

# Reflections on Canada: “A Friend Is Someone Who Knows All About You, but Likes You”



No scholar is a more lyrical writer than Professor David Dilks, who would never claim this of himself, so I will do it for him. We know him for his book *The Great Dominion*, and his stunning “The Queen and Mr. Churchill” (*FH* 135), and now for the leading essay in our Canada Number—created to complement the 29th International Churchill Conference in Toronto on October 11-14th.

Not everything in his piece reflects well on American handling of Canada, Churchill and Britain. A poignant episode was when Churchill learned of the U.S. H-bomb test by reading a story in *The Manchester Guardian*. But history is history, and understanding history, as Churchill once put it, is the key to understanding statecraft.

We can hear Winston Churchill’s famous 1941 “Some Chicken! Some Neck!” speech in Ottawa on our website (<http://bit.ly/xRWzm2>), and find it in several books. But *Finest Hour* here offers what other sources do not: the precise text, meticulously confirmed from the broadcast by Ronald Cohen, with key passages picked out in bold italics, along with contemporary photos, and comments on the speech by three Churchill authorities. It might be best, in fact, to read pages 23-28 while listening on our website, since the old audio is a little unclear.

With Dilks and Churchill to lead it, our Canada Number (the first since *FH* 44 back in 1984) came together beautifully, thanks to the strenuous efforts of the Canadians who largely wrote it for you.

*Finest Hour* has searched for Yousuf Karsh’s 1941 Churchill photographs since we first found “Karsh 3” (WSC with Mackenzie King) in a 1965 Toronto documentary. Last autumn we produced “Karsh 4.” Now, thanks to Terry Reardon, we have all seven—on our

cover and spread across Karsh’s personal recollection of his experience. Karsh himself never spoke of the “supplemental” photos—after the inimitable “Angry Lion,” who would? But they make for a wonderful cover by Charlotte Thibault, and story starting on page 29.

The 1942 raid on Dieppe, and Churchill’s role in it, described on pages 32-36 by Terry Reardon, was a tribute both to Canadian valor and to the ineptness of its planners—whoever they were. Who were they? The jury is still out. It seems that hunting for the chief perpetrator of the raid on Dieppe is like old Diogenes with his lantern, searching for an honest man.

John Plumpton’s “Encounters with Canadians”

(pages 37-42) began as a rewrite of his *FH* essay twenty-five years ago, but morphed into a thorough appreciation of Churchill’s ups and downs

with a host of Canadians from Wilfred Laurier to Lester Pearson. John follows this with a thoughtful piece on Canada in the brave new multi-polar world of the present (pages 48-49).

When Gordon Walker sent us “In the Line: Canada’s Continuous Contributions to Victory” (pages 46-47), we were struck not only by Canada’s lopsided per capita effort in blood and treasure, but the way she was shunted aside in World War II Allied councils. Churchill, David Dilks tells us, didn’t like this. We are glad to know he did not.

Growing up in New York City, I thought of Canada as a cool place with a waterfall and snappy, red-coated policemen, but never as a foreign country. It still seems “unforeign,” but in the last thirty years I learned much more about a good and great nation, embodiment of the old saying, “A friend is someone who knows all about you, but likes you.” And I could not help adopting as a subtitle David Dilks’s encomium: “Thank you a thousand times.” ☺

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