

same river, which divided about one hundred miles above York-fort, forming an island betwixt them. The greater part of the natives that trade at York-fort, I was told, came down the branch called Hayes's-river; it being reckoned by them much the shorter way, and not so wide and dangerous as Nelson-branch. But upon examining the interpreters more closely, they could not make it appear, that the natives found much greater difficulties in coming down or going up the one than the other; and the only substantial reason I could find for the preference, was, that as York-fort lay upon Hayes's-river, and Nelson-river was very broad below, they could not bring their furs round by sea below the point of the island which divides the branches, without great danger, nor conveniently carry them by land across the island. But with regard to the difficulties of navigating the different branches, which were so magnified on the Nelson side, I argued thus: They both proceed from the same level of water at the head of the island, one hundred miles above the factory; and at the sea are again upon an equal level; if then there were greater falls or sharps upon Nelson-river (as they allow it was longer in its course) than upon Hayes's-river, there must be more upon Hayes's-river; and the distances betwixt fall and fall upon Nelson, must be greater and the waters more level, than upon Hayes's-river; as a fall of three feet in ten, must be twice as sharp as a fall of three feet in twenty: therefore I concluded, that there was as good going up and down Nelson-river as Hayes's-river; which upon examination I afterwards found true.

In the year 1744, on occasion of a French war, the Company thought it expedient to winter the Sea-horse frigate, captain Fowler, in the Bay. He accordingly wintered in Churchill-river, but as soon as the river was open, and the ice was cleared