



## Lord Beaverbrook



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## Lord Beaverbrook

**William Maxwell Aitken, 1st Baron Beaverbrook, PC, ONB** (25 May 1879 - 9 June 1964) was a Canadian-British newspaper publisher and backstage politician who was an influential figure in British media and politics of the first half of the 20th century. His base of power was the largest circulation newspaper in the world, the *Daily Express*, which appealed to the conservative working class with intensely patriotic news and editorials. During the [Second World War](#) he played a major role in mobilising industrial resources as Winston Churchill's minister of aircraft production.

The young Max Aitken had a gift for making money and was a millionaire by 30. His business ambitions quickly exceeded opportunities in Canada and he moved to Britain. There he befriended [Bonar Law](#) and with his support won a seat in the House of Commons at the [general election](#) held in December 1910. A knighthood followed shortly after. During the [First World War](#) he ran the Canadian Records office in London, and played a role in the removal of [H. H. Asquith](#) as prime minister in 1916. The resulting [coalition government](#) (with [Lloyd George](#) as prime minister and Bonar Law as [Chancellor of the Exchequer](#)), rewarded Aitken with a peerage and, briefly, a Cabinet post as [Minister of Information](#).

Post-war, the now Lord Beaverbrook concentrated on his business interests. He built the *Daily Express* into the most successful mass-circulation newspaper in the world, with sales of 2.25 million copies a day across Britain. He used it to pursue personal campaigns, most notably for tariff reform and for the [British Empire](#) to become a [free trade](#) bloc. Beaverbrook supported the government of [Stanley Baldwin](#) and that of [Neville Chamberlain](#) throughout the 1930s and was persuaded by another long standing political friend, [Winston Churchill](#), to serve as his [Minister of Aircraft Production](#) from May 1940. Churchill and others later praised his Ministerial contributions. He resigned due to ill-health in 1941 but later in the war was appointed [Lord Privy Seal](#). Beaverbrook spent his later life running his newspapers, which by then included the *Evening Standard* and the *Sunday Express*. He served as Chancellor of the [University of New Brunswick](#) and developed a reputation as a historian with his books on political and military history.

### Early life

Aitken was born in [Maple, Ontario](#), Canada, in 1879, one of the ten children of William Cuthbert Aitken, a Scottish-born [Presbyterian](#) minister and Jane Noble, the daughter of a prosperous local farmer and storekeeper. When he was a year old, the family moved to [Newcastle, New Brunswick](#), which Aitken later considered to be his hometown. It was here, at the age of 13, that he set up a school newspaper, *The Leader*. Whilst at school, he delivered newspapers, sold newspaper subscriptions and was the local correspondent for the *St. John Daily Star*.

Aitken took the entrance examinations for [Dalhousie University](#), but because he had declined to sit the Greek and Latin papers he was refused entry. He registered at the [King's College Law School](#), but left after a short while. This was to be his only formal higher education. Aitken worked in a shop, then borrowed some money to move to [Chatham, New Brunswick](#), where he worked as a local correspondent for the *Montreal Star*, sold life insurance and collected debts. Aitken attempted to train as a lawyer and worked for a short time in the law office of [R B Bennett](#), a future prime minister of Canada. Aitken managed Bennett's successful campaign for a place on Chatham town council. When Bennett left the law firm, Aitken moved to [Saint John, New Brunswick](#), where he again sold life insurance before moving to [Calgary](#) where he helped to run Bennett's campaign for a seat in the [legislative assembly of the North-West Territories](#) in the [1898 general election](#). After an unsuccessful attempt to establish a meat business, Aitken returned to Saint John and to selling insurance.

### Early business career

In 1900, Aitken made his way to [Halifax](#), Nova Scotia, where [John F. Stairs](#), a member of the city's dominant business family, gave him employment and trained him in the business of finance. In 1904, when Stairs launched the [Royal Securities Corporation](#), Aitken became a minority shareholder and the firm's general manager. Under the tutelage of Stairs, who would be his mentor and friend, Aitken engineered a number of successful business deals and was planning a series of bank mergers. Stairs' unexpected early death in September 1904 led to Aitken acquiring control of the company and moving to Montreal, then the business capital of Canada. There he bought and sold companies, invested in stocks and shares and also developed business interests in both Cuba and Puerto Rico. He started a weekly magazine, the *Canadian Century* in 1910, invested in the *Montreal Herald* and almost acquired the *Montreal Gazette*. In 1907 he founded the [Montreal Engineering Company](#). In 1909, also under the umbrella of his Royal Securities Company, Aitken founded the Calgary Power Company Limited, now the [TransAlta Corporation](#), and oversaw the building of the [Horseshoe Falls](#) hydro station.

