

1729: MONTBRUN'S ESCAPE; FATE OF THE CAPTIVES

[The first is a letter from Beauharnois to the French Minister. MS. in archives of Ministère des Colonies, Paris; press-mark, "Canada, Corresp. gén., vol. 51, c. 11, fol. 122." The second is an extract from a letter of Tilly¹ to the French Minister, dated Apr. 30, 1729. MS. in Quebec provincial archives, transcribed from the Paris archives.]

MONSEIGNEUR—I have just been informed by the Sieur de Montbrun who arrived in this Town the day before yesterday, of the unhappy Fate of twelve Frenchmen who had resolved to return to Canada because they could not procure Sufficient Food to enable them to pass the winter in the fort that they had built in the Sioux country On the shores of Lake Pepin. These twelve Frenchmen, among whom Are the Reverend Father Guignas, a missionary of the Society of Jesus; the Sieur de Boucherville, an Ensign in the King's troops; And the Sieur de Montbrun, who Escaped with His brother and an employee of the Montreal government, were met in the Mississipy country at the mouth of the Riviere aux Bœufs, by a band of Maskoutins and Quicapoux on a hunting expedition, who stopped them and Took them to their Village. There is reason to fear that those Savages who quarrelled two years ago with the Renards (their former allies), will Sacrifice these Frenchmen in order to make peace with the Renards, to whom they sent notice, and who had already come to their Village before the Sieur de Montbrun's Escape that they might take the French to the Renards. But as they were only ten of them they Went back [without the French] and stated to a Quicapoux,—from whom Those Gentlemen Learned it,—that they would return to the number

¹Pierre-Noel le Gardeur, Sieur de Tilly, son of Charles le Gardeur. Sieur de Tilly, belonged to one of the most prominent of the old Canadian families. He was born in 1652, married in 1680 Marie Madeleine Boucher, aunt of Montbrun, and De Boucherville. He was a member of the royal Council of New France, lieutenant of the marine, and appears to have acted as intendant during the brief interim between the departure of Dupuy, the death of D'Aigremont, and the arrival of Hocquart. Subsequently he was comptroller of the marine.—Ed.