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AN INTERVIEW WITH
WM. LYON MACKENZIE

It was New Year's eve and the Alberta newshawk at Toronto to get the reaction of the east to the problems of the west had a hunch on that long-agoed Scot, William Lyon Mackenzie. Right now the one-time rebel leader is celebrating his 100th New Year since his ill-starred pitch for responsible government in Upper Canada (now Ontario) in 1837.

No science or other supernatural aid was needed to locate the restless spirit of the reformer of a century ago. From the studio of Walter Allward, sculptor of the immortals of Vinny Ridge, is emerging a speaking likeness in bronze. It will centre an allegorical group in Queen's Park, a perpetual sentinel for unold successions of the legislature which three times ejected him as a member in the days of his revolt.

Dusk had settled—Mackenzie called it twilight—when the reporter found him among the clay casts of the sculptor's workroom. From the kitchen came the savour of haggis. The host had implied a few kindred sippets to a Scottish New Year's Eve with his venetian guest. Reporter himself once, Mackenzie made the interviewer welcome.

"We'd better have the candles." But as he pushed the switch releasing light from the mighty Niagara the high forehead contracted in furrows of memory.

"Just about 100 years ago this night," he went on, wistfully "I was making my second stand on a border island in the Niagara, hard by the cataract, whence this electrically now comes."

The old agitator was inclined to be reminiscient, it seemed. The reporter broke in with the business of the moment. What was Mr. Mackenzie's opinion of the economic situation in the west?

But the beard-wreathed visage was still in the past or perhaps as a good politician its wearer preferred to ignore the question. He recalled the yahn promises of men of his day. They told him they could raise 5000 fighting insurgents. They sent him a corporal's guard and his "army" was swept over the Falls. For 12 years he was in exile with \$5000 on his head.

Suddenly the news sense in Mackenzie asserted itself. The young man was here to get his views on some modern issue. What was it? Ah, yes. Something about the situation in the west.

Politician once more! Mackenzie quizzed the reporter. Where did the western provinces stand on responsible government? The scribe suggested it depended on the point of view.

From the dining room came the skirt of the pipes and the chime of the supper gong. The interview must end but Mackenzie wished to be helpful. He was sorry he knew nothing about the situation except what he had read in the public prints.

"You'd better see my grandson, William Lyon Mackenzie King. He's prime minister of Canada, you know. I believe he has given a lot of consideration to these problems." There was gleam of paternal pride in the eyes and a tinge of the elder statesman to the voice as he said it.

And the "little rebel of 1837" farewell the reporter and joined the streets at his service.

King, Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie (MG
26 J 7 volume 23) William Lyon Mackenzie
- re: articles - Western newspapers
n.d., 1909-1948

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