

else they knew it was in the possession of the Eskimo of whom they must in that case have been afraid.<sup>1</sup>

Two important overland trade routes (or two sections of the same route) connected the Mackenzie river and Alaska, probably even in the earliest times, with Hudson bay and the Baffinland region. One of these led from the Arctic coast near Ogden bay directly south across Back river (where the people of that river were incidentally met by the coast traders), to the wooded section of the Akiliniik between the meridians 106 degrees and 104 degrees west. This route is recommended by no special geographic conditions other than the abundance of game and fish, but it must always have been an important one because it furnished with articles of wood a large section of the north coast of the mainland as well as the populous island settlements. A continuation of this route led (and leads to-day) north across the ice from Ogden bay to Albert Edward bay, Victoria island, and on through Victoria island west by the Ekallüktök river, which flows into the head of Albert Edward bay, and the Kagloryuak, which falls into the head of Prince Albert sound. These rivers head close together near the middle of Victoria island. This route then led west through Prince Albert sound, crossed to Banks island from Cape Wollaston to Cape Collinson or Cape Cantwell, followed the coast southwest to Nelson head and crossed the sea south to Cape Parry, and thence followed the coast westward. This was in its entirety a sled route except that pack dogs were used between Back river and the Akiliniik, and sometimes some distance north of Back river, as well as in the middle of Victoria island, for these sections were traversed in summer. The entire route is still in active use, except the section between Cape Parry and Nelson head, for Cape Parry has long been depopulated and the people at Cape Bathurst have been for more than half a century entirely concerned with white men's wares, obtained first from neighbours of their own race from the west, and later from white men directly. It is remarkable that, although a long time has elapsed since the Hudson's Bay Company and the Scotch

<sup>1</sup> Books are not at hand for exact citations. Consult, however, Alexander Mackenzie's account of the fur trade, and Daniel T. Hanbury's narrative of his exploration of the Akiliniik river.