



The Writings of David Thompson: The Travels, 1850 Version

William E. Moreau

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David Thompson's *Travels* is not only the account of a remarkable life in the fur trade but an extended meditation on the land and Native peoples of western North America. The tale spans the years 1784 to 1812 and extends from the Great Lakes to the Pacific, from Athabasca to the Missouri River. A distinguished literary work, the *Travels* alternates between the expository prose of the scientist and the vivid language of the storyteller, animated throughout by a restless spirit of inquiry and a sense of wonder.

In the first of three volumes that will finally bring all of Thompson's writings together, editor William Moreau presents the *Travels* narrative as it existed in 1850, when the author was forced to abandon his work, and supplements it with a textual introduction, extensive annotations, and historical and modern maps.

David Thompson (1770-1857) is considered by many to have been the most important surveyor of North America. His achievements--mapping the Saskatchewan River, the great bend of the Missouri River, the Great Lakes, and the headwaters of the Mississippi as well as the Columbia watershed--are the stuff of legend.



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