

118

INTERVIEW by Don McLean with Mary Grant of Glenbush, Sask.
May 6, 1982

Introduction to the Tape - I am speaking to Mrs. Mary Grant,
who is the niece of Will Jackson.

Q - Who are you related to again, Mary. How are you related?

A - Well..he is..these are both my uncles.

Q - Will and Eastwood?

A - Yes and these are photos of his parents, you see.

Q - These are Will's parents. And what was his name, Will's
father?

A - Thomas Eastwood Jackson.

Q - Thomas Eastwood - so then..

A - No he wouldn't be Thomas Eastwood, he was Thomas Gathan
Jackson.

Q - Thomas Gathan Jackson. That's where the Gathan comes from
in Gathan Grant's name.

A - Yes. Oh yes, it was a family name.

Q - And what was Will's mother's name?

A - Elizabeth Eastwood.

Q - Elizabeth Eastwood - okay. And your mother was a sister to
William Jackson and Eastwood.

A - Yes, Eastwood Jackson.

Q - Now, how old would you be when you can first remember well?

A - Well, I can only remember seeing him, I would say only once
in my life. He was up before but I was too young and I don't
know just how old I was. It might have been in 1910 and I
would be seven years old if that was it.

Q - Where were you living then?

A - Down at Colleston and that's about seven miles east of
Prince Albert.

Q - And Will would have been visiting from the States at that
time?

A - Yes. He was up and he had been travelling through the North
here somewhere. By covered wagon he was travelling with a
democrat and a team of Indian ponies and his wife was with
him.

35-
repetition of what
was asked,

- Q - He was married then?
- A - Oh yes - I am not sure just when he got married. I forget.
- Q - Did he ever have any children?
- A - No, no family at all.
- Q - Did he divorce eventually or did he stay married?
- A - No, he stayed married. He moved to New York and she was going to join him there as soon as he got settled but she died before that. She had a job...I think she was a secretary of some kind in Chicago.
- Q - She was an American, not a Canadian, eh?
- A - Yes, I think she was an American but she was a descendent of Simon De Montfort - I have a picture of her somewhere too.
- Q - Simon De Montfort, he sounds like another famous historian.
- A - That's it, Simon De Montfort from down Quebec. ,
- Q - I believe so, he was a member of Parliament, a M.L.A., or something of that nature. What were your impressions of Will? Did you remember talking to him?
- A - I can remember him as being quite a tall guy. I don't think he paid too much attention to us children.
- Q - I have a newspaper article, written by a friend of Will's in New York just before he died, before Will died, and he indicated that Will used to correspond with his niece and from that paper I traced it down to you. Do you remember getting letters from him?
- A - Oh yes, I used to. I have a couple here. I'll show you. I have two, I did have more but I must have destroyed the others.
- Q - What did he talk about to you in his letters?
- A - Everything.
- Q - Did he talk about what he was doing in the States?
- A - Well, just his own personal things, no he didn'tno, this was written by a friend after he died...
- Q - He didn't talk about any of his religious or political struggles in the States in his letters?
- A - More of his ideas, I think.
- Q - Yes?
- A - Now here's one that was written in '31 and we were married in the spring of that year or January of that year, and he

had written it after we were married. That's the first one and I also have, I think it must be the last letter he wrote.

Q - You are aware that when the Riel Rebellion was over that Will was....

A - He was an outlaw.

Q - He was outlawed but he was classified as insane. Did you ever have any cause to think of him as unusual or crazy, or anything of that nature? Did you talk to him?

A - No, I couldn't remember anything about that. I can remember more what my mother said about him. But he was very clever, she said that at school he was brilliant. Of course his mother was very smart. But she reckoned they declared him insane, well he had had what she reckoned was a kind of nervous breakdown when he was at Duck Lake after he had been imprisoned, you see. But she never reckoned that he was insane.

Q - There was nothing to indicate that before Duck Lake, just that he was brilliant...

A - He was brilliant and even though he was young, I think he was about nineteen (I've read somewhere) but he was always wanting, you know, on the side of the underdog, as they say.

Q - Was he a non-conformist? Was he an eccentric? Was he an unusual person that you can remember? Or was he just or not?

A - I think he may have been - that is he wouldn't...

Q - From your recollection, though?

A - No, I couldn't say from my recollection.

Q - How old were you, when you last saw him?

A - I must have been seven years old.

Q - Just real young so most of your....

A - Somewhere around that...At least I think that's when he had come up...1910...and that would make me about seven.

Q - So most of your knowledge is from family?

A - Yes, from the family.

Q - Your Mom?

A - My mother, most of it.

Now here's a picture of him when he was, now I don't know how old he was when these pictures were taken.

Q - Now this one again, I've seen in the history books.

A - Yes.

Q - These two and these two. Is this Will again here?

A - No, that is his brother. That is Eastwood.

Q - And he was a druggist in Prince Albert.

A - Yes, he was the first druggist west of Winnipeg, I think.

Q - I've seen this picture of Will - he's got awfully strong and intelligent eyes - penetrating eyes. He looks like the type of person that would espouse a cause.

A - I think that's what he was - he was an idealist and a dreamer.

Q - Kind of a romantic? Well, always for the underdog..

A - Yes.

Q - I heard that just before the rebellion, that Will was in love with Maurice Oulette's daughter, a beautiful Metis woman.

A - I never heard that at all. I never heard that he was too much...took too much notice of women at all. His brother did. He used to have girl after girl, and then he never married.

Q - They are both good looking and striking people. Will's father was also an idealist, I understand and this is where Will got it from.

A - Yes, he was.

Q - Was he a minister or what was his occupation?

A - No, he was a merchant. That is, he had been trained in the old country. And when he came to this country he set up storekeeping in William, I guess was the first place. I have the history of the family somewhere.

Q - They were well educated people. His father was well educated. Were they English? When you say the old country..

A - Oh yes. His father was English and Welsh and she was English and Scotch.

Q - They are both very strong looking people.

A - I think she was more the business-like one of the two really.

Q - Yep, and he was the idealist?

A - Yes.

Q - Good combination. Will didn't talk about any of his adventures in the Rebellion with you ever? Or is there any family lore about that?

A - I don't think so. I tell you, I don't believe when we were young, I don't think they talked much about it because after

the Rebellion, you see, he was considered an outlaw.

Q - Did the family consider him as such?

A - No, they didn't consider him that.

Q - Why is that?

A - A lot of people did though. In fact there was one man who threatened that if he ever came back to this country, he was going to shoot him on sight.

Q - Was that a neighbor or a farmer?

A - Well it happened to be kind of a distant relation. It was my father's sister's husband and his father had been killed at Duck Lake. He was one of the volunteers and you know how they went out from Prince Albert.

Q - You wouldn't remember his name, would you?

A - Yes. Captain John Morton. Of course my mother always said that the trouble so many of those volunteers were killed because they all had a good big drink before they went out there the night before. So they weren't in any condition the next morning for any thing.

Q - So you say the family never looked upon his actions there as bad but some of the other folks did, and what is the overall feeling now when people talk about Will? Do you feel proud?

