“To be fit for publication”: The Editorial History of David Thompson’s *Travels*, 1840-1916

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Of the many works which make up the canon of Canadian exploration literature, few have followed a direct and uncomplicated path from the author’s pen to the press. For every John Franklin, who saw the narratives of his first two expeditions through to swift publication in the 1820s, there are several Henry Kelseys and George Nelsons, whose works lay hidden in manuscript collections for generations, and had to pass through several intermediary hands before appearing in book form.² One of the more circuitous and protracted journeys was that made by the *Travels* of David Thompson (1770-1857); sixty-six years elapsed from the time Thompson put down his pen in 1850 to the first publication of his narrative.

Given the preeminence which the *Travels* enjoys in the corpus of Canadian exploration literature, this may surprise us. The narrative is valued for its historical significance as the story of one of the greatest figures of the fur trade, one who travelled the length and breadth of the West on behalf of the Hudson’s Bay and North West companies; it is at the same time a distinguished literary work, in which the author engages the people, places, and events of his life with a spirit of restless enquiry and wonder.

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2 Franklin’s accounts were published in London by John Murray as *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1819, 20, 21, and 22* (1823) and *Narrative of a Second Expedition to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1825, 1826, and 1827* (1828). The poetry and journals of Kelsey, written in the 1690s, were not published until 1929, as *The Kelsey Papers*, edited by Arthur G. Doughty and Chester Martin (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada and The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland); Nelson’s writings on Cree religion, authored in 1823, remained unpublished until 1988 when Jennifer S.H. Brown and Robert Brightman edited *“The Orders of the Dreamed”* (Winnipeg: U of Manitoba P). Much of Nelson’s work remains unpublished still.

But the *Travels* did not remain submerged for so many years because its qualities were unappreciated, or because there was no interest in its publication. Thompson himself intended to submit his work to the press even before he began its composition, and after his death two distinct editorial projects reached an advanced stage before a third came to fruition as *David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America, 1784-1812*, edited by Joseph Burr Tyrrell and published by the Champlain Society. The emergence of this volume in 1916 prompted one reviewer to comment "It is strange that David Thompson's Narrative ... should have so long remained unpublished."³

A compelling narrative in its own right, the story of the *Travels*' journey to publication may also serve as a case study in the as-yet-unwritten story of the evolution of documentary editing in Canada. This tale reveals many of the assumptions about what an edition of travel writing was intended to provide, and about who was considered fit to be an editor, and illustrates what could result when changing notions of editing intersected with a particular work.

The *Travels* manuscript

The *Travels* manuscript consists of 701 handwritten pages; 672 of these are housed at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at the University of Toronto⁴ and twenty-nine at the Archives of Ontario.⁵ The Fisher manuscript is kept in file folders in two large manuscript boxes and is made up of 276 folded, intact bifolia sheets, 112 single foolscap sheets and nine paste-ons of varying size. The narrative is written on the recto sides only. The AO manuscript is kept in a file in a manuscript box with other miscellaneous items by Thompson, and is made up of thirteen separated bifolia sheets (yielding twenty-six leaves) and three single foolscap sheets. All manuscripts are in Thompson's hand.

3 E.A.B. [Ernest Alfred Benians], review of *David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America, 1784-1812*, *English Historical Review* 31, no. 4 (Oct. 1916): 671. There have since been two more editions of the *Travels*: *David Thompson's Narrative 1784-1812*, ed. Richard Glover (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1962), and *Travels in Western North America 1784-1812*, ed. Victor Hopwood, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971).

4 David Thompson Papers, MS 21, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. This collection is hereafter referred to as Fisher MS 21.

5 David Thompson Papers, F 443, Archives of Ontario, Toronto. This collection is hereafter referred to as AO F 443.

Thompson's is not an easy manuscript. There is some order to the work—certain pages are obviously meant to be sequential, and three indices describe arrangements of parts of the work—but the forces of textual incoherence dominate. Pages have been clipped, numbered and renumbered, sewn into gatherings and taken apart again; passages have been excised and paste-ons affixed, some pages identified in the indices are no longer extant, while pages exist which can be found in no index. The subject matter of the *Travels* ranges from accounts of Thompson's own activities in the West between 1784 and 1812 to material on Native peoples, natural history, and the history of the fur trade.⁶

⁶ The *Travels* is but one Thompsonian text among many. In addition to his narrative, Thompson left behind well over one hundred notebooks and field books; 110 of these are housed at the Archives of Ontario, and others are found in the National Archives of Canada, the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, the Vancouver Public Library, and the McCord Museum. The earliest notebook dates to 1785, when, as a fifteen-year-old Hudson's Bay Company apprentice, Thompson kept the South Branch House Post Journal for the illiterate trader Mitchell Oman. The last ends with a journal entry for Feb. 28, 1851 in which Thompson, an eighty-year-old patriarch, gives an account of blustery weather (Notebook 61b:32, AO F 443). The notebooks include such diverse material as fur post accounts, astronomical observations, traverse tables, descriptions of water courses, personal journals, drafts of correspondence and miscellaneous notes and sketches. Thompson also authored several reports for his employers, including the Hudson's Bay Company, the North West Company and the International Boundary Commission, and between 1812 and 1849 contributed over three dozen articles to Montreal newspapers.

Following is a list of archives and the notebooks held:

Archives of Ontario, Toronto: Notebooks 1-84 (96 volumes, including notebooks numbered 3a, 28a, 34a, 48a, 48b, 49a, 59a, 61a, 61b, 66a, 70a, 73a), unnumbered notebooks A, B, C, and field books 1-9 (11 volumes, including field books numbered 4b and 6b), David Thompson Fonds, F 443-1,2.

McCord Museum Archives, Montreal: Meteorological Journal, Williamstown, Jan.-Dec. 1829, Northwest Company Papers, M4451; Meteorological Journal for 1829 (an abridgement of preceding item), McCord Family Papers, file 836.

National Archives of Canada, Ottawa: "Meteorological Journal Kept at Musquawegan, 1804-5," Masson Collection, MG19 C1.

Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg: South Branch House, Post Journal, 13 Sept. 1786 to 30 May 1787, Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), B.205/a/1; York Factory, Meteorological Journal, 1791-92, HBCA, B.239/a/93; and Duck Portage, Post Journal, 6 Sept. 1795 to 3 May 1796, HBCA, B.55/a/1.

Vancouver Public Library: Notebook containing "Account of an Attempt to Cross the Rocky Mountains," 1801, Northwest History Collection, 970P V22 E1.

Although Thompson had planned to write a narrative as early as 1820, he did not begin this task in earnest until 1845, by which time he was 75 years old and living in Montreal. The writing of the *Travels* stretched over the course of almost five years. In the following account I have arranged the composition of the work into five movements, which will help to frame our discussion. The divisions are based on the three indices which Thompson prepared for his work, his daily journal entries, which contain hundreds of references to his composition, and the manuscript itself.

Draft A (Oct.-Nov. 1845; Fisher i.1-12).⁷ These twelve pages consist of a description of Hudson's Bay and an account of Thompson's activities from 1784 to 1786, including his arrival at Churchill Factory and work at York Factory.

