**European Explorers to North America - 1600s**

**Samuel de Champlain** (1567?-1635) - French explorer and navigator responsible for mapping the majority of northeastern North America and established a settlement in Quebec. Champlain also discovered the lake named for him, Lake Champlain, on the border of New York and Vermont. Champlain was instrumental in establishing and leading the French colonies in the New World.

**Henry Hudson** (1565-1611) - English explorer and navigator who explored parts of the Arctic Ocean and northeastern North America. After sailing to Nova Scotia and sailing south Hudson found The Hudson River, Hudson Strait, and Hudson Bay. The discovery of present day New York City has been credited to Hudson and here many Dutch settlements were established.

**René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle** (1643-1687) - French explorer. He was sent by King Louis XIV (14) to travel south from Canada and sail down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico. He was the first European to travel the length of the Mississippi River (1682). His mission was to explore and establish fur-trade routes along the river. La Salle named the entire Mississippi basin Louisiana, in honor of the King, and claimed it for France on April 9, 1682. He also explored Lake Michigan (1679), Lake Huron, Lake Erie, and Lake Ontario. He tried to start a settlement in the southern Mississippi River Valley, but the venture ended in disaster.

**Louis Joliet** (1645-1700) - a Canadian explorer, born in Québec City, who explored the Canadian wilderness, including the Great Lakes area. He and Father Jacques Marquette found the Mississippi River in 1673; they were the first Caucasians to see the Mississippi River. They traveled along Lake Michigan to Green Bay, canoed up the Fox River, and went downstream on the Wisconsin River to the Mississippi River. They travelled almost to the mouth of the Arkansas, and then stopped because they were warned of unfriendly indians and Spanish explorers. The return trip was up the Illinois River, then the Chicago River to Lake Michigan. Joliet's journal and his maps were lost when his canoe overturned on the rapids of the Montreal River. Marquette's diary is all that remains of their journey. Joliet expanded fur trade westward, did extensive mapping, and established a fort on Anticosti Island.

**Father Jacques Marquette** (1637-1675) - French Jesuit priest and explorer. He sailed to Quebec in 1666 and in 1671 started a Chippewa mission at Chequamegon Bay, located at the western end of Lake Superior. Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette (and five others) found the Mississippi River in 1673; they were the first Caucasians to see the Mississippi River. Their travels took them along Lake Michigan to Green Bay, they then canoed up the Fox River, and went downstream on the Wisconsin River to the Mississippi River. They traveled almost to the mouth of the Arkansas, and then stopped because of warnings about unfriendly indians and Spanish explorers. The return trip took them up the Illinois River, then the Chicago River and Lake Michigan. While on his way to preach to the Kaskaskian Indians he died of dysentary.