In 1910-1911 Aitken acquired a number of small regional cement plants in Canada, including [Sandford Fleming's](#) Western Canada Cement Co. plant at [Exshaw, Alberta](#), and amalgamated them into Canada Cement, eventually controlling four-fifths of the cement production in Canada. Canada was booming economically at the time, and Aitken had a monopoly on the material. There were irregularities in the stock transfers leading to the conglomeration of the cement plants, resulting in much criticism of Aitken, as well as accusations of price-gouging and poor management of the cement plants under his company's control. Aitken sold his shares, making a large amount of money.

Aitken had made his first visit to Britain in September 1908, and when he returned there in the spring of 1910, in an attempt to raise money to form a steel company, he decided to make the move permanent, but not before he led the underwriting, with a preponderance of British money, of an amalgamation of smaller units into the [Steel Company of Canada](#). Very shortly later Aitken moved his family to the UK.

### Move to Britain

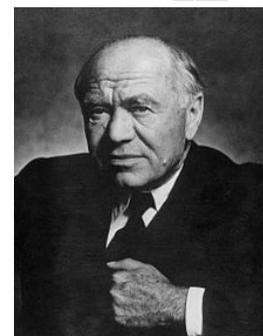
In 1910, Aitken moved to Britain and he became friends with [Andrew Bonar Law](#), a native of New Brunswick and the only Canadian to become [Prime Minister of the United Kingdom](#). The two men had a lot in common: they were both sons of the [manse](#) from Scottish-Canadian families and both were successful businessmen. Aitken persuaded Bonar Law to support him in standing for the [Unionist Party](#) in the [December 1910 general election](#) at [Ashton-under-Lyne](#). Aitken was an excellent organiser and, with plenty of money for publicity, he won the seat by 196 votes.

Aitken rarely spoke in the House of Commons, but did promise substantial financial support to the Unionist Party, and in 1911 he was knighted by [King George V](#). Aitken's political influence grew when Bonar Law replaced [A.J. Balfour](#) as leader of the Unionist party late in 1911. Aitken bought [Cherkley Court](#), near [Leatherhead](#) and entertained lavishly there. In 1913 the house was offered as a venue for negotiations, between Bonar Law and the Prime Minister, [H.H. Asquith](#), over Ulster and [Irish home rule](#). Later in life Aitken wrote about his early political efforts:

[The Right Honourable](#)

**The Lord Beaverbrook**

[PC](#) [ONB](#)



Lord Beaverbrook in 1943

[Lord Privy Seal](#)

1943-1945

[Winston Churchill](#)  
[Viscount Cranborne](#)  
[Arthur Greenwood](#)

[Minister of War Production](#)

4 February 1942 - 19 February 1942

[Winston Churchill](#)  
*Office created*  
[Oliver Lyttelton](#) (as *Minister of Production*)

[Minister of Supply](#)

29 June 1941 - 4 February 1942

[Winston Churchill](#)  
[Sir Andrew Duncan](#)  
[Sir Andrew Duncan](#)

[Minister of Aircraft Production](#)

14 May 1940 - 1 May 1941

[Winston Churchill](#)  
*Office created*  
[John Moore-Brabazon](#)

[Minister of Information](#)

10 February - 4 November 1918

[David Lloyd George](#)

*Office created*  
[The Lord Downham](#)

[Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster](#)

10 February - 4 November 1918

[David Lloyd George](#)  
[Sir Frederick Cawley](#)  
[The Lord Downham](#)

[Member of Parliament](#)  
for [Ashton under Lyne](#)

3 December 1910 - 23 December 1916

[Alfred Scott](#)  
[Albert Stanley](#)

**Personal details**

**Born** William Maxwell Aitken  
25 May 1879

[Maple, Ontario](#), Canada  
9 June 1964 (aged 85)

**Died** [Surrey](#), England

**Political party** [Liberal Unionist](#)  
[Conservative](#)

Gladys Henderson Drury  
(m. 1906; died 1927)

**Spouse(s)** [Marcia Anastasia Christoforides](#)  
(m. 1963)

Empire Fiscal Union was, in fact, my only reason for entering politics in Britain and for continuing to take an interest in public life. My devotion to Bonar Law, my belief in his Leadership, my faith in his ability to give to the Empire some day, perhaps some day soon, the Union I so ardently desired, had kept me in close and intimate touch with him and his political problems.

