

HBCA B.60/a/2

**A JOURNAL OF TRANSACTIONS AT EDMONTON HOUSE
BY GEO. SUTHERLAND 1796 & 7**

1796

July 17th

Left York Fort accompanied by Mess^{rs} Longmoor and Hallet. The former bound to the Red deers and the latter to Jack River with 16 Canoes loaded with trading Goods, 3 for the former, and two for the latter place, and the remaining 11 for the upper Settlements. they arrived at Gordon House on the 22^d. Robert Linklater Bowsman having been taken very ill with the Gravel is consequently unable to proceed on the Passage we were under the necessity of engaging Edward Tomison as Bowsman in his Stead for three years at £16 per year as per Contract now sent to the Chief at York.

24

After exchanging some part of our Cargoes we proceeded on the Voyage and got to the Jack River on the 10th of August where we pointed out a proper Spot for Mr Hallet to build a House on. near one occupied by the Canadians.

Sent one Canoe to the Cross Lake to bring the Company's property and men from that place, but the Season being far advanced and my distance to the Upper Settlement being very great, I could not wait Mr Tate's arrival but have left Mr Longmoor to settle Matters with Mr Tate's Men and I proceeded on the Voyage to Cumberland, where we reached the 25th August, where we stayed 5 days packing & repacking Bundles and leaving an assortment of Trading Goods at this place, also delivered Mr Bird an assortment for Carlton House.

[Fo. 3]

August 30

Left Cumberland with 10 canoes for Buckingham House, as also Mr Bird with two Canoes for Carleton. Mr Fidler remains in charge of Cumberland till the arrival of the Fall Canoes from the Factory. when he will proceed to take Charge of Buckingham. we came to Carleton House on the 7 Sept^r where we stayed one day, and set out upwards. on the 13 we met one Man & three horses from Buckingham where I left the Canoes and went on horseback along shore & put up with the Canoes every night, found plenty of buffalo all the way so that our men had plenty of fresh Meat

Sept^r 26

We arrived at Buckingham House where we found all well except a few

horses stolen by the Stone Indians in the Course of the Summer. the day after our arrival Mr Shaw with 18 Canoes loaded with trading Goods belonging to the Canadian Company arrived here.

- 27 employed opening and leaving an assortment of Goods at this place, leaving James Gaddy still in charge of the House till the arrival of the fall Canoes.
- 29 dispatched 6 canoes with Brandy, Powder, Guns etc. to Edmonton House – also myself with 6 men and a number of Horses carrying dry Goods to the same place, where I arrived on the 3^d of October where I found all well, and every[thing] in very Good Order. the Stone Indians also stole some horses from this House in the Summer: I found 400 Beav^r and some dry Provisions traded by Alex^r Flett in the absence of the Canoes
- Oct 4* *Tuesday* Wind S Clear fine Wea^r. men at the House clearing the warehouses etc. in the afternoon 6 Canoes arrived from Buckingham. A band of Muddy river Indians came in
- 5 *Wednesday*. Wind and Weather as yesterday. The Indians of yesterday went away. Men employed as before. The Canoe Men resting themselves [Fo. 3d]
- 6 *Thursday* Wind NW Clear Wea^r. Sent seven Men in two Canoes loaded with Bark. Indians all drunk at the House. Men employed as before.
- 7 *Friday* A Strong breeze SE Clear Weather: some of the Indians went away and others arrived Men employed as yesterday
- 8 *Saturday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday. The Indians trading. Men employed as before. Sent three men down to Buckingham House on horseback.
- 9 *Sunday* A light Breeze N^{ly} Clear Wea^r. some of the Indians went away.
- 10 *Monday* a Small Breeze SW Clear cold Wea^r Men employed laying up the Canoes and getting Hay home The Canoe men have all gone to do Duty. This day I opened the last of the Goods brought from York Fort, and I have the satisfaction to say I have not found the least article

damaged. a proof that your honours Servants are exceedingly careful of the property committed to their charge. Indians taking debt and part going away.

- 11 *Tuesday* Wind & Wea^r as yesterday The men employed getting Hay home and the Carpenter Stocking Tools. Most part of the Indians went away [Fo. 4]
- 12 *Wednesday* A light breeze NW cloudy weather. Having no Provisions in the House Sent three men with Horses to Hunt Buffalo Two men at the Pit saw and the rest Cutting down Stockades to enlarge the Yard & Gardens etc. Some Indians arrived and others went away.
- 13 *Thursday* Wind and Weather as yesterday. The Men that went to Hunt Buffalo yesterday arrived with the flesh of 2 Bulls. The rest employed as Yesterday some Indians going away
- 14 *Friday* A fresh Breeze NE Clear sharp weather with snow last night. Two Men at the Pit saw the rest Cutting down Stockades. Indians trading and going away.
- 15 *Saturday* Wind N^{ly} Clear sharp weather Men employed as yesterday Several Indians arrived, brought very little with them
- 16 *Sunday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday. part of the Indians of Yesterday went away
- 17 *Monday* Wind Variable Cloudy Cold Weather Men employed as on Saturday. in the afternoon 4 men arrived in a Canoe from Buckingham House with trading Goods etc. Some Indians Pitched away and some Arrived [Fo. 4d]
- 18 *Tuesday* A Light Breeze S^{ly} Clear fine Weather. The Canoe of Yesterday Returned to Buckingham House Men employed as before the last of the Indians Pitched away.
- 19 *Wednesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Men employed as before.
- 20 *Thursday* A light Breeze NW Clear Weather. Men employed as before.

To Mr James Bird.

Dear Sir:

I received your favour by the Canadians a few days ago, am very glad to hear your neighbours does not intend building another House this Season. by this means you will be able to send me a good many more Men in the Spring to Assist down with the Boats & Canoes and in case I should not have another Opportunity, I wish You to send as many Men as you can spare as soon as possible after the river breaks. Send up at the same time all the trading Goods remaining except what will be necessary to procure Bark & provisions in the Summer. If there should be any spare goods at Cumberland House use your best endeavors to get it sent up also as I will be short of many Articles here especially Ball.

I arrived here on the 3^d instant and have traded upwards of 1000 Beaver in furs, some of which are but of a very indifferent quality but I was forced to take them

[Fo. 5]

The reason I did not write you when I sent you the horse in the fall was as follows. Mr Shaw overtook me at the Crossing Place and told me that some of Mr Finley's men were to return that day and asked me if I had any commands to you. I told [him] I wished to Send a Horse to you by his people which he readily agreed to but at this time our canoes were about 10 Miles on head. Consequently I had neither Pen or paper. all the news I had to tell you was that the Stone Indians had been lurking about Buckingham House all the Summer: and in the end Stole some horses – 2 of the Stone Indians have been killed by the Sutherd Indians in the very act of carrying off the Horses belonging both Houses. A frenchman also shot a Suther'd Indian in the Pious act of taking away a few horses which did not belong to him. As there are several of your branch Indians come to Hunt in this part of the Country and I make no doubt but many of them are your Debtors, I wish you to send me a list thereof that I may stop payment of at least part of them. I am glad to here you have got a good quantity of Bark. therefore Build as many Canoes as You possibly can. let them be between the Large & small size, that is canoes that 2 men can take down and 3 up.

