

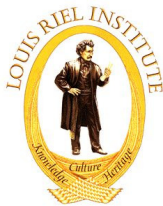
Pierre “Tête Jaune” Hatsination (d. 1821)

The “Leather Track”¹ (Yellowhead) Pass through the Rocky Mountains was first used by the Iroquois and Métis traders of the North West Company in the early 1800s. It was later named Tête Jaune (Yellowhead) Pass after Pierre Hatsination (aka Pierre Bostonais), a Métis, after he built a fur cache on the Grand Fork of the Fraser River in order to hide his furs.

Pierre Hatsination was an Iroquois Métis with yellow blonde hair that earned him the nickname Tête Jaune. He was one of the unsung Métis who stood out in Canada's fur industry. Tete Jaune Cache, the Yellowhead Highway, also called the Carlton Trail, and Yellowhead Pass were named for him. Hatsination and David Thompson traversed the pass around 1805. Pierre was a fur trader and trapper who guided for the North West Company in the early 1800s. The yellow-haired Iroquois Metis guide Pierre Hastination was named Tete Jaune by the French voyageurs because of his blonde-streaked hair. By the 1830s, the Yellowhead Highway was truly being used as a trans-Canada highway. Red River carts rolled along it in 1841, miners used it for the Caribou Gold Rush in 1856, the 1862 Overlanders followed it to Kamloops and Prince George, and settlers followed it to their new homesteads in the West.

Pierre Hatsination traveled, hunted and trapped in the triangle between the Smoky River Post, Jasper and Fort George, and from time to time, he accepted employment with the Hudson's Bay Company. Pierre Hatsination or Tête Jaune died in 1828.

James McGregor wrote about Hatsination's demise. “During the fall of 1828, Simpson called at Fort St. James on Stuart Lake to see Chief Factor William Connolly. About the time he was there, or perhaps soon after he left, Connolly received news about Tête Jaune. John Todd, writing from McLeod Lake, advised him that the venturesome Iroquois was reported dead. The Beaver Indians' enmity had finally overtaken him and somewhere in New Caledonia(*B.C.*) they killed Tête Jaune, his brother Baptiste and their wives and children. Tête Jaune who had served the white man well, the man who had led the way through the Yellowhead Pass had come to the end of his travels, all unaware that because of his cache, his name would pass down the ages.”²



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¹ So-called because this pass was used for brief periods from the mid-1820s to the early 1850s by the Hudson's Bay Company, principally to transport leather, especially moosehides, from the Saskatchewan District to its posts in New Caledonia.

² James MacGregor, *Overland by the Yellowhead*. Saskatoon: Western Producer Book Service, 1974.