

Fur and Skin Trade ^[1]

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by Joan E. Freeman, 2006

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The fur and skin trade was a significant industry from the earliest permanent settlement of the region that became North Carolina. Pelts shipped to Europe included [beaver](#) ^[3], [bear](#), [deer](#) ^[4], [raccoon](#) ^[5], [mink](#) ^[6], [muskrat](#) ^[7], [opossum](#) ^[8], [wolf](#) ^[9], and [fox](#) ^[10]. Many were exported to the Middle East, particularly to Turkey, where they were made into clothing. In 1707 Robert Holden [wrote](#) ^[11] to the Board of Trade in London about the varied produce of the Carolina colony. In addition to agricultural crops, he mentioned hides and furs, specifying particularly beaver, otter, fox, wildcat, and bear skins as well as tanned leather. [Royal governors](#) ^[12] for a time were granted a monopoly of the fur trade. In 1736 [Henry McCulloh](#) ^[13] announced his intention to prepare houses for fur storage and employ more than 100 people to carry on the fur trade on tracts of land that he owned in the Cape Fear Valley. Such activity afterward became a significant part of the commerce of the [Moravians](#) ^[14] in the [Wachovia](#) ^[15] settlement on the western frontier, where they had "skin-houses" (warehouses) for that purpose.

Additional Resources:

Dunaway, Wilma A. "The Southern Fur Trade And The Incorporation Of Southern Appalachia Into The World-Economy, 1690-1763." *Review of the Fernand Braudel Center* 17. Spring 1994.
<http://filebox.vt.edu/users/wdunaway/publications/furtrade.htm> ^[16] (accessed June 15, 2012).

Witthoft, John. "Archaeology as a Key to the Colonial Fur Trade." *Minnesota History*. Winter 1966.
<http://collections.mnhs.org/mnhistorymagazine/articles/40/v40i04p203-209.pdf> ^[17] (accessed June 15, 2012).

Subjects:

[Industry](#) ^[18]

[Natural resources](#) ^[19]

Authors:

[Freeman, Joan E.](#) ^[20]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[21]

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