

David Thompson, and still later it was the home of Daniel Harmon for several years.

On March 30th, 1796, he left Charlton House, and on April 3rd he arrived at Swan River House near the mouth of the Swan River in North-western Manitoba. After remaining here for a little more than a month to allow the ice to break up on the rivers and lakes he left Swan River house and embarked for Cumberland on the Saskatchewan River, where he arrived on the 23rd of May, having doubtless made the journey by the way of the Mossy Portage from the north end of Lake Winnipegosis to Cedar Lake.

He remained at Cumberland house throughout the summer, until the 25th of September. During this time we have not only his brief meteorological record, but we have his extended journal which is full of interesting material about the life in the country at that time. All the employees in charge of posts of the Hudson's Bay Company were instructed to keep daily journals, and in my travels through the Western country I have had opportunities of inspecting many of these old manuscript books most of which closely reflect the minds and characters of the men who wrote them. Many of them are simply monotonous records of wind and weather and the daily rounds of life, with most of the interesting and extraordinary events omitted, probably for the reason that such events were so widely known and deeply felt that it seemed needless to record them. But Fidler's journals are good exceptions to such monotony. They are not diffuse, but they give clear statistical accounts of life at the time and in the places where he was writing and enter with perfect faithfulness the coming and going of his companions or competitors in the fur trade, and of the Indians with whom they traded.

The following extract is his account of summary justice as administered to the Indians on the Saskatchewan by the Partners of the North-West Company, and at the same time it is a good illustration of Fidler's matter-of-fact style of describing even the most tragic occurrences.

"June 2nd [1796] Thursday. Early this morning two Canoes of Indians arrived loaded with meat for our house. These two men was known to be the principals in the murder of one of the Canad. men this last winter at Isle a la Crosse. Just as one had stepped out of his Canoe (i.e., Charles's Brother alias Beardy) he was immediately seized by the Canadians that was ready to take him when he landed, and they hauled him into their house. The other, called Little Gut, had not disembarked when the other man was seized, and he immediately pushed his Canoe from the Shore and paddled with all the haste he could to get out of the Canadians way, they immediately manned one of their Canoes with