

### SECTION III

LETTERS AND PAPERS, 1799

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ABRAHAM IREDELL

Detroit 2<sup>d</sup> January 99

Dear Sir I was favoured with a Letter from you Some time ago accompanied with a Map for which I am very thankful, as you desire me to Keep it untill you came this way yourself & I expected that would be Soon was the reason of my not writing before, but as I was fav<sup>d</sup> with another Letter of yours yesterday I take the earliest opportunity to answer it. you may depend on it that my Son got N<sup>o</sup> 6 in the second Township, second Concession, Northe Side River Thames, & that both the register & Land Board Certificate will prove what I say. I was not Sure it was not N<sup>o</sup> 7 once, but as the Land Board Certificates must be followed (it seems) even If given thro Wrong information or mistake, I do not mean to take or accept of any other in lieu thereof. M<sup>r</sup> James M<sup>c</sup>Donell<sup>1</sup> I believe so far as I can recollect got a lot very near it. No person has or Shall See the map you sent me but myself, but untill you are present I cannot well make a choice, not Knowing how near what you have or is laid out is to the River Ruscum or Pointe aux Roches where you Know I always intended to take up my Lands. Please present my best Comp<sup>ts</sup> to M<sup>rs</sup> Iredell & believe me to be &<sup>a</sup>

(Signed) J A

M<sup>r</sup> Iredell

*Endorsed:* Detroit 2<sup>d</sup> January 1799 John Askin to Abraham Iredell Copy

LAND CLAIMS OF ARENT S. DE PEYSTER

Detroit 5 Jan<sup>y</sup> 99

Sir Your letter of the 29 May did not reach me untill the 26 November last. It will give me pleasure at all times to have it in my power to render service to any relation to my worthy friend Col. Depeyster, at Same time in the

<sup>1</sup> For the career of James McDonell, see *B. H. R.*, I, 374.

present case I can only advise whats to be done & how I would wish to do with Some of my own in a Similar Situation. the tract of land you elude to is at a Small distance from this. I Know it well, it is not claimed by any person here nor elsewhere to my Knowledge unless congress will not admit of Such purchases, and you are better Situated than I am to take legal advice how to act in order not to have your claim disputed: Could you get it confirmed by the American Government it would not be a hard matter to have it Settled probably, but even that might be better done with you than here, as from your Quarter or I mean the States many are looking out to purchase land but few here. it also happens that adventurers from your Quarter purchase Deeds and run all risks. this in my opinion is the best way to dispose of those sort of Lands I have offered very good tracts for  $\frac{1}{4}$  York the acre and give such titles as I hold from the Indians but have not been able to part with any yet however Indian deeds before 83 as yours is, Some Gentlemen of the law Suppose to be good. as you have at York many eminent characters of that profession, your opportunity of having their Sentiments is very easy and I would be thankfull to you to Know what they are. Please observe when I say I would give my right of tracts of Land for  $\frac{1}{4}$  the acre I mean large tracts, and give no other than the Indian Deeds, but If Congress admitted those Deeds as good I Would not sell such as small tract as yours under 8/ or 10/. I was last Summer favoured with a letter from your uncle Col. DePeyster dated 18 Jan<sup>y</sup> last. I take the liberty of sending you under cover herewith my answer, as being the Safest way of conveyance in my opinion I am &<sup>a</sup>

Signed J A

M<sup>r</sup> Arent Schuyler DePeyster<sup>2</sup> New York

*Endorsed:* Detroit 5 Jan<sup>y</sup> 99 John Askin to Arent Schuyler DePeyster Copy

<sup>2</sup> Arent Schuyler De Peyster, born April 4, 1779, was a nephew of Colonel Arent S. De Peyster, who was commandant at Mackinac and Detroit during the Revolutionary period. His father, being a loyalist, migrated from New York (the ancestral home) to England, where the son was educated at the expense of Colonel De Peyster, who planned to procure a comission for him in his own regiment (the Eighth Foot). Instead, the boy ran away to sea at the age of fifteen, and thus began his life-calling as a sailor. In 1819 he discovered the group of islands in the South Pacific which still bear his name. He married

## FROM JOHN ASKIN TO COLONEL DE PEYSTER

Detroit 5 Jan<sup>y</sup> 99

D<sup>r</sup> Sir I had the pleasure Jointly with my Family to learn by your kind letter of the 18 January last that M<sup>rs</sup> Depeyster & you enjoyed good health, indeed we frequently had that happiness before from the information of several acquaintances in this Quarter, M<sup>r</sup> Leith I believe the last