Draft B (mid-to-late 1846 to Aug. 7, 1847; Fisher iv.13-38, 49; iii.45-52; iv.97-106; iii.65-230; ii.233-262). This draft totals 272 pages. It contains writings on such subjects as the Canadian Shield, the history of the fur trade and Native peoples of the West, and an account of several episodes in Thompson's career, including his 1796-1798 travels in the Plains and Lake Superior region, and his 1807-1812 work west of the Rockies. Because most of the pages of draft B were transferred into draft C, in the interests of clarity "draft B" will be used only to refer to this draft's thirty-page conclusion, which treats of Thompson's 1811 journey to the mouth of the Columbia River (Fisher ii.233-262).

Draft C (Aug. 7, 1847 to June 17, 1848; Fisher iv.7-12; iii.5b-12; iv.13-38; iii.34a-bbb; iv.48-49; iii.45-52; iv.97-106; iii.65-324). This is a draft of 374 pages, consisting mostly of pages transferred from draft B, but including a new twelve-page introduction on life at Churchill Factory and a new ninety-four page conclusion concerning Thompson's journeys in 1811 and 1812. During the composition of this draft Thompson suffered an episode of blindness, and from February 10, to May 14, 1848 he did no writing. An index describing this draft survives in the Fisher collection.

Draft D (June 19, 1848 to June 29, 1849; Fisher iv.5-312, 33a-l, 47a-b, 104a-f; iii.5b-12, 6a-h, 9c). This draft totals 344 pages, and contains an account of Thompson's activities from 1784 to 1798, and material on such subjects as Lake Superior, the Ojibway and the Piegan (including the renowned narrative of the elder Saukamappee). Many

⁷ Page numbers are those assigned to the manuscript by the archivists at Fisher.

of the early pages are transferred from draft C, but 278 pages are new. Thompson fell ill when cholera struck his household in July 1849, and all writing ceased for almost a year. This draft is described in a second index, found in Thompson's AO notebooks.⁸

Draft E (May 26 to Sept. 16, 1850; Fisher iv.1-4; iii.9a-b; AO 27a-zd). The thirty-five pages of this draft contain new accounts of Thompson's 1784 voyage to Churchill Factory and his activities in the interior from 1786 to 1790. The pages are intended to be inserted into the early portions of draft D. A third index, found in the AO notebooks, contains a list of these pages.⁹

Thompson last composed new material for his *Travels* on September 16, 1850. He tried to resume writing on several occasions, but as blindness returned his world grew steadily darker, rendering work impossible. On February 27, 1851 Thompson recorded that he "could hardly read large print," and the next day left off his journal definitively.¹⁰

Thompson's Plans, 1840-1857

In August 1840, long before he had begun to compose his narrative, Thompson solicited the patronage of no less a figure than Charles Poulett Thomson, the newly-minted Lord Sydenham and Governor of Canada. He was refused within the week.¹¹ The early 1840s were especially lean years for Thompson, and he was forced to sell many of his possessions and move with his wife Charlotte into ever more humble lodgings in the city of Montreal. Having exhausted other remunerative options, including surveying work, sale of maps, and petitions for a pension, Thompson turned again to the writing of a narrative in 1845, and when he began his work in earnest he attempted to establish a subscription scheme. His "Prospectus" first appeared in the *Montreal Gazette* of October 6, 1846, and promised: "This will not be a dry detail. Many curious facts will, for the first time, be

8 Notebook 78, pp. 73-84, AO F 443.

9 Notebook 78, pp. 69-72, AO F 443.

10 Daily journal entries for Feb. 27 and 28, 1851, notebook 61b, p. 32, AO F 443. For a full discussion of the development of the *Travels* see William Moreau's "David Thompson's Writing of His *Travels*: The Genetics of an Emerging Exploration Text" (Ph.D. diss., U of Toronto, 1997).

11 Register of Provincial Secretary's Correspondence, Vol. 749, #6090, RG4 C1, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

given to the public, which will interest the reader." The item continues: "The Work will be published in two crown 8vo, or three duodecimo volumes, and the cost not to exceed Fifteen Shillings ... if sufficient encouragement is received, the First Volume will be issued about the early part of February next."¹² Response must have been lukewarm, for no volume appeared in February 1847, and the prospectus was discontinued in late March.¹³

But Thompson did not abandon his project. On August 17, 1847, having just completed draft B of the *Travels*, he wrote to Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company:

I have drawn up my travels ... it could form perhaps a small Octavo of about 300 pages at five, or six shillings a volume, a humble performance. I am now correcting for the press to get it published by subscription, in hopes it may relieve our distresses, which are such that all the paper, pens and ink are the gift of charity. My hope, and request is, that you will be so good as patronise the work, of which I shall make honorable mention and that by your influence, a small subscription may be made for me P^r month, till I have got it corrected for the press, which may yet take me near three months, but not more.¹⁴

Simpson denied Thompson's request, although he did offer a position at the Company posts below Quebec, which Thompson declined. Thompson's daily journals for late 1847 contain many references to the impending publication of his narrative; on August 7 he reflected that he must write his narrative "fair, to be fit for publishing" (Notebook 75:18), while on October 7 he wrote "I must now place

¹² "Prospectus," *Montreal Gazette*, 6 Oct. 1846: 4.

¹³ It would be difficult to ascribe the poor response to Thompson's *Prospectus* to lack of interest in the subject. The travel genre was certainly popular; newspaper advertisements for books of travel were common, and of the more than 2000 English-language titles in the 1842 catalogue of the Montreal Library, more than an eighth fall into the category "Voyages and Travels" (*Catalogue of Books in the Montreal Library* [Montreal: J. Starke, 1842]). But publication in Montreal was evidently difficult. When Henry David Thoreau visited Montreal on Sept. 26, 1850 (just ten days after Thompson stopped writing), he visited a bookshop to examine works published in the city and was told that "there were none but schoolbooks and the like [and that] they got their books from the states" (Thoreau, *A Yankee in Canada*, 1866, repr. [New York: Greenwood Press, 1969], 14).

¹⁴ David Thompson to George Simpson, 17 Aug. 1847, D.5/20 fos. 116-117, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

all to be fit for publication and cut down all repetitions" (Notebook 75:25).

The three-month period anticipated in the appeal to Simpson proved to be overly optimistic, and journal references to publication cease by early 1848. Thompson continued to write, though, and in another letter to Simpson, dated April 18, 1850, he writes "My travels are ready for publication, but I have not yet determined whether in New York, or London."¹⁵ This was not to be; Thompson found no patron, failed to win subscribers, and could interest no publisher.