Collect as much pitch as you can as the Boats will require a great deal of that article

Wishing you a Plentiful Winter and a good trade, I remain
D^r Sir your Obe^t Hble Serv^t G.S.

[Fo. 5d]

To Mr Robert Longmoor.

Dear Sir

Mr Shaws men going your way gives me an Opportunity of informing you that we are well here. I arrived at this place the 3 Instant on Horseback from Buckingham House and our Canoes came the next day. I found all safe except some Horses that were stolen by the Stone Indians in the Course of the Summer: Since my arrival here I have traded upwards of 1000 Beaver in furs a part of which is but of a very indifferent quality but I was obliged to trade it in Order to get the goods bye and bye.

Provisions have been hitherto very scarce Owing to the Indians being Continually drinking. so much for this place.

They had a very disagreeable and I may add a very dangerous Summer at Buckingham the Stone Indians having lurked about the whole Season with an intention as is supposed of Attacking the Houses but their Courage failed them: they were satisfied with Stealing a few horses which cost 2 of them their lives having been shot by the Suther'd Indians, who detected them. A Suther'd Indian was also Shot by a Canadian in the Pious Act of helping himself to a few horses that were not his own.

There ware some Bark got here in the Summer but not enough to Build the number of Canoes wanted. therefore I hope you will use your best endeavours in getting a few built at the Red deers River. Dispatch your Canoes for Gordon House as soon as the navigation will Permit in the Spring and not wait for us as have been the case for some years back. by this means your Men and Canoes will be able to meet the Boats at the Head of Trout River with a Cargo of Goods from Gordon House the Men cannot and must not make any Objections to this Order, as there is trip money allowed by the Honble Company

[Fo. 6]

I told you before and I now repeat it that Officers are not to be Permitted to go down to York as usual, as it puts the Honble Company to great to a great [sic] expense Annually. but

to indent for those Articles they may Stand in need of which Mr Colen Promises to Supply them with.

Wishing you a Plentiful Winter and a good trade. I am D^r
Sir Your Obed^t hble Serv^t G.S.

P.S. Give my Compliments to Mr Isham.

- 21 *Friday* Wind NW Clear Weather: The Men employed as before. Ice driving in the river.
- 22^d *Saturday* Wind the same Cloudy Wea^r: Men getting firewood.
- 23 *Sunday* A light breeze S^{ly} Cloudy wea^r.
- 24 *Monday* Wind SW Clear fine Weather. Men employed getting birch for Sleds This day engaged an Indian to kill Provisions for the Winter. at the same time payed of the Indians who found the House in Provisions all Summer.
- 25 *Tuesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Men employed falling Timber. The Hunter and three Men Pitched away. The Summer hunter also went away to kill Beaver.
- 26 *Wednesday* A Light Breeze So^{ly} Clear Wea^r Men employed as before Three Men arrived from Buckingham House with the Packet. [Fo. 6d]

From Mr Colen to GS Augst 25, 1796.

Sir

The arrival of the *King George*, Capt Richards, the 20th Instant enables me to dispatch all the Canoes which returned from Cumberland House. Mr Oman will deliver you the Invoice of goods taken from hence and Mr Whitford [h]as Orders to send an account of Articles that shall be taken from the stores at Gordon House.

Only 100 yards of vitry sent out this Season, out of which Mr Oman has had a Tent made. No raven duck to be purchased What we shall do for Tents next Summer I know not. All kinds of Merchandise as well as Provisions are considerably advanced in England & our Indents are curtailed in Consequence. I advise you to be as frugal as possible in Your expenditures as you cannot be

supplied next year with many things much called for Inland. We have neither Oatmeal, Scotch Barley, Rice, Lard, Molasses, prunes, raisins, Rum or Suet sent us, only half the usual quantity of Butter & porter, no more than 42 Rundlets of Flour & not two-thirds of the quantity of Sugar as was taken Inland this Season by you & other Officers. of the latter Article you no there was none in the House when you left York. We are also deprived of the Usual Quantity of Tea. Upon the whole I am fearful we shall experience want before your Arrival to avoid which I shall send several of the Men home without any cause or Complaint against them but to prevent it.

[Fo. 7]

Our being curtailed so very considerably originated from the large Stock on Remains in York Fort books which on Examination were balanced from the Stewards; to clear this business the remains as taken by Mr Longmoor & himself Augst 1. 95. have been produced to the Company's new Officer, Mr Jarvis who is appointed Inspector. these remains differ very widely from what were entered in Account Book sent home. In the Article of Scotch Barley alone the Deficiency is upwards of lbs. 2600 & other Articles in proportion

All the Articles requested, you will I hope receive as per Invoice: those you wish to be conveyed to Gordon House next spring shall be sent. As John Moor is Strongly recommended to me as a good Boat Builder he accompanies Mr Oman. You will therefore employ him with Nichol Spence in building such Boats as will suit the rivers in which they are to be navigated.

I expect to have a large assortment of Goods at Gordon House against your arrival next Summer.

The Honble Committee disapproves of so many Officers coming to the Factory you are therefore in future to prevent their coming down

You will herewith receive all Letters from Europe which will inform You how Officers are situated in that Quarter.

And let me impress on your mind the Committee's Determination of this Season, that is, only by an Increase of Returns, the Company will in future give encouragement to their Servants. They are much disappointed at the small Trade from York last year, 32,000 MB^s but are highly Pleased at the exertions of the Officers from Churchill who sent little better than 5000

MB^r.

I remain with Wishing you all manner of happiness and
Success to the Honble Company's concerns

Yours etc. J.C.

[Fo. 7d]

27 *Thursday* Wind NW Clear fine Weather. Men employed as before A
Suther'd Indian Arrived with a few furs

28 *Friday* Wind and weather as yesterday Men's employ the same

29 *Saturday* Wind Variable Clear fine Weather
Mr Sutherland and two Men set off for Buckingham House 4 Men
getting Pitch, the rest as before.

30 *Sunday* A light Breeze SW Clear fine Wea^r three Sussew Indians arrived
with a few furs, and went away in the evening

31 *Monday* Wind and Weather the same three men went to fetch Meat from
the Hunter & arrived in the evening with the flesh of 2 Moose and two
Bulls. The rest peeling Stockades etc.

1796

Nov^r 1 *Tuesday* Wind & Weather as before. Men employed as yesterday A few
Muddy River Indians arrived brought very little with them

2 *Wednesday* A fresh breeze NW Clear Weather. Men employed as before

3 *Thursday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday Men's employ the same –
Some of the Muddy River Indians went away The Hunter arrived to go
across the river to hunt.

[Fo. 8]

4 *Friday* A light Breeze W^{ly} clear fine Wea^r The Hunter Pitched away
across the River. Part of the Men Cutting fire Wood the rest as before

5 *Saturday* Wind SW Clear fine Weather Men employed as yesterday

6 *Sunday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday.