Your letter reached me last Summer & I immediately wrote a particular friend of mine at Michilimackinac to endeavour & obtain of Doctor Mitchel<sup>3</sup> & M<sup>r</sup> Gautier the vouchers you required. the former readily gave one, but the latter from intoxication & perhaps Some other cause never could be prevailed on. the Doctor's after I got it was on Such a Scrap of paper that I had to Send back for another, and now he has not put any date to it & declares (which Surprises me) that he does not know the time. there is no others of those mentioned in your account could be met with at Michilimackinac, but M<sup>r</sup> Ainse<sup>4</sup> and many others are at Montreal & as your old acquaintance M<sup>r</sup> Todd (Isaac) lives there & they are all known to him, I am sure he will render you Service If in his power, and as he has the art of persuasion he is a very proper person I would have wrote him & sent the list, but I think its better you do it yourself.

All your old acquaintances in this Quarter—William M<sup>c</sup>Comb excepted, are all alive and well the Commodore lives at gros Pointe (except when his duty requires him at the Rivers' mouth) Colonel M<sup>c</sup>Kee at River tranche, his Son<sup>5</sup> (married to my Daughter Therese) at petite cote, M<sup>c</sup>Gregor & Park lower down in the Same quarter also Pollard our high Sherrieff Elliott<sup>6</sup> & Caldwell<sup>7</sup> at the Rivers

Sarah Macomb, daughter of William Macomb of Detroit and (later) New York, and sister of General Alexander Macomb of the U. S. army. Information adapted from sketch in A. S. De Peyster, *Miscellanies by an Officer* (New York, 1888), and Henry A. Macomb (comp.), *The Macomb Family Record* (Camden, N. J., 1917).

3 Dr. David Mitchell, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 85.

4 Probably Joseph Louis Ainse, for whose career see *ibid.*, 69.

5 Captain Thomas McKee, for whose career see *ibid.*, 376.

6 Matthew Elliot, for whose career see *ibid.*, 257-58.

7 William Caldwell, for sketch of whose career see *ibid.*, 243.



mouth, now Amherstburg as likewise Doctor Harffy Reynolds & Sparksman I dont recollect any other that you are acquainted with, I live on my farm near town & Keep a Shop in Col. M<sup>e</sup>Kee's old house opposite LaMoths, that was. my Son John carries on the mercantile business in town, M<sup>rs</sup> Hamilton is dead & M<sup>r</sup> Hamilton married again. my Daughter Madelaine who was brought up in Canada has been married Some years past to a Doctor of Simcoe's Rangers. Archange, M<sup>rs</sup> Meredith is in Ireland with her husband, so that there remains with us, Alice & Nelly, likewise three Boys, the eldest of whom begins to assist me in the Shop, I have taken the liberty of troubling you with this long account of the family knowing that M<sup>rs</sup> Depeysters & your friendship is so great that you will be pleased to hear of all those who are related to me I'm on a very good footing with the American Garrison, tho a declared british subject Compliments &<sup>a</sup> &<sup>a</sup> &<sup>a</sup>

Signed J A

Colonel Arent Schuyler DePeyster<sup>8</sup>  
at Dumfries in Scotland

*Endorsed:* Detroit 5 Jan<sup>y</sup> 99. John Askin to Col. DePeyster Scotland

### WRECK OF THE *ANNETTE* AT LONG POINT

#### Declaration of Augustin Francoeur<sup>9</sup>

On the tenth august last he, as sailor with one Timothy Grumment *then* commanding the now Wrecked Sloop *Annette*, Sailed from Detroit for Presquisle, and came to shore at Malden about 2½ days wind bound, then sailed out and went as far as the Islands in 1½ days when they anchored ½ wind bound, from whence they Sailed out and arrived at Presquisle on the Second day in the morning from which Place after loading the Vessel (which took 2 days) they sailed out the 3<sup>d</sup> day with a fair wind on same day, wind turning a head, they were drove to the grand River where they remained 3 or 4 hours, after which they Sailed out into the lake where after being toss'd about all

<sup>8</sup> For the career of Colonel Arent S. De Peyster, see *ibid.*, 72.

