

**RADISSON, THE  
VOYAGEUR: A VERSE  
DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS**

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Radisson, the Voyageur: A Verse Drama in Four Acts by Lily A. Long

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**LILY A. LONG**

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VOYAGEUR: A VERSE  
DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS**



# RADISSON

The Voyageur

*A VERSE DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS*

BY  
LILY A. LONG



NEW YORK  
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1914

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## PREFATORY NOTE

FOR over two hundred years the two white men who first pierced the wilderness beyond Lake Superior were overlooked by historians,—their names forgotten, their exploit unknown. Manuscript records of unquestionable authenticity now give the honor to Pierre Esprit Radisson and his brother-in-law, the *Sieur des Groseilliers*. They were trappers and traders, not scientific explorers, and they were apparently quite careless of fame. Such discoveries as were incidental to their avocation were all in the day's work. But their adventures were many and dramatic, and Radisson's journal shows that he, at least, was keenly sensitive to the romantic aspects of their work and to the wonder element of the wilderness.

There is no historical record of any love adventure, such as is included in the play, but—Radisson was twenty, and a Frenchman. The other incidents in the drama follow his story closely, and many of the speeches are merely paraphrased from his journal.

The play as presented is arranged for reading, but the notes at the back make it available for amateur out-of-door performance, or for use as the basis of an Indian Pageant. The opening poem, "The Voyageurs," could be made to serve as a prologue, spoken

by a voyageur; and after the last curtain has fallen it might be raised for a moment on the solitary figure of a woman, looking toward the sunset, who recites the closing poem, "The Passing of the Indian."

"The Feast of Friendship," which is introduced as a Pageant following Act III, gives an opportunity for the presentation of Indian dances and games, to any extent desired.



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFATORY NOTE . . . . .	v
PROLOG—"The Voyageurs" . . . . .	ix
THE PLAY—"Radisson: The Voyageur" . . . . .	1
L'ENVOI—"The Passing of the Indian" . . . . .	105
HISTORICAL NOTE . . . . .	107
DIRECTIONS FOR COSTUMING AND MOUNTING . . . . .	111
DIRECTIONS FOR PAGEANT . . . . .	115

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## THE VOYAGEURS

They were a gallant band, the Voyageurs,—  
Adventurous spirits, tossing life and death,  
Like chance-flung dice, with an unfaltering hand,  
To find the western sea that led to Ind,  
To thread the rivers, flowing from the north,  
To pierce the mystery of unknown lands,  
To find the fabled gold of buried kings,  
To track the bear and bison in the wild,  
To trade for silky pelts a queen might wear,  
To hold dumb converse with the woodland men  
And learn the master-craft of how to wrest  
Full life, bare-handed, from the barren wilds,—  
All these were lures to lead the adventurer on.  
Yet more than all, perhaps, 'twas but to feel  
The wildness close about him, shutting out  
The petty strife of towns, the labor dull  
Of day by weary day while time shall run  
That marks the somber safety of the towns.  
Here there was danger, meet to match his might;  
Here there was vastness, equal to desire.  
The night sky spread a tent above the world,  
Murmurous with winds that blew from sea to sea.  
The forests held the memories of a past  
Older than cities, and than empires more.  
Foremost of all, the gallant Radisson,