Joshua Thompson's custody, 1857-1868

David and Charlotte Thompson both died in early 1857. They were survived by eight children, and the notebooks and *Travels* manuscripts were taken by their eldest surviving son, Joshua. An employee of the Province of Canada, Joshua sought to sell his father's writings rather than publish them, and in January 1859 he offered the "journals, field books and narrative of his explorations" to P.M. Vankoughnet, the Commissioner of Crown Lands.¹⁶ In late July 1859 the Executive Council of Canada resolved to purchase the notebooks at a cost of £600.¹⁷ The transaction caused enduring resentment among the descendants of David Thompson; as William David Scott, the son of Thompson's daughter Charlotte, recounted in 1917 "Joshua Thompson did this of his own accord, as he had no legal authority from the heirs of David Thompson to dispose of such documents, thereby depriving his sisters, living at the time, of any share they were entitled to of the proceeds of the sale."¹⁸

15 Thompson to Simpson, 18 Apr. 1850, D.5/28 fos. 94-95, Hudson's Bay Company Archives. Note that Thompson does not mention Montreal as a possible place of publication.

16 P.M. Vankoughnet to George Simpson, 25 Jan. 1859, D.5/48 fol. 122, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

17 Minutes of Executive Council meeting of 22 July 1859, State Book U, 264-265, RG1 E1, National Archives of Canada. These are the notebooks now housed at the Archives of Ontario. They were first placed with the Canadian Crown Lands Department, and after Confederation were passed on to the Crown Lands Department of the province of Ontario (later renamed the Ontario Department of Lands, Forests and Mines). They were transferred to the fledgling Archives of Ontario in 1905.

18 Charles Shaw to J.B. Tyrrell, 21 May 1917 (questionnaire answered by William David Scott enclosed), J.B. Tyrrell Papers, Vol. 1, Correspondence, MG30 D49, National Archives of Canada. This collection is hereafter referred to as NAC MG30 D49.

The *Travels* manuscript went unsold at this time (although the twenty-nine pages of draft E numbered 27a-zd were included with the notebooks, and would not be properly identified until 1957). By 1862 Joshua had lent the manuscript to Charles Lindsey, editor of the Toronto *Leader*, reformer and son-in-law of William Lyon Mackenzie. In July of that year the *Travels* was offered to Thomas D'Arcy McGee, President of the Executive Council in the Reform administration of John Sandfield Macdonald, and Joshua encouraged Lindsey to forward him the manuscript, asserting "There is no use in refusing [the administration] as there is little prospect of our publishing [the *Travels*]." ¹⁹ Lindsey's response does not survive, but no sale took place. On March 30, 1864 a Conservative administration took office under John A. Macdonald, and the manuscript was again offered to the Canadian government. The covering letter specifically mentions the possibility of publication: "The style might doubtless be improved, but the MS. Contains a vast storehouse of facts which a skilful writer might put into an attractive & popular form." ²⁰ Macdonald himself recommended the purchase of the *Travels* to Alexander Campbell, Commissioner of Crown Lands, ²¹ but again no sale occurred.

Here Joshua exits the scene. In an 1888 letter, Lindsey states that he had purchased Thompson's papers "over twenty years ago," ²² giving 1868 as a *terminus ad quem* for the transfer of ownership. Lindsey made use of Thompson's manuscript in 1872-73 in the preparation of his *Investigation of the Unsettled Boundaries of Ontario*, which includes an extract illustrating the extent of the territory in which the North West Company traded in the early nineteenth century.

Lindsey's project and the appearance of J.B. Tyrrell, 1868-1895

But Lindsey had greater plans for Thompson's manuscript. J.B. Tyrrell recalled a letter that Lindsey had written in 1888, in which he stated that he thought the narrative "was the only account available of a

19 Joshua Thompson to Charles Lindsey, 18 July 1862, Charles Lindsey Papers, MU 1923, Archives of Ontario.

20 H.G. Gibbs to John A. Macdonald, 31 May 1864, RG1-61-O-26, Archives of Ontario.

21 John A. Macdonald to Alexander Campbell, 1 June 1864, RG1-61-O-26, Archives of Ontario.

22 Charles Lindsey to J.B. Tyrrell, 13 Jan. 1888, NAC MG30 D49.

remarkable life," and "that he had begun to re-write the story for publication in book form."²³ The work that Lindsey prepared survives in the Tyrrell Papers at the National Archives of Canada. This manuscript, written in longhand, numbers 385 leaves of lined foolscap; ten leaves contain a historical introduction, while the remaining 375 consist of a paraphrase of parts of Thompson's text. The work is written in the voice of an omniscient third-person narrator, and syntax and diction are altered liberally, paragraphs are established, and spelling and punctuation are regularized. The two largest sections of the rewritten narrative are the end of draft C, 180 leaves covering the contents of manuscript pages iii.194-324, and the beginning of draft D, 111 leaves corresponding to manuscript pages iv.5-112; also included are extracts from later portions of draft D (64 leaves), and four short pieces from earlier parts of draft C (20 leaves). Lindsey followed the arrangement of Thompson's material closely, and often indicated original manuscript page numbers in the left-hand margin of his text.

In the same letter of 1888 Lindsey stated that "the English in which [the *Travels*] was written was neither good nor clear." The account of Thompson's arrival at the Pacific Fur Company post of Astoria on July 15, 1811 illustrates well the nature of the changes that Lindsey made in order to improve the quality of Thompson's prose. Thompson's original text, found in the draft C conclusion, is as follows:

The waves being too high for us to double the Point we went close to the River bank where there is a narrow isthmus, of one hundred yards, and carried across it; from thence near two miles to the fur trading Post of M^r J J Astor of the City of New York; which was four low Log Huts, the far famed Fort Astoria of the United States. (iii.275)

Lindsey's version reads thus:

The waves were too high to permit the Point to be doubled; so our travellers held close to the river's bank, making a portage over a narrow isthmus of one hundred yards, thence the distance was but two miles to the trading Post of Jacob Astor, comprising a few low log huts, the Fort Astoria of the United States.²⁴

²³ J.B. Tyrrell, "The Re-Discovery of David Thompson," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Section II (1928): 243.

²⁴ Charles Lindsey's version of David Thompson's *Travels*, J.B. Tyrrell Papers, NAC MG 30 D49, vol. 8.

Here the first person is changed to the third, the active voice of the first clause is changed to the passive and diction is altered (“for” is replaced by “to permit,” “which was” is changed to “comprising,” and “far famed” is excised entirely). But these changes are not merely stylistic; given Thompson’s description of Astoria, his use of the adjective “far famed” is clearly sarcastic, and so its excision alters Thompson’s tone. Lindsey’s changes tend to level Thompson’s distinctive and idiosyncratic work to a generically standard, ostensibly objective travel narrative.