A - Our family do, I think. But I think there was so much politics in it back then and the Conservatives were so, like this Captain John Morton was a strong Conservative, you see, whereas our folks were strong Liberals. There was always that feeling, you see, I think. Because I know that nothing was said much when we were young or talked about it, at least when we were around. But they were afraid we would talk too much.

Q - In the family lore, were there any other names that ever came up that Will talked about or people that were angry with Will because of his role in the rebellion? Did you ever hear of Lawrence Clarke?

A - Oh yes, I've heard plenty of Lawrence Clarke, too, although I can't even remember all except that he was a villan. That was what my family looked on him as.

Q - Looked upon Lawrence Clarke as a villan?

A - He was a crook.

Q - And according to the family lore, did you ever hear them talk about how the rebellion was actually started?

A - Well, what I have heard - the first shot fired. Now there is a fellow, they used to call him Gentleman Joe McKay, now he is a half-breed, I guess and was an interpreter for the Mounties. And my uncle knew him, this Uncle knew him - Eastwood - and my sister went to teach out at a place near Duck Lake and this Gentleman Joe McKay was the farm where she boarded as a teacher, you see, and he told her to go and tell her Uncle Eastwood that she had found the man who had fired the first shot in the rebellion. That was himself. Well, what my mother says is this - "When they were doing some parlying between the Indians and the R.C.M.P., there was a blind Indian Chief and he went and put his hand, he couldn't see but he was talking to the R.C.M.P., he put his hand on the horse's bridle or something like this and this I guess it was Gentleman Joe who shot him. But it was because the Indian did that to get balance or know where he was." Mother thought this a shame.

Q - Have you ever heard them talk about the C.P.R. in relation to the rebellion or any...

A - No, I never heard them say anything about that. The C.P. wouldn't have been up in this part then.

Q - I heard some talk that some of the native people thought that the C.P.R. was going to displace them by bringing people in and everything.

A - They may have been but there is a thing that Lawrence Clarke, he spread stories. Because he reckoned he would gain if there was trouble with the Indians and I guess maybe he did. He claimed for loss of goods through the rebellion and he got paid for it. You see, things like this. That is the kind of thing he would do.

Q - So you are suggesting that, at least you are indicating that Clarke may have been happy to see the rebellion come?

A - Yes, that is what I have heard.

Q - From your mother's folks?

A - From hearing my uncle talk and I can remember hearing a Dr. Porter, have you ever heard of him?

Q - Yes, I have

A - Well, I remember him coming down to visit my uncle and this might have been about, gosh I forget whether it was....

Q - This is Eastwood now, that you are talking about?

A - Yes. This was up in Prince Albert and Dr. Porter lived in Edmonton at the time, I think. But he came down and visited and he stayed with us. He was a white haired man then, and he and my uncle did a lot of talking about that. And I know both of them were so down on Lawrence Clarke, you see, and the things he had done.

Q - Like what was it that he had done? Can you remember specifically at all what they were talking about?

A - No, I can't remember too much, except it was something to do with his claiming - he told lies I guess to rouse the people, the natives, and then he put claims afterwards for having lost goods through the rebellion itself.

I told you, another person, and you might of heard of him - he lived in Prince Albert at that time and that was W. J. Carter.

Q - W. J. Carter - No, I haven't heard that name, what was he?

A - I think he was a lawyer, I may be wrong. But he lived in Edmonton. Now it was back in about 1931 or something, I think it was just after we were married that I was home and they were saying how he had wanted his memoirs published down here - I have something here about that - or put in the archives maybe and he was refused because of something he had said and it might cause a bit of dissension. But he was probably telling some truths.

Q - About Clarke, do you think?

A - About Clarke and about other ones who had been in the government at that time. Because there were always a lot of crooks, you know.

Q - So the picture that is building is then that there were government people out here who, it looks now like these people were quite happy to bring the rebellion on.

- A - Well, I don't know whether the government people but Lawrence Clarke, but of course he was a Hudson Bay man, I think. I just wonder. I have here some letters that I had written to different people and I could remember them better than what I....
- I - From the Bronx River, 1931, December 14 - that's from your Uncle Will. I'll have to read that after if there is nothing personal in there.
- A - Here also, after he died down in New York, I had a letter from the Rev. J. C. Fetting and it was a very, very nice letter. I probably have lost that. I've moved around so much, that's the trouble. But he had known him.
- Q - And what did he say about him?
- A - Just that he had considered him a fine man and everything like that. Kind of a eulogy.
- Q - And he made sure that the family got word of that? So the feeling is and I noticed when I came in to talk about Will Jackson that Gathen didn't know really what to expect - you are sort of on the defensive - how do people that know about Will now and his role in the rebellion - a lot of years have passed - do they still....?
- A - I don't really know. I doubt if there is any of the strong feeling that there was before because there has been so much talk about the rebellion - they were really fighting for something that they were either wanting or afraid they were going to lose, you know. And I think people can understand it - he was a way ahead of his time. Henri was, at that time.
- Q - Do you know when he changed his name to Henri Jaxon? How did the family feel about that?
- A - I don't think they mind a bit except his mother. His mother objected. And he was William Henry and he changed it to Henri Joseph and he spelled the Jackson different because he said if you spelled it the way it should be spelled, the 'x' should be then the greek way or something - he had learned greek you see so he had always said when he was young, when he was home that he was going to have his name changed and he did when he got older then. But my grandmother always addressed him as 'Willy' and she always spelled the 'Jackson' the old way. Another thing he had the title of 'Major'. and

she wouldn't address his letters as 'Major'.

Q - Did he want his letters addressed as 'Major'?

A - Oh yes and he wrote to her and I can't remember when this was. It must of been - no I couldn't tell you, that was before I was married, before '31.

Q - That 'Major' referred to his role in the Rebellion?

A - No, that's wrong. That's where it was wrong because I read clippings where it said that but no he didn't. He got that and I think it was during the first World War.

Q - He was overseas in the first World War?

A - No. he wasn't but down in the States and he had written some phamplet or something to do with the Army and the exercises, you know the physical education or something like this in connection with the Army - I think that's what it was but anyway he was given that title. Now that could be found out somewhere down in the States, I suppose. But he was given that title...

Q - So that title was a real title. He was a 'Major' in the American army.

A - Oh yes, he was a real 'Major' but Grandma always objected to that.

Q - I've heards rumours, you know you hear rumours, pro and con, that he was considered to be a well educated man, a person with a degree or at least having studied in the University of Toronto - did he in fact have a degree from the University of Toronto that you know of?

A - He attended there but I really don't know. And I believe he taught school for awhile.

Q - What did his mother and father think when he turned Catholic? Was that a bit of a shock?

A - Oh, that was terrible for them. They were Methodists, you see.

Q - That was a shock even for a progressive person like Will's father?

A - Yes.

Q - Did they disown him?

A - No, No.

Q - They stuck by him.

A - Oh yes. And he used to write regularly to his mother.

Q - What about Eastwood? Did they remain life-long friends?

A - Oh yes, they were. It did not make any difference to them.

Q - I know Eastwood went to bat for him at his trial. And went out to talk with him when he was held prisoner by Riel, when Will was held prisoner.

