

Partridges, they were allowed Two or Three a Day, some of which weigh above a Pound; that the Indians frequently bring their Arms to mend; and the Musquets furnished them by the Company, are worth above 20 Shillings apiece; that they frequently burst, not from the Fault of the Gun, but by overcharging, or from Snow getting into the Muzzle.

*Christopher Bannister*, who had been Armourer and Gunsmith to the *Hudson's Bay* Company, and had resided in the Bay about 22 Years, informed your Committee, That he had seen Lead Ore at *Moose River*, which came from the Northward, but he can't say whence; that he had seen a good Quantity of it, and some of it tried by Mr. *Longdon's* Apprentice; and it seemed extraordinary good Lead, and the Boy made a Pair of Buckles of it.

That the Witness can't say what Proportion the Lead bears to the Ore; only the Boy put in a Piece of Ore as big as a Man's Fist, and got Lead enough to make a Pair of large Buckles; and that the Witness is sure nothing was put in but the Ore, none being present but himself, and the Boy who brought it down; that this was about Three Years ago; and that he never saw any Lead Ore at any other time.

That he has seen Copper frequently brought down by the Northern Indians, a Piece of which he produced to your Committee; and said, He had seen great Quantities of it there; and was informed by a young Man, who is now at *Hudson's Bay*, that the Indians told him, that it was brought from a Mine, in search of which the young Man would gladly have gone.

That the Trade of the Country consists chiefly in Furs; but the Indians bring down Feathers and Deer-skins likewise; and they get some Whalebone from the *Eskimaux*, going from the Straights; that he never knew any Commodities brought by the Indians, that were refused by the Company; but that if the Indians were better used, the Company might have more Trade; for the Factors don't give them a sufficient Price, and then they growl and grumble.

And being asked, Whether in that case they come again? he said, Not always; but some are forced to come, because there are no others to trade with; that he believes, if other People were suffered to trade, they would not come to the Company, because they use them ill.

And when they meet with the French, they dispose of the best of their Goods to them, and bring their Refuse to the Company; that he can't say at what Distance the French lie; but apprehends they send People, and lay wait for, and stop the Indians, and take the best of their Goods.

And being asked, Whether the Company did not give a better Price to the Indians than formerly for their Furs? he said, He believed not; for that he himself had been ordered, to shorten the Measure for Powder, which ought to be a Pound, and within these 10 Years has been reduced an Ounce or two.

That the Company had more Trade formerly than now; and though he never saw the French Furs, yet 'tis plain, they have the small Furs, as he has been informed by the Linguists, who were told by the Natives, that the French use them better, and give them a better Price; so that we deal chiefly in Beaver.

The Martens and Foxes are the most valuable Furs, and the Cat-skins are very good; that the Natives trade but for very little Beaver with the French; but he has seen the Indians come down in fine French Cloaths, with as much Lace upon them as ever he saw upon any Cloaths whatsoever.

That he has seen a great many Indians in laced Cloaths without Shoes or Stockings.

That he believes, That if the Company would give as much for the Furs as the French, the Indians would

bring them; and if the Company were willing, they have a sufficient Stock to purchase small Furs; but 'tis not the Interest of the Company to pay 10 000 *l.* for 30 or 40,000 *l.* worth of Goods, when they can have Goods to that Value for 5,000 *l.*

Being examined as to the Usage he received from the Company; he said, It was very indifferent, being sometimes treated with bad Victuals, and sometimes with bad Language; that he wrote several times to the Company to come home, but was refused.

Being asked, Why he desired to go back? he said, That was upon another Account; that the Master of the Factory had wrote an Account to the Company, that the Witness had not behaved himself well, and he desired to be examined face to face with him; that he did throw in a Line or two, but he did it to clear himself from a false Accusation; that he cannot remember the Words, but one of the Company's Clerks wrote it for him, and the Clerk wrote it as he thought proper; and the only Reason that he sent in that Paper was to gain Admittance into the Committee-room.

That the Complaint against him was, refusing to do his Duty; but that the Company sent for him the Year before he threw in that Paper, to take him into their Service, which he refused; that he really does not know what the Paper contained; but he thinks he did not express any desire to go to *Hudson's Bay*, but is not certain; and that he would not go now for 100 *l.* a Year.

*Robert Griffin*, a Silversmith, who had been Five Years in the Company's Service, said, That he melted down Six Ounces of Ore, which was brought from the *East Main*, by Captain *Mitchell*, and which produced about Two Ounces of Lead; that he did this by the Order of *Joseph Isbester* the Factor or Governor of *Albany*, who is now at *Churchill Fort*; that the Governor stood by him while he made the Trial, and that the Witness can swear 'tis good Lead; that the Witness told the Governor 'twas pity that Captains did not take in this Lead Ore for Ballast instead of Stones: To which the Governor replied, That they did not want any such Discovery; but he cannot tell whether *Isbester* informed the Company of this Transaction; that the Governor ordered the Witness to try if he could extract Silver from the Ore; who told him he had not proper Instruments to make such Experiment: To which the Governor answered, That the Company had no Occasion for it, for that they wanted Encouragement for nothing but their Furs; that he imagines there are great Quantities of Ore on the *East Main*, having known several Quantities brought from thence from One to Fifteen Pounds Weight; and he is further confirmed in that Opinion from the Report of the Indians (whose Language he understands) who have told him, that there were great Quantities of Ore on the *East Main*; that he imagines the Trade in Ore would be as advantageous as that in Furs, there being Wood enough in the Country to smelt it; nor would it interfere at all with the Fur Trade, only more Hands must be employed.

That he thinks the Trade to *Hudson's Bay* capable of being extended, which must cause a greater Consumption of European Goods; but for that Purpose proper Settlements must be made: And if a Colony was once settled there, they might trade in Huts, as the French do, and there would be no Danger of the Indians attacking them; but if a Colony was settled an hundred Miles up the Country, he believes the Indians would not come to the Bay at all.

That the Witness has been informed, that the Soil One hundred Miles up the Country, would produce Corn: That he has seen Oats grow to Perfection at *Albany*.

That he has also seen Peas, Beans, Turnips, Sallad-