In 1883 J. B. Tyrrell, then a twenty-five year old assistant geologist with the Geological Survey of Canada, became impressed by the accuracy of the maps of the Rocky Mountains then in use. He investigated their source and was directed to Thompson’s notebooks, by that time in the possession of the provincial government of Ontario at Toronto.²⁵ In 1887, while on holiday at the Weston home of his father, William Tyrrell, J.B. examined the notebooks and published a paper on Thompson’s explorations.²⁶

By a happy coincidence Lindsey also resided in Weston, and learned of J.B.’s interest in Thompson from the geologist’s father. Lindsey told J.B. of the existence of the *Travels* manuscript and of his own plans for publication, and in March 1888 Tyrrell offered his paper for Lindsey’s edition, writing that “Such an account enlarged and completed and printed at the end of the Autobiography would be of great service to geographers.”²⁷ Then, on November 21, 1888, Lindsey sent Tyrrell part of Thompson’s work itself. Tyrrell recalls: “I received some of the manuscript from Mr. Lindsey with the proposal that, having personal knowledge of much of the territory covered, I should re-write and publish it, dividing the profits equally with himself.”²⁸ Tyrrell took over two-and-a-half years to respond, and in June 1891 returned the manuscript, declining Lindsey’s offer. Lindsey’s project was eventually abandoned; in Tyrrell’s words, “Mr. Lindsey ... found himself constantly hampered by a want of personal

25 J.B. Tyrrell, ed., *David Thompson’s Narrative of His Explorations in Western America, 1784-1812* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1916), xviii.

26 *Proceedings* [of the Canadian Institute], 3rd section, vol. 6 (1887-1888): 135-160. This work was published in monograph form as *A Brief Narrative of the Journeys of David Thompson* (Toronto: Copp, Clark, 1888).

27 Tyrrell to Lindsey, 17 Mar. 1888, Charles Lindsey Papers, MU 1923, Archives of Ontario, Toronto.

28 J.B. Tyrrell, “The Re-Discovery of David Thompson,” *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Section II (1928): 243.

knowledge of the country described, and finally he decided not to proceed."²⁹

Tyrrell continued to follow the fortunes of Lindsey's manuscript closely. In June 1894 the *Travels* was offered for sale through the Toronto bookseller Albert Britnell at a price of \$1700³⁰ (a figure identical to Tyrrell's annual salary from the Geological Survey of Canada).³¹ In March 1895 Lindsey placed the manuscript at a Boston auction,³² where it failed to find a buyer, and in May 1895 he sold the *Travels* to Tyrrell for \$400.³³

Tyrrell's Macmillan Project, 1895-1911

Even before he purchased the *Travels* manuscript from Lindsey, Tyrrell had begun to test the waters of publication. On February 17, 1895 he wrote to at least three publishing houses: Robert Clarke Co. of Cincinnati, and Macmillan and D. Appleton, both of New York.³⁴ Macmillan asked that Tyrrell forward Thompson's manuscript to New York for examination, which he did in June 1895. Response was prompt. In a letter dictated by George Platt Brett, Macmillan's resident New York partner, Tyrrell was asked to alter Thompson's text in order that it cater to a broader audience: "there is altogether too much matter, the style in a number of instances requires correction and altogether the book should be thoroughly worked over before being submitted to a publisher."³⁵

²⁹ Tyrrell, ed., *David Thompson's Narrative*, xvii-xviii.

³⁰ J.B. Tyrrell Papers, MS 26, Box 90, file 2, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. This collection is hereafter referred to as Fisher MS 26.

³¹ Alex Inglis, *Northern Vagabond: The Life and Career of J.B. Tyrrell* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), 129.

³² The auction was held at C.F. Libbie and Company, Boston, on 7-8 Mar. 1895. The *Travels* appears as Item 421, "Manuscript of David Thompson" in the *Catalogue of the Valuable Historical Library of Charles Lindsey, F.R.S.C. of Toronto, Canada* (Boston: C.F. Libbie, 1895).

³³ Fisher MS 26, Box 90, files 2, 9. In 1939 Tyrrell donated the *Travels* manuscript to the University of Toronto. See Fisher MS 21, Finding Aid.

³⁴ Fisher MS 26, Box 90, files 8-9.

³⁵ George Platt Brett, Macmillan Publishers, to J.B. Tyrrell, 18 June 1895, Fisher MS 26, Box 90, file 9. In 1896 Macmillan New York became a distinct corporation with Brett as president, a position he would hold until 1931. See John Tebbel, *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, 4 vols., (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1975), II:354-355.

Figure 1 – J.B. Tyrrell in 1912. Photo from the J.B. Tyrrell Papers (MS 26, P 189), courtesy the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library.

Tyrrell set his project aside for several years; in 1899 he left the Geological Survey and spent the years until 1906 prospecting for gold in the Klondike. By early 1909, having returned to Toronto and taken up work as a mining advisor, he turned again to the *Travels*. On January 30 of that year he wrote to Macmillan in New York and asked if they would still consider the publication of the narrative. A reply of February 8 confirmed Macmillan's interest in the work, and asked that a manuscript be forwarded.³⁶ But Tyrrell sent nothing; while he spent some time during 1909 on a revised version of Thompson's text, most of his energies were occupied in the preparation of an edition of Samuel Hearne's *Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean*, which would be published by the Champlain Society in 1911.

Tyrrell sent a draft introduction to Macmillan on April 14, 1910, and the letter acknowledging its receipt included a request for a manuscript of Thompson's text. Tyrrell sent the work that he had prepared, which was then given to a reader.³⁷ The reader, who remains anonymous, made two main recommendations. The first concerned the size of the edition, and advised that "curtailment" should be made to the amount of 10%, so that "the book be kept within the limits of a volume of reasonable size."³⁸ The second recommendation concerned transcription of Thompson's original text:

Historical students, nowadays, demand the printing of original material as nearly as possible as the author left it. The editor of this manuscript has undertaken to revise the author's language and to omit what seemed to him to be immaterial passages. I should advise you to have it printed as nearly as possible as it was written, three-quarters of a century ago.³⁹

These two recommendations appear to be contradictory; on one hand the reader advises abridgement, while on the other he counsels against the omission of original passages. Macmillan's communications with Tyrrell, though, make it clear that curtailment was not to be made to Thompson's text, but rather to Tyrrell's biographical sketch and ancillary material.

³⁶ Fisher MS 26, Box 90, files 15-16.

³⁷ Fisher MS 26, Box 90, file 30.

³⁸ E.C.M., Macmillan Publishers, to J.B. Tyrrell, 11 June 1910, Fisher MS 26, Box 90, file 33.

³⁹ Quoted in E.C.M. to Tyrrell, 21 May 21 1910, Fisher MS 26, Box 90, file 32.

Macmillan sent Tyrrell a contract for the publication of "The Autobiography of David Thompson," which he signed and sent to New York on August 6, 1910.⁴⁰ In his covering letter, though, Tyrrell refused to make the requested cuts to his work, and by a reply of August 18, the edition was aborted: "since we are not willing to accept the contract on the terms which you propose," reads the letter, "we have no choice but to return it to you."⁴¹ There was no further communication between Tyrrell and Macmillan.