7 *Monday* Wind & Weather the same Men employed as on Saturday Mr
Sutherland and three men arrived from Buckingham House

- 8 *Tuesday* A fresh Breeze NW part & part Cloudy Wea^r Men employed as before
- 9 *Wednesday* Wind as Yesterday with Snow in the Afternoon Six men went for Meat the rest as before
- 10 *Thursday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday The Men that went for Meat Yesterday returned with the flesh of 7 Buffalow The rest as before
- 11 *Friday* Wind & Weather as before. Part of the Men getting firewood the rest variously employed. Some Blood Indians Arrived brought little or nothing with them
- [Fo. 8d]
- 12 *Saturday* Wind & Weather the same – Men employed as yesterday. The Indians of Yesterday traded and went away. The river Ice set fast Opposite to the House
- 13 *Sunday.* A light Breeze SW Clear weather.
- 14 *Monday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday Three men at the Pit Saw. the rest getting firewood
- 15 *Tuesday* A fresh Breeze SE Cloudy Weather Men employed the same. Six Men Arrived from Buckingham House
- 16 *Wednesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed the same Six Men arrived from Buckingham House.
- 17 *Thursday* Wind NW Cloudy Weather with Snow Men employed as before.
- 18 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Some of the Men hauling firewood, the rest as before Two Sussew Indians arrived brought a few furs
- 19 *Saturday* Wind & Weather the same The Indians of Yesterday went away The men employed as before

- 20 *Sunday* Wind the same clear sharp Wea^r
- 21 *Monday* A light Breeze SW with small Snow Part of the Men hauling & Cutting fire wood, the rest as before
[Fo. 9]
- 22 *Tuesday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday Men employed as yesterday.
- 23 *Wednesday* A light Breeze S^{ly} Clear Weather Sent five men to Buckingham House Men employed as before
- 24 *Thursday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday Men's employ the same
- 25 *Friday* Wind SW Clear thawing weather Men employed as before This Morning a tribe of Blood Indians came in, brought a few wolves but no Provisions – and in the evening a large tribe of Fall Indians Arrived for a Supply of Tobacco etc., they brought a few wolves.
- 26 *Saturday.* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed cutting fire wood & Cleaning the Yard Part of the Indians of Yesterday went away.
- 27 *Sunday* Wind Easterly cloudy Weather. A Suther'd Indian arrived for a supply of Tobacco
- 28 *Monday.* A fresh Breeze NW Clear cold Weather Sent three men with the Indian of yesterday to fetch the flesh of two Red Deer, also a man from the Hunter Tent arrived for Men to fetch Meat from the Tent The rest of the Men employed as on Saturday
[Fo. 9d]
- 29 *Tuesday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday The men that went for meat yesterday arrived with the flesh of two Red Deer. also 4 Men went to the Hunter Tent to fetch Meat. The rest employed as before In the evening some Blood and fall Indians Arrived, brought a few wolves
- 30 *Wednesday* Wind variable Clear fine thawing Weather The Men that went for meat yesterday arrived with [the flesh] of 7 bulls. The Indians of yesterday traded and went away Men employed as before
- 1796**
Dec^r 1 *Thursday* Wind S Clear fine weather Two Men at the Pit Saw Taylor at work for trade one making Kegs Carpenter laying floors, the rest cutting

down & Collecting fire wood.

- 2 *Friday* Wind Variable clear fine Weather Men employed as Yesterday. one man Arrived from the Hunters Tent for Men to fetch Meat
- 3 *Saturday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday Sent 5 Men and 16 horses to the Hunters Tent to fetch Meat. The rest employed as before. A few Suther'd Indians came in with a tolerable trade
- 4 *Sunday* Wind E Cloudy warm weather. The Men that went for meat Yesterday Arrived with the flesh of 4 Buffaloes. The rest as before. Two Men Arrived from Buckingham House.
- 5 *Monday.* Wind and Weather as Yesterday. Tradesmen as before. the rest Cutting down & Collecting Timber The Indians of Saturday traded and went away A number of Blackfoot Arrived brought a few furs & some Provisions [Fo. 10]
- 6 *Tuesday* Clear calm warm Weather. Men employed as Yesterday. Indians all drinking
- 7 *Wednesday* A light Breeze SW Clear fine Weather. The Indians of Monday went away. Men employed as before
- 8 *Thursday.* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Sent 4 Men with 12 Horses for Meat. The rest as before.
- 9 *Friday* Wind NW Cloudy thawing Weather. The men that went for meat Yesterday returned with the flesh of 2 Bulls. The rest of the Men as Yesterday. In the Evening a large tribe of Blackfoot Indians came in brought a number of Wolves and some Provisions.
- 10 *Saturday.* Wind Variable cloudy warm weather. Men employed cleaning the Yard and Cutting firewood Indians trading
- 11 *Sunday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday The Indians of Friday went away Two Suther'd Indians arrived for a supply of Tobacco and Powder etc. [Fo. 10d]
- 12 *Monday* Wind SW Clear fine Weather 4 Men Looking for horses the rest tying up furs and Cutting fire Wood The Indians of Yesterday went

away.

13 *Tuesday* Wind as Yesterday with rain all day. Sent 4 Men with 10 Horses to Buckingham House for Trading Goods. The rest as yesterday

14 *Wednesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday which is very singular at this Season of the Year the rain having exhausted all the Snow. A Large Tribe upwards of 400 of Fall Indians Arrived they appeared to have a number of Wolves and some Provisions Men Guarding the Gates and ware House

15 *Thursday* A Strong Breeze NW with Snow all day Men employed as Yesterday. Traded with most part of the Indians of Yesterday.

16 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed as before.

Finished trading with the fall Indians, these being the nation who Plundered Manchester House in 1793 and attacked and burnt the south Branch and kill'd three of your honors servants there in the Summer 1794 and have not visited any of your Honors' Settlements since that time till now.

I thought it Absolutely necessary to let them know we had not forgot that horrid Affair by giving them severe reprimand but to give this the more weight, I begged Mr Shaw the Canadian Master with all his Officers to be present which he very readily agreed to.

[Fo. 11]

When after we had Collected as many of the principal Men as the room could, we told them through an interpreter that we had not forgot their past Conduct and we now had them in our powers – and did not want the means of punishing them effectually.

But that we would forgive them this time if they made proper Acknowledgement and promise never to be even so much as impertinent to europeans in future, to which they all agreed & seemed thankful to us for our lenity and to convince us they were sincere they brought me in three Horses and a few wolves Skins with the same number to Mr Shaw in order to make peace with us, which we have Concluded accordingly and they all went away.

But here I solemnly declare that if they or any other Tribe of Indians should again Attack any of the Honble Company's Settlements while I have the honor of being Inland Master, I will take such effectual revenge as will perhaps for ever deter them from Committing the like,

unless I should receive a Contrary Order from the Honble Committee next year, which I have no reason to expect

I will here beg leave to observe that my sole view in wishing to reduce the Indians to a sense of their Duty is no more or less for the Good of your honours Service – As its well known to all those who understand the Customs & Manners of Indians that the Oftener they escape with impunity, the more daring they grow & I am of Opinion this will hold good with respect to Cowards and savage people.

