

Introduction:

... Foster, who's a very good friend of mine. I never took a course from him, thank goodness, but we studied together. And he said he'd send his CV, you know, a CV, what's a CV? It's one of these things like I wave up here, eh? And I said, "John," I said, "if you don't get it to me in the next two weeks I'm going to wing it." He told me tonight he'd put it in the mail 10 days ago, and that's campus mail between about 1000 feet between buildings, so we've got our problems too. But I'm very please to introduce my peer and colleague, John Foster, outstanding scholar not only in the development of the fur trade, and that is his specialty, but also in Western Canadian history which of course ends at the passes of the Rocky Mountains. And I hope you would note that in excluding British Colombia perhaps it's safe to say they are still suffering a colonial mentality. But, because John's penchant from his studies in the fur trade have always been focused on the fur trade, I have to say certain things about his career development which he never told me about but which I appreciate because I work at the University of Alberta like John does. And there are certain things and characteristics that, if you're a fur trader and study fur traders that you end up looking or acting like them. And number one, John possesses a high degree of literacy. Even though he was born in Ontario he has performed all his studies and his schooling in Alberta, including an M.A. and a Ph.D. at the University of Alberta, which is one of the leading educational institutions in Canada. That's my commercial. John is also willing, just like a fur trader, to accept promotions from within the ranks and he is now Associate Professor of History at the University of Alberta. Thirdly, he works at the University of Alberta and he's very willing to accept lower wages and a lower willing standard. But fourthly, finally, he possesses unquestionable moral qualities. As a good fur trader, John has never brought his own brandy to a rendez-vous. But given all of this in good fun, Dr. John Foster is an outstanding scholar and, ladies and gentlemen, let us welcome John Foster to our gathering tonight.

Dr. Foster:

Well I must say this had been a most enjoyable experience. Am I coming through alright? I don't usually have that problem in lecture halls. Neither do I... how's that? Very good. As I was saying, I, very enjoyable experience, different people I'm meeting. First of all the number of people I already knew that I didn't expect to meet here, as the mayor of St. Albert who I can report was a very good student. I didn't quite have in mind the mayor of St. Albert when I saw him leave but nevertheless it is quite acceptable. As well I have current students, so this is a bit of an old home week for me and at the same time I have also met other people who I haven't had the pleasure before and I hope to meet more of you before the evening is over.

I think you all should be commended for turning out on this evening when one realizes what is available to entertain us in the metropolitan area. An Oiler

hockey game, I understand a barbershop quartet, I understand the Liberals are having a convention as well. [laughter] And, uh, Habenola has informed us, of course, that the attitude in the West towards the Liberal party is changing. This probably explained why, on our way out here we passed the Mayfield Inn and they all couldn't get into that phone booth they seem to keep using all the time. But nevertheless I'm sure you've all made a deep sacrifice to be here this evening. In view of that sacrifice on your part, I promise you that I will not give you the 50 minutes that the mayor wants. If he wants 50 minutes we can go outside on our own afterwards. We'll try to keep it somewhat shorter than that.

But nevertheless, what I would like to do this evening is talk to you about an individual that I've been coming across in the documents and in various sources that I take a look at and I want to communicate a little bit about him to you because I think, first of all, what he does do is dispel this idea that Canadian history, Western Canadian history, we don't have any of these characters, these heroes that we can find on the boob-tube coming up from the south of the line. Somehow they seem to have had all of the colourful people and we got left with our ancestors, you know, that kind of problem. Well this individual, for the little we can get ahold of him is not that kind of a person, an extremely colourful one. And while some of you well may not have heard of him, some of you may well have, and some of you may have source materials that I have not come across so I will appreciate it if you do have such material, if you'll speak to me before the evening is out. The man I have in mind is a fellow known as Paulet Paul, and you'll have to excuse my French, it was acquired here in Alberta south of the Red Deer River, but this Paulet Paul is the way he comes through. And unfortunately we are not completely sure that that is his name. In one account, the spelling on it is P, O, U, L, E, T. Those of you who recall your high school French course, that's "Chicken Paul." In view of the fact that he probably stood about six foot four to six foot six and around 250 pounds it seems a rather curious name to give the individual. The other account comes from Paul Kane, the artist, has him referred to as "Paulet," P, A, U, L, E, T, and of course I suppose it isn't Paulette, the girl's name at six foot six, 250 pounds I don't think too many people referred to him in that way. But again Paulet or Poulet Paul is the individual we have in mind. We don't know where he, he appears on the scene about 1840 in the St. Albert/ Fort Edmonton region here and, ah, he's around, he crops up in the odd place, account books, Father Lacombe actually mentions him on a couple of occasions. And finally, unfortunately comes to a rather, ah, sticky end, he's shot just outside of Fort Edmonton by, ah, an individual who disagreed with him. So he's a very narrow period of time in which he emerges historically but I must say it's a rather colourful period that he does put in here.

