

There were a number of ways to reach the Hudson Bay

- Upper Bay or lower Bay from Europe

river routes: - Tadousac - Saguenay - Nemisco - Rupert to the Bay (this one was the easiest)
- Montreal - Ottawa - L. Temiskaming - L. Abitibi Abitibi R. - Moose R.
- L. Superior - Albany - James Bay

Seeing how Rupert, Moose and Albany were the great waterways to James Bay there were many trading posts at the junctions of those rivers.

Nelson, Hayes and Severn Rivers to the Hudson Bay were primarily used by the Indians to bring their furs to the English and French posts there.

Nelson and Hayes were the most important rivers at that time.

origins cont.

1674- Colbert forgave Radisson of treachery and then proposed to him the importance that the Hudson's Bay had to Fur Trade.

Louis Jolliet's expedition: - The English trade with the Indians was dominating the area which left the Canadians little trade clientele.
- La Compagnie du Nord emerged by an association of merchants: La Chesnays, Le Moyne, Le BER and Phillippe Gaultier de Comporté.
- La Chesnays went to France to propose to Radisson the formation of La Compagnie.

1682- Directors of La Compagnie du Nord were: Joseph Petit Bruneau, Pierre de Saurel (passed on shortly after), Guillaume Chajon, Jean Gitton. The financing of an expedition to the area was agreed upon by Frontenac.

Le Febvre de la Barre provided the final impetus for the formation of la Compagnie du Nord.

* there are many documents that show that the Compagnie was established in different years : 1682, 1683 or 1684. Conclusive evidence is provided in: An, Col., series, I, 117, "Mémoire de la Compagnie du Nord" (1682)

* The Compagnie was infact formed in October 1682 and was only a partnership between several Canadian merchants.

Borins, Edward H., La Compagnie du Nord, Master of Arts, McGill University, 1968.

Brief

- 1682- *La compagnie du Nord* was formed by leading New France merchants to challenge the English Hudson's Bay Co. in the Hudson Bay area.
- 1685- The King of France, Louis XIV, granted a charter for monopoly of fur trade, the following year the Co. du Nord embarked on a policy of military aggression, it reached it's climate in 1690 reducing the English to only one post.
- 1694- *La Compagnie du Nord*'s finances were exhausted
- 1700- Failure of *la Compagnie du Nord*, the charter was revoked by the French Crown.

Works on the Compagnie

* *la Compagnie du Nord* was also referred to as *la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson*.

Professor E.E. Rich's thorough study, The Hudson's Bay Co. 1670-1763, V. I.

Guy Frégault's, Iberville le conquérant.

Professor W. J. Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV.

* there have been no official study's written on *La Compagnie du Nord* (Borins, 1968)

Three causes to the Compagnies Failure

- Lack of royal support for the Compagnie
- The remote location of the Hudson Bay
- The Compagnie had a weak organization

Origins of La Compagnie du Nord

1670- A group of English associates received a royal charter incorporating them under the title "Governor and Company of Adventures of English Trading into Hudson's Bay". Due to this the New France fur trade began to suffer. To counter this presence a group of Canadian merchants formed *la Compagnie du Nord* in 1682.

* It is said that the Compagnies was not very well organized, there are no existing documents. The employees of the Compagnie probably appeared in the name of one of the directors rather than of the Company's.

* The company headquarters were located in Quebec. Some of the french directors wanted to have it located in La Rochelle but there were many directors who lived in Quebec.

1691- Chesnaye was the leading Canadian investor of la compagnie.

1682- Chesnaye was 50 years of age and was the oldest director of the Compagnie.