[Fo. 11d]

17 *Saturday* Wind N^{ly} Cloudy sharp weather. Men employed Cutting fire wood and Cleaning the yard

18 *Sunday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday a few Blackfoot Indians came in brought some Wolves and provisions

19 *Monday.* Wind and Weather as Yesterday One man making Kegs three laying the upper floor of the shed taylor at work for Trade the rest Cutting fire wood. The Indians of Yesterday went away. One man came from the Hunter Tent for Men to fetch meat

20 *Tuesday.* Wind N^{ly} Cloudy cold Weather with snow. Sent 6 Men and 10 Horses to the Hunters Tent for Meat The rest employed as Yesterday.

21 *Wednesday.* Wind & Weather as yesterday. Men employed as before. This day one of our men James Murray, had the Misfortune of Shooting himself in the knee with his Gun very fortunately it was only loaded with powder. Yet I am fearful it will be some time before he will be able to go to duty.

22 *Thursday* A light Breeze W^{ly} Clear fine Weather. The Men that went for meat on Tuesday returned with the flesh of 8 Cows. The rest as before A few swampy Ground stone Indians Arrived brought a few skins.

23 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. The Indians of yesterday went away. four Men went to the Hunters Tent for meat The rest as before.

[Fo. 12]

24 *Saturday* A light Breeze S^{ly} Clear fine warm weather. The Men that went for meat Yesterday Arrived with the flesh of six Cows The rest as before.

Sunday Wind and Weather as Yesterday. the Canadians brought the following Letter from Mr Bird

Carleton House Nov^r 28th – 1796

Dear Sir:

You may depend upon my sending up all the men & Goods that can possibly be spared from this place (& Cumberland House if the season will permit) early in the spring if I can be supplied with a Steersman. the two who are here will at that time be employed building Canoes, should we be able to get our Birchrind safe (I have lately been informed that the Mountain in which it is, was on fire some time ago) and exclusive of these there is only one man here who can with any degree of propriety be trusted with a Canoe

The Indians of this place have made no fall Hunt worth mentioning. I have only traded about 300 B^r since you passed & have but a poor prospect of getting anything considerable this Season owing to a scarcity of Beaver: (of which there is a universal Complaint) and such a number of our traders having left this quarter. an Account of whose debts I have inclosed

[Fo. 12d]

as also to the improvements the Canadian Traders have made in the quality of their goods; a few years since many Indians who from the great quantities of Spirituous Liquors given them were induced to go to the Canadians Houses, the superiority of our Cloth, Guns, &c tempted, to trade these Articles from us; but they are now as well supplied by the Canadians. I find our Guns this year very indifferent both in their Locks & Stocks these are in general a dark red, and of course not much fancied by the Indians; our Neighbours Guns far surpasses them in appearance.

I have at Present about five or six cwt. of Fatt with a proportionate quantity of beat & dry'd Meat & hope to be able to make fifteen or twenty Pimmican Bags in the Spring. The Buffalo are tolerable near us & we have the appearance of a plentiful Winter for fresh Meat

Wishing you every happiness, I remain Sir Your Obd^t hble
Servant James Bird.

Monday Wind and Weather the same The Men amusing themselves at

foot Ball.

27 *Tuesday* Wind W^{ly} Clear fine Weather. Sent six Men to the Hunters Tent to fetch meat. three Suther'd Indians Arrived brought a few furs and some provisions.

[Fo. 13]

28 *Wednesday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday The Men of Yesterday Arrived with Six Cows. also the Men that went to Buckingham House Arrived with trading Goods and the following Letter. Sent 2 Men to the hunters Tent for Meat.

Buckingham House Dec^r 20th – 1796

Dear Sir

Your Men Arrived here all safe the 18th Inst and have sent as much Trading Goods as loaded the six horses (which was all they brought down) as per list inclosed The awls, steels, worms, &c shall be made as soon as the cold weather is over: which of late has been so intense (sixty below the Cypher) that the smith could not get any thing made of small Articles – hitherto he has been employed in repairing falling Hatchets (as there was not any fit for use here) and making nails for the Batteaux.

Shall pay every attention in getting the Boats as fast forward as possible – one is nearly finished and the Carpenters will go to the woods after Christmas to saw stuff for the other one.

Am glad to hear you have got such a Trade already so early in the season and hope if your Goods be sufficient to last till the Spring hunt comes in it will far surpass any of the former Years

[Fo. 13d]

there are but few Indians about this place. but by two Blackfoots now Arrived they say all their Country men will be here with their spring hunt.

We are but middlingly of[f] for Provisions, having only 3 Weeks Stock before hand, but hope the Buffalo will be soon nearer us than before by reason of the severe weather that has of late prevailed

Wishing you health and a happy new Year

I remain D^r Sir your Obdt hble Servant

Peter Fidler.

P .S. The Gun Locks &c shall be done as soon as possible

29 *Thursday* Wind E Clear fine Weather. The Men that went for Meat yesterday Arrived with three Cows. also a tribe of Sussew Indians Arrived brought but few furs and some provisions Sent six Men to the Hunters Tent for Meat.

30 *Friday* Wind and weather as yesterday. The Indians of Yesterday trading The Men that went for Meat yesterday arrived with the flesh of six Cows.

31 *Saturday* Wind N^{ly} Clear sharp Weather Men employed Cleaning the Yard The Indians of thursday went away. A Suther'd Indian Arrived, brought a tolerable good trade

1797
Jan^y 1 *Sunday* Wind NW Clear fine Weather. The Indian of yesterday traded & went away.

2 *Monday* Wind SW Clear warm weather. Men employed Cutting up fire Wood & tying up furs

3 *Tuesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Men employed the same.

Edmonton House Jan^y 3: 97
D^r Sir

Your favour of the 28th Nov^r Arrived here on Christmas day. am sorry your fall Trade is so little but hope you will make it up in the course of the Winter. Yet this is what can hardly be expected as many of your Indians are in this Quarter and doing nothing but pounding Buffalo – I'll endeavour to get as much of your Debts from them as possible

Trade at this place is great at this Season, being about 6000 Bea^r. I will be very short of some Articles a list of which I have enclosed.

[Fo. 14d]

I wish you to send only one Canoe with 5 or 6 Men as we will have Craft enough to carry down the furs as far as Cumberland. your people need not be afraid of the fall Indians as they have been in here and traded about 1000 Bea^r in furs with me. Mr Shaw & myself took them severely to task for their past

Conduct and nothing prevented us from retaliating on but the Consideration of our being under the Necessity of leaving but a few men inland in the Summer. but to do them justice they seemed to be sensible of what they have been guilty off. they say they have been lately like wolves but promise to Conduct themselves with propriety in future

They made me a Present of three horses with a few Wolves and the same to Mr Shaw in order to make peace with us which we have done accordingly

I am very glad you are likely to make 20 Bags of Pimican as there are very little Beat meat or fatt brought in here as Yet and Still less at Buckingham

I am glad to hear that a good understanding subsists between you and your Neighbour, Mr Finley its also the Case here, Mr Shaw being an excellent neighbour. by this means we bring the Natives to terms. a Contrary Conduct I am well convinced answers no end to either party. it makes the Natives impertinent and by that means creates unnecessary expense to our employers.

Since the cold weather commenced the Buffalo have been plenty near us and hope by this day month to have laid in our winter Stock.