	Hon. Janet Aitken
Children	<a href="#">Sir Max Aitken, 2nd Baronet</a>
	Captain Hon. Peter Aitken
Occupation	Legislator, author, entrepreneur

Aitken continued to grow his business interests while in Parliament and also began to build a British newspaper empire. After the death of [Charles Rolls](#) in 1910, Aitken bought his shares in [Rolls-Royce Limited](#), and over the next two years gradually increased his holding in the company. However, [Claude Johnson](#), Rolls-Royce's Commercial managing director, resisted Aitken's attempt to gain control of the company, and in October 1913 he sold his holding to [James Buchanan Duke](#), of the [American Tobacco Company](#). In January 1911, Aitken, secretly, invested £25,000 in the failing [Daily Express](#). An attempt to buy the [Evening Standard](#) failed but he did gain control of another London evening paper, [The Globe](#). In November 1916 a share deal worth £17,500, with Lawson Johnson, landed Aitken a controlling interest in the [Daily Express](#), but again he kept the deal secret.

## First World War



Lord Beaverbrook

During the [First World War](#) the Canadian government placed Aitken in charge of creating the Canadian War Records Office in London, and he made certain that news of Canada's contribution to the war was printed in Canadian and British newspapers. He was innovative in the employment of artists, photographers, and film makers to record life on the [Western Front](#). Aitken also established the Canadian War Memorials Fund that evolved into a collection of art works by the premier artists and sculptors in Britain and Canada. His visits to the Western Front, with the honorary rank of [colonel](#) in the [Canadian Army](#), resulted in his 1916 book *Canada in Flanders*, a three-volume collection that chronicled the achievements of Canadian soldiers on the battlefields. After the war Aitken wrote several books including *Politicians and the Press* in 1925 and *Politicians and the War* in 1928.

Aitken became increasingly hostile towards the Prime Minister, H. H. Asquith whom he considered to be mismanaging the war effort. Aitken's opinion of Asquith did not improve when he failed to get a post in the Cabinet reshuffle of May 1915. An attempt by Bonar Law to secure the [KCMG](#) for Aitken was also blocked by Asquith. Aitken was happy to play a small part, which he greatly exaggerated, as a go-between when Asquith was forced from office and replaced by [David Lloyd George](#) in December 1916. Lloyd George offered to appoint Aitken as [President of the Board of Trade](#). At that time, an MP taking a cabinet post for the first time had to resign and stand for re-election in a by-election. Aitken made arrangements for this, but then Lloyd George decided to appoint [Albert Stanley](#) instead. Aitken was a friend of Stanley and agreed to continue with the resignation, so that Stanley could take Aitken's seat in Parliament and be eligible for ministerial office. In return, Aitken received a peerage on 23 January 1917 as the *1st Baron Beaverbrook*, the name "[Beaverbrook](#)" being adopted from a small community near his boyhood home. He had initially considered "Lord [Miramichi](#)", but rejected it on the advice of [Louise Manny](#) as too difficult to pronounce. The name "Beaverbrook" also had the advantage of conveying a distinctive Canadian ring to the title.

Later in 1917, Beaverbrook's controlling stake in the [Daily Express](#) became public knowledge and he was criticised by parts of the Conservative Party for financing a publication they regarded as irresponsible and often unhelpful to the party.

In February 1918, Beaverbrook became the first Minister of Information in the newly formed [Ministry of Information](#), was also made [Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster](#) and was sworn of the [Privy Council](#). Beaverbrook became responsible for propaganda in Allied and neutral countries and [Lord Northcliffe](#) (owner of the *Daily Mail* and *The Times*) became Director of Propaganda with control of propaganda in enemy countries. Beaverbrook established the [British War Memorials Committee](#) within the Ministry, on lines similar to the earlier Canadian war art scheme, but when he established a private charity that would receive income from BWMC exhibitions, it was regarded as a conflict of interest and he dropped the scheme. Beaverbrook had a number of clashes with the Foreign Secretary [Arthur Balfour](#) over the use of intelligence material. He felt that intelligence should become part of his department, but Balfour disagreed. Eventually the intelligence committee was assigned to Beaverbrook but they then resigned en masse to be re-employed by the Foreign Office. In August 1918, Lloyd George became furious with Beaverbrook over a leader in the *Daily Express* threatening to withdraw support from the government over tariff reform. Beaverbrook increasingly came under attack from MPs who distrusted a press baron being employed by the state. Beaverbrook survived but became increasingly frustrated with his limited role and influence, and in October 1918, he resigned due to ill health. A tooth had become infected with [actinomycosis](#) and the often fatal disease progressed into his throat; his English doctors were unable to discover a cure and it was a Portuguese medic who cured him by administering orally iodine solution until the fungus was arrested.

[A J P Taylor](#) later wrote that Beaverbrook was a pathbreaker who "invented all the methods of publicity" used by Britain to promote the war, including the nation's first war artists, the first war photographers, and the first makers of war films. He was especially effective in promoting the sales of [war bonds](#) to the general public. Nevertheless, he was widely disliked and distrusted by the political elite, who were suspicious of all they sneeringly called "press lords."

