

The more information they gave, the more His Lordship plied them with questions.

"I must say," whispered Uncle Jack to Sir Alexander MacKenzie, "if any Hudson's Bay man asked such pointed questions on North-West business, I'd give myself the pleasure of ejecting him from this room."

Then, I knew his anger was against Lord Selkirk and not against me for sleeping.

"Nonsense," retorted Sir Alexander, who had cut active connection with the Nor'-Westers some years before, "there's no ground for suspicion." But he seemed uneasy at the turn things had taken.

"Has your Lordship some colonization scheme that you ask such pointed questions?" demanded my uncle, addressing the Earl. The nobleman turned quickly to him and said something about the Highlanders and Prince Edward's Island, which I did not understand. The rest of that evening fades from my thoughts; for I was carried home in Mr. Jack MacKenzie's arms.

And all these things happened some ten or twelve years before that wordy sword-play between this same uncle of mine and the English colonel from the Citadel.

"We erred, Sir, through too great hospitality," my uncle was saying to the colonel. "How could we know that Selkirk would purchase controlling interest in Hudson's Bay stock? How could we know he'd secure a land grant in the very heart of our domain?"