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Story 1-2 Orlo Miller Interview

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711 Richmond Street is my old homestead, beside the CPR tracks. That is where I grew up in the early 1900s. My dad had a tailor shop there. One of the more shocking experiences that I have ever had in this town was the funeral of Sir Adam Beck. The cortege began at Headley. It was a funeral procession where the people walked with the hearse. It was outside of our place on Richmond at the C.P.R. Tracks. Adam Beck had been a customer of my father.

We were standing on the sidewalk watching the procession—as it went by, the men would remove their hats. This was the sort of thing done as a sign of respect. Not everybody did, however. Everything was quiet except you could hear women weeping. Well, to my shock, I heard some men booing, hissing and snarling. I was just a kid of thirteen or fourteen at the time. I was appalled. I encountered sheer human hatred.

Adam Beck was loved and hated. There was no in-between. He was the kind of man who evoked that sort of thing. You believed in what he believed in which was 'Hydro For The People.' You must realize that that represented socialism then. Have you ever thought of the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario as the first socialist publicly owned hydro system in North America? This was the reason for the hatred, you see. Here was the new order. They might take over everything. But Adam Beck was no socialist. He was a pure capitalist. That hatred that he evoked was amazing. He was a tough man.