

1778: LANGLADE TO REINFORCE HAMILTON

[Letter from De Peyster to Langlade and Gautier, dated Oct. 26, 1778. Reprinted from De Peyster, *Miscellanies*, p. lxx.]

MESSIEURS—In accordance with the power that has been given me by his Excellency General Haldimand, Commandant in Chief of the Armies of his Majesty the King of Great Britain, in Canada, etc. etc. etc. to do all in my power to assist Lieut. Gov. Hamilton⁹⁷ in all his enterprises against the Rebels, and as I have learned by letter from the Lieut. Governor that he has gone to dislodge the Rebels of the Illinois⁹⁸ and

⁹⁷ Henry Hamilton was of Irish descent, of the family of the Marquis of Boyne. He early entered the army (1754), and was commissioned lieutenant of the 15th in 1756. He served with Amherst at Louisburg, was with Wolfe at Quebec, and later (1761-63) was in the West Indies. His regiment was in England, 1768-76, but in the summer of 1775 Hamilton was in Quebec, being there appointed lieutenant-governor of Detroit. He arrived at the latter place Nov. 9 of that year, and was much occupied in counteracting American influence among the neighboring Indians; see Thwaites and Kellogg, *Revolution on the Upper Ohio*. In the autumn of 1778, he advanced against Vincennes and retook the fort from the Americans, only to be captured with all his garrison by Col. George Rogers Clark (February, 1779). Hamilton was sent a prisoner to Virginia, and there kept in close confinement until his exchange in 1780. He then visited England, returning to Canada as lieutenant-governor, 1782-85. In 1790 he was governor of the Bermudas, and four years later of Dominica. During the latter incumbency he died (1796) and was buried on the island.—Ed.

⁹⁸ Since Langlade's departure for Canada in June, 1778, matters had taken an unexpected turn in the Western country. Col. George Rogers Clark, commissioned by Virginia, had marched from the Falls of Ohio and surprised Kaskaskia (July 4), capturing the commandant and securing the allegiance of the French habitants. In August he held a great council with the northern Indians, and secured many for his allegiance—see certificates to Winnebago and Fox chiefs in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xi, pp. 133, 177. Pierre Gibault, the Kaskaskia priest, had meanwhile visited Vincennes in the interests of the Americans. He there secured the coöperation of its inhabitants, who took oaths of allegiance; also the alliance of the neighboring Piankashaw Indians.