

Champlain refers to the Neutrals in 1616 as a powerful nation, holding a large extent of country and numbering 4,000 warriors, and to their alliance with the Cheveux Relevés (the Ottawas), whom he visited in the Bruce peninsula, against the Nation of Fire. He states that the Neutrals lived two days to the south of the Cheveux Relevés, and the Nation of Fire ten days from the latter. The Nation of Fire occupied part of what is now Michigan, and it is quite probable that they extended as far east as the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers.

Describing his visit to the Cheveux Relevés, he adds: "I had a great desire to go and see that nation (the Neutrals), had not the peoples where we were dissuaded me from it, saying that the year before one of ours had killed one of them, being at war with the 'Entouhoronons' (the Senecas) and that they were angry on account of it, representing to us that they are very subject to vengeance, not looking to those who dealt the blow but the first whom they meet of the nation, or even their friends, they make them bear the penalty when they can catch any of them, unless beforehand peace had been made with them and one had given them some gifts and presents for the relatives of the deceased, which prevented me for the time from going there, although some of that nation assured us that they would do us no harm for that. This decided us, and occasioned our returning by the same road as we had come, and continuing my journey I found the nation of the Pisierinij," etc.*

Brebeuf, who reckons the Hurons at more than 30,000, describes the Neutrals in 1634 as much more numerous than the former. The Relation of 1641 gives them at least 12,000, but adds that notwithstanding the wars, famine and disease (small-pox) which since three years had prevailed in an extraordinary degree, the country could still furnish 4,000 warriors, the exact number estimated by Champlain a quarter of a century earlier. The name of the Neutrals is variously given as "Attikadaron," "Atiouandaronk," "Attiouandaron," "Attiwandaronk," but the last is the more common. The name signified "people who spoke a slightly different dialect," and was equally applied to the Hurons by the Neutrals. The Neutrals are mentioned in the Relations as one of the twelve numerous and sedentary nations who spoke a common language with the Hurons. The "Oueanohronons" formed "one of the nations associated with the Neutral nation." They are afterwards called in the same Relation (1639) the "Wenrôhronons," and are said to have lived on the borders of the Iroquois, more than 80 leagues from the Huron country. So long as they were on friendly terms with the Neutrals they were safe from the dreaded Iroquois, but a misunderstanding having arisen between them, they were obliged to flee in order to avoid extermination by the latter. They took refuge (more than 600 in all) with the Hurons, and were received in the most friendly and hospitable manner.

The Relation of 1640 speaks of a Huron map communicated by Father Paul Ragueneau, in which a large number of nations, most of them acquainted with the Huron language, are shown, including the Iroquois, the Neutrals, the Eries, etc. The "Mission of the Apostles" was established among the Tobacco Nation by Garnier and Jogues, in 1640. Nine villages visited by them were endowed by the missionaries with the names of apostles, two of which are given in Sanson's map of 1656.† In one "bourg," called S. Thomas, they baptised a boy five years old, belonging to the Neutral nation, who died immediately afterwards.

* NOTE.—The above translation is verbatim and exhibits the author's peculiarities of style. The Pisierinij are of course the Nipissings.

† The principal "bourg" was Ehwaë, surnamed S. Pierre et S. Paul. If S. Pierre on Sanson's map is the same place, this must have been near the south end of the County of Bruce. The other village or mission shown on the map is S. Simon et S. Jude.