That equal Success may attend you is the wish of, D^r Sir
your Obedt hble Servant G.S.

[Fo. 15]

- 4 *Wednesday* A light Breeze NW Clear fine Weather the Men employed as Yesterday. a few slave Indians Arrived
- 5 *Thursday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday one man came from the Hunters Tent for people to fetch meat. The Indians of yesterday traded and went away. Men as before.
- 6 *Friday* Wind SW Clear warm weather. Sent six Men with horses to the Hunters Tent for Meat The rest as before. a few Southerd Indians Arrived
- 7 *Saturday* Wind Variable Clear fine Weather. Men at home employed Cutting fire wood and Cleaning the Yard. the Men returned with the flesh of six Cows The Indians of yesterday traded & went away

- 8 *Sunday* Wind E^{ly} Cloudy warm Weather. Some Blackfoot & Stone Indians Arrived brought a few furs & a quantity of dry Provisions
- 9 *Monday* Calm Clear Weather. Sent 7 Men with horses to the Hunters Tent for Meat. the rest Cutting fire wood the Indians of yesterday traded & went away
- 10 *Tuesday* Wind NNW Clear fine Weather Men employed as Yesterday. the Men returned with the flesh of 7 Cows. James Murray who got shot on the 21st of Dec^r has now got well and gone to work. [Fo. 15d]
- 11 *Wednesday* Wind S^{ly} Clear warm Weather Men employed hauling fire wood. Sent 7 Men with horses to fetch some Meat
- 12 *Thursday* Wind & Weather as yesterday Men employed as before. the Men returned with the flesh of 7 Cows.
- 13 *Friday* Wind Easterly cloudy warm Weather. Sent six Men to the Hunters Tent to fetch meat. The rest employed as yesterday.
- 14 *Saturday* Wind & Weather as yesterday. Men at home Cutting fire Wood, & Cleaning the Yard. The Men returned with the flesh of six Cows A few Sussew Indians came in in the Afternoon, brought a few furs & some dry provisions
- 15 *Sunday* Wind Variable Clear fine Weather. the Indians of yesterday traded and went away
- 16 *Monday* Wind NW Cloudy wea^r with snow Sent six Men with horses to the Hunters Tent for Meat. The rest employed Cutting up fatt Meat to be Melted down for making pimican for the use of the Men in the summer [Fo. 16]
- 17 *Tuesday* Wind and Weather as Yesterday Men employed as Yesterday The men that went for meat Yesterday returned with the flesh of six Cows.
- 18 *Wednesday* Wind E Cloudy weather with snow. Sent six Men to the Hunters Tent for meat The rest employed as Yesterday

- 19 *Thursday* Wind and Weather the same The Men that went for meat returned with the flesh of six Cows the rest employed as yesterday
- 20 *Friday* A light Breeze SW Clear fine warm wea^{er} Some Muddy river Indians Arrived brought a tolerable good trade. Men employed Cutting fire Wood.
- 21 *Saturday* Wind Variable Clear fine wea^r. the Indians of yesterday went away. Men employed Cleaning the yard & Cutting fire wood.
- 22 *Sunday* Wind SE Clear fine Weather.
- 23 *Monday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed Cutting up & melting fat Meat Some Blood Indians Arrived.
- 24 *Tuesday* a light Breeze SW Clear fine thawing wea^r The Indians of yesterday went away Sent 4 Men to the Hunters Tent to fetch meat. the rest employed as yesterday. A Stone Indian Arrived
- 25 *Wednesday* Wind Variable Clear fine Weather. Men employed as before. The Indian of Yesterday traded & went away [Fo. 16d]
- 26 *Thursday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday The [men] that went for meat on Tuesday returned with the flesh of 4 Cows. Sent six more men with horses to fetch meat the rest Cutting fire wood.
- 27 *Friday* Wind E^{ly} Cloudy Wea^r. Men at home employed as yesterday. the men that went for Meat yesterday returned with the flesh of six Cows A few Blood Indians Arrived
- 28 *Saturday* Wind SW Clear fine Wea^r Sent 4 Men with horses to the Hunters Tent to fetch Meat. the rest Cutting fire wood & Cleaning the Yard. The Indians of Yesterday traded & went away.
- 29 *Sunday.* Wind & Weather as Yesterday The men that went for meat Yesterday returned with the flesh of 4 Cows
- 30 *Monday* Wind & Weather as before. Sent 7 Men with horses to fetch meat The rest Melting fatt & Cutting fire wood.

[Fo. 17]

31 *Tuesday* Wind & Weather the same The Men that went for Meat Yesterday returned with 7 Cows Sent six more for meat. The rest as yesterday.

1797

Feb^y 1 *Wednesday.* Wind W^{ly} Clear fine Weather The men that went for meat yesterday returned with the flesh of six Cows Sent five more for meat. The rest as before A Stone & Suther'd Indian Arrived brought a few skins & Some provisions

2 *Thursday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday The men that went for meat Yesterday returned with the flesh of 5 Cows – Sent six more for meat the rest Cutting fire wood.

3 *Friday.* Wind & Weather the same The men that went for meat returned with the flesh of six Cows also sent 4 more to fetch meat, the rest as yesterday

4 *Saturday* A light Breeze SW Clear fine weather The men that went for meat returned with 4 Cows. The Rest cleaning the yard & cutting fire wood. A Suther'd & Stone Indian arrived brought a tolerable good trade

5 *Sunday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday the Indians of Yesterday went away.

6 *Monday* Wind SE Clear fine thawing Weather Sent 8 men with horses to the Hunters Tent for meat. the rest putting snow & water in the Cellar to keep the Meat froze.

[Fo. 17d]

7 *Tuesday.* Wind & Weather as Yesterday The men that went for meat yesterday returned with the flesh of 8 Cows. The rest as yesterday.

8 *Wednesday* Wind easterly Clear fine Weather Sent 12 Men with horses to the Hunters Tent for meat the rest stowing away meat & Cutting fire wood. A few Blood Indians came in brought but a very few furs.

9 *Thursday.* Calm Clear fine Weather. the Men that went for meat yesterday returned with 12 Cows as did also the Hunter & men who were tenting with him he having kill'd a sufficient quantity of provisions to last the

winter the rest of the men as before The Indians of yesterday went away.

- 10 *Friday* Wind S^{ly} Clear Wea^r. Men employed Cutting fire wood.
- 11 *Saturday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed Cutting fire wood & Cleaning the Yard. A very large tribe of muddy river Indians Arrived, seemingly well gooded.
- 12 *Sunday* Wind & Weather as before. Indians trading
- 13 *Monday* Wind NW Cloudy weather with Snow Men employed hauling fire wood The Indians traded & went away.
- 14 *Tuesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed the same. [Fo. 18]
- 15 *Wednesday* Wind easterly cloudy weather Men employed hauling fire wood.
- 16 *Thursday.* Wind Variable Clear fine weather. The Men employed as on Tuesday.
- 17 *Friday* Wind SW Clear fine Weather Sent six Men with 12 Horses with following letter to Buckingham for trading Goods &c The [rest] hauling home timber & fire wood.

