

Advance Publicity for Lady Flora Eaton and Canada's 'Royal Family'

Flora McCrae (1880-1970) from Omemee, near Peterborough Ontario, was a failed student nurse when she met and married John (later Sir John) Craig Eaton, the son and heir of department store magnate Timothy Eaton. Together they raised a family but tragically, Lady Flora became a widow at a very young age. Undaunted, she turned herself into the power behind the throne at Eaton's, creating superb in-store restaurants, assisting Eaton employee organizations as well as many charities and eventually promoting her son, John David Eaton, to the company presidency. During her lifetime the Eaton family was regarded by many as Canada's "Royal Family". This is story of tragedy and achievement, untold wealth and the glamour of a bygone age.

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The photo shows Lady Flora Eaton and her son John David Eaton at the Hollywood-like opening of Eaton's College Street store in 1930. She was a small-town girl who successfully re-invented herself several times to fill the complex roles that came with her marriage to Eaton department store heir John Craig Eaton. (Photo courtesy of the Archives of Ontario.)

