



Enlightened Zeal: The Hudson's Bay Company and Scientific Networks, 1670-1870

Theodore Binnema

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Enlightened Zeal examines the fascinating history of the Hudson's Bay Company's involvement in scientific networks during the company's two-hundred year chartered monopoly. Working from the company's voluminous records, Ted Binnema demonstrates the significance of science in the company's corporate strategies.

Initially highly secretive about all of its activities, the HBC was by 1870 an exceptionally generous patron of science. Aware of the ways that a commitment to scientific research could burnish its corporate reputation, the company participated in intricate symbiotic networks that linked the HBC as a corporation with individuals and scientific organizations in England, Scotland, and the United States. The pursuit of scientific knowledge could bring wealth and influence, along with tribute, fame, and renown, but science also brought less tangible benefits: adventure, health, happiness, male companionship, self-improvement, or a sense of meaning.

The first study of scientific research in any chartered company over the entire course of its monopoly, *Enlightened Zeal* expands our understanding of social networks in science, establishes the vast scope of the HBC's contribution to public knowledge, and will inspire new research into the history of science in other chartered monopolies.

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