

transferred the rivalry of these two centers from the country on the lower to that on the upper portion of the Churchill River.

In 1804 and 1805 David Thompson, on behalf of the North-West Company, was trading and surveying on the Churchill River as far downstream as Southern Indian Lake, which was as far as he ever descended. During this season and the preceding twelve years he had made track surveys, checked by great numbers of astronomical observations, of the river down to this lake from its three principal sources, one at the head of the Beaver River, near Lac la Biche ($54\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ N. and 112° W.), and the others in Methye and Wollaston Lakes. He never had the opportunity of traveling over that portion of the river from Southern Indian Lake down to Hudson Bay.

In the winter of 1804-1805 Thompson was opposed in the fur trade by his old schoolmate George Charles of the Hudson's Bay Company, who, like himself, had received a rudimentary education in surveying at the Grey Coat School in London, though there is no published record that he ever made use of his early training.

At that time there were three fur-trading posts on this lower portion of the Churchill River, namely (Southern) Indian Lake, Granville Lake, or Musquawegun, and Nelson House. William Conolly, afterwards so well known in connection with the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs in British Columbia, was in charge for the North-West Company at Indian Lake, David Thompson for the same company at Musquawegun, and George Charles for the Hudson's Bay Company at Nelson House.

The following account of an incident which occurred during the previous year in the conduct of the fur trade at Nelson House is given in Thompson's own words¹¹:

Oct. 2. In the evening paid a visit to Mr. Charles to enquire the reasons of his seizing Louis Duplein. He informed me that in the spring on the arrival of all their party at this place, a Mr. Clarke deposed that Louis Duplein entered his tent with arms and forcibly took from thence a bundle containing 30 beaver skins, and that another small bundle of furs had been stolen out of his tent in the night previous to the above, the wrapper of which small bundle he found in the morning at the door of the said Louis Duplein. They all then proposed to seize him and take him down to Churchill to be tried as Criminal for the above actions; but that he Mr. Charles overruled the motion as not thinking it an affair of sufficient consequence to cause such violent measures. But upon the arrival of Mr. Linklater &c. at the Factory (Fort Churchill) they by their representations to the Trader there got an order to seize on the person of Louis Duplein, commanding all persons that should be found present to be aiding in seizing the said Louis Duplein. In consequence of which, when they arrived in the summer, after having settled their affairs and ready to return to the Factory, they invited Louis Duplein to breakfast, which invitation like a blockhead he accepted (for they had no intention of entering the N. W. Co.'s House to seize him). At breakfast they asked Louis Duplein if he actually took by force the above 30 skins from Mr. Clarke, to which he replied in the affirmative, owning his guilt and offering to pay half the skins on the spot. Having thus declared himself guilty they were obliged to seize him and put his hands in irons. They then embarked him, leaving orders with their clerk at

¹¹ Thompson's MS. notebooks in the Provincial Archives of the Province of Ontario, Toronto.