The preliminary drafts of the Macmillan project, made in 1909 and early 1910, survive in Tyrrell's papers at the National Archives of Canada, and show that Tyrrell worked under the guidance of George Platt Brett's letter of 1895, which had called for extensive revision and abridgement of Thompson's original text. Tyrrell began with a typescript literal transcription of the entire manuscript, onto which he then made handwritten notes and revisions.⁴² Most of the changes made to Thompson's text concern orthography, punctuation, and grammar; Tyrrell places full stops at the ends of clauses and changes lower-case letters to upper-case at the heads of sentences, changes the active voice to the passive, cuts circumlocutions, and substitutes more polished forms of expression for the often rough prose style of Thompson. Tyrrell later recalled that his intention "was to abbreviate, and partly rewrite [the narrative], in the hope of being able to reduce it to somewhat more popular form,"⁴³ and in an early version of his introduction, Tyrrell writes: "As a rule [the *Travels*] was written in poor English, and I have taken the liberty of correcting and altering it to some extent, though the utmost care has been exercised to leave it as nearly as possible, consistent with intelligibility, in his own words."⁴⁴

Typical of Tyrrell's work for the Macmillan edition is his version of Thompson's passage on the killing of captured grouse, found early in draft D. Thompson writes:

we have now to take the neck of each Grouse between our teeth,
and crack the neck bone, without breaking the skin, and drawing

40 Fisher MS 26, Box 90, files 15-31.

41 E.C.M. to Tyrrell, 18 Aug. 1910, Fisher MS 26, Box 90, file 31.

42 Preliminary drafts, vol. 5, NAC MG30 D49. The quality of the transcription is uneven; for example, Thompson's draft C description of the bed in a Mandan lodge, "the bottom, is the skin of a Bison, with a Bison robe which makes a soft bed" (iii.77) is transcribed as "the botom is the skin of a Bison, withh a Bison Robe which males a soft bed."

43 Tyrrell, ed., *David Thompson's Narrative*, xix.

44 Preliminary drafts, vol. 5, NAC MG30 D49.

blood, which if done, the foxes destroy the part of the net on which is blood and around it, which sometimes happens to our vexation, and we have to mend the net. (iv.21)

Tyrrell's version of the same passage reads:

Our next duty is to take the neck of each grouse between our teeth, and crack the neck bone, without breaking the skin, or drawing blood, for if any blood is spilled on the net the foxes will destroy that part of it, and we shall be put to the trouble of mending it.⁴⁵

Most of Tyrrell's changes are stylistic, and have the effect of formalizing Thompson's discourse into typical early twentieth-century modes of expression. "We have now to" becomes "our next duty," "which if done" is changed to "for if," and "we have to" is replaced by "we shall be put to the trouble of." But Tyrrell, like Lindsey before him, also changes Thompson's meaning. In the original text it is clear that the drawing of blood results from the breaking of the skin of the grouse, while Tyrrell's version implies that the breaking of the skin and the drawing of blood are two separate consequences of the cracking of the neck bone.

A blunter example of the alteration of Thompson's work can be found in an emendation made directly onto a leaf of the manuscript itself. The draft D passage about the migration of geese is a typically Thompsonian meditation:

The question arises, by what means do the wild geese make such long journeys with such precision of place; the wise, and learned, civilized man answers, by Instinct, but what is Instinct: "an unerring property of mind that has never been defined." The Indian believes the geese are directed by the Manito, who has the care of them. Which of the two is right. (iv.15)

The text as altered by Tyrrell reads thus:

What is that wondrous instinct by which they are enabled to do this [migrate]? The Indian, in his simplicity, believes that the Geese are directed by the Manito, who has the care of them. (iv.15)

It is not only the style that is altered here. Thompson had set the conjectures of the "learned, civilized man" on equal footing with those of the Native, while Tyrrell places the Native in a subservient

⁴⁵ Ibid.

role; Tyrrell himself uses the word "instinct" uncritically, and attributes Native belief in the power of the Manito to "simplicity." In this instance, then, the text has become more Tyrrell's than Thompson's.

Although Tyrrell prepared a typescript of the complete manuscript, several of the typescript pages carry the directive "omit." The passages thus marked belong mainly to drafts A, B, and C, and in many cases exist in later parallel versions, but much of draft D was also to be excluded. In the draft introduction to this edition, Tyrrell indicates his intention to present the text in two parts:

Part I, describing [Thompson's] life east of the Rocky Mountains, has been considerably abridged and many pages and even chapters which did not contain records of his own personal experience have been left out. Part II, being his journal west of the Rocky Mountains is presented in full.

The first of these parts corresponds to draft D, and the second to the latter part of draft C (iii.194-324); the many unique draft D passages tagged for exclusion include Thompson's emblematic passage on the "Musketo Bill," a meditation on the moral degradation of the bayside Natives, and an account of the extent of lands claimed by the Chepawyan.

Tyrrell's Champlain Society Edition, 1911-1916

As we have seen, in 1909-1911 Tyrrell had prepared an edition of Samuel Hearne's *Journey to the Northern Ocean* for the Champlain Society, an association founded in 1905 in order to publish scholarly editions of primary sources of Canadian history. In March 1911 Sir Edmund Walker, President of the Society (and of the Canadian Bank of Commerce), wrote to Tyrrell and "offered to publish [the *Travels*]." ⁴⁶ Like all Champlain editions, Thompson's *Travels* would not be for commercial sale, but would be printed in strictly limited quantities, for distribution to society members only.

An agreement was reached between Tyrrell and Walker in June 1911 for the publication of the *Travels*, and Tyrrell sent Walker a copy of the heavily revised typescript that he had already worked on for Macmillan during 1909 and 1910. Walker was not satisfied with the work that Tyrrell had prepared, and he enlisted the help of

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Figure 3 – William Stewart Wallace, graduation photo, 1906.
From *Torontonensis 1906*, (Toronto: Students' Administrative Council
of the University of Toronto, 1906).

William Stewart Wallace, a twenty-eight-year-old historian working at the University of Toronto Library. Wallace later recalled: "In the summer of 1912 ... the Thompson MSS and Tyrrell's copy of them were handed over to me.... I went over the typewritten copy (which was very imperfect), and in accordance with the conversation I had with [Walker] I restored the punctuation, spelling and grammar of the original."⁴⁷

Wallace worked quickly in preparing a new typescript literal transcription of Thompson's manuscript (now also housed in the NAC Tyrrell Papers).⁴⁸ This typescript was sent off to the Ballantyne Press in Edinburgh, which printed the first proofs on November 7, 1912. The Champlain edition was progressing quickly indeed, and a

⁴⁷ William Stewart Wallace to Sir Edmund Walker, 22 May 1914, Champlain Society Papers, MS 50, Box 47, file 3, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. This collection is hereafter referred to as Fisher MS 50.

⁴⁸ Preliminary drafts, vol. 6, NAC MG30 D49.

notice was placed in *Saturday Night* magazine in November 1912 announcing the impending publication of "David Thompson's Journal," co-edited by J.B. Tyrrell and W.S. Wallace.