## Baron of Fleet Street

After the war, Beaverbrook concentrated on running the *Daily Express*. He turned the dull newspaper into a glittering and witty journal with an optimistic attitude, filled with an array of dramatic photo layouts. He hired first-rate writers such as [Francis Williams](#) and the cartoonist [David Low](#). He embraced new technology and bought new presses to print the paper in Manchester. In 1919 the circulation of the *Daily Express* was under 40,000 a day; by 1937 it was 2,329,000 a day, making it the most successful of all British newspapers and generating huge profits for Beaverbrook whose wealth was already such that he never took a salary. After the [Second World War](#), the *Daily Express* became the largest-selling newspaper in the world, with a circulation of 3,706,000. Beaverbrook launched the *Sunday Express* in December 1918, but it only established a significant readership after [John Junor](#) became its editor in 1954. In 1923, in a joint deal with [Lord Rothermere](#), Beaverbrook bought the *Evening Standard*. Beaverbrook acquired a controlling stake in the Glasgow *Evening Citizen* and, in 1928, he launched the *Scottish Daily Express*.

Consolidation was rampant. James Curran and [Jean Seaton](#) state:

after the death of Lord Northcliffe in 1922, four men-Lords Beaverbrook, [Rothermere](#) (1868-1940), [Camrose](#) (1879-1954) and [Kemsley](#) (1883-1968)-became the dominant figures in the inter-war press. In 1937, for instance, they owned nearly one in every two national and local daily papers sold in Britain, as well as one in every three Sunday papers that were sold. The combined circulation of all their newspapers amounted to over thirteen million.

Beaverbrook purchased [The Vineyard, Fulham](#), a "tiny Tudor house in Hurlingham Road" which ... "far from the centre of London I was relieved of casual callers and comparatively free of long-winded visitors. I provided facilities by means of private telephone lines without any direct contact with the Telephone Exchanges. Thus the political conferences held there were safeguarded against interruption." Powerful friends and acquaintances such as Asquith, Lloyd George, Churchill, [Frederick Edwin Smith](#), [Philip Sassoon](#), [Diana](#) and [Duff Cooper](#), Balfour and [Tim Healy](#) were guests at both Cherkley and the Vineyard. The circle included [Valentine Castlerosse](#), [H. G. Wells](#) and [Rudyard Kipling](#), who was godfather to Beaverbrook's youngest son Peter, but this did nothing to repair the rift that developed between them when Beaverbrook endorsed [Irish Home Rule](#).

Beaverbrook, the first baron of [Fleet Street](#), was often denounced as excessively powerful because his newspapers supposedly could make or break almost anyone. Beaverbrook enjoyed using his papers to attack his opponents and to promote his friends. From 1919 to 1922 he attacked [David Lloyd George](#) and his government on several issues. He began supporting independent Conservative candidates and campaigned for fifteen years to remove [Stanley Baldwin](#) from the leadership of the Conservative Party. He very shrewdly sold the majority of his share holdings before the [1929 crash](#) and in the resulting depression launched a new political party to promote free trade within the British Empire. [Empire Free Trade Crusade](#) candidates had some success. An Independent Conservative who supported Empire Free Trade won the [Twickenham by-election](#) in 1929. The Empire Free Trade candidate won the [South Paddington by-election](#) in October 1930. In February 1931, Empire Free Trade lost the [Islington East by-election](#) and by splitting the vote with the Conservatives allowed [Labour](#) to hold a seat they had been expected to lose. Duff Cooper's victory for the Conservatives in [St. George's Westminster](#) by-election in March 1931 marked the end of the movement as an electoral force.

On 17 March 1931, during [the St. George's Westminster by-election](#), Stanley Baldwin described the media barons who owned British newspapers as having "Power without responsibility - the prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages." In the 1930s, while personally attempting to dissuade [King Edward VIII](#) from continuing his affair with American divorcee, [Wallis Simpson](#), Beaverbrook's newspapers published every titbit of the affair, especially allegations about pro-Nazi sympathies. Beaverbrook supported the [Munich Agreement](#) and hoped the newly named [Duke of Windsor](#) would seek a peace deal with Germany.

