

1763: THE ILLINOIS

[Letter from Neyon de Villiers to d'Abbadie. Translated from Villiers du Terrage, *Dernières Années de la Louisiane Française*, pp. 178, 179.]

FORT CHARTRES, Dec. 1, 1763.

If General Amherst had informed me of the cessation of hostilities and the ratification of the treaty, each event as it occurred, I could have disposed the tribes accordingly, convinced as I am, that a man worthily representative, is incapable of taking advantage of the law of nations. I would have had collars passed about in all this region, and I dare flatter myself, that from the confidence the red men have in me, I could have put a stop to this conspiracy. But ignorant as I was, it was out of my power to accomplish this, and I have reason to fear that matters have gone to such lengths that it will be difficult for me to quiet them.

I have had the honor to report to you what I have done to execute the orders you have sent me, in passing collars, messages, and calumets in every direction throughout this region.

The sieur Debeaujeu, who was charged with sending the messages, calumets and collars to all the northern tribes, decided to winter sixty leagues away, on the Illinois river, with a party of the Poutéouatamis and to send his messages further. The latter, with whom he has communicated, have replied to me that their chiefs and old men have always listened to my words, but that they cannot answer for their warriors, and moreover it was the Master of Life who incited them to war. It is well to observe, Monsieur, that a prophetic spirit arose among the Abénottes, a man of that nation⁵⁵ having without difficulty con-

⁵⁵This prophet appeared among the Delawares on the Tuscarora, and according to the Pontiac MS. (*Mich. Pion. and Hist. Colls.*, viii, pp. 268-272) was the inciting cause of the attack on the English. His dream and interview with the Master of Life, as related by De Neyon, correspond in essence with the more detailed narrative of the Pontiac MS.—ED.