In giving you a little flavor of the man's life and the kind of community he came from I'm also going to quote rather extensively from the writings, one of the sources that appeared that was published in about 1940 but the manuscript was actually written around the turn of the century. The man in question is a John Gunn, and John Gunn in himself is extremely interesting, born in the Red River settlement of mixed blood parents himself, his grandfather was Donald Gunn, a Hudson's Bay Company fur trader who had married into the mixed blood company McNabs. So Gunn himself had deep roots in Western Canada and in many cases met many of the

individuals, not Paulet Paul but could have met many of the individuals that he refers to. But he has a very colourful turn of phrase and I think he very accurately captures the society in which Paul lived and the kinds of values and outlook that they had. And I think you'll agree, in some ways, a little bit different than we are ourselves.

First of all, to introduce Paul, perhaps I can turn to Gunn's account of him. He begins his account with,

"To begin with, he was picturesque. A giant in stature and strength, beardless but shock-headed and black as Erebus. A voice like thunder and a manner as blustery and boisterous as March. Eyes like an eagle and a pair of as heavy and once at least as deadly as cannonballs."

Now with an introduction like that this isn't your average shy retired hermit-type, alright? The reference in mind is with these fists like cannonballs of course. Apparently two individuals tried to borrow his horse without first getting his permission and in the resulting melee they were permanently put away. So Paul was obviously a man with a fine sense of property. Anyways. What was Paul's job? Where do we come at him in the Fort Edmonton and St. Albert area here? Paul was the brigade guide for the York boats that left Fort Edmonton annually, made the journey down to Norway House on Lake Winnipeg and then from Norway House down to York Factory on the coast of Hudson's Bay. And of course, this transportation system prior to the 1860s was what made the fur trade in Western Canada possible. And it depended upon the use of the York boats, I realize our usual image is that of the canoe and the Voyageur merrily singing his "*En roulant ma boule roulant*" and probably not the same words you and I learned in school but nevertheless merrily singing this. Very colourful image but by the time Paul comes along the canoe has been phased out, we're into the York boat, carries a much larger cargo, much less number of men, but somehow struggling on an oar as a tripman rather than as a Voyageur, I guess you are not moved to sing "*En roulant ma boule roulant*." Whatever it is. Nevertheless this annual voyage from Fort Edmonton, taking the furs down to Norway House, Lake Winnipeg, gathering additional cargos down to York Factory and then of course returning upstream from the fall river with the goods that were necessary: guns, ammunition, ah, and a little Hudson's Bay spirits too to help you through the winter, this was the job that these individuals did. And at its peak there were as many as 8 York boats leaving Fort Edmonton and the one man responsible for making sure that those boats got through and dealt with the chief factors at all the posts that went along was this Paulet Paul. So as a result he's a man of some importance, not one of the officers that we read about extensively, not one of the men who kept extensive documents, but obviously a man who played a critical role in maintaining the fur trade out here in the West and in serving the Hudson's Bay Company's interests. And it was men like Paul who were of fundamental importance. Their ways of doing things, their ways of thinking are things that we'd like to know about right now.

Now there were 3 principle brigades in this transportation system. If I can just give you a little explanation of the transportation system so we can fit Paul into