At this point the progress of the edition shifted to a lower gear. The contributing factors included Tyrrell's duties as a mining advisor, which often took him for long periods to remote areas of northern Ontario, the outbreak of war in Europe in the fall of 1914, and, most significant for our purposes, disputes between Tyrrell and Wallace regarding the amount of ancillary material to be included, and the recognition of their respective contributions. When he saw the *Saturday Night* notice, Tyrrell sent off a letter to Walker:

I do not wish to make any difficulty in the matter, but you may remember that one of the conditions under which I handed over the Journal to the Society for publication was that I was to be the sole editor, as I have put too much time, work and money on this old manuscript to divide up the work now at the very end. I draw attention to this matter at once to avoid any doubt or ambiguity, and so that Mr. Wallace may not be working under a false impression as to the recognition that he will receive⁴⁹

There was also the question of notes to explicate the text. In April 1913 Tyrrell promised Walker that these notes would be forwarded shortly, and in September, when they were still not forthcoming, he wrote again, "I can assure you that I am as anxious as anyone *can* be to complete the work on the David Thompson book."⁵⁰ The notes were at last submitted in March 1914, and passed along to Wallace. On March 26 Wallace wrote to Walker:

Mr Tyrrell's notes are on a very full scale (too full, in my opinion) ... I attempted to keep it down to one volume, but Mr Tyrrell has rejected the suggestions and deletions ... If I consulted my own wishes, I should withdraw from all connection with the book.⁵¹

The struggle over the nature and scope of the notes continued for a year, and Wallace was able to whittle Tyrrell's work down considerably; among those pieces which were most severely cut were Tyrrell's itinerary of Thompson's activities from 1784-1812, several footnotes containing long extracts from Thompson's journals, and a

49 Tyrrell to Sir Edmund Walker, 25 Nov. 1912, Fisher MS 50, Box 47, file 3.

50 Tyrrell to Walker, 6 Sept. 1913, Fisher MS 50, Box 47, file 3.

51 Wallace to Walker, 26 Mar. 1914, Fisher MS 50, Box 47, file 3.

number of earlier draft C passages of the *Travels* itself. The final proofs are dated between February 3 and March 1, 1915. At this juncture we find the following exchange, with Walker warning Wallace: "Pray do not give Tyrrell any real cause for offence. He is naturally good tempered, but doubtless finds his relations with you rather trying to his pride at times." Wallace replied:

So far as I am aware I have given Mr Tyrrell no real cause for offence and shall not do so in the future. I have steadily overlooked and disregarded some features of his letters to me at which I myself might easily have taken offence. I rather dread sending the page proofs to him for fear of further complications, but I suppose he has a right to revise them.⁵²

But revisions were few—indeed, Tyrrell's personal copy of these proofs is unmarked—and in early 1916 520 copies of the book were printed, and the Society presented its members with publication number twelve, *David Thompson's Narrative of his Explorations in Western America*. Tyrrell alone is named as editor, while Wallace is credited with "assisting in the revision of the introduction and notes."⁵³

The contents of 502 manuscript pages are presented in this edition. These include the latter half of the contents of the first index (iii.194-324 of draft C) and almost the entire contents of the second and third indices (iv.5-312, including six draft E pages and almost all of draft D; Tyrrell had either not encountered or not identified draft E's pages 27a-zd among Thompson's AO notebooks).

The 170 pages not included are draft A, draft B, most of the early parts of draft C, and nine pages of draft D, on igloo construction and on the Aurora Borealis. Some of this material was omitted by Tyrrell himself; of his selection of material for publication, Tyrrell comments that much of the material "had been written twice in somewhat different form, and in each case the one that appeared to have most merit has been printed."⁵⁴ Other pieces were cut by Wallace in order to reduce the amount of text. While many of these pages had already been discarded by Thompson and their contents included in later drafts, some, especially those belonging to the first part of draft C, contain information that appears nowhere else in the

52 Walker to Wallace, 18 Feb. 1915; Wallace to Walker, 22 Feb. 1915, Fisher MS 50, Box 47, file 3.

53 Tyrrell, ed., *David Thompson's Narrative*, xx.

54 Ibid., xvii.

manuscript, including a description of the Metis, an account of the capture of wild horses, references to Noah and Herodotus, and distinctive accounts of the Mandans and the Windigo. After the work of Tyrrell and Wallace, a single early draft C passage remains, concerning Salish sexual morality (iii.168-171).

Draft D is presented as Part I and the end of draft C as Part II. The former ends with draft D's closing discussion of the Piegan, while the latter opens with the signal event of Thompson's crossing of the Rocky Mountains in 1807. Because of the incomplete nature of the manuscript, there remains a temporal gap of several years between Parts I and II. Tyrrell further subdivides the *Travels* into thirty-eight chapters, often taking his cue from transitional phrases and textual seams in the manuscript itself; chapters are headed with a running point-form description of their contents, and vary from five to twenty-seven pages in length. The two longest movements in the text, the draft D section on the Piegans and the draft C narrative of the journey to the Pacific, are each split into two chapters.

Tyrrell arranges Thompson's text into paragraphs, few of which are indicated in the autograph manuscript. Of his emendations to grammar and orthography Tyrrell notes "for the convenience of the reader the liberty has been taken of altering the punctuation slightly and of introducing some capital letters."⁵⁵ The passive voice is appropriate here, for this was not Tyrrell's responsibility. Still, even after Wallace's work at recovering Thompson's original spelling, punctuation and grammar, subtle changes remain. The first sentence on page iv.1 of the manuscript is as follows:

In the month of May 1784 at the Port of London I embarked in the Ship Prince Rupert belonging to the Hudsons Bay Company, as Appentice and Clerk to the said company, bound for Churchill Factory, on the west side of the bay.

The sentence appears in the Champlain edition thus:

In the month of May 1784 at the Port of London, I embarked in the ship Prince Rupert belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, as apprentice and clerk to the said company, bound for Churchill Factory, on the west side of the bay. (3)

Wallace makes six changes here: punctuation is added in the form of a comma between "London" and "embarked" and the possessive

⁵⁵ Ibid.

apostrophe in "Hudsons," upper-case letters are changed to lower-case in the words "Ship," "Clerk" and "Appentice," and Thompson's misspelling of this last word is silently corrected. The addition of capital letters, not represented in this sample, is usually made at the beginning of sentences. Abbreviations are usually expanded and words are sometimes added where grammar demands them; these additions are placed in square brackets. Wallace does not alter Thompson's often idiosyncratic spelling of many place names, such as "Mississippe" and "Kissiskatchewan."

In addition to the notes and the itinerary of Thompson's activities already mentioned, Tyrrell's edition includes a preface, a large-scale introduction, a list of works cited, plates of sites associated with Thompson, a reduced facsimile of Thompson's 1813-1814 map of the Northwest (placed in a pocket inside the back cover of the volume), a modern map, and an index. Tyrrell's own notes are supplemented by material on natural history contributed by Edward A. Preble, a naturalist with the Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture, and notes on the Pacific Northwest provided by Thompson Coit Elliott, a Washington State investment banker and amateur historian. Wallace compiled the index.

* * *

The decisions that have been taken regarding the practical matters of selection, arrangement and transcription of Thompson's text reveal the assumptions and objectives that underlay the act of editing in Canada during the period between Confederation and the First World War. At the same time, these decisions point towards changing notions about the nature of Thompson's text itself. But before turning to consider these editorial decisions, it will be helpful to pick up some other strands in the early history of the *Travels* manuscript.