A - Now in the trial, if I remember right, didn't he, from what I have read, he reckoned that Henri was insane. He did say that.

Q - He did say, he did mention something to that effect.

A - Well you know, my mother reckoned, I don't know if she knew it, he reckoned that he could save his life by that, by saying that he was insane, you see. So he was then put in Selkirk, but you know he was never really detained there.

Q - Did he escape or did they let him go?

A - They let him walk out.

Q - They let him walk out.

A - That's a funny thing, my sister, you see someone was asking her about this and they were writing it down. And she said that he climbed the fence. But he didn't. And my other sister reckoned the same thing. He was never confined really and when he wanted to leave, he simply walked out.

Q - Do you think the authorities were happy to see him go?

A - They probably were. I think there might have been more trouble if, you know, among some of the factions in Canada, if he had been contained or if he had been executed. You know, like Riel was.

Q - What do you think would have happened, let us just say that the government had decided to execute Will Jackson along with Riel, what would that have done to the Protestant people, and prairie farmers that were just settling here then? A lot of them, I understand, were in sympathy with him.

A - Oh yes, they were at first but when it came to the rebellion itself, then that's when they drew back.

Q - But Will didn't.

A - No he didn't.

Q - What do you think would have happened if they had executed him? He was a brilliant orator, and...

A - I don't know but I imagine there would have been lots of repercussions. That's what would have been.

Q - So it turns out that Will was sort of a king pin in this whole thing. He was the one that used to send all the petitions to Ottawa because of his education.

A - He had a wonderful gift of talking or writing, really.

Q - Was he good with a crowd? Did he hold a crowd spellbound?

A - Well I think so from what I have heard. When he was down in the States for example. He gave speeches into his later years.

Q - I'm asking, you never got any of the books? I understand that when Will died in New York, there was something like a ton or a ton and half of material. You never got any of that, eh?

A - No, nothing. You see, when he died he left everything to my elder sister. And she reckoned...

Q - Did she get anything?

A - I don't know...she didn't say much about it. She and I had a little misunderstanding over that but...he had a friend down there who was in contact with her and I think he had the books disposed of. And I know there was one book among those...and he had got this back away in....golly I don't know when it would be... sometime anyway before...he got a book...he used to buy books that were sent from the old country, you know when they were trying to save them from the bombings or something like this, and he bought these things cheaply at the sales but this one, and it had come, I think, from the old country and was a book that had been printed and I think it was telling an inquiry before the rebellion, of the conditions out in the west here. And I don't know who it was by, who had made this inquiry. But there was only three editions published, what do you call it, only three books published. And my uncle had one and I don't know who had the other two. But anyway the government had those books recalled or whatever. I wouldn't say there were just three... I'm still fuzzy about that now...anyway I know that my uncle had one and these books were supposed to be recalled. But my uncle kept his and it was stolen. And who had the others, I don't know but anyway he never did find out who...but one

of these books was among the ones that Uncle Henri had bought in New York that had come over from the old country. And he reckoned that it was a very valuable book. Now that book went with all the rest. Now my sister didn't know anything about that apparently. At least she didn't care enough about it, or something. And all those books were just dispersed. Now we had... before he died...I had been corresponding with him...we didn't know how serious his health was and we were arranged that he was going to come up here and live and we had just built this house and we reckoned we would have room for him. And we could store the books or some of the books. He said he would look over the books and he would find out, I think he mentioned in his letter... he would go through and pick the best of these books and have them shipped up here.

Q - Did he have any plans for their use up here?

A - His idea was to have a library but mostly to benefit the Indians, I think. And he thought at one time they had the homestead down on the river that his parents had taken up when they first came up here and he thought that if that could be used - have a library right down there, you see.

Q - Now he would have been getting up in years by this time, close to his nineties?

A - But he was still so interested in everything.

Q - I guess the book you are talking about awhile back that he got from Britain - that would have described the conditions of the Indians and Metis folks out west?

A - Yes, that was what it was. And apparently the government didn't want this book made public because they didn't want to....

Q - Can you remember if that book dealt with the Hudson Bay Company or whether it dealt with just the conditions of the people in the west after 1870.

A - I imagine it dealt with everything. And I don't know what the book would have been called.

Q - But it was some sort of government inquiry into native conditions?

A - Yes, as I understood it, they had had the inquiry made. Maybe it was a different government that had it but the government in power that came in after it was printed wanted it withdrawn because it was too damaging to the government.

- Q - Now this was the British government?
- A - No, this was the Canadian government.
- Q - But nevertheless, Will picked this book up from Britain.
- A - Yes, apparently it was published in this country and it must ...somebody had sent it....sent it to the old country....I understand that's the way it is. And then it had come back.
- Q - I wonder if that book had dealt also with the conditions leading directly to the rebellion.
- A - It could of...it would have been a very interesting book and I was so sorry when I heard that they had all been sold. But I just don't imagine anybody even went through those books, they probably are just gone.
- Q - Well I read an article talking about that situation and it said that Will was evicted out of an apartment where he had lived for ten years - they were tearing it down or something of that nature and he was about ninety-two and he had left this ton and a half of documents that he had gathered through his entire life. He had set them out in December, had set them out on the sidewalk and snow was falling. He was trying to save them and it was in trying to save those documents that he took sick finally and died.
- A - Well he was ninety-one when he died. Those were mostly papers that he had saved because he had things in them.
- Q - Newspapers?
- A - Newspapers, I understand. But he had two rooms rented.

A - I am not much of a talker anyway.

Q - Now I don't know where we left off.

A - We were talking about those books and papers. He had two separate rooms that he paid the rent on every month just to keep his books.

Q - Was he keeping in touch with you regularly at that time.

A - Yes, we had a letter.

Q - Did any of Eastwood's children follow in their Uncle's steps or their father's steps?

A - Eastwood never married.

Q - He never married and Will never had any offspring so...

A - No, we are the last of...

Q - And you are all descended from sisters.

A - Yes.

Q - Who are the other living relatives now?

A - Well there was six of us. Six girls and the oldest one was a teacher and she never married. She died last spring. The other one, she is about 83 now. She lives - she travels around a lot too, but she makes her headquarters at Melfort. She is a Mrs. Sproll.

Q - That's Jenny.

A - Yes. She has six or seven in her family. I forget. Then the next one is Betty and she lived in Steep Creek, on my Dad's old homestead, that's right near where these folks settled. And in fact one of their boys has that land now.

Q - Is that north of P.A.?

A - No, it is east and they have about five sons. And they are very interested in the history of Uncle Henare and that. They know more about it, I guess. Because maybe having lived up there than my family do. My family know very little.

I'm the next one. We have the four boys and one girl.

Then there is the next sister. She never married. Oh yes, she married and had no children rather.

Then the youngest one is married and has one child.

Q - Would any of them have correspondence from Will that you know of?

A - No.

Q - This is it as far as you know.

A - Except, maybe there may be some - after my eldest sister died last year, we left a lot of old letters belonging to our great Aunt with my younger sister where anybody of the family can get

in touch and see them.

