

in which you are not willing to allow trade. To grant his request would be to give him the opportunity to carry on the beaver trade, to the exclusion of other persons in the Colony.¹

1698: ILLICIT FUR TRADE; PARTICIPATION THEREIN OF FRENCH SOLDIERS; COMPLAINTS AGAINST LE SUEUR.

[Extracts from a letter of Champigny to the French Minister, Oct. 14, 1698. MS. in Ministère des Colonies, Paris; press-mark, "Canada, Corres. gén., vol. 16, c. 11, fol. 102."]

The commanders of the Companies, with a few exceptions, show such ardor in getting for themselves the pay of their soldiers, that I cannot describe to you how far this extends, and what obstacles and hindrances result to the service from letting them leave their companies. There is no discipline; the majority of the soldiers, who are in quarters distant from the Commandant and myself, are rovers exempted from the service—at least those who abandon their pay to their captains; while those who are incapable of working (whose number is slight), are charged with keeping guard and going through the exercises. But, as I do not receive any complaints from either side, although I ask for them and have them asked for by the commander at the head of the companies at the time of the reviews,—the soldiers, on the contrary, all seeming satisfied,—I know the evil without being able to remedy it. I even know from several soldiers that, even if I were to do them justice, they would at once return their pay in order not to be annoyed, and to have liberty to go to work; the remedy therefore, can be found only in the perfect uprightness of the captains. Those who are not actually guilty of this cupidity, and who are of inviolable fidelity, are Messieurs de la Durantaye, de Longueuil, and Dulhut, and after them de Maricourt—who merit by these extraordinary marks of honesty, and by their other good quali-

¹ In another letter to the Minister, dated six days earlier, Champigny says: "I think that the only mines that he [Le Sueur] seeks in those regions are mines of beaver-skins."—Ed.