

Lake, and the west side of the lake up to the portage route to Wollaston Lake, beyond which he surveyed Wollaston Lake and Black River to the east end of Turner's survey of Lake Athabaska. In 1797, while in the employ of the North-West Company, he surveyed the Churchill River from the mouth of the Reindeer River to Frog Portage, on his way to Cumberland House, and the following year he surveyed the river from Frog Portage upwards to Isle à la Crosse, making a detour on the route into Lac la Ronge. From Isle à la Crosse he ascended Beaver River, the principal upper branch of the Churchill River, past Green Lake to the source of the stream, whence he carried his canoes to Lac la Biche, where he built a trading post. In May, 1799, he was on the Clearwater River, a branch of the Athabaska, which he ascended to Methye Portage, from which place he surveyed the Churchill River down to Isle à la Crosse, and thence checked his survey of the river made the year before down to Frog Portage.

The absurdity of maintaining two sets of trading posts on the Churchill River and the upper waters of the Burntwood River, both belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, but one sending its furs down the Churchill River to Churchill and the other down the Burntwood and Nelson Rivers to York Factory, was recognized in 1798, and the chiefs at York Factory recalled their traders and left the district to the men from Churchill. From that time onwards until 1821, when the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies united under the former name, and perhaps for several years after the union of the companies, the furs from this district which were secured by the Hudson's Bay Company were carried down the Churchill River to Churchill, whence they were shipped to England.

In 1799 a trading expedition was sent from Fort Churchill up the Churchill River all the way to Green Lake on the Beaver River. It left Churchill on June 26 in three boats and one or two canoes in charge of Messrs. Thomas Stayner and William Auld. Everything went well for a while, but at about 130 miles from the fort, somewhere near the mouth of the Little Churchill River, the canoe containing the two principals was upset in a rapid, and, though the men were saved by the accident of the tracking line becoming entangled in the loose rocks in the bottom of the river, the contents of the canoe were lost. On this account Stayner returned to Churchill, while Auld continued up the river and established a trading post on Green Lake, where he spent the winter. On his arrival there he was greatly distressed to find that he had not brought enough brandy with him, but on his appealing to some of the posts on the Saskatchewan River they helped him out.

In the same year Peter Fidler of the Hudson's Bay Company, under direction from York Factory, left Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan waters and went by Frog Portage to the Churchill River, thence up that river and its tributary, Sturgeonweir River, to Green Lake and Lac la Biche. Thus Fidler and Auld, one from York and the other from Churchill,