Q - What is her name and address.

A - Mrs. Teddy Paul in Prince Albert.

Q - She still has some of that correspondence?

A - Yes. It will be there because Donald McLeod, my other sister's son. He may have some of it because he has been so interested. He lives down at Steep Creek, east of P.A.

Q - There may come a time when we get around to talking to those folks.

A - Any of them, there are three boys there - Donald McLeod, Euwin McLeod and Allister McLeod. And they are all interested in the history of the family.

Q - The things I wanted to find out about Will. (1) I want to look at the whole question of his mental health just because he has been classified as insane; (2) I wanted to find out what happened to him after he left Canada. I understand he went into the United States where he continued to be involved with people who were down and out. At that time there was a bad depression on and workers were laid off all over America and there was a lot of turmoil. He took a leading role in that, I understand.

A - Yes he did. I can just remember hearing my mother speaking about it when there had been a letter come from him. I think Grandma used to write - and used to write to Grandma regularly and he wrote to mother and uncle too, but mostly it was to grandmother. But I don't know what happened to those letters. They must of been destroyed sometime. Because when we went through all the papers and things that were there, we did not find letters. And I can remember at one time when he had written back telling aboutI think he had something to do with starting of the Unions down in the States. I don't think he would approve of the Unions now though perhaps. But he was doing some building...and...the guys wanted a raise in their wages and they refused to give them. So they went on strike. Here's what they did. When the men stopped work...it might have been a house they were building or something else...but anyway when they stopped for a meal, these other guys, Uncle Henare and he would have these cronies with him, they would all go over there and they would gather all their saws and hammers and everything else, dump them down inside the walls. This is what they kept doing to get what they want.

Q - But they were trying to organize...

A - Yes, organize an union. And that's the way they got attention.

Q - Was that in Chicago, by any chance?

A - That was in Chicago.

Q - What year would that be roughly? Have you any idea?

A - No. I really couldn't tell you.

Q - But in terms of his activities, organizing unions and all that, he did continue to write sporadically over the years and in those letters you have seen or that the family has talked about, did he really get into what his organizational activities were down there or did he just talk family.

A - Oh no, I think he told a lot of things down there of what he did.

Q - And your younger sister may still have some of that but a lot of it has been lost.

A - A lot of it, I know, wasn't there. Although I tell you she has ...that's another thing, I forgot....there was a box with a whole lot of letters in it and we didn't come across it this time when we were there but I wouldn't be a bit surprised if my son hasn't got it.

Q - Gathon?

A - No the one down in Saskatoon.

Q - What is his name again?

A - Lorne Grant. Because I turned over some papers I had to him. And I know he has some things, for example, the first time I ever had any questions about Uncle Henare was from a woman and I believe her name might have been Lucas or something and I think she was going to University maybe in Montreal or Quebec, someplace down there and she was writing a thesis or something and she wanted to get all the information on him. Now I wrote and told her just the little I knew then. That's the first time. But then she told me there was this Duff Blake, well he had written this strange story, Secretary of Louis Riel, so anyway she sent to me a copy of that. Now so far as I know, Lorne has that copy.

Q - Did you think it was an accurate from what you know.

A - Oh definitely No. That was the most awful thing, really it was ridiculous. The things he said in there. He said that to show he was a bit unbalanced, even as a teenager - he tells about the story about seeing Uncle Henare, or William Jackson

as he was called, he come home (you see he went to school in Toronto) and he was home. Somebody had a load of something, you know a team of horses with a sleigh, just pulled up, and had bars of homemade soap on it and what did he go and do - he did something, just mischief. Maybe he buried under the sawdust and this is to show he was insane.

Q - That he was a bad guy?

A - Yes. It always struck me as so silly.

Q - And you don't remember your uncle as being that kind of person?

A - He might have been when he was young, but that is just what any teenager would likely do. I can imagine any of our boys doing a thing like that. I have heard of some of the things they done and I wouldn't say they were insane.

Q - So it seemed to be almost a character assassination?

A - Yes that was what it was.

Q - That's the way it struck me. I can't remember the ins and outs as I read it quite awhile ago. He seemed to go out of his way, he talked about Will, once in there, grinding his teeth to aggravate his rich uncle. By the way what do you think - there are rumours that Will died a rich man even though he was living a very poverty stricken life in terms of lifestyle.

A - He could have been a millionaire but he wasn't. He died in poverty. It's so bad. He owned land down in New York and he could have sold it and made himself a millionaire. It was valuable land. I can remember him writing to my mother and telling her about certain lands that he had, but he reckoned that there was other people wanting to get hold of it. And when he wasn't able to pay taxes, maybe then he foreclosed and he did, and he lost whatever he had.

Q - So it was sort of taken from him surreptitiously?

A - He blames the Jews and something else.

Q - But do you think he cared much about wealth?

A - No. he didn't. He didn't care about it but except that he would have like to able to do things with that wealth. I think maybe he may have mentioned in that letter.

Q - People always talk of him being an idealist, do you know what kind of an idealist? Was he a religious idealist, was he one of these people...

A - That's funny he was very religious really but he belonged to that Bai'Hai Faith.

Q - Believed in a world government...

Was he also a sort of a Marxist in the sense that working people and natives would have to educate themselves and start to understand some of their power?

A - I think he was that but I wouldn't say he was a Marxist or anything.

Q - Probably just read everything he could.

A - Oh yes, he did. And I think he was a guy who could have talked on any subject. You take it, I can remember from some of the letters that he had written. He took an interest, and my mother was the same, she took an interest in everything.

Q - So it came right from the family. Now people have argued that "Oh, my goodness, he must have been driven by some force to be always worried about the underdog, to always be fighting for some just cause. He must have been driven by something in his family past." So do you think that is nonsense.

A - That's nonsense as I think they had a very peaceful family compared to what you see now days.

Q - What about books in the house? And ideas being discussed in the house? Is that a tradition?

A - I think so.

Q - Open discussion?

A - Yes, I think that is very much so. That is probably where he got his

Q - Part of the liberal tradition of that day?

A - Yes. You know that's funny, my grandfather in the old country had been a Conservative and when he came to this country, he turned liberal. When his sister came, she was down in the States, oh she was scandalized that he had turned liberal. But he said there was no comparison between the Conservatives in the country and the Conservatives in the old country. Now in this country, it was a family compact.

Q - You don't know anything about his childhood except, of course, from what the family has discussed and you say he was quite normal, a little mischievous...

A - Oh yes, but as he was--his mother used to say--he was brilliant.

Q - From the time he was a child?

A - Yes, he was; yeah, but he was a terrible writer. Oh boy, his letters were terrible.

Q - Were they?

A - His handwritting, oh ...

Q - That seems to be a mark of all brilliant people ...

A - Well, that's it.

Q - Can you read his writing?

A - Oh, I used to have an awful time reading his--even that one.

Q - You think I'm going to have a hard time?

A - That's good compared to some of them I've had. That's why I think maybe I must have destroyed the others because they were too hard, but he thought why bother when there's so many other things important, why bother about writing?

Q - Yeah.

A - And he used to--a lot of his letters I guess he knew they were hard to read and he used to have somebody type them.