Before 1910 the justification for the publication of the *Travels* was always made in terms of its contents; Thompson's "Prospectus" promises "curious facts ... which will interest the reader," the 1864 proposal made to John A. Macdonald asserts that "the MS. Contains a vast storehouse of facts," while Lindsey regarded the manuscript as "the only account of a remarkable life." Tyrrell picked up especially on the element of life writing, and this is reflected in the title that he gave to his Macmillan project, "The Autobiography of David Thompson."

Also lurking behind the early history of the *Travels* is the notion of the work as a commodity. This is clearest in the case of Joshua, with his legally questionable seizure of the manuscript and several attempts to sell it, but David Thompson's own writings often consider the *Travels* as a physical object and article of sale. The "Prospectus" foresees the *Travels* as two crown octavo or three duodecimo volumes, selling for under fifteen shillings, and the August 1847 letter to Simpson mentions a "small Octavo of about 300 pages at five, or six shillings a volume," which "may relieve our distresses." The two subsequent editors were, like Thompson, proprietors of the manuscript. The November 1888 letter from Lindsey to Tyrrell regarding possible joint editorship concludes in frank business terms, with the proposal that profits be divided equally. In 1895 Tyrrell spent almost one-quarter of his annual salary from the Geological Survey to purchase the manuscript, and he was in dire financial circumstances when he made his 1895 proposal to Macmillan.⁵⁶

Tyrrell's 1895 communications with Macmillan indicate the extent to which commercial publishers' requirements affected the production of an edition. George Platt Brett sought simply to provide the public with a clear, interesting, well-written, well-defined, and preferably chronological narrative. In this light it is instructive to consider the editorial decisions that were made by Lindsey and Tyrrell. The existence of parallel versions of several episodes has been of particular importance in the editing of the *Travels*. The conclusion of draft C consists of a new account of Thompson's activities during 1811-1812, while the 278 pages that are new with draft D contain versions of much material that had been covered in earlier drafts, including most notably such subjects as the Cree, the Piegan, the Plains, and Thompson's travels from 1796-1798. In each edition, certain parts of the manuscript have been selected for publication, and others excluded.

Thompson himself made few explicit notes regarding those parts of his narrative he wished to retain and those he meant to discard. On October 7, 1847, he wrote in his journal that he wanted to "cut down all repetitions" (Notebook 75:25), and marginal notations reading "Already done," and "I think done," appear on several draft C pages, while the indices preserve three distinct states of the work. But because the *Travels* remained unfinished, it is impossible to

⁵⁶ See Inglis, p. 129ff.

determine with certainty that any piece had been definitively excised. The fact that certain passages were rewritten is no guarantee that the earlier versions would be discarded entirely, for some of these pieces were later reinserted into the narrative. For example, when Thompson composed his draft D passage on the Cree in July 1848, he integrated several pages from draft C, written over the preceding two years.

In his rewriting of the *Travels*, Charles Lindsey selected two large blocks of the manuscript: the end of draft C (iii.194-324) and the beginning of draft D (iv.5-112). He also worked on some pieces from later parts of draft D and earlier sections of draft C, but did not integrate these into the larger blocks of text. He selected nothing at all from drafts A or B. Macmillan's editors complained to Tyrrell in 1895 that the Thompson manuscript contained "too much matter," and so it is perhaps surprising that he began his edition by making a transcription of the entire manuscript. But Tyrrell then set about reducing Thompson's text quite severely. His intended omissions, indicated on the typescript and in his draft introduction, include draft A, draft B, the early part of draft C, and large parts of draft D, leaving only the draft C ending (iii.194-324) and a reduced version of draft D.

The problems of arrangement of the *Travels* text derive from the incoherence of the manuscript, with its bound and unbound, clipped and rearranged pages, and the absence of structural divisions. Thompson produced three indices which describe drafts C, D, and E, but he never organized all the pages of the work in a definitive way. The editors have had to decide if the material should be divided into parts, chapters, and paragraphs, and how these divisions should be determined and indicated.

Each editorial project consisted of two large pieces of the *Travels* manuscript: the draft C ending and draft D. These could either be arranged in the order that Thompson composed them, with draft C before draft D, or could be placed in the chronological order of the events that Thompson describes, in which case the order would be reversed, and in each instance the latter arrangement was chosen. No structural divisions are indicated in Lindsey's manuscript, nor in Tyrrell's Macmillan typescript.

The question of what to do with Thompson's original words has always been addressed explicitly by Thompson's editors. The letter to John A. Macdonald states that "the style might doubtless be improved," and Lindsey wrote that Thompson's style was "neither good nor clear," while Tyrrell noted the narrative's "poor English"

in the draft introduction to his Macmillan edition.⁵⁷ In August 1847, Thompson recorded that he was writing his narrative "fair," but makes no indication of what this signifies, and the evidence of the manuscript suggests that he was little concerned with such matters as orthography and grammar. While the manuscript contains some corrections to spelling, there is much inconsistency; for example, within the space of two pages, Thompson spells the word for dried bison meat as "Pemican," "Pimmecan," "Pemmecan," and "Pem-me-carn" (iii.228a-b). There are virtually no alterations to syntax, and no stylistic improvements made to the actual pages of the manuscript.

We have seen how both Lindsey and Tyrrell altered Thompson's writing, Lindsey in the description of the 1811 arrival at Astoria, and Tyrrell in the passage on the netting of grouse. Both made extensive revisions to spelling, punctuation, and syntax, to the extent that the editions became more paraphrases than proper transcriptions. In both cases, the changes that were made extend beyond forms of literary expression to the content of the work itself.

In their attempts to work up a publishable text, both Lindsey and Tyrrell were attracted to the two most coherent portions of the manuscript: the end of draft C, which concludes with Thompson's descent to Montreal in 1812, and the beginning of draft D, which opens with Thompson's departure from London in 1784 (and which were arranged in chronological order). In the attempt to provide a popular narrative, the spelling, punctuation, and grammar of the manuscript were altered to conform to the standards of the day, and the style was refined considerably, even extending to paraphrase.

The Macmillan reader's report of 1910 and Sir Edmund Walker's 1912 directive to William Stewart Wallace reflect a different understanding both of the role of the editor, and of the nature of Thompson's work. The Macmillan reader alluded to both matters (and the newness of this understanding) when he wrote that "Historical students, nowadays, demand the printing of original material as nearly as possible as the author left it." So too, Walker, in asking Wallace to recover Thompson's original manuscript text, was concerned less with the accessibility of the primary text than the

57 Indeed, one modern critic comments that Thompson's "favourite form of expression is the comma splice," (Nick Mount, "In Praise of Talking Dogs: The Study and Teaching of Early Canada's Canonless Canon," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 63 [Spring 1998]: 79).

faithful presentation of the words that Thompson himself wrote. While the original manuscript had been seen as an obstacle for the editor to overcome in the production of a lucrative narrative, the preservation of the author's original text was now regarded as the cornerstone of any edition, and editing seen as a function of historical scholarship. These new editorial standards reflect a paradigm shift, by means of which Thompson's work went from popular narrative to historical document, and its perceived audience from a general public eager for "curious facts" to students and patrons of history in search of primary sources.⁵⁸ Decisive factors in the ascendancy in North America of the editorial approach espoused by Walker included the founding of the American Historical Association in 1884, the birth of the first university presses, and the establishment of national, state, and provincial archives (for example, that of Canada in 1872, and that of Ontario in 1903); the period corresponds almost exactly with that of the long emergence of the *Travels* into print.