<sup>9</sup> The manuscript is evidently a rough draft, with many corrections and interlineations.

day, they were drove to *Pointe à Bineau* [Abino] the next day, where having a head wind for Detroit they, on their 4<sup>th</sup> days anchorage, being in want Provisions went to Fort Erie in order to obtain some there, and arived Same day. next day Set off for Detroit a few hours after the *Francis & Charlotte* and Steering by Said vessells after Standing out a hard gale for two days (which had Drove both *Francis & Charlotte* back to Erie) they come to anchor under *Pointe à Bineau*. the next day, finding the wind Still against their course for D. they Steered for Fort Erie in Same day to get some Candles Next day at about 12 Sailed with fair wind in Co with the *Nancy* (which they lost sight of at night) came as far as *long Pointe* the Same day at night, where they got aground, pushed off, then Sailed again for D. with a light breeze, they got aground again on Said *Pointe* So that it was impossible to get her off a 2<sup>d</sup> time. the next morning finding that the vessell had taken Some water, they unloaded all they could on shore, remained there all day,—then Francoeur attempting to discover the habitations, which were about 15 miles from the vessell lost the Road and came back 2 days after, Stay 1 day more at the vessell, next day Grummet after declaring that he would not leave the vessell untill the vessell Was broke to pieces Went off with S<sup>d</sup> Francoeur in a canoe to the habitations where after getting a Barge S<sup>d</sup> Grummet returned to the Vessell and came back to the Houses loaded with part of the vessell's cargo, then S<sup>d</sup> Grum[met] declared he would not let the cargo into any body's hands lodged it into a House and remained in posesion of it, at which time S<sup>d</sup> Francoeur departed for Detroit, with daily

N B It must be remembered, that after being Cast with the vessell S<sup>d</sup> Grummet enticed S<sup>d</sup> Francoeur to pillage & Steal the Goods &<sup>ea</sup> as his Share giving him to understand that whenever a vessell was wrecked, the Seamen had a right to take any thing that remained. which he refused S<sup>d</sup> Grummut had himself taken some things to himself, had drank some of the Rum wine &<sup>a</sup> and had offered to Sell Brandy & Cloathes &<sup>a</sup>

Said Francoeur declares that to his Knowledge & according to a particular Survey he had made to the vessell he

Saw no other harm done to her Except a Small opening about 3 Inches wide on the side of her, but not being able to be present when Daily cut the vessell to pieces, being Sick at the habitations, Daily told him he had cut the vessell to pices Moreover, Grummet was always intoxicated always on the lake.

*Endorsed:* Augustin Francoeur his Declaration relative to the loss of the *Annette* in 1798

SALE OF INDIAN LANDS

Detroit January the 22<sup>d</sup> 1799

Sir I Meant to have called on you prior to your departure relative to our Conversation on the subject of Lands purchased of Indians. I think you said the best Method to Strengthen such Titles would be to sell a part of them to men of Interest. I Agree with you. Therefore if you know of any such Characters please write or Mention the Matter to them. they may Almost make their own price for some hundred Thousand Acres and I think the offer should come from them in which case the affair could be closed soon. They can have no better Deeds than Us who purchased, and it must be an Undivided Share, for by their Securing their own they will Secure that of the other Proprietors which is the reason that I in behalf of myself & them would sell so low. No fraud has been mad[e] use of towards Indians, & the purchases are prior to the Treaty held by the late General Wayne the Lands are well situated & of a good quality.

I am Sir Your Most Obedient Humble Servant

John Askin

Solomon Sibley Esquire at Cincinnatie

*Addressed:* Solomon Sibley Esquire, Cincinatti

DISPUTES OVER TRADER'S OBLIGATION

Montreal 24<sup>th</sup> January 1799

Dear Sir I was duly favoured with yours of the 12<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> October to which I attend. The different articles of yours on the communication would I hope get up by the



*Nancy* or *Charlotte* which I learn had arrived before M<sup>r</sup> R. M<sup>o</sup>kenzie left Detroit.