Testifying before a Parliamentary inquiry in 1947, former Express employee and future MP [Michael Foot](#) alleged that Beaverbrook kept a blacklist of notable public figures who were to be denied any publicity in his papers because of personal disputes. Foot said they included Sir [Thomas Beecham](#), [Paul Robeson](#), [Haile Selassie](#) and [Noël Coward](#). Beaverbrook himself gave evidence before the inquiry and vehemently denied the allegations; Express Newspapers general manager E.J. Robertson denied that Robeson had been blacklisted, but did admit that Coward had been "boycotted" because he had enraged Beaverbrook with his film *In Which We Serve*, for in the opening sequence Coward included an ironic shot showing a copy of the *Daily Express* floating in the dockside rubbish bearing the headline "No War This Year".

In the late 1930s, Beaverbrook used his newspapers to promote the [appeasement](#) policies of the [Chamberlain](#) government. The slogan "There will be no war" was used by the *Daily Express*.

## Second World War

During the Second World War, in May 1940, his friend [Winston Churchill](#), the British [Prime Minister](#), appointed Beaverbrook as [Minister of Aircraft Production](#). With Churchill's blessing, Beaverbrook overhauled all aspects of war-time aircraft production. He increased production targets by 15% across the board, took control of aircraft repairs and RAF storage units, replaced the management of plants that were underperforming, and released German Jewish engineers from internment to work in the factories. He seized materials and equipment destined for



Cherkley Court



Lord Beaverbrook, c. August 1941

other departments and was perpetually at odds with the [Air Ministry](#). His [appeal for pots and pans](#) "to make Spitfires" was afterwards revealed by his son Sir Max Aitken to have been nothing more than a propaganda exercise. Still, a *Time Magazine* cover story declared, "Even if Britain goes down this fall, it will not be Lord Beaverbrook's fault. If she holds out, it will be his triumph. This war is a war of machines. It will be won on the assembly line."

Under Beaverbrook, fighter and bomber production increased so much so that Churchill declared: "His personal force and genius made this Aitken's finest hour." Beaverbrook's impact on wartime production has been much debated but he certainly energised production at a time when it was desperately needed. However, it has been argued that aircraft production was already rising when Beaverbrook took charge and that he was fortunate to inherit a system which was just beginning to bear fruit. Air Chief Marshal [Lord Dowding](#), Head of Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain wrote that "We had the organization, we had the men, we had the spirit which could bring us victory in the air but we had not the supply of machines necessary to withstand the drain of continuous battle. Lord Beaverbrook gave us those machines, and I do not believe that I exaggerate when I say that no other man in England could have done so."

Beaverbrook resigned on 30 April 1941 and, after a month as Minister of State, Churchill appointed him to the post of [Minister of Supply](#). Here Beaverbrook clashed with [Ernest Bevin](#) who, as [Minister of Labour and National Service](#), refused to let Beaverbrook take over any of his responsibilities. In February 1942, Beaverbrook became [Minister of War Production](#) and again clashed with Bevin, this time over shipbuilding. In the face of Bevin's refusal to work with him, Beaverbrook resigned after only twelve days in the post. In September 1943 he was appointed [Lord Privy Seal](#), outside of the Cabinet, and held that post until the end of the war.

In 1941, Beaverbrook headed the British delegation to Moscow with his American counterpart [Averell Harriman](#). This made Beaverbrook the first senior British politician to meet Soviet leader [Joseph Stalin](#) since [Adolf Hitler](#)'s invasion of the Soviet Union. Much impressed by Stalin and the sacrifice of the Soviet people, he returned to London determined to persuade Churchill to launch a second front in Europe to help draw [German](#) resources away from the [Eastern Front](#) to aid the Soviets. Despite their disagreement over the second front, Beaverbrook remained a close confidant of Churchill throughout the war, and could regularly be found with Churchill until the early hours of the morning. [Clement Attlee](#) commented that "Churchill often listened to Beaverbrook's advice but was too sensible to take it."

In addition to his ministerial roles, Beaverbrook headed the Anglo-American [Combined Raw Materials Board](#) from 1942 to 1945 and accompanied Churchill to several wartime meetings with [President Roosevelt](#). He was able to relate to Roosevelt in a different way to Churchill and became close to Roosevelt during these visits. This friendship sometimes irritated Churchill who felt that Beaverbrook was distracting Roosevelt from concentrating on the war effort. For his part Roosevelt seems to have enjoyed the distraction.

## Later life

Beaverbrook devoted himself to Churchill's [1945 General Election](#) campaign, but a *Daily Express* headline warning that a Labour victory would amount to the 'Gestapo in Britain' was a huge mistake and completely misjudged the public mood. Beaverbrook renounced his British citizenship and left the Conservative Party in 1951 but remained an Empire loyalist throughout his life. He opposed both Britain's acceptance of post-war loans from America and Britain's application to join the [European Economic Community](#) in 1961. In 1953 he became chancellor-for-life of the [University of New Brunswick](#) through an Act of the local legislature. He became the university's greatest benefactor, fulfilling the same role for the city of [Fredericton](#) and the province as a whole. He would provide additional buildings for the university, scholarship funds, the [Beaverbrook Art Gallery](#), the Beaverbrook Skating Rink, the Lord Beaverbrook Hotel, with profits donated to charity, the [Playhouse](#), [Louise Manny](#)'s early folklore work, and numerous other projects. He bought the archive papers of both Bonar Law and David Lloyd George and placed them in the Beaverbrook Library within the [Daily Express Building](#).

