

May 1, 1980

Dear Mr. Raddall,

We are two students of Sackville High School in Halifax County. During the course of our last year in High School we have been assigned an oral report on a topic in Canadian Literature class. We have chosen your works as our topic.

To narrow it down we decided to concentrate on the romantic aspect of your novels: Roger Sudden, His Majesty's Yankees, and Pride's Fancy. We would dearly appreciate any information you would care to supply that would be applicable to our topic. For instance-what traits do you automatically install in your characters.

We both read your books and enjoyed them immensely. It is an interesting way to pick up the facts you miss in History class.

It would be greatly appreciated if any reply could be forwarded to:

Lorna J. Ellsworth
42 Langevin Drive
Lower Sackville
Nova Scotia
B4C 1P6

Sincerely yours,

Lorna J. Ellsworth
Marion Auld

Lorna J. Ellsworth
Marion Auld

P.O.Box 459 BOT 1KO

May 11,1980

Miss Lorna J. Ellsworth,
42 Langevin Drive,
Lower Sackville, N.S.

Dear Miss Ellsworth (and Miss Auld):

Thank you for your enquiry about my first three historical novels. I did not "automatically instill" any traits into my characters. I don't write that way. Rather, I studied the scene, the time, and the event or events, and then built my characters partly or considerably from actual people involved in those events.

In the case of "His Majesty's Yankees", my scene was Nova Scotia at the time of the American Revolution, when about two-thirds of the people in Nova Scotia were settlers from New England and their sons and daughters -- the Nova Scotia Yankees. All had close family ties and trading connections with the people of New England, the hotbed of revolution, and so they were suspected of treason and persecuted by the British Governor at Halifax. On the other hand, because they sought to be neutral in the war, their ships were seized and several of their towns and villages were attacked and pillaged by American privateers. Eventually they had to take a stand in their own defence against the American privateers. This painful decision placed them on the King's side. I set out to tell all this in a novel, faithfully based on the historical facts. The "Matthew Strang" of my story was drawn from Captain Sylvanus Cobb of Gorham's Rangers, who brought the first large group of Yankee settlers to Liverpool N.S. in 1760. For the purpose of my theme I gave him three sons, with ~~the~~ separate and various parts to play a real-life drama of Nova Scotia between 1775 and 1780.

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In "Pride's Fancy" I set forth typical adventures of the privateers who sailed out of Liverpool to the Caribbean Sea during the Napoleonic Wars. The character of "Amos Pride" I drew from Enos Collins, a native of Liverpool who made a huge fortune in privateering and general shipping and trading during those wars. His bank building, and the adjacent "Privateers" Wharf, still stand today as part of Historic Properties on the Halifax waterfront. For the purpose of my story I gave him an adopted son who became captain of one of his privateers.

In "Roger Sudden" I wrote about the foundation of Halifax as a rival fortress to Louisbourg, and the ensuing struggle which would destroy one or the other. "Roger Sudden" himself was drawn from Michael Francklin, a young Englishman who came to Halifax with a little money and started a grogshop. From that he went on to

general trading in the province, in the course of which he was captured by Indians and learned their language, which proved useful in his subsequent affairs.

Eventually Francklin became Lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia; but for the purpose of my story, which was to involve the siege and destruction of Louisbourg, I turned "Roger" to a different course and a very different end.

I hope this will be of use to you in your school project.

With my best wishes,

Thomas H. Raddall