud to the saucy squirrel, which had curiously come near him. The squirrel churred, flicked its tail in alarm, and scurried back to its tree. Willie laughed.

“I didn’t think you knew any better than I,” he said and returned to his silent reverie. Would he be a lawyer like Papa? His father had recently been appointed a Queen’s Counsel. Law seemed a noble profession. Or a minister? That way he would help people and please God. Or would he enter a life of public service? He often thought he would be a politician like Grandfather and maybe, maybe even one day return to Woodside, beloved Woodside, and purchase it. The reward after a life of helping others. *Perhaps, perhaps...* and his dreams became fuzzy, golden and warm.



National Archives of Canada/PA-115223

On his way. Willie graduates with a master’s degree from the University of Toronto (1897) and one from Harvard (1898).

## Deeds Worthy of Showing



University of Toronto

Toronto, Ontario

October, 1891

“Let’s go on an expedition, lads!” King proposed. “Let’s hike out over to the cemetery and visit the grave of Toronto’s first mayor and hero of the people.”

“Your grandfather, you mean?” asked his longtime friend from Berlin, Louis Breithaupt.

“Of course!” King smiled.

“It’s a grand day,” his college pal Bert Harper pointed out. “Let’s go!” Harper and Breithaupt were as eager as King to explore their new surroundings.

Looking smart in their new suits and hats, the three young men set out. The city near the University of Toronto boomed with the sounds of industrial growth. As they made their way through streets filled with bustling carts and trolley cars, the students couldn’t help notice that not all of Toronto’s 181,000 souls were in step with the march toward progress. Many recently arrived immigrants were homeless. The boys passed alleys where entire families camped out despite the chill of the autumn nights. When King saw the faces of dirty and hungry children he wondered how things got that way and what he could do to make them better.

When the young men entered the cemetery, the angry din of the city was replaced with a golden green peace. The autumn sun smiled, the leaves danced down from the trees and fell onto the quiet memorials of the generations who, King believed, had gone on to greater glory.

Although he couldn’t remember quite where the grave was, as if led by instinct, Willie led the little band in search of Mackenzie’s burial site. “Here it is!” he called out before long.

When the boys gathered around Mackenzie’s grave, King almost couldn’t speak. It was such a powerful moment, reverently observing the hallowed spot and seeing friends’ faces, quietly impressed.

King held his hat in his hands and briefly closed his eyes. He thought of all his grandfather had worked to accomplish in his life. But the poor suffered as much as they had in the days when the elder William Lyon was alive. His grandson should change things. Surely he would accomplish some great work before he died!

Silently, King renewed his vow to become as great a man as he could and to help others. At university he would prepare himself for his life’s work, whatever God showed him it would be.

A few days later he wrote about his experiences in a letter home. Often, Willie missed his family. He decorated his stark room at the boarding house with their pictures. The largest one centred over the mantelpiece was a photograph of his father looking noble in his legal robes. Willie was proud that his father, a former student of the university and now serving on its senate, was highly regarded by young and old alike. In fact, Willie introduced himself to some of his classmates as the son of “Senator Rex of Berlin. The nickname stuck, and Willie became known as Rex to his closest friends.

Like any eighteen-year-old living in a big city and away from his parents for the first time, Rex had a lot of fun sampling the social aspects of university life. He was always in a laughing group of students, at dances, the theatre, sports matches, and Glee Club events. Willie enjoyed the company of his friends and especially his female acquaintances. In King’s circle it seemed there was always a beautiful young lady whom he admired. For a while, the lovely Mab Moss received his attentions, but he never let himself become distracted for too long.

To enter into his life’s mission King wanted to have his body, mind, and soul at their best. To keep his body in shape he worked out at the gym and continued to play sports such as cricket and football. To strengthen his soul he prayed every day, attended church, and devoted his spare time to good works, such as visiting sick children in the hospital. To sharpen his mind he joined the debating club, spoke at political clubs, and studied, studied, studied.

King had entered a relatively new area of study at the University of Toronto – political science. He worked hard to get good marks – even put notes on his bedpost so he could revise while dressing! In 1893 he was quite pleased when his hard work paid off when he was awarded the Blake Scholarship. He was also proud when he was voted president of his class. His family wrote to congratulate him. Bella teased: “You seem such a young boy to make President but I hope in every way the position you have attained will bring much pleasure to all about you & that you will act in a way becoming the grandson of the late William Lyon Mackenzie. Is not that a speech?”