it. But there was the brigade out of Fort, ah, Edmonton here, known as the Saskatchewan Brigade, but the men themselves had their own name for it, it was called the Blaireau. And, uh, again, my apologies to francophones with my Alberta high school French, but the "blaireau" as I understand, "badger" in English. The brigade out of Red River then, but is Winnipeg area today, these were the Toro which I suppose, literally translated means "Bull" but actually what they had in mind was the pemmican, this dish or shall we say this food that was used in the food trade that preserved the meat of the buffalo and uh, if you kept it dry you could store it virtually indefinitely. So if you made good pemmican, of course, you took the meat of the young cow or the heifer. But if you really made a miserable product you took that of an old bull, and the men out of the Red River used to like to feel that well how did they get so tough? Because they liked "toro," okay. [laughter] They liked the old bull. Well then what does that say about the Saskatchewan Brigade? Well the Saskatchewan Brigade of course, their favorite food was "blaireau," badger. This accounted for their wild and aggressive behavior. I guess if you eat badger all the time you're gonna say "Good Morning" with a different outlook than most people say "Good Morning." [laughter] This raises certain questions, of course, because the third brigade was known as the Poisson Blanc, the White Fish. Seems to me if you were associating with a group of fellas and one were the bulls, and the others were the badgers, and they asked you who you were and you turned out to be the white fish it wouldn't be particularly impressive, and I guess generally they were, tended to be looked down ah, a little bit in here.

What Gunn explains, of course, is that the Saskatchewan Brigade was of such notoriety in the west that they, they gave their own meaning to this term "blaireau" and actually in the fur trade west if you were not favorably commenting on somebody you tended to use this "blaireau." He explains here,

"Similarly, blaireau came to have a meaning not credited to it in the dictionaries. This name, the French for 'badger,' was given to the Saskatchewan men because that animal was a usual item of their bill of fare." (I take that with a grain of salt) "Now the Saskatchewan Brigade became famous for the turbulence and insubordination of its members so much so that their arrival at Norway House and other posts was looked upon as an affliction, and their departure as the most desirable event of the season. Thus boisterous and violent conduct came to be associated with their name."

So when an old timer characterizes a man or a horse as a regular Blaireau he is not to be understood as meaning that it looks like a badger. As a matter of fact, it's in conduct or disposition that the individual resembles the Saskatchewan tripmen. So this is the brigade, then, that our good friend Paulet Paul commands. He is the man who commands it, makes sure that they, everybody does their job to get the furs through. And from the description I think we've seen to this point you're going to have to have particular technique of personnel relations if you're gonna manage this kind of crew of men past the different posts and get them down to this area. And it's actually in this other area that uh, we find that Paul's name becomes famous throughout the west and as a matter of fact when the brigades used to return in Fall,

whether it was the Toro returning to Red River, whether it was the Saskatchewan, the Blaireau returning up past Fort Carlton to Fort Edmonton, or even the Athabasca Brigade, from the banks people would gather and holler out to the brigades passing by, "What about Paulet this year? Did he win?" What were they talking about? Well, Gunn explains to use what everybody was asking as these brigades came back up the rivers: "When the different brigades..." Well let's start right here:

"Besides be guide of his brigade, Paulet was also its champion. Not merely in such affairs as were mentioned as happening at Norway House but on any and every occasion when a champion was required. When the different brigades met at York Factory and the question 'Which could produce the best men?' came to be mooted about over a regale of Hudson's Bay rum, he was ever the first to strip to the waist and stand forth to claim that honour for the Blaireau. That was the sort of man the tripmen adored. And even those of the Red River who still survive (and you'll remember this manuscript written at the turn of the century) ...who still survive have a big, warm place in their hearts for Paulet and tell of his deeds and give him as much honour as if he had been one of themselves. This may be partly because in doing so they glorify their own champion, Michael Lambert (Michel Lambert) who, on such occasions would step forward in the interest of the Toro, shake hands with Paulet, and then for the next half an hour or so proceed to enhance his picturesqueness. (Little more on the wine than I counted on [laughter] but anyways) Such encounters, off-hand a first no doubt, and having their inspiration in the rum keg came to be recognized as a recognized institution of the trip. It was known that when the brigades left Fort Gary, Fort Edmonton, what champions went along and as they returned up the river in the Fall friends hailed them from the banks for news of the expected fight. Of course, there were other minor events at such points as Norway House or Portage-La-Loche with the Poisson Blanc, but it was on that of York Factory when Paul and Lambert stood up for the honour of their respective districts that the interest chiefly centered. When Toro and Blaireau crowded around and watched the championship of all the West tossed back and forth with Paulet's ferocious pounding and the lightening-like sense of Lambert, but inevitable to remain with the latter."