The new approach to editing was fulfilled to varying degrees in the Champlain edition. Tyrrell selected virtually all of draft D (iv.5-312, with pages iii.6a-b and iv.104a-f lacking) and the last half of draft C (iii.194-324), while a small portion of earlier draft C material was also included, in the form of the pages on the Salish (iii.168-171). In all, these pages represent three-quarters of the manuscript. Almost all material within these two large blocks of text is presented, including some parallel passages and some terribly dull and plodding prose, and no attempt is made to supply material that is lacking due to missing pages or manuscript damage. And yet one-quarter of the manuscript *is* excluded, including much unique material. Early drafts of the Champlain edition indicate that Tyrrell had intended to include more early draft C pieces in the form of notes, but that these were cut in the long struggle between Tyrrell and Wallace over the

58 For an early consideration of the development of modern standards of documentary editing, see the address given by American Historical Association president Worthington Chauncey Ford in 1917, "The Editorial Function in United States History," *American Historical Review* 23, no. 2 (Jan. 1918), 273-286. Useful considerations of the historical development of documentary editing during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries include Julian P. Boyd's "God's Altar Needs Not Our Polishings," *New York History* 29, no. 1 (Jan. 1958): 3-21, Donald H. Reiman's "The Four Ages of Editing and the English Romantics," in *Romantic Texts and Contexts* (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1987), 85-108, and Joel Myerson's "Colonial and Nineteenth-Century American Literature," in D.C. Greetham, ed., *Scholarly Editing: A Guide to Research* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1995), 351-64.

size of the work. In this case the exigencies of the publisher did affect the scope of selection of text, for the work had to be kept to a single volume.

Tyrrell's arrangement of the text represents no change from the earlier commercial projects, valuing the chronology of the text's contents over the order of its composition. Still, it is difficult to characterize this as infidelity to Thompson's manuscript, for much of the early part of draft D was in fact taken from draft C; an editor would have to dismantle this later draft if the arrangement of text were to be made on the basis of time of composition. The framing of draft D as Part I and the last part of draft C as Part II of the text reflects the fragmentation of the manuscript, and Tyrrell makes no attempt to stitch these two large pieces of Thompson's work together.

Walker's instructions regarding the editing of Thompson's narrative concern the presentation of the text, and in this area of the Champlain edition fidelity to the original manuscript is the general rule. Thompson's own words, written with his own idiosyncratic spelling conventions and expressed with his imperfect grammar, are largely left to stand for themselves. Yet even here some emendations remain; many changes are made to accidentals, such as capitalization and punctuation, and obviously misspelled words (such as "Appentice") are silently corrected. Also, the Champlain edition contains chapter and paragraph divisions which, as logical as they may be, are absent from Thompson's manuscript.

The history of the *Travels* also reveals a change in notions of the ideal editor, and with this matter we may conclude. Under the attitudes that informed the editing of the *Travels* before 1910, an essential quality in an editor was facility in the literary craft; for this reason the letter to John A. Macdonald states that the manuscript could be gone over by "a skilful writer." Charles Lindsey, a prolific and capable writer accustomed to the business of manuscript revision in his career as a newspaper editor, could properly initiate an edition of the *Travels*. But there was another concern: according to the testimony of Tyrrell, Lindsey ran into difficulty, for he had neither seen the land over which Thompson had journeyed, nor experienced the kind of life that Thompson had led. Lindsey proposed that Tyrrell should co-edit because of his "personal knowledge of much of the territory covered," and then gave up his project because he "found himself constantly hampered by a want of" such knowledge. Joel Myerson has noted that until the early part of the twentieth century editing was regarded as "a type of creative biographical

Figure 4 – J.B. Tyrrell in his house at Pottsville, Ontario, 1911.
Photo from the J.B. Tyrrell Papers (MS 26 P 156), courtesy the Thomas Fisher
Rare Book Library, MS 26.

writing (or rewriting)," in which editors were concerned not so much with textual accuracy as with the persona of the author.⁵⁹ Tyrrell, who had made his own extensive expeditions throughout Western Canada with the Geological Survey, and who could also write solid, workmanlike prose, was thus a more appropriate editor than one whose literary skills might be greater, but who has less of an affinity with the author whose work was to be presented.

But the attitude which informed the Macmillan reader and Sir Edmund Walker demanded an editor with different qualifications. If the original text was not to be altered, then the literary skill of the editor fell in importance (although the editor must still be capable of writing an introduction and notes); what was required instead was a scholar with an appreciation for the value of original documentary source material and a critical attitude toward the reception of communications from the past. Tyrrell's gifts did not lie in this area, and it is difficult not to sympathize with him, struggling to stay afloat amidst a sea change in editorial practise. He had willingly altered Thompson's words in response to George Platt Brett's directives of 1895, and then submitted to the 1912 restoration of the original text without comment (it was instead the question of Tyrrell's ancillary material that led both to the breaking of the Macmillan contract and the delay of the Champlain edition). William Stewart Wallace was the man who could provide what the emerging historical consciousness demanded of an editor, and the work of the young historian and university librarian complemented the practical field knowledge of the distinguished geologist. The volume that was finally produced reflects the positive contributions and the collaboration, as strained as it was, between these two men; while imperfect in many respects, its strengths are such that, for scholarly purposes, it has not been superseded by two subsequent editions.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article traite de l'histoire du manuscrit des *Travels* de David Thompson depuis le début de sa rédaction en 1840 jusqu'à sa première publication en 1916. Le manuscrit des *Travels*, un ouvrage qui est devenu un des plus importants dans le domaine des récits de voyages canadiens, passa entre les mains de plusieurs personnes après la mort de l'auteur en 1857. L'histoire de sa publication comprend quatre

59 Myerson, 351.

projets de publication distincts : celui de Thompson lui-même, abandonné lorsqu'il devint aveugle, celui du rédacteur-en-chef de journal Charles Lindsey, également sans lendemain, et deux préparés par le géologue et ingénieur minier J.B. Tyrrell, le premier, sans suite, pour Macmillan de New York, et le second, conduit à terme celui-là, pour la Champlain Society. Ce dernier projet est décrit ici en détail en montrant l'influence des contributions de Tyrrell, de l'historien William Stewart Wallace et de Sir Edmund Walker, le Président de la Champlain Society, sur le texte définitif publié. En décrivant les présomptions concernant les éditeurs et de l'édition en général sous-jacentes aux quatre projets, cet article présente l'histoire du manuscrit des *Travels* comme un cas-type de l'évolution de l'édition documentaire au Canada.