

At what time was Nicolet appointed interpreter of the Company of New France, otherwise called the Hundred Associates or Partners?

Nicolet arrives in the country in 1618, being a nominee or a protégé of Champlain. He goes immediately to Allumettes Island, on the Ottawa, in order to study the Indian language. In 1622, he is noted as having already a very extensive influence among the Algonquin Indians. And for a period of eight or nine years after 1622, says Father Le Jeune, a particular friend, he lived with the tribes of the Nipissing—that is, from 1623–31.

In 1627, the Company of New France is founded, fulfilling the views of Champlain, whose friendship towards his protégé, Nicolet, may have induced him to give him the rank of official interpreter, which he fully deserved. It is to be noted that Hertel, Godefroy, Marguerie, Marsolet, Brulé, and Le Tardif, were, as well as Nicolet, all young men of thirty years, or thereabouts, at this period—1627; and that they had had already a good many years of experience among the Indians. In speaking of them our historians have always styled them interpreters, and so they really were. I may add, that I believe I have always noticed the above named persons mentioned in the writings of this period as “interpreters.” We know, also, that Hertel, Brulé, Godefroy, Marguerie, and Le Tardif, were located, or had charge of various localities of trade between Gaspé and Montreal, during the time that Nicolet was living among the tribes of the Upper Ottawa and the Nipissing region, and 1618–1629, leaving that country to himself, and partly to Marsolet who resided there, I believe, for some period prior to 1629.

In my *Life of Nicolet*, I say that I am not certain that he did, or did not, return to Quebec before 1629. My impression is, that he might have been there in 1628, to receive orders from Champlain on account of the new state of things inaugurated by the creation of the system of 1627—“The Hundred Associates;” but I see no reason why he should not have ranked from that time with the interpreters of New France. The *Relation* says that he remained with the Nipissing during the occupation of Quebec by the English—1629–32.