Apparently Gunn goes on at other points, having mentioned the physical size of Paulet, he also mentioned Lambert who was only about five foot eight but apparently both ways and ah, as a result was more than able to take care of himself on those occasions and ah, would appear to be as Paulet could deal with everybody else but finally when he got to Lambert he just was a little faster than everyone else in this area here. Gunn also sites an account of course where an English naval captain when the annual supply ship came into York Factory, decided that he would demonstrate to the native of the Northwest what a real fighting Englishman was like, so with the biggest sailor that anybody had ever seen in their lives was brought ashore to demonstrate this, an apparently Lambert landed one punch and that was

it. Reminded, I guess, somewhat of what we saw this afternoon on the television of Willie the Wit and his mastery of the art of fisticuffs.

Nevertheless this is our friend Paulet Paul. We'll go a bit beyond him though. He's just not simply a tough man, a man legendary for his abilities with his fist and his abilities to control the crew. It's also interesting to what extent he's disciplined by the crew. And there's one incidence that's recorded in the books, of course, where one of the members of the crew, actually an Irishman who's on his way back to Ireland, he's served his hitch, decides that once he reaches Norway House, that's it, he's a free man, and he's not pulling on one more oar for the rest of his time with the Hudson's Bay Company. And of course when the officers refused to recognize this workingman's point of view they then, ah, decide that he doesn't have to go along with the boat. So as soon as the crew has left, he is seized, thrown into a fur trade jail, which is probably not anywhere near as luxurious as ours now and, ah, he is going to feel the weight of the Hudson's Bay Company displeased with one of its employees. Unfortunately for the Hudson's Bay Company some of the free men about the post are aware of what happens so they quickly get into a canoe, they pursue the brigade which is headed down to York Factory, and inform them that one of their buddies has been dealt in this way. Well the reaction of the crew, of course, is to immediately stop, put ashore, dump all of the cargo out on the shore and head back to Norway House and to inform the Hudson's Bay Company officer, of course, that that crew, or that bunch of goods will only be picked up when their good friend is dealt with appropriately. Now it's very obvious of course that Paul has been risen to the position of guide in the Hudson's Bay Company Saskatchewan Brigade because the company knows that he is an expert in personnel relations, he carries his authority around this way and they never do have too many problems with that brigade as long as he's around. But it's also quite obvious that if he is to retain that leadership, then he must serve the interest of the men in the brigade. And it's very interesting that it's Paul who leads the protest, demands the redress, and of course the Company finds in this circumstance they can do nothing but acknowledge the injustice that they've offered to this good Son of Ireland and rehabilitate. And he also takes the keg of rum for the men. There's gotta be a profit margin in there someplace.

Now, this is the kind of individual of course, given proper treatment (I said proper treatment, not CBC treatment), but proper treatment could immediately come up with a, I think a colourful character either in book form or on television. Paul Kane in his trip came west in 1847, his paintings of course are interesting source material for us historians in their own right, just how many things we don't talk about in our letters and in our journals but if somebody takes a picture or before pictures, makes a painting, just how many things we finally understand that you can't understand from just looking at somebody's journal or letter. So Paul Kane is a very good source for us. But he also kept a journal, which makes him even more valuable to us. And in this journal he tells a story, he introduces Paulet and while he does not witness this event, it is quite obvious from his account that it has take place only a few years before. And again, it helps account for this legendary image associated with Paulet Paul. Apparently what was happening is that the Saskatchewan Brigade was proceeding down with the cargo of furs and it came to

the Grand Rapids. The Grand Rapids, they're on the lower Saskatchewan just before it enters into Lake Winnipeg. And in coming down with a cargo of furs in Spring one can usually run the rapids without having to stop and portage or décharge, is the other French expression meaning unloading part of the cargo and allowing to go through. And, it was up to the brigade guide though to make the decision as to whether they would try and run the rapids and suffer the risks that were involved or whether they would, ah, take a more cautious action. From what we know of Paulet, ah, to this point I'm sure you'll understand that he didn't often stop to unload the boats, his idea was full speed ahead. And as the brigade guide, of course, he would be in the first boat. He would be leading the first of the boats down. Well any of you've been down to Fort Edmonton, at least that's the York boat I always make reference to, the one that's usually parked out front in Fort Edmonton, when I say parked well they usually don't have it in the water and they have it up there, but if you've seen that York boat there you'll notice of course that it is steered by a rather long oar out of the, ah, stern area, and of course the man controlling it would usually stand, ah, to control the progress of the boat. And Paulet Paul I guess was at his post as the steersman on this particular boat and as it entered into the rapids, well the oar snapped and over he went into the rapids. Now most individuals experiencing this would probably be written off. It's surprising how many places in the fur trade West are named in translation places like ra, Rapids of the Drowned and Rapids of the Dead. This was quite a frequent occupational hazard in the fur trade. So to be pitched into the Grand Rapids particularly in the flush of Spring is probably the end of anybody else but Paulet Paul. Paul apparently, rather than going to his reward on this occasion, proceeded to get hold of a, rather a large rock in the stream, was able to get himself to his feet, this is in Kane's account, get himself to his feet at which point the next boat proceeding down behind his swept by. He immediately grabbed hold of the gunnel and managed to pull himself up onto this second boat. He then takes command of the second boat and encourages it to proceed after his which is pummeling down the rapids with its steersman, and while everybody's taken aback somewhat at this, he has this persuasive way with people and everybody bends to the oars and sure enough if they don't catch boat ahead. He then, classic Steven McQueen kind of thing, vaults from this one boat into the other boat, picks up an oar, and brings the brigade right through. Granted, you know, if it had appeared on Fall Guy you wouldn't have believed it, but ah, and according to Paul Kane's account this is again, ah, Paulet Paul saving the cargo, ah, of this ship.

