

The Seigniors of Quebec have modified the institutions of that Province, and have become an interesting part of its history. The Baronets of Nova Scotia took their origin in a shady commercial scheme, and have had no appreciable influence upon the Provincial destinies.

To Sir William Alexander, afterwards created Earl of Stirling and Viscount Canada, the Province of Nova Scotia owes its name. It was under his pressure that James I, in 1621, appointed him hereditary lieutenant of the colony of New Scotland, with extensive powers of colonization and settlement. The first two expeditions from Scotland to the new land cannot be described as successful, notwithstanding the attractive pictures drawn by Sir William of the region. He describes "the very good fat earth" and "the very delicate meadows," "with roses white and red;" yet he had to add an artificial bait to attract the wary Scot to the beautiful but distant shores. His royal master, ever since his accession to the English throne, had systematically replenished the royal revenues by the sale of titles. His most successful venture in that branch of statesmanship, was based upon the pretence of colonizing Ireland. The members of the new Order were known as Baronets of Ulster, and were, in fact, English land-owners, who were willing to pay £1,100 for the hereditary title. From 1611 to 1622, honours were, so to speak, "easy," and by their open sale the enormous sum of £225,000 was added to the royal exchequer.

Sir William Alexander had lost money by his expeditions, and carefully estimated that if a grateful sovereign would allow him to exploit the rich stream that might be made to flow from "the fountain of Honour," he would soon mend his broken fortunes. To this laudable end the Order of Baronets of New Scotland was created; and certain territorial rights in the colony accompanied the title. The conditions attached to each Baronetcy were the supplying of six men to the colony, and the payment to Sir William Alexander of "one thousand merkis Scottish money." It was made clear, however, that valued precedence was granted