Q - That's what I do, it's true. The secretaries have a heck of a time with them.

A - Well, you know, I have a son who is a terrible writer, too; but, he's left handed. That's his trouble.

Q - What has he left to you personally?

A - I don't know unless you'd say the ideal that it's a good thing to help the under dog.

Q - And he's left that with you?

A - Yes, I think that is. I think any of our family would feel that way, you know.

Q - Would you have sooner not had a man like that for an uncle or are you dammed happy you had?

A - Oh, I'm kind of proud to have him.

Q - Yeah.

A - Yeah, yeah. I think the others are too.

Q - Okay, I can't really think of anything else that I should ask you. There's probably a hundred things that I should ask you about, but...

A - Well, I tell you ...

Q - It's foggy with all the years ...

A - ...you know, of all the different people who had written, you see, now I have here this--I wrote an answer to it--this is to Sara Greenland, this is a copy of a letter I wrote to him. And you

may be getting more information from that.

Q - Do you mind if I read those letters into the tape recorder?

A - I wish I could find the last one that...

Q - Is it this here, from ...

A - No, that's the one ...

Q - You refer to him as 'honora' 'on air' ... how'd you say it?

A - 'on nor ra'

Q - 'on nor ra'

A - Uncle Onora.

Q - You always referred to him as Uncle Onora, so you've accepted that name in total ...

A - Oh yes, he was always--my grandmother was the only one who didn't.

Q - And why was that again? Because of the switch in religion?

A - Well, but no ...

Q - Catholic?

A - ...because she had him christened that.

Q - And that's what he was going to be?

A - Yeah.

Q - But the father went along with it?

A - Well, I guess he did although I don't know too much about him because you see he died earlier.

Q - I've been looking for more information on the honorable Lawrence Clark. Because the information that I've got verifies what you said and what a lot of other people have said that didn't find their way into the history books.

A - Yes.

Q - And that is that the honorable Lawrence Clark brought that rebellion on consciously and knowingly.

A - Well, I don't know that. I just...I've had the impression that he had a lot to do with it. But if you can ever read anything that was written by W. J. Carter, or by Dr. Porter, you might get something there, you see.

Q - W. J. Carter, would that be spelled 'c a r ..

A - ... t e r'

Q - ... t e r, W. J. Carter.

A - Yes.

Q - And was he a politician out West or lawyer, or ...

A - He was a lawyer, I think.

Q - In Saskatoon?

A - No, he was in Prince Albert.

Q - In Prince Albert.

A - They were friends of the family and ...

Q - Did he move to Edmonton with Porter or did he stay in...

A - No, I don't know just when they moved there.

Q - But Carter, as far as you know, continued to live in Prince Albert?

A - No, no, he didn't; he moved to Edmonton.

Q - They both moved to ... at one time or another?

A - When he moved, I don't know that. And I don't know when Dr. Porter did.

Q - Well, you know...

A - Dr. Porter, you see, was the doctor up here then and he would have to be the coroner if anybody died or anything like this. But I can remember hearing Uncle and Dr. Porter talking about this that one time there were two trappers. Of course, the Hudson's Bay Company didn't like free trappers.

Q - Right.

A - Free traders. So, anyway there was these two trapper who have found somewhere north of the river, somewhere. Apparently they'd burnt--they'd been sleeping in the night--and they burnt to death. At the camp fire, you see. They burnt to death. But Dr. Porter had to go out and, I suppose, give an autopsy. Yes, but the peculiar thing was, about it was that they died with their feet to the blaze. Now, how could any man be burnt to death when there was his feet that burned first?

Q - Couldn't be overcome with smoke? Not in the open air.

A - Not in the open air.

Q - It would be more likely to have their heads towards the fire that way?

A - Yeah.

Q - Was there any...

A - That was put...

Q - Was the mystery ever solved?

A - That's... I don't think so.

Q - But they suspected ...

A - I just imagine it was hushed up.

Q - Was this after the rebellion or would it be, wouldn't it?

A - Darned if I know whether that was after or before.

Q - Were these settlers or policemen or ...

A - No, these two people that burned?

Q - Yeah,

A - No, there were just trappers.

Q - Just trappers?

A - You know, free lance ones as you'd call that.

Q - So, that would have been in 1880's though, wouldn't it?

A - It was suspected that they had, at least that's what both uncle and this is uncle Eastwood this time. Uncle Eastwood and Dr. Porter reckoned. That they had been killed first and then burned.

Q - The Hudson's Bay Company lost its official monopoly in 1870; that's when they sold Rupertsland to Canada.

A - Yeah.

Q - But and then they still had a big business though up North around P.A.?

A - Yeah.

Q - That was Fort Carleton; that's the one that the honorable Lawrence Clark was the chief factor of?

A - Yeah.

Q - That would have been in that area, wouldn't it?

A - Yes, I think so.

Q - Yeah. Well now, Mary I wonder if I could--which of these letters do you think would have something that might indicate ...

A - Well, I don't know. I just read that; I just looked at it and found it.

Q - ...up to, that was 1931?

A - And, but I can't think what--I had it--it was written on a scrap of paper. I'll see if ...

Q - There's nothing personal here? I can read this into the tape?

A - Oh yes.

Q - This is a letter written by Wil Jackson.

"Box Castle Bridge, Eastern Boulevard and Bronx River, Bronx,
New York City, December 14, 1931.

Dear Niece Mary,

Approaching Christmas gives me a good excuse to let worldly cares and worldly men go topsulterio(?) and give myself the pleasure of answering your delighted letter of April 30th. It reached me in due season as did the picture of yourself and John. And let me say at the outset that while I regard marriage as a desirable scheme for the enslavement of women in general and my sister and my niece and grand nieces in particular yet I was very much pleased with the evidences of mental force and good principles, that I pursued in John's photograph (is that line a ments?) (A. Liniments) liniments. He is of a type that I particularly admire and as a matter of fact I was prejudiced in his favour by the fact that he is Scottish, for experiences taught me that with very negligible exceptions, a Scot will stand without hitching and whether friend or foe, one knows where to find him. The preliminaries impressions have been pleasingly confused by a letter from Ray in which she expresses in a gusty way of her own, her warm admiration of John saying that he is very good to you. So give John my warm greetings.

Q - Now, who's John?

A - My husband.

Q - Oh, he's talking--this is you when you got married?

A - Yeah.

Q - What a great uncle to have.

"I am...

Q - I wish he could write though.

"...pleased, I am promised a flask of real old brandy for Christmas and will drink to the health of both of you. I am just getting over my customary December feeling of bad cold, generally followed by a winter fairly immune from other troubles. But this time, the attack was unusually severe and the possibility of pneumonia harvered increasingly in the background. This of course simply would not do for if I should pass out with no one here to be (something) in regard to the status of my several holdings and the best method of standing off the Jews and Italians and other mediterrians that for years have been coveting these water fronts, I greatly fear this (taminy?) official friends would combine with them to grap the estate by some of the rascally schemes that these politicians are adept in operating.