This man, then, in many ways obviously what he did and the myths became about what he did grew in the west in this period here prior to 1870. And the man became indeed a legendary figure. Unfortunately, since he was not a man of education and prominence, what has survived in the documents is extremely limited indeed. As I said there's an account that appears in John Gunn's manuscript *Echoes of the Red River* and particularly in the chapter *The Tripmen of Assiniboya* there's another account, a very brief one of course in Paul Kane's *Wanderings of an Artist*, the story I told you of the incident in Grand Rapids occurs there, and there is a couple of other mentions, I've located them of course in the half-breed script records. Ah, unfortunately not particularly helpful in there because ah, I guess Paulet was a bit of a bon-vivant, he did not establish a family in the traditional way

that one does it [laughter] so ah, one has difficulty ah, following him extensively through those records. Hopefully me might find some others that will be a little more, ah, helpful to us. Ah, and there's a few brief references in, ah, Father Lacombe. Now the reason I mention this of course because the question that emerges for somebody like myself, you might say my, over there at the University of Alberta and all you're doing is looking for John Wayne types back there in the history? Come on, what are we paying you for, fellow? Ah, no, there's a, there's a more scholarly interest and that scholarly interest of course is in attempting to understand the historical circumstances responsible for the appearance of the Métis in the Canadian West because the Métis are an extremely unique adaptation. They're, they did take place in the American West but nowhere near the prominence and significance. We can read American history and there simply is not a Métis presence there yet when you come to the Canadian West prior to the 1880s, one simply can't talk about Western Canadian history without the Métis. It was quite obvious with the Métis people, of course, is that before the coming of the fur traders they did not exist. With the coming of the fur traders they do appear. Well, usually with the students in my undergraduate class that's fine, it's no problem sir, for the Métis all you need is the fur traders and ah, an Indian lass and that gives you Métis, right sir? And I wish it was that easy but it isn't. When we get into the historical documents of course we can find very often that, ah, you can have a European progenitor but unfortunately you live life as an Indian. And that's very upsetting, it isn't neat and simple. The best example I usually give my class of course are two Cree warriors who died in battle with the Blackfoot just very, right on the site where the University of Lethbridge is today. And the names of these two Plains Cree warriors were Curly Hair and Yellow Hair Sutherland. Now, if you have a name like Curly Hair and Yellow Hair Sutherland, let me explain, you have a European progenitor there, ah, [laughter] in the case of these gentlemen this was George um, Sutherland out of Fort Edmonton here about 1795. And while we can't find the evidence on George Sutherland, there appears to be a good deal of evidence that some of these chief factors at least prior to 1820 were polygamists in their marriage habits and so they could build up very large families very quickly. And George's family, of course, a lot of daughters apparently, who brought home their husbands and as a result, ah, founded a particular band of the Plains Cree, the Willow People among the lower river Plains Cree are essentially descended out of this family here. It explains why, if any of you know any Plains Cree people with the last name of Sutherland this is the family that they're attached to but what is quite obvious is these are not Métis. These are not the buffalo hunters that we've come to know about. These are not the people associated with Louis Riel. These are classic Plains Indian Cree. So the idea, then, of mixed ancestry as automatically just isn't there. There are lots of examples where one can have sort of a mixed ancestry but it's an Indian way and not the Métis. On the other hand, there's the other kind. Jennifer Brown's book *Strangers in Blood* some of you are familiar with it, but she gives an extremely interesting study. Fur trade officers' families, again, Native wives, but almost 100% in these families, in the last century, the children did not emerge as Métis. Very often because the father was extremely wealthy, because he was most usually ah, university experience if not university graduate, he had the means of sending his children back to the old

