



THE FUR TRADE

A long time ago people in Europe loved hats made out of beaver felt. They hunted and killed lots of beavers. One day the beavers became hard to find.

When Europeans came to North America they found lots of beavers. Native Americans were very good at trapping beaver. They were willing to trade goods for beaver pelts.

A man named William Henry Ashley decided to hire young men to go to the Rocky Mountains and trap beaver. Every year Mr. Ashley met with the young men in the Rocky Mountains. He brought them money and trade goods. They gave him the beaver pelts. This was called a *rendezvous*. The young men soon became known as “Mountain Men.”

One day, people decided they liked silk hats better than beaver hats. That was the end of the beaver trade business.