Edmonton House Feb^{ry} 17 97

Dear Sir,

Several tribes of Indians have been in since my last, most of which have brought good trades which has reduced my trading Goods very low Particularly Guns Tobacco Kettles Knives & Ball. I have therefore dispatched 6 Men with 12 Horses for what goods you can by any means spare, Twine excepted. Indeed all the goods that came from York fort this Season into this river would have been barely sufficient to serve this House only I make no doubt but you will be surprised when I tell you that the trade here at this early season surpasses the last years Trade Altogether at this place, being 10,000 MB^t. Although

scarcely any of the suther'd Indians have yet been in I also expect a large tribe of fall and Sussew Indians every day, and what to do for Tobacco I know not having only one roll in the House. To add to this since I have began this letter the Blackfoot Tribe have been for Tobacco. According to Custom this makes matters still worse.

[Fo. 18d]

At any rate I wish you to trade no more dry provisions as we have got sufficient already to serve ourselves and to assist our fellow servants who go to the Northward.

I have sent down all the bark for canoe building as also a gun lock to be repaired by Gilbert with some pinning wire to be made into Gun worms.

I beg you will return our men as soon as possible. Wishing you health & plenty, I remain D^r Sir your obdt hble
Servant G.S.

18 *Saturday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men as before. A tribe of Blackfoot Indians came poorly gooded.

19 *Sunday* Calm Cloudy warm Weather The Indians of yesterday traded & went away.

20 *Monday* Wind E.S.E. Clear warm weather. Men employed as on saturday.

21 *Tuesday* Wind & Weather as yesterday Men employed as before.

22 *Wednesday.* Wind N Cloudy weather with snow Men employed as before. A few blood Indians came in brought but little trade

23 *Thursday* Clear calm weather. Men employed as before.

24 *Friday* Weather as Yesterday. Men employed as before. a tribe of blood Indians came in brought but few furs.

[Fo. 19]

25 *Saturday* Wind N Cloudy cold weather Men employed Cutting fire wood & Cleaning the Yard The Indians of yesterday traded & went away.

26 *Sunday* Wind and weather as yesterday

27 *Monday.* Wind Variable Clear fine Weather. Men employed Beating dry meat. A few Blackfoot Indians came in brought little or nothing with them except provisions which we do not want.

28 *Tuesday* Wind W^{ly} blows a very hard Gale Men employed as before. The Indians of yesterday went away.

1797

March 1 *Wednesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. All hands making Pemican.

2 *Thursday* Wind SE Cloudy weather with snow. Men employed as yesterday and finished making our Pemican 60 Bags of 76 lb each A few Souther'd Indians came for Tobacco & Ammunition brought but few Beaver

3 *Friday* Wind Variable Clear cold weather Men employed Cutting & Collecting fire wood. the Indians of yesterday went away.

4 *Saturday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed Cutting fire wood & Cleaning the Yard.

5 *Sunday* Wind SE Cloudy weather with Snow.

6 *Monday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Men employed as on Saturday. [Fo. 19d]

7 *Tuesday.* Wind NW Clear cold Weather. Men employed Cutting fire wood & putting snow out of the yard.

8 *Wednesday.* Wind Variable clear cold weather Men employed hauling home Stockades &c.

9 *Thursday* Wind W Clear warm Weather. Men employed as yesterday.

10 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Men employed Cutting down & hauling home birch to make mallets & wedges, for the Beaver press. In the Afternoon John Pruden and one man Arrived from Buckingham house with two Bundles of trading Goods having left the rest of the men behind with the Horses whom they think will be unable to reach this place with the remainder of the Goods Owing to the great depth of

the Snow on the River.

Buckingham House, 2nd March 1797

Dear Sir

Your people Arrived here the 26 Instant, after a very tedious Journey of 10 days. they were necessitated to leave all the Birch rind & two Horses more than 60 Miles from this place on Account of the great depth of the Snow, and it was with the greatest difficulty they got the rest of the Horses down here. I should have dispatched your men back sooner but it was necessary to let the Horses rest themselves a few days before they returned

There are but very few Indians about this House (save Bungees.) therefore have sent you nearly all the trading here (except Brandy & Powder) as per list enclosed,

[Fo. 20]

there is only 1 ½ y^d of red Corded 5 y^{ds} of Blue Corded Cloth and ½ a roll of Tobacco left here of those Articles.

It astonished me to hear, that you had made such an extraordinary Trade so early in the Spring which is double of what was promised there the last Year at this time & I make no doubt but you will be able to accumulate 2 or 3 thousand more if your Goods be sufficient when the spring Hunt comes in.

The Gun Locks is repaired and sent, also the Broad ax with 70 Steels, 100 Worms & 100 Awl blades.

Wishing you health & Plenty

I remain D^r Sir

Your obd^t hble Servant

Peter Fidler.

- 11 *Saturday* Wind WSW Thaws much with some rain Sent 4 Men with eight dogs to Meet & assist those from Buckingham with trading Goods Men at home Cutting fire wood & Cleaning the Yard
- 12 *Sunday* wind easterly Clear thawing Weather.
- 13 *Monday* A fresh Gale E part Clear & part Cloudy Weather. Two men at the Pit Saw, one making Kegs Taylor at work for trade: the rest hauling home timber

- 14 *Tuesday* Wind Westerly Clear thawing Weather. Men employed as Yesterday.
- 15 *Wednesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed the same. [Fo. 20d]
- 16 *Thursday* A light Breeze. E^{ly} Clear weather. Men employed as Yesterday the men returned with some goods from Buckingham House.
- 17 *Friday* Wind NNW Cloudy Weather. Men employed the same
- 18 *Saturday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday The Men Cutting fire wood & cleaning the Yard. A tribe of Muddy river Indians came in Brought a tolerable good trade.
- 19 *Sunday* Wind SW Clear thawing Weather.
- 20 *Monday* Wind & Weather the same. Men employed Cutting down & Squaring timber The Indians of Saturday traded & went away.
- 21 *Tuesday.* a light Breeze S^{ly} Clear fine weather. Men employed as yesterday. A Swan seen today.
- 22 *Wednesday* Wind Easterly **C**loudy Weather with thick Snow. Sent 2 men with dogs to Buckingham House for a Supply of Brandy &c. the rest tying up furs & Cleaning the Yard.
- 23 *Thursday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Men employed Cutting down & hauling home fire wood.
- 24 *Friday* Wind NW Cloudy Weather with Snow. The Men employed as Yesterday.
- 25 *Saturday* Calm Clear fine Weather. The men employed Cutting fire wood & Cleaning the Yard.
- 26 *Sunday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday [Fo. 21]
- 27 *Monday* Wind & Weather the same. Men employed hauling home wood for the Beaver press.