country or if not to the old country, down to Lower Canada and there they would be educated and there they quite frequently would form marriage, ah, alliances and in effect adopt ways of life Britisher, if they happened to go back to Great Britain, or Upper Canadian/ Lower Canadian if they moved down to the area there. And these people certainly are not Métis. So once we start asking these kinds questions, that's great Foster, you found out everybody who isn't, now who was? There appear to have been a few of them around here. Let's face it, Louis Riel wasn't all by himself at Batoche, ah, [laughter] how do we account for ah, these other kinds of individuals there? And this is where we haven't been particularly successful as scholars is trying to come up with the explanation as just how come, who are these people that emerged as Métis, what distinguishes them from those who had ways of life like the Plains Cree or those, shall we say, who adopted British or Canadian ways of life. The image that seems to be coming through very, very clearly is that a relatively few number of men in the fur trade, French Canadians essentially, who came west with the North West Company, XY company, and other companies like this. And these men of course after a period of time would form family connections, let's face it, you might come West with the idea of making a zillion and then going back home and buying a farm but sometimes these plans never did quite work out. You came out west, probably formed family circumstances and then all of a sudden around the age of 40 you decided well, shoot, I better do something with my life, what am I going to do? And it appears that a few of these individuals took their freedom, as the expression was. They were under contract to the fur companies and they took their freedom but instead of going back to Eastern Canada they decided that they would preform what is known as the provisioning role in the, ah, fur trade posts. In other words, they simply go to the bourgeois and they say, "Look, we'll hunt buffalo, will you sustain us, will you support us here?" So these men often left the employ of the fur trade, took their families with them and they succeeded as buffalo hunters.

It's quite obvious of course that they had to be on very friendly relations with the Indians. You could not wander around ah, Fort Edmonton, ah, 150 years ago flogging buffalo if the Cree didn't think that you had a right to do that. If the Cree took a dim view of it, then your life and success was extremely short, I can assure you. So obviously they required Cree wives to have the, ah, kinship connections with the Indians that would permit them to succeed in this fashion here. They seem to be highly successful of course because the fur trade more and more depended upon them to supply them with this essential provision. Let's face it, if you couldn't eat you didn't have much time for trading furs. And if you were always doing your own hunting you didn't have time for trading furs. So somebody had to be taking care of that provision role. Now in some cases, of course, you look to the Indians to do it, but the Indians, they just did not do it with the regularity that you wanted as a good proper Englishman, alright? They kept deciding, "Oh, what the heck guys, let's go down and scare a few Blackfoot, okay?" And, ah, you know it's good fun for a Cree to be down there scaring Blackfoot or borrowing his horse to pick up a little later, but unfortunately if he was doing that he wasn't bringing in the buffalo that you needed. So these few men, then, the French Canadians who decided that they would specialize in this role of buffalo hunting and would supply the provisions to the posts really appear to be they key individuals to focus on to understand the

appearance of the Métis peoples. And of course they had to be, ah, extremely capable individuals because it's not only a question of them doing the job but we know their children succeeded to it and their children after them, and that's really the key thing if you've got a community emerging. It's not so much if you just do it yourself but you establish a tradition that gets repeated over time.

