

*Michigan's*

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**Translated Example of a North West Company Engagement'**

**Before the Notaries** of the City of Montréal in the Province of Québec, here residing, **Undersigned Was Present Paul Dulong son of Jn. Bte. D. Lavaltrie**

who has by these presents voluntarily engaged & engages himself to Mrs. [Misters] *McTavish, Frobisher & Co.* here present & accepting, in the capacity of *milieu* to depart from this city at their initial request in one of their canoes in order to arrive at their destination as well as *spend the winter in the north, returning next summer by way of the G. Portage*

And during the voyage to take proper care of their merchandise, stores, furs, tools, & everything else necessary for the journey; serve, obey & loyally carry out all which the Srs. [BLANK, the name of the employers should have been entered here] or any of their representatives, will order him to do that is honest & legal, work for their benefit and avoid losses & inform them if any come to their attention, & generally do all that a good employee should be obligated to do; refrain from carrying on any trade whatsoever, take leave or quit the said service under penalty of being brought to court as per the Ordinances, & lose their wages. This Contract thusly made for the sum of *six hundred Livres or Shillings old Currency of this Province*, that they promise & bind themselves to pay the said employee one month following his return to this city, & at his departure *the said Esq.[uire] has received as an advance on his wages the sum of fourteen pounds fourteen shillings currency which will be deducted from the wages from the said journey.*

For such, & etc. Promising & etc. Binding & etc. Renouncing & etc. Made & contracted in Montréal, in the Study of the undersigned Notary, in the year seventeen hundred *ninety two* on the *eighteen of February, before noon*; & have signed with the exception of the said [BLANK, the name of the employee should have been entered here] who having declared being unable to do so as required, has made his make following the reading.

X [His Mark of a Cross]

Chaboillez

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'Engagement of Paul Dulong to McTavish, Frobisher & Co., 18 February 1792, number 905, Louis Chaboillez, notary, photocopied on 20 August 1981 from the Archives nationales du Québec à Montréal. Translated by Paul La Voie, Vanier, Ontario, 6 August 1984. Comments are in brackets. Punctuation and type fonts try to follow the original. This is a printed form with the filled in script indicated with italics. This voyageur shares my surname but I have as yet been unable to determine how, if at all, he is related to me.

(con't. from p.46)

A leaden sky closed in on us, the wind picked up, and a light rain began to fall. It required all our efforts, against a strong headwind and choppy waves, to paddle out to Drummond Island and the Twentieth Century.

We gain much from these annual reenactments, including a broader perspective on our modern life and a greater appreciation of our ancestors' lives and times. They lived in eras of often greater physical labors and discomforts than ours, but also in times when many more aspects of life, earned by example and done by hand, could bring satisfactions, such as carving a balanced trigger for a snare or stitching a moccasin.

On the evening after our departure from the island, at a motel near the Straits of Mackinac, I couldn't bear to break the spell of the week by taking a shower and changing into modern clothing. Instead, I spent the evening on the shore of Lake Huron, envisioning canoes rounding the point centuries ago.