- 28 *Tuesday* Wind S^{ly} Clear fine Weather. Men employed peeling Stockades.
- 29 *Wednesday.* Wind & Weather as yesterday. Men's employ the same.
- 30 *Thursday.* Wind Variable Clear fine Weather thaws very much Men employed as before.
- 31 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed Carrying up fire wood & Stockades &c. Two Men Arrived from Buckingham House with Brandy

1797

- April 1* *Saturday* Wind & Weather the same. Men employed Cleaning the Yard & Cutting fire wood. A Suther'd Indian Arrived.
- 2 *Sunday* Wind NW Cloudy Wea^r with snow.
- 3 *Monday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed falling & hauling home Sleepers.
- 4 *Tuesday.* Wind & Weather the same. Men employed Cutting fire [wood] &c.
- 5 *Wednesday* Wind SW Clear fine Weather. Men variously employed
- 6 *Thursday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Mens employ the same
- 7 *Friday* Wind the same Cloudy Weather. Men pointing & Cutting Stockades into the ribbons
- 8 *Saturday.* Wind N^{ly} Clear Weather. Men employed Cutting wood and Cleaning the Yard. [Fo. 21d]
- 9 *Sunday.* Wind SW Clear fine thawing weather. A few Indians arrived for a supply of Tobacco &c
- 10 *Monday* Calm Clear hot Weather One man making Kegs Carpenter working at the Beaver Press the rest digging trenches for Stockades & Clearing the Plantation. The Indians of Yesterday went away.

- 11 *Tuesday*. Wind S^{ly} Clear fine weather. Men employed as before.
- 12 *Wednesday*. Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Mens employ the Same.
- 13 *Thursday* Wind Ely Clear fine Wea^r. Men employed packing furs. A band of Fall Indians Arrived for a Supply of Tobacco &c & went away in the evening.
- 14 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Mens employ the Same.
- 15 *Saturday* a light Breeze S^{ly} Clear fine Weather. Men employed as before. A band of Blackfoot Indians Arrived brought a few wolves
- 16 *Sunday*. Wind & Weather as Yesterday. The Indians of Yesterday went away.
- 17 *Monday* Wind SW Clear fine Weather. Men employed packing furs.
- 18 *Tuesday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed digging trenches for Stockades The river broke Opposite the House. [Fo. 22]
- 19 *Wednesday* Wind E Cold Weather. Men employed as Yesterday.
- 20 *Thursday* Wind Variable Clear cold weather. Men employed peeling down and cleaning Stockades A few Sussew Indians Arrived brought little or nothing with them.
- 21 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Men employed Setting up Stockades The Indians of yesterday went away.
- 22 *Saturday* Wind NE cold Weather Men employed as yesterday
- 23 *Sunday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Some Souther'd Indians came in for Tobacco & went away in the evening
- 24 *Monday* Wind & Weather the same Three Men making Gates the rest Setting up Stockades Some Souther'd Indians Arrived

Edmonton House April 24th.

Dear Sir

The Backwardness of the Spring will very much retard the Building of Canoes & consequently will occasion a late embarkation at the same time I find it will be impossible to man our Boats & canoes for York & leave a Sufficient Number of Men to protect both Houses in the Summer. I have therefore determined to Abandon Buckingham House this Season.

Mr Shaw having a great number of spare hands intends leaving some there and Officers to prevent as far as in his power our house from being destroyed by the Natives in our Absence. You will therefore send up all the trading Goods and tradesmens Stores by the Boats & Canoes keeping the House Stores till my Arrival

[Fo. 22d]

as I intend leaving them in the french House during the Summer

The River Ice has given way Opposite the House, but remains fast both above & below yet the water fall off[f] fast. Send up all the Men with the craft except the Canoe Builders. I will dispatch 20 Men in the four Canoes here as soon as the river Ice gives way with what furs & Provisions they can take. if the Boats are finished Nichol Spence Boatbuilder may come up the first trip as he his [sic] to Summer here. he being unfit for the passage & John Moor goes down with the Boats in case of accidents let him keep what tools he thinks will be necessary for the passage. send up all the Plank cut for Boats by the boats as that article will be difficult to get at this place. the Canoes can take all the trading Goods and Stores. if you have any spare line for tying Bundles I beg you to send it as we are Short of that Article here.

The Indians have told me often of the great Scarcity of Beaver. many of them have been in & brought but very few.

Wishing You better Success

I am yours &c

G.S.

25 *Tuesday* Wind NW Clear fine Weather. Men employed as Yesterday.

26 *Wednesday.* Wind & Weather as Yesterday. Men employed as before.

- 27 *Thursday* Wind SW Clear fine Weather. Men employed as before A band of Sutherd Indians Arrived tolerable well gooded [Fo. 23]
- 28 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed setting up Stockades & repairing canoes
- 29 *Saturday* Wind & Weather the same Men employed as yesterday. The Indians of thursday went away.
- 30 *Sunday* Wind NW Cloudy Weather A band of Southerd Indians Arrived brought a tolerable good trade The last of the river Ice went past

1797

May 1st *Monday* Wind SW Clear warm Weather 20 Men preparing to go down to Buckingham House the rest setting up Stockades.

Edmonton House. May 1st

Dear Sir.

The last of the River Ice past this place yesterday – I have therefore dispatch[ed] 20 Men in four Canoes with furs & Provisions as per enclosed list the extra Men are to assist up with the Craft. the water fall off very fast & the Season is far advanced. I therefore hope you will dispatch all the Men in the Boats & Canoes that can possibly be spared immediately on your receipt of this. have sent you all the Tracking Lines Crocus & raw pitch I had here. have also given each man 4 Pr. of Shoes for tracking up the Craft. Send me all the tobacco you can Spare as I have not 6 lb in the House as the Stone Indians are all gone towards the Stoney Mountain. I wish you to send up all the Horses on the South side of the River as soon as possible in order to be drove to the Westward where they are to be kept in the Summer

[Fo. 23d]

as I understand there are a number of Vagabond horse Stealers from the Touchwood Hill intends Visiting this quarter in the Summer with a view of taking away all the Horses they can find

I am D^r Sir

Your Hble Servant G.S.

2 *Tuesday.* Wind Westerly Clear Weather Dispatched 12 Men in four Canoes with furs & provisions to Buckingham House also eight Men

over land to assist up with the Craft. the rest Employed setting up Stockades

- 3 *Wednesday* Wind & Weather the same Men employed as yesterday. The last of the Souther'd Indians came in brought but few furs They informed me that their has been a distemper Among the Beaver of which great numbers have died has they are daily seen floating on the Water since the breaking up of the Ice.
- 4 *Thursday.* Wind NW blows very hard Men employed building a Watch House.
- 5 *Friday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed as before.
- 6 *Saturday* Wind & Weather the same Men employed as before. The water begins to rise in the River.
- 7 *Sunday* Wind West blows very hard The last of the Southerd Indians went away.
- 8 *Monday* Wind & Weather as Yesterday Men employed packing furs. [Fo. 24]
- 9 *Tuesday* Wind and Weather the same Men employed packing furs.
- 10 *Wednesday* Clear calm weather. Men employed as before.
- 11 *Thursday* Wind S^{ly} Clear fine Weather. The Men finished packing the furs. In the evening 14 Men in two Boats Arrived from Buckingham House for furs &c.
- 12 *Friday* Wind E Cloudy Weather. Men employed fitting Bundles & loading Boats. 4 Men Arrived from Buckingham with all the Horses.

