

Jeanne at the trading post. Jean and Marie Bonga's son Pierre became a respected fur trader in Minnesota. Later Pierre Bonga married an Ojibwe woman there. She gave birth to their son George in 1802.

Like other fur trader families, the Bongas probably lived in a simple log home, heated with a fireplace. When he was a child, George Bonga may have worn a mix of Ojibwe and European clothes. He learned how to hunt like the Ojibwe hunters and how to canoe like the voyageurs. When he grew older, George Bonga went to school in Montreal (*MON-tree-ALL*), Canada. When he returned to Minnesota, he worked in the fur trade like his father and his grandfather.



George Bonga in the Fur Trade

George Bonga began his work in the fur trade by taking pelts and trade goods across the lakes and rivers of Minnesota. He was famous for his strength. People who knew him wrote that he was over six feet tall and weighed more than 200 pounds. They also reported that he could carry 700 pounds of furs and supplies all at once!

Voyageurs carried animal pelts across lakes and rivers by canoe. The voyageurs in this painting by Frances Anne Hopkins are waking up on a foggy morning.