

larger than this would be generally considered useless, unless it was equal in size to a York boat, and was so constructed as to outride the heavy swells which even moderate breezes provoke on shallow lakes like this.

It happened that in the fall of '76 the Berens River Missionary was a prisoner in the Red River country, with his winter's stock of provisions on his hands, but with no means of procuring their removal to the far-away mission. The last days of August were still lingering, and, usually at that season of the year, brigades happened along; but this year's work had been done up with unwonted celerity, and the season was considered at a close. The crews had been disbanded, and freights were not likely to move again until the following spring.

In the dilemma private parties were canvassed, but no one could be found willing to risk the fall wrath of Lake Winnipeg for anything that could be paid. Every day lost in vain endeavor was a day nearer to the high winds of mid-September. Delay was perilous, perhaps fatal, to the purpose of reaching the field of labor which lay two hundred and fifty miles across the water.

With some hesitation the Governor of the Hudson Bay Company was approached, and the most favorable terms of sending a special boat out were solicited.