

Donald McKenzie

Below are two quotes from the journal of Donald McKenzie in the Snake Country Fur Trade, he was Scottish-Canadian and worked for both American and British companies. The quotes below are from his time with the British (1816-1821). [Changed for easier reading using ChatGPT.] Original found at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41441125?seq=1>

McKenzie was beginning to understand what the Native Americans around him were really like. Their main activities were fighting and hunting buffalo. Their land did not have many furs, and the men, who were used to a free and wandering way of life, refused to do the hard work of trapping beavers. They laughed at the idea of crawling around to look for furs. “That kind of work,” they said, “is only for women and slaves.”

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When McKenzie and his group approached, the Native Americans realized something was wrong and gathered in small armed groups. But McKenzie acted quickly. Without giving them time to think, he ordered Mr. Seaton, the leader of the men, to surround the nearest lodge with bayonets ready. McKenzie and Mr. Reed then entered the lodge and searched it, turning everything upside down. They used their daggers to cut open anything that might be hiding the stolen goods. They searched five or six lodges this way, with mixed results.

## Original

“McKenzie now began to learn the true character of the Indians about him. Their occupations were war and buffalo-hunting. Their country did not abound in furs, nor would men accustomed to an indolent and roving life submit to the drudgery of killing beavers. They spurned the idea of crawling about in search of furs; "Such a life," they said, "was only fit for women and slaves”

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“On their approach, the Indian suspecting something, turned out in groups here and there also armed. But M'Kenzie, without a moment's hesitation, or giving them time to reflect ordered Mr. Seaton, who commanded the men, to surround the first wigwam or lodge with charged bayonets, while he himself and Mr. Reed entered the lodge, ransacked it, turning everything topsy-turvy, and with their drawn daggers cutting and ripping open everything that might be supposed to conceal the stolen property. In this manner they went from one lodge to another till they had searched five or six with various success...