M<sup>r</sup> Todd was gone for New York before either of your letters reached me, and is not yet returned, but is expected in ten days or a fortnight; of course I have not had an opportunity of speaking to him on the chief subject of your last, M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Gill however read me what you say to M<sup>r</sup> T. on the subject of my having assumed the 2500 Livres recovered from Vallé<sup>10</sup> by Loisel.<sup>11</sup> I do not know how M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum can swear to my having done so. when you & I had the last & final conversation on that subject I cannot remember that he was present, and from which conversation you conceive that I *did* assume the Debt as acting for M<sup>r</sup> T. but was it not still subject to his approbation? The memorandum which you suppose I left about that matter must be what M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum got at Mackinac from M<sup>r</sup> Swan,<sup>12</sup> with whom the matter had much better have been settled seeing he knew the people in the Illinois, it is also odd that M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum did not say any thing to M<sup>r</sup> Todd on the subject in 1797 when he was at Mackinac & Detroit, nor did he say any thing of it this year till the very day that I was leaving Mackinac when there was no time to have it cleared up. In writing you last Septem<sup>r</sup> I mentioned the reasons for M<sup>r</sup> T's refusing to pay the whole demand, which letter I wrote by his desire and he saw it before it was closed. if M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum has any information regarding that business or proofs to bring forward of which M<sup>r</sup> T. is ignorant I think he would do well to produce them, and if they are convincing M<sup>r</sup> T. as you observe is surely the last man that would wish to have

<sup>10</sup> On the Vallé family of Ste. Genevieve, see *B. H. R.*, I, 290. The member here alluded to was probably Jean Baptiste Vallé, who was actively engaged in the fur trade and in other commercial activities. He married Jane Barbeau and lived to an advanced age. See Houck, *History of Missouri*, I, 349-50.

<sup>11</sup> Régis (or Registré) Loisel was a native of Canada, who came to St. Louis in 1793, where he married Helene Chauvin. He engaged actively in the fur trade of the Upper Missouri region, and about the year 1800 built a "4 bastion" fort in central South Dakota which is described with considerable care by Sergeant John Ordway of the Lewis and Clark expedition. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XXII, 135. When Louisiana was transferred from Spain via France to the United States, Loisel seems to have chosen to remain a subject of the first-named country. He died in New Orleans in October, 1804. See Houck, *History of Missouri*, II, 252.

<sup>12</sup> James Swan, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 375. For his report on the matter here discussed, see *post*, 216-17.



what does not belong to him, but the matter appears to be that he never got the money otherwise than by a Credit in an Acc<sup>t</sup> Current on which there is still a large balance due, and it will fall hard on M<sup>r</sup> Todd to pay the money, which I told M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum at Detroit. Swan who is gone back to the Illinois this winter will endeavour to get some information on the subject as I wrote him from your place, and I hope all parties will at last be of one opinion; I heartily wish I had never had any thing to say in the business for disputing claims is an unpleasant task. I shall drop the subject by observing that I am now writing from my own head and not as M<sup>r</sup> Todd's Attorney.

You will hear the news from this place through other channels, and I have only to add my thanks for your obliging expressions and for the good wishes of your family, and begging you will present my best Compliments to them all, I remain Dear Sir

Your most obed<sup>t</sup> & very hu<sup>le</sup> Servant

Tho. Blackwood<sup>13</sup>

I have not forgot the Quebec Pocket Almanack, but it cannot be sent till the spring.

If you have any Mem<sup>m</sup> from me about the 2500<sup>n</sup> I will thank you to say what it is, as I don't recollect of having left any with you regarding that matter. I left a mem. about the *Saguinah's* loading only, if I remember right.

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal Jan<sup>y</sup> 24<sup>h</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Blackwood to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin rec<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> of March Ans<sup>w</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 6 June 1799

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Blackwood was a prominent Montreal merchant in this period. He was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland, Feb. 10, 1773. In 1791 he came to Canada, and after several years' employment in the mercantile business in Quebec, entered the service of the firm of Todd and McGill in Montreal, where he continued to reside until his death, Nov. 22, 1842. About the beginning of 1800, he was admitted to partnership in the firm of James and Andrew McGill, and at a later date he became a partner of François DesRivières, son of Mrs. James McGill. Blackwood was for several decades an active supporter of the St. Gabriel Street Church, whose historian says of him: "... few men in Canada wielded a more trenchant pen, or exhibited a more statesmanlike grasp of Church questions, as these were affected by Canada." He was a charter director of the Montreal General Hospital, an executor of the will of James McGill, and a director of the Montreal Savings Bank. A sketch of his career is in Robert Campbell, *A History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, St. Gabriel Street, Montreal* (Montreal, 1887), 244-49.