## Personal life

On 29 January 1906, in Halifax, Aitken married Gladys Henderson Drury, daughter of Major-General Charles William Drury [CBE](#) (a first cousin of Admiral Sir [Charles Carter Drury](#)) and Mary Louise Drury (née Henderson). They had three children before her death on 1 December 1927. Their son [Max Aitken Jr.](#) became a fighter pilot with 601 Squadron, rising to [Wing Commander](#) with 16 victories in World War II. Beaverbrook remained a widower for many years until 1963 when he married [Marcia Anastasia Christoforides](#) (1910-1994), the widow of his friend [Sir James Dunn](#). Beaverbrook was rarely a faithful husband, and even in old age was often accused of treating women with disrespect. In Britain he established the then-married Jean Norton as his mistress at Cherkley. Aitken left Norton for a Jewish ballet dancer named Lily Ernst whom he had rescued from pre-war Austria.

## Historian

After the First World War, Beaverbrook had written *Politicians and the Press* in 1925 and *Politicians and the War* in 1928 and had the two books were reprinted as one volume in 1960. Upon their original publication, the books were largely ignored by professional historians and the only favourable reviews were in Beaverbrook's own newspapers. However, when the combined edition came out, the reviews were more positive. A. J. P. Taylor said it was "Tacitus and Aubrey rolled into one".

Later Taylor said: "The enduring merits of the book are really beyond cavil. It provides essential testimony for events during a great political crisis...It contains character sketches worthy of Aubrey. On a wider canvas, it displays the behaviour of political leaders in wartime. The narrative is carried along by rare zest and wit, yet with the detached impartiality of the true scholar". Sir [John Elliot](#) in 1981 said the work "will remain, despite all carping, the authoritative narrative; nor does the story want in the telling thereof".

*Men and Power 1917-1918* was published in 1956. It is not a coherent narrative but divided by separate episodes centred on one man, such as Carson, Robertson, Rothermere and others. The reviews were favourable, with Taylor's review in *The Observer* greatly pleasing Beaverbrook. The book sold over 23,000 copies.

When *The Decline and Fall of Lloyd George* was published in 1963, favourable reviewers included Clement Attlee, [Roy Jenkins](#), [Robert Blake](#), [Lord Longford](#), Sir [C. P. Snow](#), Lady [Violet Bonham Carter](#), [Richard Crossman](#) and [Denis Brogan](#). Kenneth Young said the book was "the finest of all his writing".

Beaverbrook was both admired and despised in Britain, sometimes at the same time: in his 1956 autobiography, [David Low](#) quotes H.G. Wells as saying of Beaverbrook: "If ever Max ever gets to Heaven, he won't last long. He will be chucked out for trying to pull off a merger between Heaven and Hell after having secured a controlling interest in key subsidiary companies in both places, of course."

Beaverbrook was of an imperialist mindset, with the quote, "There are countries so underdeveloped today that the gift of independence is like the gift of a razor to a child" attributed to him in a panel discussion on Canadian TV.

## Death

Lord Beaverbrook died in Surrey in 1964, aged 85. He had recently attended a birthday banquet organised by fellow Canadian press baron, [Lord Thomson of Fleet](#), where he was determined to be seen on his usual good form, despite suffering from cancer. The Beaverbrook Foundation continues his philanthropic interests. In 1957, a bronze statue of Lord Beaverbrook was erected at the centre of Officers' Square in Fredericton, New Brunswick, paid for by money raised by children throughout the province. A bust of him by [Oscar Nemon](#) stands in the park in the town square of Newcastle, New Brunswick, not far from where he sold newspapers as a young boy. His ashes are in the plinth of the bust.