Being smart and having friends wasn’t enough for King. He was always pushing himself to do more. In 1893 he began to write about his struggle for betterment in his private diary, a journal that he would keep until a few days before he died. In his diary he would chart his dreams, detail his daily activities, bemoan his shortcomings, and crow his victories. On September 6, 1893 he earnestly penned the first entry:

This diary is to contain a very brief sketch of the events, actions, feelings and thoughts of my daily life. It must above all be a true and faithful account. The chief object of my keeping this diary is that I may be ashamed to let even one day have nothing worthy of its showing, and it is hoped that through its pages the reader may be able to trace how the author sought to improve his time.

In his ascension to goodness and greatness, Willie drew inspiration from those around him. He brushed elbows with the noted intellectual Goldwin Smith. When the Kings left Woodside they moved to Toronto, and rented a house from the Smiths. John King, now a lecturer at Osgoode Hall, was a friend of the famous man. Smith’s thoughts on economics and the unfulfilled potential of Canada as an independent nation fuelled many spirited conversations. Now the family was happily gathered together again – in the library of the house on Grange Road – to discuss matters of the changing world.

Willie also talked to his family about the biographies of the famous reformers he had read. He was particularly inspired when he read Arnold Toynbee. Toynbee was a British economist and

humanitarian who had worked himself to death in 1883 at age thirty-one from his efforts to help the poor. King read how Toynbee Hall had been opened in an immigrant section of London as a haven for the poor and a centre of education. There the well-off and educated could live and work with their less fortunate brothers and sisters. After reading Toynbee's essays on the working class in the Industrial Revolution, King "was simply enraptured by his writings..." He confessed to his diary "I have at last found a model for my future work in life." He also attended talks at a conference on Education and Religion given by another person who had been inspired by Toynbee. The famous American settlement worker, Miss Jane Addams, had been spurred to action by Toynbee's example. Willie was thinking that social work combined with the ministry might be a fine way to make a difference in the world.

Willie was aware that politicians were also people who had the power to perform good works. He greatly admired the famous Liberal Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone, who had just served his fourth term as prime minister of Britain. The young student knew that one of the earliest good works the politician had performed was to rescue girls who had "fallen" into prostitution.

Above all these examples of thinking and acting people was Grandfather. With his eyes open wide, Willie read a biography of Mackenzie written by Uncle Charles Lindsey. He was especially stirred by Mackenzie's love of the poor, "the humble and the lowly." He felt his grandfather's blood "coursing through my veins," and his heart beat more quickly with resolve to make his mark by helping others.



Sick Children's Hospital, Toronto

January 6, 1894

King watched the little girl on the bed struggle with death. Her breathing was so shallow that it could not be heard over the gentle swish, swish of the nurses' long starched skirts as they came and went.

"Katie," he said softly. Her eyes fluttered open. "Shall I say a prayer? Shall we pray that your family will draw nearer our Lord as you have?" he asked her. "Then they will have a beautiful home for the hereafter," he continued, "just like the one that waits for you."

Katie smiled, but she could no longer speak. King began to pray out loud. In his mind, he also prayed that soon Katie's earthly suffering would end and her eternal reward begin.

Almost every Sunday since he had arrived in Toronto, King had conducted religious services and read *Sunbeam* stories to the children at the Sick Children's Hospital. He loved his time with the eager children and the dear nurses, whom he also sought to guide towards eternal life through letters and talks.

When Katie Cameron's bright little spark went out, King thought about what she had told him about the terrible life she had lived. She had confidentially confessed some of the things that she and her sister had done to survive. King knew it was time to do more, to take his work beyond the hospital walls. Shortly after the last hymns were sung at little Katie's funeral, Willie called on her parents. Next he went to see her sister and spoke to her about stopping "her wicked life" and turning to Christ. Nina cried a little and seemed ready to repent. Encouraged, King went back to visit her another time at Mrs. Sherman's boarding house, but instead learned she was at a different house on King Street. When he arrived he found "a young fellow there, a perfect scoundrel, I believe, who has wished to marry her."



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