

NORTHLAND EXPLORATION

OTTAWA, April 10th, 1909.

To the

HONOURABLE FRANK OLIVER,
Minister of the Interior, Ottawa.

SIR.—I have the honour to report on my exploration during the last season. By the foregoing letter of instructions to me, dated August 6th, 1908, and signed by Mr. R. E. Young, D.L.S., Superintendent of Railway Lands, I was to make an exploration of that part of Saskatchewan north and west of Prince Albert as far north as the Churchill River covering as much of this country as time would permit.

The following are extracts from this letter:—

"The object aimed at is to procure all the information possible about that tract of country lying to the east of the Beaver River and Green Lake, south of the Churchill River and extending east to the old canoe route from Cumberland House via Frog Portage to Stanley Mission. The water routes in this district have been travelled by many travellers and explorers, but as little is known of the interior particular attention should be paid to obtaining information about the character of the country away from the travelled routes. Expeditions should be made inland and the approximate course and distance noted.

"The object of this exploration is to ascertain the value of the district to be traversed for farming, lumbering and mining purposes and any useful information bearing upon these subjects not included specifically in these instructions should be included in your report."

I have the honour to report that in compliance with the above instructions I proceeded at once by train to Prince Albert and arrangements were made with the Hudson's Bay Company to provide me with men and the means of transportation. In this they were not altogether successful and much valuable time was lost by the disinclination of the natives for work, although I offered double wages.

We left Prince Albert on August the 20th, 1908, and I returned on January 6th, 1909. My assistant, Mr. Caldwell, who I regret to say met with a painful and serious accident to his knee, returned somewhat earlier. I bear willing testimony to his valuable services. From Prince Albert I proceeded by team to the south end of Green Lake. The road from Prince Albert to Green Lake is a surveyed highway, and in most seasons of the year would be considered a fairly good wagon road except perhaps the last twelve miles.

After reaching Green Lake I travelled chiefly by canoe making side trips inland where possible or when it seemed desirable to do so.

When the setting in of winter made further canoe travel impossible I procured dog teams to continue the exploration.

An effort was made to keep a record of the temperature each day but owing to the fact that we seldom camped longer than one night in the same place and had to do our own cooking and in the winter drive our own dogs, this was found impracticable. However, I placed a thermometer at Ile a la Crosse in care of the Hudson's Bay Company, and had a temperature record kept there. At the conclusion of this report I give a table showing the result from August 27th, 1908, to March 15th, 1909.