

frequent sled trips from their home to the Asiatic side to buy reindeer skins of the Siberian deer-men.

So far as the writer knows, it was only in Alaska and near Hudson bay that the rivers played an important commercial rôle. Indians and Eskimo made use of the Yukon. The several rivers north of the Yukon brought the inland Eskimo to the coast, where they bought wares whose ultimate source was in distant Eskimo, Indian, or Siberian communities. Either by boats, or by sleds carrying boats, parties then bent on trade ascended the Kuwûk and Noatak rivers, carried their boats by sled over to the upper Colville, and descended by boats to the sea to meet the Point Barrow people near the western edge of the Colville delta, or traversed one of the easterly delta channels, by which routes they sometimes made their way as far east as Barter island. There was some trade intercourse between the Athabaskan Indians, and the Mackenzie Eskimo on that river and between the Athabaskans and the Coronation Gulf Eskimo on the Coppermine or near it, but in neither of these cases did the waterways, as such, play an important part—indeed the Coppermine can hardly be called navigable and, although portions of it were now and then used by Indians as canoe routes, the Eskimo probably never took their kayaks farther up than Bloody fall, nine miles from the sea. (They do not seem ever to have had umiaks). Chesterfield inlet and the rivers flowing into it were no doubt formerly, as now, ascended by Hudson Bay Eskimo for purpose of trade with the Back river, Arctic coast, and Victoria Island people.

An interesting light is thrown upon the past history of the Athabaskans of Great Slave lake, as well as upon that of the Eskimo, by the fact that, in the early days of the fur trade, these Indians made long and difficult journeys to the Hudson Bay trading posts by a circuitous southern route which was recommended neither by abundance of game (for they frequently starved), nor by navigability of rivers, while (as David T. Hanbury's explorations have shown) there existed a direct route well supplied with game and consisting of readily navigable rivers and lakes—the Akiliniik River route still so much used by the Eskimo. Either the Indians did not know of this route, or