The parcels aggregate about 2,000 feet of waterfront and since New York City waterfront when proved provided with steel piling dock is going to be worth about \$50.00 per foot. It is worth from \$300.00 per foot up. It is evident that to fumble the chance for the clan to escape from poverty would be the kind of plunder that is worst than a crime.

Q - So, it looks like Wil did have some property and some money there?

A - Yes, at that time.

"In your letter of April 30th, you intimate that you had not heard from Amy for some time and that you feared she might have taken some offence for some unknown and unimaginable reason. Don't worry about Amy however. She is very, very fond of all of you and it's just a great comfort to me as the arrangement between her and me as expressed in our respective wills is that the survivor inherits the estate, and I therefore am most anxious that in case of my preceding her across the great divide, she shall feel in love with my idea of establishing a sort or family centre as the basque people would call it. Where the children the can can be brought up within reach of New York City wonderful institutions for training in liberal, in literary and artistic and technical lines according to her revered talents and where the old folks of the clan may enjoy a comfortable and lively old age. It breaks my heart that your mother's should be (something) in his years to such depressing conditions should be subjected in her year to such depressing conditions and that those two kids should be to (something) by the limitations of hunting a job, a process which which for my girls is dangerous as well as disgusting.

A - That's his old-fashioned idea isn't it.

Q - Yes, it surely is.

"Were it not for the advent of the (I don't know) depression, I would have closed a deal two years ago for the sale of the parcel downstream from here for \$40,000.00. This would(ran out of tape)

Q - Will Jackson was talking in the previous one about some land deals he was hoping to make on the banks of the Bronx River of the United States. He said "I would have closed a deal two years ago for the sale of the parcel downstream from here for \$40,000 and this would have made it possible to bring your mother and the unmarried girls down here and get them in touch with the system sufficiently to equip them for carrying on. Each of the nine parcels has the potentiality of a fortune in the way of annual income and with ordinary good fortune and continued good life, it would also be possible for me to keep some of the children of old French Indian comrades in the fight of '85. When we had the intelligence to understand and resist the scoundlenous by which the politicians and financiers of

Eastern America have skimmed the cream of the west at the price of creating dire disasters on the hardy pioneers who have done the real work of opening up the country. I am glad that the politicians of the present have recognized John's merits to the extent of putting that experience and station in his care. But don't let them buffalo him into the error of thinking that they have put him under everlasting obligations by such recognition. They have to pick good men in order to make good their national speculation in Northwest lands."

A - This is the first letter...

Q - This is right from Will, himself. Oh, it's terrific.

"While awaiting the returns of properties, and the consequent possibility of getting returns from the properties, I have been living very simply, practically in frontier fashion, in order to keep the taxes from pulling the parcels into the tax lien sales where the Jews gorge their appetite for usuary or bargains. Technically they do not require the real title at first, but they have a trick of putting on expenses by means of title searches performed in reality at much charged by legal confederates but billed high prices against the property and thus making it hard for the original owner to redeem the property from the lien, thus opening the way for foreclosures proceedings through which they finally get title perfected. In the meantime they are able to charge as high as 12% interest on the sums at which they purchased the liens at public sale. So far I have been able to protect all the parcels from these vultures. Of course the original criminals are the tammany politicians who...."

What is the meaning of tammany?

A - Tammany - they used to speak of tammany hall - it is something to do with government.

Q - So he is referring to some government personally. I may run across that elsewhere and find out specifically what it is.

"who run the city so extravagantly by means of padded payrolls and grafting contracts in all departments of public service, that the City budget is about double of which it ought to be for a more efficient service. Naturally I am in the thick of the

fight against tammany and am in great demand of a drafter of literature for the non-partisan movement that the property owners and more intelligent working men are instituting against the combination of mediterrian pirats and cut-throats with the Pope's political Irish who do not even know the meaning of the republic. Fighting against political scroundals is the work I am best fitted for, although for an honest man it is a "no-water trail", but it is my earnest prayer that God will loose me from financial burdens sufficiently to let me freely not only to use my full force of experience and ability against the pirats who control our American cities but also to fight a final round against a similar class of Canadian politicians who by playing on the French excitability of Louis Riel were unable to crowd me out of the Northwest at a time when the Northwest was in dire need of men of my type. Today I am recognized down here in having more help than most men seventy-five years younger, and I am certainly having more pep than most men seventy-five years younger and I am certainly a more forcible speaker and writer than ever so that if my life is spared to approximately the years of your wonderful grandmother, I shall have the satisfaction of one grand old age battle with the political cormorants that infect both parties in Canadian public life and sell the people by countless tricks of finance into industrial slavery. Well Mary, this turns out to be a very funny Christmas letter, but you must blame it on my recognizing that you and John are persons of unusual intelligence. I greatly hope that your affairs will permit you to take a trip down here and acquaint yourselves with the situation. I want Siciley Jr. to come down here with Ray and Teddy and become a permanently resident charge d'affaires while superintending the final touches of their education but she will need able and honest advice and it seems to me that John has the gumption and canniness to fill my shoes in that respect. Possibly Betty's husband and Jenny's husband are also practical and level headed men, but Jenny has never written me and Betty has never answered a long letter I sent her years ago in answer to one she sent me. That sort of discourtesy is a serious offence against good breeding but I am considerably worried about their hard luck in their farming operations. It sometimes seems to me that Betty's husband

would have a better chance down here, especially if he is a good hand with trucks and digging machines. The wages here are good in those lines and I am strongly tempted myself to get into the contracting game and under bid the tammany gang on some of the big street jobs that are constantly being advertised. My holdings are free from mortgages and with the turn of the tide I shall be able to raise the capital necessary for "musceling in". Of course all these things are on the knees of the gods, as Goethes says. "We think we punch but in reality we are punched". We say we let our plans to suit current appearances but fate may change the whole aspect of things overnight. The only thing we can do is to be concerned to do our best in the present but leave the consequences of our doing to the will of God. As ever, affectionately,

Honare Jaxon"

"P.S. Please have Betty and Jenny send me photos of their babies, up to date, with names and ages clearly indicated. There seems to be a clan of women-folk and it seems to me about time for them to organize to run the family fortunes on a pool basis. Otherwise, many possible benefits will slip away. "Stand together" should be a slogan."

What a guy! What a great uncle to have! Hang unto that Mary, that may well become history and this is priceless and if you can somehow get a copy of that picture.

A - Much harder to read that; it might be better to try and write it down or something.

Q - This is the last letter Mary Grant got from Honare Jaxon and there is no date. This would be when Will was about ninety years old and there is an address on it. It's in a plain piece of yellow lined paper. The address says: "159 East 34th Street, New York City, November."

Will died in November?

A - He died in December.

Q - So that would have been the last month of his life?

A - Yes. Because after we got this, we started trying to find out what was wrong. We thought there was something.

Q - Were you ever able to translate this letter?

A - I guess I did at the time but I have never looked at it since, though.