Buckingham House May 5 1797

Dear Sir

Your men arrived Yesterday safe in the four Canoes with all the things sent, have dispatched them back again & shall send three more Canoes up in a day or two. the Boats went away this morning and Nichol Spence, boat Builder, accompanied them. They have took up all the boards & line at this place

The River did not clear of Ice till yesterday and there is a great quantity left on the shores which will make it very bad tracking. The Cold weather that has of late prevailed has very much retarded the canoe Building however we have built 4 and hope if the Weather permit shall get all the rest made & the others repaired by the time you arrive here.

There is not more than 6 lb of Tobacco in the House & Indians has come in from two different parts this day for that Article so that there will not be a bit to spare at this place and indeed it will not be half enough

[Fo. 24d]

Shall send up all the Horses in a few days on the south side with four men along with them

Wishing you a Pleasant passage & an early sight of you

I remain D^r Sir

Your Obed^t hble Servant

Peter Fidler

13 *Saturday* Wind & Weather as yesterday Men variously employed Dispatched both boats and two Canoes to Buckingham House with 181 Bundles of furs & some provisions & the following letter:

Edmonton House May 13 97

Dear Sir

Our four canoes only Arrived here Yesterday the other three are not yet come however. I have dispatched 30 Men in the Boats and two Canoes well Loaded with furs &c. as per Enclosed list. I expect to get everything down this Trip as it would be too late to make a second.

I think Leaving this place on Monday, get all the Canoes mended & everything ready as soon as possible

I am D^r Sir

Yours &c.

G.S.

14 *Sunday* Wind & Weather as yesterday Pitch canoes and preparing everything to set out to Buckingham Tomorrow.

[Fo. 25]

15th *Monday* – Wind W clear fine weather. after taking stock I delivered the Charge of the House to Alex^r Flett who with 11 men summer at

Edmonton House. I embarked in 4 Canoes with the last of 279 bundles of Furs, upwards of 12,500 MB traded here this Year.

18th *Thursday* – Wind variable clear cold weather. Arrived at Buckingham House, where I found all well – but had the mortification to find the Buffalo Boat had run foul of a stone, which stove her; by which accident upwards of 40 bundles of furs got wet. All hands employed drying them. Carpenter repairing the boat

19th *Friday* – Wind NW Clear fine weather – Men employed drying and packing Furs

20th *Saturday* – Wind & weather as yesterday – men finished drying & packing Furs.

21st *Sunday* – Wind variable cloudy cold weather This day after having put the little Trading Goods remaining here together with the House stores into the Canadian House – and giving the key of the Gates to Mr John Finlay who summers there – I embarked with 2 Boats & 19 Canoes loaded with Furs & provisions

[Fo. 25d]

30th *Tuesday* – Wind SE. cloudy weather – arrived at Carlton House, where I found all well.

1797

June 1st *Thursday* – Wind N. Cloudy weather – Set out for Cumberland after having appointed James Sandison & three men to summer at Carlton House – Mr Bird follows tomorrow with three Canoes.

4th *Sunday* – Wind N. Clear cold weather. arrived at Cumberland House where I found all well – but to our great surprise, the Lake is still frozen over apparently as solid as it was in the middle of Winter – never was such a backward season known before by the oldest Indian here – & God only knows when we shall be able to pass thro' the Lakes – Burbon & Wennepeg, which we cannot expect to break up before the 20th at soonest

12th *Monday* – Wind NNW. Clear weather having left Mr James Bird in charge of Cumberland House with three men, two of which (namely

William Tate and John Mowat, both steersman) are ill of a rhumatic complaint – we embarked with 2 Boats & 19 Canoes for York Fort. it was with some difficulty we got a passage cut & broke thro' the Ice in the Lake for a passage for the Canoes.

[Fo. 26]

15th *Thursday* Arrived near the long point in the Cedar or Lake Burbon, where our career is effectually stopped up by the Ice – found the Canadian Traders tenting on an Island where we also put up

17th *Saturday* Being heartily tired of laying here, sent the Canoes to carry over a point of land – and we forced the Boats thro' heavy driving Ice about 1 ½ mile & got into clear water.

18th *Sunday* – Arrived at the Great rapid, where we took out all the Furs, and shot down the rapid without injuring the Boats or Canoes. indeed the Boats seems to exceed even my utmost expectations on the falls as they did not ship any water, altho' the waves ran very high.

19th *Monday* – Parted with the Canadians at the mouth of Lake Wennepeg – They proceeded towards the great carrying place and we to York Fort – the weather being exceedingly foggy we steered by Compass NbE it being our course for about 7 miles when we were suddenly brought up by the Ice, when we were obliged to make for the Land & put up

[Fo. 26d]

about 2 PM. The weather cleared up, when to our mortification we beheld the Lake frozen over appearently as solid as it was at any Time in the winter – a circumstance never known before – so that we have no prospect of getting from here for a considerable time – perhaps a month, unless there are heavy gales of wind from the Northwards. Mess^{rs} Longmoore & Isham with nine men in four canoes from Swan river came to us where we were Tenting on the 19th where we were all obliged to remain in great suspense until

1797

July 1st

when we made a shift to force our way thro the Ice with the Boats and the Canoes followed next Day when we arrived at Jack river House and found all well – suffice it to say, that after cutting Tracks & drawing the Boats over several Carrying places we arrived at the Head of Trout river on the 8th Ins^t where I propose leaving the Boats, as the navigation is too difficult for them to proceed any further. so they must remain here with

4 men to take care of them & Cargoes until the Canoes arrives from Gordon House with Trading Goods &c – and here I cannot help expressing my satisfaction at the probable

[Fo. 27]

advantages the Honourable Company are likely to reap from the use of Boats in this Quarter – The easy draught of water – the facility with which we have brought them from Edmonton House to this place – a distance of 1200 miles – the Cargoes they are likely to carry up to from whence they came &c

9th Having left John Moore boat builder, to make Oars – Setting poles &c. with three men to take care of the Cargoes of the Boats consisting of 113 Bundles of Furs which are to come down the 2nd trip – we set out with all our Canoes 23 in number for Gordon House in Hill River, where we arrived the 12th Ins^t – here we found all well – with a large assortment of Trading Goods, brought from York – I also received Letters from Mr Colen on business, who had been here and waited a long time for our arrival – but had returned, his presence being necessary at the Factory

13th Busily Employed settling the Canoes – Mr Whitford & Ward, serving out the Men. I already find I will have great difficulty to get the Men to go the Second Trip – owing to there not having their

[Fo. 27d]

usual supply of Provisions, or Articles of Clothing, to be got here – such as Cotton Shirts, Duck Trousers &c

14th Employed as Yesterday and after much difficulty and altercation, I fitted out 17 Canoes well loaded with Trading Goods &c – the Cargoes of Ten of which are for the Boats – Two to go as far as Jack River house, and the remaining five are to accompany the Boats Inland direct. They all set off the 17th as did also myself with Ten men mostly lame in four Canoes and a small Boat I found here with the remainder of the Furs for York Factory, where we arrived the 18th Ins^t – where we found the Warehouses in a very impoverished state, both with respect to Trading Goods & Provisions.

Wishing Success to the Honble C^o
affairs at home and abroad –

I am Honble Sirs

Your faithful Servant George Sutherland.

[Fo. 28]