## Legacy

Beaverbrook and his wife Lady Beaverbrook left a considerable legacy to both New Brunswick and the United Kingdom. In 2016, he was named a [National Historic Person](#) on the advice of the [Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada](#). His legacy, and memorials, includes the following buildings:

- [University of New Brunswick](#)
  - [Aitken House](#)
  - Aitken University Centre
  - Lady Beaverbrook Gymnasium
  - Lady Beaverbrook Residence
  - Beaverbrook House (UNBSJ E-Commerce Centre)
- [City of Fredericton, New Brunswick](#)
  - Lady Beaverbrook Arena (formerly operated by the University of New Brunswick)
  - The [Beaverbrook Art Gallery](#), including world-renowned art collection (New Brunswick's provincial gallery)
  - [The Fredericton Playhouse](#)
  - Lord Beaverbrook Hotel
  - Lord Beaverbrook statue in Officer's Square



Lord Beaverbrook during the Second World War



Gladys Drury, sometime before her marriage



Beaverbrook House, formerly the Old Manse Library, and earlier the boyhood home of Aitken, in Newcastle, [Miramichi, New Brunswick](#) (IR Walker 1983)

- [City of Miramichi, New Brunswick](#)
  - Max Aitken Academy
  - Lord Beaverbrook Arena (LBA)
  - Beaverbrook Kin Centre (formerly the Beaverbrook Theatre and Town Hall)
  - Beaverbrook House (his boyhood home and formerly the Old Manse Library)
  - Lord Beaverbrook bust in Queen Elizabeth Park
  - Aitken Avenue
- [City of Campbellton, New Brunswick](#)
  - Lord Beaverbrook School
- [City of Saint John, New Brunswick](#)
  - Lord Beaverbrook Rink
- [City of Ottawa, Ontario](#)
  - [Beaverbrook](#)
- [City of Calgary, Alberta](#)
  - [Lord Beaverbrook High School](#)
- [McGill University](#)
  - The Beaverbrook Chair in Ethics, Media and Communications

## Beaverbrook's published works

- [Canada in Flanders](#). London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1916.
- [Success](#). Small, Maynard and Company, 1922, 2003. [ISBN 978-0-7661-5409-4](#).
- *Politicians and the Press*. London: Hutchinson, 1925.
- [Politicians and the War, Vol. 1](#). London: Oldbourne, 1928.
- *Politicians and the War, Vol. 2*. London: Oldbourne, 1932.
- *The Resources of The British Empire*. London: Lane Publications, 1934.
- *Why Didn't you Help the Finns? Are you in the Hands of the Jews? And 10 Questions, Answers*. London: London Express, 1939.
- *Spirit of the Soviet Union*. London: The Pilot Press, 1942.
- *Don't Trust to Luck*. London: London Express Newspaper, 1954.
- *The Three Keys to Success*. London: Hawthorn Books, 1956.
- *Men and Power, 1917-1918*. North Haven, Connecticut: The Shoe String Press, 1956.
- *Friends: Sixty years of intimate personal relations with [Richard Bedford Bennett](#)*. London: Heinemann, 1959.
- *Courage, The Story of [Sir James Dunn](#)*. Fredericton: Brunswick Press, 1961.
- *My Early Life*. Fredericton: Atlantic Advocate Book, 1962.
- *The Divine Propagandist*. London: Heinemann, 1962.
- [The Decline and Fall of Lloyd George: and great was the fall thereof...](#) London: Collins, 1963, 1981 [ISBN 978-0-313-23007-3](#). [online](#)
- *The Abdication of Edward VIII*. NY: Atheneum, 1966.



Bust of Lord Beaverbrook, where his ashes are deposited, in the town square of Newcastle, [Miramichi, New Brunswick](#) (R Walker 2008)

