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### Sources for the Study of the Fur Trades

The study of the fur trade was initially the domain of historians, who recognized its economic, social, and political importance to the settlement of North America (e.g., Chittenden 1902; Innis 1962; Norton 1974; Phillips 1961; Turner 1891). Their work has produced an enormous historiography on the fur trades (see Cuthbertson and Ewers 1939; Donnelly 1947; Hanson 2005; Peterson and Anfinson 1984). Researchers have relied on a voluminous archive of primary sources such as journals, letters, company records, public documents, account books, bills of sale, vouchers, private papers of prominent fur traders, maps, drawings, voyageur contracts, newspapers, and unpublished manuscripts to produce a mountain of books, dissertations, and articles in scholarly journals.

Until recently, most document-based histories have generally ignored oral histories, archaeological data, and additional forms of materiality that provide insight into the fur trade (cf. Miller 2000). Yet investigations of fur trade sites were among the earliest developments in historical archaeology (Orser 2004, 31–33). As the heyday of the trade came to a close in the late nineteenth century, antiquarians sought material manifestations of sites that had been identified in the documents, thereby laying the groundwork for what would become historical archaeology (Beeson 1900). They were followed by archaeologists who sought to analyze the material traces of the fur trade through the lens of the research questions current at the time (e.g., Caywood