

nine hundred savages which left not the least doubt that this nation, having forgotten how to make war according to the system practiced in Europe, does not desire to be false in America to the title with which an author of ability has characterized it.

Captain Don Fernando de Leyba of the infantry regiment of Luisiana was commandant at the post of San Luis de Ylinoises;¹⁰ and having received information that a body of one thousand two hundred men, composed partly of savages and partly of troops, was being drawn up for an attack upon the town under the orders of Captain Esse, he fortified it as well as its open situation permitted. He built at the expense of the inhabitants a wooden tower at one of the ends of the town, overlooking it, and placed therein five cannon. In addition to these he had some cannon with which he defended the two intrenchments that he threw up at the other two extreme points. These were manned by twenty-nine veteran soldiers and two hundred and eighty-one countrymen. The enemy arrived May twenty-sixth at one o'clock in the afternoon, and began the attack upon the post from the north side, expecting to meet no opposition; but they found themselves unexpectedly repulsed by the militia which guarded it. A vigorous fire was kept up on both sides, so that by the service done by the cannon on the tower where the aforesaid commander was, the defenders at least succeeded in keeping off a band of villains who if they had not opportunely

he had left the army and entered the fur-trade. Sinclair speaks of him as a man of character, and gave him a captain's commission, probably in the Indian department. No more is known of him after this campaign of 1780.—ED.

¹⁰ Fernando de Leyba was a native of Barcelona, in Spain. Appointed captain of the Louisiana infantry regiment, he came to New Orleans with Unzaga in 1769. Chosen lieutenant-governor of Spanish Illinois, he arrived at St. Louis June 17, 1778. Upon Clark's conquest of British Illinois, that officer entered into intimate relations with De Leyba, whom he found a courteous gentleman, much to his taste. During the troubled years of the latter's governorship, he and Clark maintained the pleasantest and most helpful relationship. De Leyba's wife died in 1779; he himself succumbed soon after the attack on St. Louis, dying June 27, 1780, and being buried in the churchyard of that village—ED.