called Fort St. Pierre, at the mouth of Rainy Lake; another which they called Fort St. Charles, on the west side of the Lake of the Woods, near the 49th parallel of latitude, and finally other posts as far west as on Lake Winnipeg and the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Rivers. The Verendryes and their associates were probably the first Caucasians to see the Red River of the North, and this at its entrance into Lake Winnipeg.

The senior Verendrye was far more anxious to cross the continent and reach the Pacific Ocean than to discover and note the local geographic features of the country through which he passed. He left very meager and unsatisfactory records of his travels and those of his sons. He sent the latter very far westward and they discovered some considerable elevations which they called "the Great Shining Mountains." Some modern historians and investigators think these were the Big Horn Mountains of Montana, while others think they were the Black Hills of South Dakota.

In June, 1736, a party of 22 French voyageurs accompanied by a priest and one of Verendrye's sons, were murdered by the Sioux Indians of northern Minnesota on an island in the Lake of the Woods. The Sioux considered that the Frenchmen were too friendly with their old-time foes, the Crees. Thereafter the Verendryes kept out of the Sioux country, and kept within the country controlled by the Crees and the latter's kinsmen, the Chippewas or Ojibways.

Verendrye's sons built a trading post on the southern shore of Lake Winnipeg, near the mouth of the Red River. Only the sons were here; the father remained at Lake Nipigon. We cannot tell what his sons reported to him, but in his records he makes no mention of any stream which can now be identified as the Red River of the North. Of course his sons were familiar with the river, but they either did not tell their father of it, or else he did not think it worth mentioning. It is not probable that they ascended the river any considerable distance, because, for one reason, they were afraid of coming upon the blood-minded Sioux.

In 1734, Verendrye, or his sons, built a fort near "Lake Ounipegon," at the mouth of the Maurepas River (which is now known as the Winnipeg River), and not far from the present Fort Alexander, on the southeastern projection of the lake. Here the Frenchmen passed at least a year, engaged in trading with the Indians between Lake Winnipeg and the Grand Portage (Bryce's History of the Hudson's Bay Company, p. 85), and during this time they must have become acquainted with the Red River, although they made no written mention of it.

A CHIPPEWA HALF-BLOOD GAVE THE FIRST PRINTED DESCRIPTION OF THE RED RIVER REGION.

The earliest printed description of the northern part of Minnesota, and especially of the lower Red River region, was published by Arthur Dobbs, in London, 1744. Among other articles it contains a narrative by a French-Chippewa half-breed named Joseph La France, who, from 1740 to 1742, traveled extensively through what are now the northern parts of Minnesota and all of Manitoba. He reached Lake Winnipeg (or "Ouinipique") in September, 1740, and spent the autumn there hunting beavers with the Crees. From these Indians he learned of the big Red Lake of Minnesota, but he understood them (or else his amanuensis misunderstood him) to say that it lay west instead of south of Lake Winnipeg. His description reads:

"On the west side of this lake [Winnipeg] the Indians told me that a River entered it, which was navigable with Canoes; it descended from Lac Rouge, or the Red Lake, called so from the Colour of the Sand. They said there were two other Rivers run out of that [the Red] lake, one into the Mississippi, and the other westward into a marshy Country, full of Beavers."

This is the earliest known printed description of the lower Red River Valley. It will be noted that La France says Red Lake was so called "from the Colour of the Sand," presumably to be found on its beaches and shores. Some other observers saw the reflection of a red sunset on its surface and thought the derivation of the name came from the apparent