

“Trapped”

A Frenchman's illegal journey

Holm

U.S. History

Main concepts covered in this article:

- ❖ **Read the black Fact Box in the bottom left-hand corner!**
- ❖ **1661 – Two young trappers sneak out of the fort at Three Rivers near Mont Royal (Montreal) in New France**
- ❖ **Pierre Esprit Radisson had moved to the fort as a child and was captured by Iroquis Indians, who tortured him by burning him and pulling out four fingernails.**
- ❖ **Radisson knew, however that he had a great skill for trapping, and that leather and furs were in demand in Europe. He could be a rich man because kings would pay for furs with jewels.**
- ❖ **Radisson and his friend, Groseillers, set off in a small boat with two priests who wanted to spread the Christian faith, and some Indians.**
- ❖ **They traveled along the banks of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior, trapping animals for fur.**
- ❖ **Winter hit hard and the men stopped trapping. They were not prepared for a battle with the Iroquois, and they had to eat their dogs and even each other to survive.**
- ❖ **When they returned to the fort, the governor jailed Groseillers and stole his furs.**
- ❖ **Radisson got mad and decided to trap for England, whom he felt cheated him as well.**
- ❖ **Although Radisson was the first white man to explore as far west as the Mississippi, he was not recognized by either France or England. He died poor and unknown in England.**