



The Siren Years: A Canadian Diplomat Abroad 1937-1945

Charles Ritchie

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Charles Ritchie, one of Canada's most distinguished diplomats, was a born diarist, a man whose daily record of his life is so well written that it leaps from the page.

In wartime England, Ritchie, as Second Secretary at the Canadian High Commission, served as private secretary to Vincent Massey, whose second-in-command was Lester B. Pearson, future prime minister of Canada. In a perfect position to observe both statecraft and the London social whirl that continued even during the war, Ritchie provides a fascinating, perceptive, and (surprisingly) humorous picture of the London Blitz – the people in the parks, the shabby streets, the heightened love affairs – and the vagaries of the British at war. There are also glimpses of the great, and portraits of noted artists and writers that he knew well.

A vivid document of a period and a wonderful piece of writing, *The Siren Years* has become a classic.

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