

## MEMORANDUM RELATING TO THE ATHAPASCAN DISTRICT.

In the Athapascan River are a Number of Mineral and Salt Springs and from the Rocks a Substance issues which has the Smell of Tar and which the Indians mix with the Gum of the Pine to pitch their Canoes.

Besides the usual Track there is another, by which the Portage la Loche would be avoided, striking off from Clear Water Lake to Buffalo Lake and entering, after a Portage, the Red Willow River which joins the Athapascan. Sir Alexander Mackenzie explored this Route, but did not approve. This Track should be again explored.

There is likewise another Route which is worthy of Consideration and should be carefully explored, namely from the Athapascan Lake to Deers Lake which was explored last year (1820) by Mr. J. P. Audrier.<sup>1</sup>

The Black River enters the Athapascan Lake about 30 Miles East of [illegible] House. Several Portages, one 4 Miles—Black Lake, Hatchet River, several Rapids. Small Lakes, full of Rapids. Lake Wollaston, 70 Miles, Swan River, full of Rapids and Carrying Places. Deers Lake, Wappiscon River to the Frog Portage or Portage de [?] Traite and English or Churchill.

The District called New Caledonia may extend from N. to S. about 500 Miles and from E. to W. 350 to 400 Miles. The Post at Stuarts' Lake is nearly in the centre of it and lies in 54.30 N. Lat. and 125 W. Lon.

Frasers River which Sir Alex. Mackenzie considered to be the Columbia River rises in the Rocky Mountains within a short Distance of the Peace River. The Natives are called Carriers—but they call themselves Tacullies[?] which signifies People who travel on the Waters.

Berens House is situated on the West Bank of the Athapascan and Elk Rivers about 60 Miles from Fort Chipiwywan; full of Moose Deer and Buffalo. The Soil is here fertile. Grain and Potatoes might be raised. This District rendered 52 Packs Fur in 1821.

The Distance [from Portage La Loche] to Fort Chipiwywan is about 160 Miles. It is down Stream, and loaded Canoes take three Days. The Wood is Pine and Poplar with Birch here and there and the Country is stocked with Buffalo, Moose and Red Deer. The Moose is the Elk. It is said they shed their Horns every Year. Hardly to be credited when their ponderous and immense size is considered.

## NAVIGATION OF CHURCHILL RIVER.

York Fort, 1st Sept., 1821.

The Navigation of Churchill River from the Frog Portage to the Split Lake by Way of Burntwood River is by no means difficult either with Boats or Canoes and from Split Lake and York Factory it is much the same with the Difference that the Portages or rather the Falls are of that Nature that the Boats cannot be taken up by Water so often above Split Lake as below because the Falls are more perpendicular, consequently heavy Craft such as Boats have to be hauled across the Land which creates much Delay in Comparison with the Canoe which is lighter and thus more easily transported. The Time that it would occupy to go from York Fort to the Frog Portage, which is near the Forks of the River Wappiscon (which here joins the Churchill near the Kettle Fall), with loaded Boats by this Route will be in my

<sup>1</sup> Or Andrier