Q - "Dear Mary: Please forgive my long delay in acknowledging your wonderful donation. My employer may just have been delaying my pay in hopes of starving me into the inability to do the work and then grabbing the books in the furnace basement. (Will is referring to his ton of books there.) First having the City Marshall put them on the sidewalk for 24 hours. I am taking him to court on of (a kind of larceny) but am too weak to talk strongly. Am to be ninety-four this March..... Can hardly dress myself or stay on my feet without collapsing. Please forgive my being..... and so weak. Signed Honare J. Tell Sicily..... but let no one come down to help. God only can control the judge."

That's a ^{misprint} ~~pointed~~ letter.

A - That was the last one. And then, I forget, we tried to get in touch with the Salvation Army because one time before when we hadn't heard from him for awhile, they had gotten in touch with the Salvation Army. And then there was a woman who had helped him a bit, I think, wrote. We couldn't find out what was wrong and finally we heard that he was in the hospital after that.

Q - Mary when you go in - this too might be worth something some day. I don't know, in terms of worth in money or something. If you are ever in a place where you can have that photostated, could you send us a photostat. It just costs a dime, you know if you are ever in town. At the library, you can get photostats. And we have got most of this down. This letter here, was it from you or from Will. "Miss Sicily Plaxton"

A - No, that was written to Sicily after Uncle Honare died.

Q - Can I read this into the machine because it talks about his "Hobo News" which is the last papers he put out. By the way, while we are on the subject of papers, have you heard of a paper that Honare wrote in 1885 in Prince Albert called "The Voice of the People". There were three issues put out and then they were scquelched, and so far I have not been able to get in touch with anybody that knows anything about them.

- A - Yes. I don't think I have one but I'm just wondering if we had come across one. But I can remember as a child seeing some of those papers in a valise up in the attic. But I don't know what happened to those things. They were probably...when they moved...I imagine a lot of that stuff was destroyed.
- Q - Boy, history gone down the drain. Son of a gun, eh. If a person only knew in those days, but you know who would have ever thought that later on people were going to be looking high and low for that.
- A - Was it about two pages or something like that?
- Q - "The Voice of the People" - I would give anything to get those papers. In any event it looks like Will was into more of the same. This is dated "317 East 54th Street, New York, 22, N.Y., January 20, 1952." (That's the year Willy died, isn't it?)
- A - Yes. See that is written by this fellow who was a friend of Uncle Honare's. Mertig.
- Q - Oh yes, Curt Mertig.
- A - There was three friends that Uncle Honare had. Now he had given my sister Sicily the addresses but I didn't know this when we were trying to get in touch with him. I didn't know about these addresses. She told me afterwards. Curt Mertig was one, and that Mrs. Chandler was another and I can't remember the name of the other.
- Q - These are Americans?
- A - All from New York City.
- Q - This one states: "Miss Sicily Plaxton, 309 - 9th Street East, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada. Dear Miss Plaxton: I wrote you before that your late Uncle was afraid of leaving part of his books with Mr. Baronian (Hobo News) that he thought he had lost his keys and that the wanted me to co-operate with whomever he appointed as his heir. I have not met Mr. Baronian personally, although I had made many attempts to see him at the request of your late Uncle when he still could remember things. Although it visably caused him pain to do do, but what I thought of the Hobo News and the people hanging around there, did not impress me favourably at all. I do not like to criticize other people or write about them unfavourably but I think you should be informed correctly, so that you may

be stopped from getting mixed up with the wrong kind of your late Uncle's acquaintances. At the end of the services held by the Bai'Hai and the Salvation Army, a man whom I know your late Uncle thought very little of, because he was a drunkard, came into the funeral parlour, approached the coffin somewhat unsteadily, said he came from the Hobo (Bowery) News and began a five minute oratory with 'Major, you old Sun of a Gun, I loved you and now you are gone'. He swayed and had to steady himself several times at the coffin and several other friends who came to the service of your late Uncle, left in consternation. The Salavation Army people seemed pained but as they have to do very often with derelicts, said such performances was nothing new to them. ¶ Tonight, a man, also under the influence of liquor, came to my door, when I had some discussion about legal matters with some clients and insisted on speaking to me, although he could see, and although I furthermore told him I was busy. ¶ He said that Baronian was in possession of the keys to the basement of 226 East 83rd Street, and although he and Baronian had been told not to enter that basement without authority of the heirs, did so anyway last Wednesday or Thursday. He said that the Canadian Consul General had appealed to the Public Administrator and that this office was going to take charge of your late Uncle's affairs tomorrow (Monday) after request of your sister's, Mrs. Grant, which would complicate matters and make the liquidation very costly. ¶ As I had written to you before, the Public Administrator steps in, when somebody dies without a will. A political lawyer is then appointed by them for the liquidation and the heirs usually do not receive anything, as red tape consumes all the assets. ¶ I told the elderly man (he called himself Leroux), a student of the same subject your late Uncle had interested himself in, and he said that he had never met your late Uncle (that I could speak to him more at length tomorrow afternoon.) I told him that you had written me that you were in possession of your late Uncle's last Will and that I was in touch with you. ¶ I share your late Uncle's distrust of Baronian and the people connected with him, but if your sister wishes, I gladly shall withdraw and let Baronian

handle your late Uncle's resp." (What does that mean, Mary?)

A - Respect meaning belongings.

Q - "As I know I would have to spend more time on this matter than I can afford. Sincerely, signed Curt Mertig."

A - That was where my sister and I had some disagreement over this. Because she didn't tell me about this Mertig and Baronian wrote to me, you see, telling me. I didn't know what belonged to who.

Q - Who was Baronian?

A - Oh I guess he was kind of a crook.

Q - Was he a religious cohort?

A - No, I think he was just a publisher of a paper. You see, he wrote to me and I said that Uncle had written before sometimes saying he was worried about what would happen to his books. And the rent had to be paid on these things, so I wrote and told Baronian that if Uncle was unable to, this should be paid. So that's where Baronian got my name. And I didn't know anything about this Mertig and so I just wrote back. And my sister didn't talk to the rest of the family about these things. That's where it was.

Q - Here's another letter from Curt Mertig. "Location, 317 East 54th Street, New York 22, N.Y., January 22, 1952. Miss Sicily Plaxton, 309 - 9th Street East, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada. Dear Miss Plaxton: I am glad to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 19th instant. Just to hand, I shall try to see Mr. Baronian tomorrow afternoon regarding what he has done in your late Uncle's affairs. ¶ It is quite understandable that your sister, Mrs. Mary Bush--before she know that you are the beneficiary named in your late Uncle's Will - may have taken some steps in this matter which may have already complicated things, as for instance calling the Canadian Consulate in New York City to instruct the Public Administrator to take charge. ¶ It was for this reason that I first wanted to know who was to handle the matter from your end and who was to handle things here, before I took a hand.

A - The consulate, I never got in touch with the Consulate. By the way the Consulate had known Uncle Honare because he had come from Prince Albert. You may heard of him, T. C. Davis. That's who the consulate was at that time.

Q - The American Consulate?

A - The Canadian Consulate.

Q - He know Will.

A - Yes, he had known him. I think that Davis had just been a boy at the time though.

Q - Davis was an MLA or something.

A - Yes he was an MLA but later on he was Canadian Consulate. My mother had taught him when he went to school so he is younger than they were.