## Descendants

- Hon. Janet Gladys Aitken (9 July 1908 - 18 November 1988); she married [Jan Douglas Campbell, 11th Duke of Argyll](#), on 12 December 1927 and they were divorced in 1934. They have one daughter and two granddaughters. She remarried Hon. William Montagu on 5 March 1935. They have one son and three grandchildren. She remarried again, Major Thomas Kidd, on 11 July 1942. They have two children, three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.
  - [Lady Jeanne Campbell](#) (10 December 1928 - 9 June 2007); she married [Norman Mailer](#) in 1962 and they were divorced in 1963. They have a daughter. She remarried John Sergeant Cram in March 1964. They have one daughter.
    - [Kate Mailer](#) (b. 18 August 1962)
    - [Cusi Cram](#) (b. 1967)
  - William Montagu (9 February 1936 - 6 November 2002); he married Edna Ahlers in 1969. They have three children:
    - Michael Drogo Montagu (b. 1968)
    - Nicola Lilian Montagu (b. 1971)
    - Monette Edna Montagu (b. 1973)
  - Jane Kidd (b. 1943); she married Graham Morison Vere Nicoll in 1972.
  - John Kidd (b. 12 December 1944); he married Wendy Madeleine Hodge on 2 April 1973. They have three children and three grandchildren:
    - Jack Kidd (b. 1973)
    - [Jemma Kidd](#) (b. 20 September 1974); she married [Arthur Wellesley, Marquess of Douro](#), on 4 June 2005. They have three children.
    - [Jodie Kidd](#) (b. 25 September 1978); she married Aidan Butler on 10 September 2005 and they were divorced in 2007. She remarried David Blakeley on 16 August 2014 and they were divorced on 1 May 2015.
- [Sir John William Maxwell Aitken](#), for three days before disclaiming, 2nd Baron Beaverbrook (15 February 1910 - 30 April 1985); he married Cynthia Monteith on 26 August 1939 and they were divorced in 1944. He remarried Ursula Kenyon-Slaney on 15 August 1946 and they were divorced in 1950. They have two daughters, five grandchildren, and two great-granddaughters. He remarried again Violet de Trafford (daughter of [Sir Humphrey de Trafford, 4th Baronet](#)) on 1 January 1951. They have two children, seven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.
  - Hon. Kirsty Jane Aitken (b. 22 June 1947); she married Jonathan Morley on 6 September 1966 and they were divorced in 1973. They have two sons and two granddaughters. She remarried Christopher Smallwood in 1975. They have one daughter.
    - Dominic Max Michael Morley (b. 1967)
    - Sebastian Finch Morley (b. 1969); he married Victoria Whitbread in 1993. They have two daughters.
      - Violet Mary Davina Morley (b. 3 February 2004)
      - Myrtle Rose Beatrice Morley (b. 13 December 2005)
    - Eleanor Bluebell Smallwood (b. 1982)
  - Hon. Lynda Mary Kathleen Aitken (b. 30 October 1948); she married Nicholas Saxton on 25 April 1969 and they were divorced in 1974. She remarried Jonathan Dickson in 1977. They have two sons.



- [Works by or about Max Aitken](#) at Internet Archive
- [Works by or about Lord Beaverbrook](#) at Internet Archive
- [Ontario Plaques - Lord Beaverbrook](#)
- ["Archival material relating to Max Aitken, 1st Baron Beaverbrook"](#). UK National Archives.
- [The Beaverbrook Papers](#) at the UK Parliamentary Archives
- Hansard 1803-2005: [contributions in Parliament by Max Aitken](#)
- [The Lord Beaverbrook, A bygone era](#)
- [Newspaper clippings about Max Aitken, 1st Baron Beaverbrook](#) in the [20th Century Press Archives](#) of the [German National Library of Economics](#) (ZBW)

#### Parliament of the United Kingdom

Preceded by <a href="#">Alfred Scott</a>	Member of Parliament for <a href="#">Ashton-under-Lyne</a> 1910-1916	Succeeded by <a href="#">Albert Stanley</a>
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#### Political offices

New office	<a href="#">Minister of Information</a> 1918	Succeeded by <a href="#">The Lord Downham</a>
Preceded by <a href="#">Sir Frederick Cawley</a>	<a href="#">Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster</a> 1918	
New office	<a href="#">Minister of Aircraft Production</a> 1940-1941	Succeeded by <a href="#">John Moore-Brabazon</a>
Preceded by <a href="#">Sir Andrew Duncan</a>	<a href="#">Minister of Supply</a> 1941-1942	Succeeded by <a href="#">Sir Andrew Duncan</a>
New office	<a href="#">Minister of War Production</a> 1942	Succeeded by <a href="#">Oliver Lyttelton</a> <i>as Minister of Production</i>
Preceded by <a href="#">Viscount Cranborne</a>	<a href="#">Lord Privy Seal</a> 1943-1945	Succeeded by <a href="#">Arthur Greenwood</a>

#### Peerage of the United Kingdom

New creation	<a href="#">Baron Beaverbrook</a> 1917-1964	Succeeded by <a href="#">John William Maxwell Aitken</a>
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#### Baronetage of the United Kingdom

New creation	<a href="#">Baronet</a> (of Cherkley) 1916-1964	Succeeded by <a href="#">John William Maxwell Aitken</a>
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Chris Brown  
Coldplay  
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Gorillaz  
Jay-Z  
Justin Bieber



Lord Beaverbrook has never denied he was not one of these self-appointed representatives of England. But the Foreign Office must know, and it is time the secret dossiers of international intrigue were made public. He was persistent. To close the subject I said I wished to take the advice of my friends H. G. Wells and Arnold Bennett. Negotiations ended when I called on Lord Beaverbrook one morning at noon, finding him sitting up in bed, a plaintive figure like Camille, reading the Bible. His close colleague, Lord Northcliffe, meanwhile was responsible for directing propaganda towards the populations of enemy nations. Beaverbrook's numerous volumes of memoirs sold well and included Politicians the Press (1925), Politicians and the War (1928) and Men and Power (1956). He died in 1964. Sponsored Links.