Great! That's my definition of a Métis. Where do we put in Paul? You do not shoot too many buffalo from the back seat of a York boat going down through Grand Rapids, alright? This becomes our problem, then. The individual with a name like "Poulet" or "Paulet Paul" would appear to have a French Canadian heritage as much as a Cree or Assiniboiné heritage out here. Yet, does he qualify for a Métis in this circumstance. This is where Father Lacombe's very brief mention of Paulet Paul is perhaps helpful to us. In Father Lacombe's account, we have Paulet Paul introduced when Lacombe goes to the chief factor at Fort Edmonton and says, "Chief Factor Rowan, (and Chief Factor Rowan was a good Catholic, I should mention this), Chief Factor Rowan, I want you to do a favour for me. I have convinced Paulet Paul of the error of his ways and I'm going to baptize him." (which I'm sure was a scandal to many of the circles in Fort Edmonton at the time) But not only that, would Chief Factor Rowan act as his Godfather for the baptismal ceremony. And ah, Rowan we don't know for sure but I'm sure had many reservations about that but nevertheless agreed to cooperate with good Father Lacombe in the baptism of Paulet Paul. Uh, Paulet Paul, duly baptized of course, and, uh, would appear that, uh, Father Lacombe is very grateful and very enthused about having a man obviously of his stature and leadership among the men who worked in the boat associated with the mission at this time. And I think perhaps to encourage Paulet Paul's significance in the community he then went to Chief Factor Rowan and said, "Look, would you go some good with Paulet?" This was the tradition where a favoured man would be given some goods, would travel out from the Fort amongst his Cree kinsmen and trade furs with them. And he would have the goods, he would acquire the furs, he would bring them back to Fort Edmonton, and, ah, he would get the stature and the recognition of the Chief Factor for this achievement. It tended to be given only to men of character and prominence and respect and everything else like that. So obviously Lacombe, in encouraging Paulet Paul to have this responsibility, was recruiting him to the interests of the mission and of course the fact that Paulet Paul responded to this gives me my evidence to suggest that maybe we do have a Métis here because very often these were Métis individuals. Not only did they provision but they often took good out from the Chief Factor, contact with their Indian kinsmen, and bring the furs back in. So while Paulet Paul doesn't fit the classic image of the Métis buffalo hunter, he works in the boats, that's where his whole career is, until, as I said, he's shot in the back by a rival. But this man seems to be exhibiting the values that we associate with these ah, um, fur traders. So I was very glad to see this account because I said, "boy, this looks like this has given me some evidence that I can definitely label Paulet Paul as a Métis."

Unfortunately, I turned the page. [laughter] I turned the page and what does Lacombe's account go on to explain of course, that Paulet Paul goes out on this **ont des rouille** trade, he goes out with these goods to visit some kinsmen it would appear, and he trades with them. He trades so well that he trades all of his goods

and doesn't acquire any furs. [laughter] So the account then goes on with Paulet Paul coming back into the Fort and going to Father Lacombe and suggesting to Father Lacombe, "I have a problem here, alright?" [laughter] And of course, you can read the account yourself of course, it's given in ah, James MacGregor's book on Chief Factor Rowan, and as well as in (excuse me) Katherine Hughes' account of Father Lacombe. Father Lacombe very craftily finds a way out for Paulet Paul. My problem, though, obviously is of course that Paulet Paul seems to have failed at this task that we associate with the Métis and I'm back to where I am before. Is Paulet Paul a Métis or is he one of the house Indians who used to work in the boats on the Saskatchewan Brigade as well? We don't know yet. We're gonna have to keep looking in the documents to see what we can find. Some account books somewhere, if we can only get him having a family and sending the family in for catechism and if we could get him out flogging a buffalo it would be very helpful to me. [laughter] But until we can do that we're gonna have to suspend judgment on Paulet Paul as to whether we can officially assign him to the Métis or not.

The other point, though, and this point I would leave you with, I think what we have here is an extremely colourful Western Canadian in the era before 1870. And he certainly isn't the only one. A number of you belonging to a society like the St. Albert Historical Society would be familiar with others like Jaime Jaques-Bird out Fort Edmonton here. Perhaps not a man that you would want to hold up and have your children and grandchildren emulate, but nevertheless an extremely colourful individual in some of the situations that he got himself into and the way got out of them. Now it is rather a comment on ourselves, on our educational system, on our society, on perhaps even what I do over at the University, the fact that somebody like myself can find out about these, but these stories are not widely available to others. And it's the kind of thing that your organization and organizations like yourself in becoming aware of this kind of thing can make neighbours, children, and others aware of. Those of you doing curriculum, storybooks, a lot of material for that kind of thing. We have with us of course tonight Dr. John Chalmers who has done more than just about anybody else in bringing many of these stories to the attention of people who are interested in Western Canadian history. But there's more to be done as well. So, I've merely introduced you to one of these people ah, who I find extremely colourful and interesting. Let's face it, when it comes to Friday afternoon you're wondering what to do, nothing like looking in the documents again to see what Paulet is up to. But ah, it's an individual colourful and yet at the same time encourages us to find out a little bit more about what we were a little while ago. Thank you very much, you've been very patient. [applause]