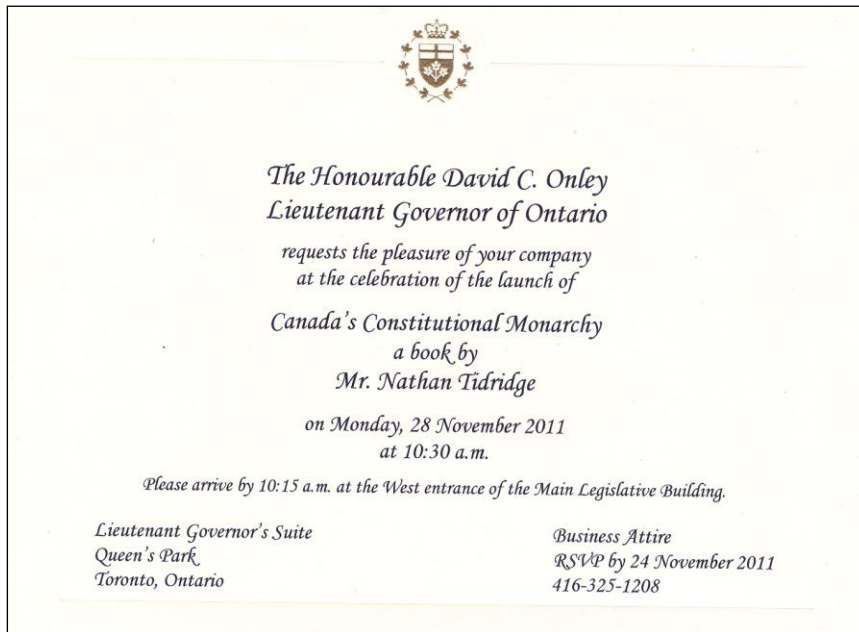


VICE-REGAL LAUNCH OF CANADA'S CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

First, the invitation....

Then the welcome.....



Nanda Casucci-Byrne, Chief of Staff

SPEAKING NOTES FOR LAUNCH OF CANADA'S CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

I am delighted to welcome you to Queen's Park today for the launch of an important new work on our constitutional monarchy.

As a teacher in the History Department of Waterdown District High School, Mr. Tidridge decided he had to do something about creating a wonderful tool that could be used in schools across the country to demonstrate the relevancy of the Crown in a contemporary Canadian setting.

And the result is Canada's Constitutional Monarchy, which John Fraser, Master of Massey College, has described as "an invaluable guide to all things royal in Canada."

A few years ago, I had the pleasure of visiting Waterdown District High School, to present the Mace for the opening of the school's first Student Parliament.

With Mr. Tidridge's guidance, the students had changed their Student Constitution to better represent Canada's form of government. And from what I saw during my visit, I am quite certain that, if any Waterdown students would be polled about civics in general and our system of government in particular, they would stand head and shoulders above others.



The Hon. David C. Onley UE, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

They have had the privilege of being mentored by a teacher who has taken the time and trouble to develop an expertise about the nuances and advantages of our system of governance.

Obviously, because I represent The Queen in the province, I am anxious that Ontarians learn more about our parliamentary democracy. I firmly believe that, the more they know, the more they will appreciate how fortunate we are.

As Robert Finch, President of the Monarchist League of Canada has said, “Countries that have a monarchy in the Canadian sense, a constitutional monarchy, these are the countries where human rights and the rule of law flourish.”

As The Queen’s representative in Ontario, I applaud Nathan Tidridge for his authorship of this timely and very informative book. I am excited that a teacher who has demonstrated I almost wish I had the power of my early predecessors in this role, so that I could make it required reading for Canadian students everywhere!

Thank you.

LG’s Suite, Queen’s Park
Mon. 28 November 2011

Then the

ADDRESS BY NATHAN TIDRIDGE....

I am truly humbled today to be in the Vice-regal Suite of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. The significance of this event is not lost on me, and to be recognized by an institution that I respect so much is something I will long cherish. We stand in the midst of Ontario’s oldest institution, with roots that stretch back to the great John Graves Simcoe who arrived in 1792. For those of us here from Waterdown it is important to acknowledge Ontario’s second Lieutenant Governor since Confederation - William Howland – the only American-born Father of Confederation and long-time resident of our village.

To have my family here with me today is very important to me. My wife, Christine, deserves so much credit – especially since she was up so early today to ensure that our daughters Sophie and Elyse could be here with us. I owe much thanks to my mother-in-law Greta, father-in-law Roy, brother-in-law Jeff and his girlfriend Jess – their constant support has been something I can always count on.

I am also very grateful to have students from Waterdown District High School with me here today – including its Student Parliament which Your Honour officially opened in 2008 when you visited our school to dedicate our student War Memorial. It was as an educator that I approached this book, because it was as an educator that I realized that our country faces a crisis in how its citizens learn about their government.