Q - So he was a Prince Albert boy too?

A - Yes.

Q - To continue with the third paragraph of the letter: "Mr. Baronian, the head of the Bowery (Hobo) News is of course very much interested to cash in on the publicity, he and his publication could derive from making this a "cause celebre" - but that would be very much detrimental to the liquidation of the assets in an orderly way. ¶ But I would not want to have any friction between Mr. Baronian and me -- and if I can, I want to avoid complications of any sort. ¶ True, your late Uncle had some lots bought at tax sales many years ago, but he was in arrears with the taxes many years already when I first met him seventeen years ago. So I doubt, if they are assets, but nevertheless, I shall ask a friend of mine and the late Major Jaxon to find out what is what. To the best of my knowledge, your late Uncle had never found time to classify the books, but I would have to search in the basement of 226 East 83rd Street. The new owner is Mr. J. Mendlowitz, 1438 - 1st Avenue, New York City (as to what papers he wanted me to look for and keep out of the hands of Mr. Baronian.) He may have listed them after all. The Salvation Army paid the undertaker \$135 for the funeral and ordered a \$10 flower piece, and if I can collect from some friends some further donations beyond the flowers I bought, I should like to pay the undertaker an additional sum and also arrange for planting a tree and perhaps erect a tombstone to your late Uncle's grave. ¶ I shall write to you tomorrow what authority I may need from you. including a photostat of your late Uncle's last Will so that so that I may be able to look into your Uncle's affairs without hindrance and without any eventual antagonism from anybody.

Please do not pin too great hopes on the value of the books your Uncle considered priceless. They were sacred to him, no doubt, but his investments for some were small, as he only received \$50 a month for his services as Superintendent at 159 East 34 Street, and only a few dollars a week during the last three or four years when he was only working a few hours daily, one and half and to two hours at 60¢ per hour, after the owner of the Newstand at 84th Street and 3rd Avenue had died. In fact people could not understand how he could manage to pay \$25 a month for storage of his books, when he had himself such small earnings. But in order of his determination to build up a library so late in life, after he had lost already twice a collection of books, when he was living in the Bronx and was evicted there twice. Signed - Very sincerely yours, Curt Mertig."

- A - That is the last of his business and this is mentioned in '31, but he died in '52.
- Q - He died in December of '52. Okay, Mary, if you ever go into town and you have a few minutes, you can photostat these. And if you ever get them reproduced, we will gladly pay you for them. Just send us the bill for both your trip to town and the photostat. We will pay you mileage for going to town and be darn glad to do it.
- A - These are just what I had written and kept copies. You might find something interesting in them. I don't know.
- Q - This is to John A. Bowvey, Provincial Archivist. This was written in 1970.
- A - This is another one I wrote to Sarah Greenland. Greenland has been to see my son in Saskatoon and the last I heard was that he had come to the conclusion from some of his studies or something that Honare Jaxon was insane. There was Greenland, and there was that guy and there was a guy by the name of Charlebois. You have heard the name?
- Q - Yes. Have you talked to him.
- A - I never talked to him but I got a letter from him. I was annoyed with him. Anyway he got in touch with my sister though, and I guess she gave him information. I think thats where she let him have some of these pictures.

Q - That's where I've seen them. That's where I've seen from Charlebois this picture and this picture and this one. These I haven't seen and these I would like very much to put in my book. So if you can get that done, we'll pay the costs and pay your trip so it won't put you out of pocket or anything.

"He was fond of being British and he and his wife took a trip back to the old country."

They went their separate ways and she died.

A - They were living in Chichago and then he went to New York and she was going - she had a job you see and she was going to keep on there until he got settled in New York and she was going to join him, but she died.

Q - The letter says that he would let people imagine what they wanted to. It was inconsequential to him. "He was proud of being British and he and his wife took a trip back to the old country and he was interested in where his ancestors had lived. He was my mother's favorite brother and according to her, he had a brilliant mind. Undoubtedly he shocked some of the elders when he was young because he was an individualist. I can just imagine the opinion of some of those prim and proper ladies had of him. That to call it signs of insanity is a no-no. Also he is said to have gotten savage at the mention of Macdonald's name. Well I have seen people get savage at the mention of MacKenzie King or Diefienbaker. Have you ever read an article or memoirs written by a Mr. W. J. Carter of Edmonton. He was a lawyer and a friend of the Jackson family in Prince Albert. He did some writing and wished to have it in the Saskatchewan Archives. He was refused at the time. This was in the early 30's. I believe the reason given was that they might cause some trouble bringing to light facts better let lie. It should make very interesting reading. (Oh, I have to get that).

A - I wonder if he ever did get them there.

Q - No. He never did get them into the Archives. I have seen nothing of his. His name again is Mr. W. J. Carter of Edmonton, a lawyer

and friend of the Jackson family in Prince Albert.

A - By the way that Carter had a son.

Q - You don't know where he is living now.

A - No. But I think the son was living at one time still in Edmonton, because he had come down to Prince Albert. I don't know just what it was, whether just to see where his folks had lived or what it was. But he did come to see and one of my sisters told me about it.

Q - I see the people down East were after Will Jackson too. The letter says here: "I also had a letter from a man in Toronto saying that my Uncle's reputation is going to be attacked again and that he hopes to write articles in his defense. Truth to tell, I don't think anything more could be said to hurt his reputation than has been said in the past. Yours truly, Mrs. Mary A. Grant."

And that letter was dated January 20, 1970.

A - This other one is '72 and this one is to Mr. Greenland. It's probably something of the same.

Q - This letter was dated April 22, 1970 and again its to Serile Greenland of Toronto written by Mary Grant. Mary said in this letter: "I can remember him and his wife visiting at our home though dates meant nothing to me at that age. I believe it may have been in 1910. Whether that was the only time he came back I am uncertain. He travelled through some of the northern districts such as Montreal Lake using a democrat covered with canvas like a covered wagon and drawn by a team of Indian ponies. He was my mother's favorite brother and I think his troubles always grieved her. I forget now what information I did give you. There were three children in the Jackson family, the eldest Thomas Eastwood, then William Henry as he was christened and Sicily Jane and my mother who married Amos Gordon Plaxton. Eastwood never married, Henare married Amy Montfort in Chichago I believe. His parents were married in England, a marriage arranged by their parents. They were Wesleyan Methodists, her father had been a Methodist Minister. No smoking, drinking or card playing was allowed in this home. My mother never believed that Uncle Henare was insane but she thought Riel had some strange influence over him. She said he had a brillent mind. His brothers and sisters also had their share of brains. I believe it

was the failing of the whole family to want to help the under-dog. Yours sincerely, Mrs. Mary A. Grant"

Q - Charlebois, I've read his history and I don't like him as a historian.

A - I just didn't like his letters.

Q - I had that same feeling about him, just a touch of arrogance and things I couldn't quite handle.

A - Well he seemed to be totally ignorant of the west. When he wanted to get in touch with me in the first place, he got in touch with the Parish Priest up in this neck of the woods or whatever you call it.

Q - Glenbush is the name of the town. It's a hard little place to find.

END OF INTERVIEW