## DEFECTS IN LAWS GOVERNING MILITIA

Detroit 24 Jan<sup>y</sup> 99

D<sup>r</sup> Sir I wrote you the 26<sup>h</sup> since which I have endeavoured to throw M<sup>r</sup> Nortons account into such a State as may induce him to pay you the Ballance. I have taken the liberty to inclose you herewith the copy of my letter to him as also of his Note & account, So that Should he make any further difficulties you will be acquainted how badly they are founded I wish this tedious business was at an end.

pray have you not Some young man of the law in your Quarter who you wish well. If you have I think you should recommend it to him to settle at the River thames or Sandwich, for, tho he may not get much at first, his profession will make his profits daily increase as the Settlement does, in particular If he understands conveyancing, besides only one lawyer in Court gives a poor Chance to him who has not engaged him first. M<sup>r</sup> Roe has declared it would be more agreeable to him If there was an other than he alone.

Pray let me ask you If you have not found Some defect in your Militia laws. I command a Batallion but on no occasion whatever unless in conformity to an order from the L<sup>t</sup> Governor &<sup>a</sup> or L<sup>t</sup> of the County, can I order out one man for review, exercise, or any other purpose? but the Captain who is my inferior officer can call his company out 4 times a year. On the 4 June the whole militia is to be out, but it's not me who can give them Orders to appear on that day. the law directs we should be all there, Officers & men, and a fine is to be paid by the absent, I should have been [glad] to have paid a Compliment by ordering some out to fire over Colonel M<sup>e</sup>Kee, but I make a rule never to do what the law will not support me in doing for fear of being refused without having the means of punishing, others its true order without authority and are sometimes obeyed. Some militia were called out by them to fire over col. M<sup>e</sup>Kee's Corps & they did so. Another defect I find in the militia law is, that no person can be compelled to serve as a Sergeant, and I assure you so few among the Canadians are disposed to do it voluntarily tho excepted for the time from Serving as Constable, that I have one Comp<sup>y</sup> without officer or Sergeant. it's true the law has

provided for the former, and when officers are wanting the L<sup>t</sup> of the county is to blame When I mention these matters to Some of the council in this Quarter the answer I get is, that it's understood I should be obeyed when I give orders to the militia. my ideas are very different except in cases where the laws directs, for was I [acting] as Judge in any case where a militia man refused what the law had not exacted he should do, I would acquit him If in your opinion the defects I suppose exist & [you] think it right to move at next Sessions for an amendm<sup>t</sup> it is well. If not I have nothing further to urge. It is however painful to me as a militia officer not to be able to put the [into] execution such orders as I may receive from the president or any other in his Stead, thro the L<sup>t</sup> of the county. I am &<sup>a</sup>

(Signed) J A

*Endorsed:* Detroit 24 Jan<sup>y</sup> 99 John Askin to Hamilton  
Copy

FROM ALEXANDER HENRY TO JOHN ASKIN

Montreal 25 January 1799

Dear Askin I received your several letters and observe what you say respecting Trade at your post it is nothing new when money is gaine one or two years in a post they must loose five business is much the same here all Trades overdone from your information, I have alter'd my plan and sold off all my importations at cost & charges, so am again free living on stock which goes very fast, and [what] the next will be [I] cannot say. the new North West Company is going on it will be a considerate [considerable] struggle but I know who will gain. the one party is a new rais'd corps without discipline, the other old veterans. I cant find one man of experience that has the least knowledg in the North concern'd. Forsyth does the business here and Sharp at the portage. I thank you for the [me]morandum &<sup>a</sup> you sent me, I did not mean that my Nephew<sup>14</sup> should have settled at Sagana or the Indian Country but

<sup>14</sup> This was Alexander Henry who is commonly known as "the younger" by way of distinguishing him from his uncle. He seems to have entered upon the fur trade this same year. He was drowned in the lower Columbia in April, 1814, along with Donald McKenzie. Most of the intervening years were spent by Henry in the far Northwest. His extensive journals, edited by Elliott Coues, were published in New York in 1893.



