

his former engagement, placed himself in communication with a leading Celtic trader of the Nor'west Company, Alexander Fraser. He was gladly welcomed by the Montreal traders, and entered their service in the capacity mentioned. Leaving Fort William, on Lake Superior, in August, 1796, Thompson passed by the Grande Portage to Lake Winnipeg, then to Lake Winnipegosis to the upper Assiniboine River, down this river to the Souris, up the Souris and overland in a south-westward direction to the Missouri, back again to the Assiniboine (this Missouri journey being accomplished in the dead of winter), down the Assiniboine to Red River, and on March 7th, 1798, reached the junction of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers, where the city of Winnipeg now stands, but where, in that year, there seems to have been not even a fur trader's post.

Ascending the Red River to Red Lake, Thompson found the sources of the Mississippi much south of what the Commissioners in the Treaty of 1783 had supposed them to be. The hardy adventurer reached Lake Superior in the month of May, 1798. He continued in the service of the Nor'west Company years after this, being a most capable official, and succeeded in fixing the latitude and longitude of most of their posts. In July, 1811, we hear of Thompson arriving at the mouth of the Columbia River, and one of the rivers of the Pacific slope bears his name. On the occasion of this visit his work was the location of a fort for the company on the Columbia River. A journal of Astronomer Thompson, in manuscript, is known to be in existence.