Nathan Tidridge

In our province, students learn about Canada’s government in grade’s five and ten. In reading the curriculum for the Grade Ten Civics’ course, one may be surprised to learn that there is no mention of, meaning no requirement to teach, about such fundamental concepts as constitutional monarchy, responsible government, or even how the head of government is selected. Surveying the document you will find no mention of the following terms: Sovereign, governor general, lieutenant governor, prime minister, premier, cabinet, legislature or even the word parliament.

Last week Your Honour hosted the Countess of Wessex along with members from the aboriginal community. Such a gathering and its deep historic implications is easy to understand when the ancient relationship between the Crown and

First Nations is taken into account. I was sad to find that the only article reporting the event dwelled instead on whether or not the reporter would curtsy to the Countess.

We must protect our institutions because ignorance will lead to their dismantling. Last year was the first ever policy conference on the Canadian Crown entitled *The Crown in Canada: Present Realities and Future Options*. Held on Parliament Hill, the conference, sponsored by Queen's University, gathered academics and officials, including those from this office, connected to the Canadian Crown. It is quite deliberate that my book begins with a statement made at that conference during the opening address by Senator Serge Joyal:

An institution that is continually depreciated either by design or ignorance, like the Canadian Crown, will eventually wither and die, and with it an integral part of our constitution.

The Crown – both provincial and federal – is integral to our democracy and sovereignty and I cannot in good conscience be a teacher of Civics and not have this recognized by my students. For the opportunity to do this I have to thank Dundurn Press and Barry and Jane Penhale of Natural Heritage Books – Barry and Jane have become two of my best supports. I can't thank Jane enough for her sleepless weekend in September! Kirk Howard decided to give me a chance at the 2010 Crown Conference – Kirk also paid for me to attend the 2010 Symons Lecture in Charlottetown – a trip that had a dramatic impact on this book. Thank you for your unflagging support – a true Friend of the Canadian Crown – I look forward to writing more books for you. This thanks is also extended to the amazing team at Dundurn – Beth Bruder, Shannon Whibbs and Marta Warner in particular.

The Symons Lecture that Kirk sent me to last year is named after the great Canadian Professor Thomas Symons who was an integral part of this process – Professor Symons authored the influential report “To Know Ourselves” in 1975, a report that highlighted the precarious state of Canadians' knowledge about their own country. The report's conclusion was that “. . . no student should be permitted to graduate from high school, and still less from university, without certain minimal levels of knowledge about the political institutions and political culture of this country.” We have not properly answered this report as shown by our last provincial election (and its 49% voter turn-out) and such things as a 2008 Ipsos-Reid poll that stated only 75% of Canadians knew that Her Majesty was our Head of State. A tremendously busy man, Professor Symons has been a great mentor, and I treasure our discussions together over a book written in the spirit of his famous report.

It was 15 years ago that I discovered Jacques Monet's *The Canadian Crown* at the Waterdown District High School library. Little did I know that I would be sitting with Father Monet not one block from here pouring over sections of my manuscript – that was a serene moment for me. A similar experience was had when I met Dr. Michael Jackson, author of *The Canadian Monarchy in Saskatchewan*.

Your Honour, I want to end with a personal expression of thanks for what you have done for the Crown in this province. I have been fortunate to see you a few times over your mandate and each meeting has been memorable. I will never forget when you met with the TRY program at Waterdown District High School. That visit was an example to me that the dignity of the Crown and the dignity of the person who represents it can be two in the same – what you did for our students made me so proud to be Canadian. And then you invited them all back to Queen's Park for a special reception in their honour – that was an afternoon that I know they still hold high in their memories of their education. You are a strong advocate for accessibility, and that message has been successfully spread across the province.

I remember a conversation that we had a few years back about the problems in our curriculum. It is with this conversation in mind that I am honoured to present both Your Honour and your Private Secretary Ms. Nanda Cassuci-Byrne (my book is the first to have a section on the hard work done by the vice-regal secretaries across the country) with personal copies of *Canada's Constitutional Monarchy*. Within your book Your Honour, please find copies of two letters being presented to your Minister of Education later on this morning – I give them to you in the spirit of your unwritten constitutional rights – as articulated by Walter Bagehot – to be consulted, to encourage and to warn. I give you these books with great respect and thanks for this day.

And then time for photographs



His Honour David C. Onley, Waterdown District High School history students and Nathan Tidridge



Left: His Honour David C Onley, Nathan Tidridge, Frederick H. Hayward
Above: First Lieutenant Governor – John Graves Simcoe

Photography: Ruth Nicholson, President Hamilton Branch UELAC