at Detroit. he is going to the NorthWest with the old Company. I am inform'd Sheifland was at Philidelphia with the Indians from Detroit but cannot know what has been done, but can guess. Isaac Todd was there at the Time but has not return'd I suppose you will have the News—such as never was known. Admiral Nelson with 13 ships of the Line attackd the Toulon fleet, which Took Boanaparta to Egypt, and took Eleven of the french the Beys or Generals in Egypt has kill'd the greatest part of his army, Nelsons fleet also destroyed 300 Transports Admiral Warran, has Taken & Destroyd the Brest fleet going to Ireland with Troops, the french Landed a number of Troops there some time before these, but they were all taken or Kill'd. the Turks has declar'd war against france and it is supos'd Germany, Russia & all the World will do the same. America talks big. they feel Bold all this good news has rais'd our sperrets. furs in England will sell by the best Information I can get for less than last year Beaver very great fall, Deer about the same as last year bears much less raccoons a fall. Muskratts will sell here 20 coppers good, no small ones, to 22<sup>d</sup> that is if those shipt for England last fall, sells for that in London, but if for less, they will all return to America and *overstock* the market, then a fall.

I expect Todd up soon with all the News. he is like myself growing old always complaining. one of your old friends General Christie<sup>15</sup> took his departure for the other World a few days ago. old standards deminishes very fast. there is not more than six rema[in]ing in Montreal which are Dobé, John Neagles Major Hughs, James Morrison, & my self. Todd came some time after the conquest. we have lost that number in about two years, so we may keep a sharp look out. Tell my old friend Com'odore Grant that I receved a letter from Doct<sup>r</sup> Wright Barbados 24 August. M<sup>rs</sup> Wright and the Children is well<sup>16</sup> they have had an

<sup>15</sup> General Gabriel Christie spent practically a lifetime in the army, rising to the rank of general in 1798. For a number of years prior to the Revolutionary War he was lieutenant colonel of the Sixtieth (Royal American) Regiment. We have been unable to discover where Askin encountered him, although it seems quite probable it was during the sojourn of the latter at Mackinac from 1764 to 1780.

<sup>16</sup> Therese, daughter of Commodore Grant, married Dr. Thomas Wright in January, 1793. For the tragic fate of the Wright family, see *B. H. R.*, I, 461.



addition of one to their family since they left this. as the time is so very short for us, we should endeavour to meet once more here on Earth so it is your Turn to come down, which [I hope] you may do this summer and bring Mr<sup>a</sup> Askin with you. I have tired your patience with so much stuff, so when you are half through lay this by for another time, and believe me ever, with my wishes & that of my family for the Happiness of you & your family

Your affectinate friend

Alexander Henry

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal Jan<sup>y</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> 1799 Alex<sup>r</sup> Henry to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> March Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 30<sup>h</sup> April

# OBLIGATIONS OF FRANCIS VIGO

Cincinnati Jan<sup>y</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> 1799

Dear Sir, I shall with pleasure hold myself retained on your behalf in all Cases in which I may be applied to either by your self, or by any other person against you, upon the principles you have stated in your last letter. I do not wish any money to be advanced, but will leave it to be received as the Cases individually occur.

Your letter addressed to Mr<sup>r</sup> St. Clair<sup>17</sup> and myself at post Vincents did not come to our hands. We found Mr<sup>r</sup> Vigo perfectly willing, but unable to discharge the Debt. he offered to give lands in payment, which we were not empowered to receive. our only object therefore was to secure the debt, if possible. to effect this we proposed to take a Mortgage on his lands. at first he was unwilling to give it, observing that it would prevent the sale of his lands which was the only source from which he could raise money to discharge the bond; however he waived the objection and executed a Mortgage on seventeen four hundred acre tracts of land, lying in the neighbourhood of the post. the patents for these lands have not yet been taken out, but the Governor is ready to grant them whenever an application shall be made for that purpose.

<sup>17</sup> Arthur St. Clair, son of Governor Arthur St. Clair, and a pioneer attorney of Ohio.

Mr Vigo values the land at one Dollar and fifty Cents Pr Acre and offers to give the seventeen Tracts if the Company will accept them and give him a discharge. We endeavoured to learn the value of the lands with as much accuracy as possible, but could not obtain sufficient information to make it prudent or safe for us to recommend or advise one way or the other. it appeared to be the opinion of some persons whom we consulted that the lands were valued at more than they would sell for in Cash at present, but that they were rising in value.

please to present my respects to your Family and believe me

Your Friend & Very Hum<sup>e</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

Jac Burnet<sup>18</sup>

Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Detroit fav<sup>d</sup> by Mr Sibley

*Endorsed:* Cincinnati Jan<sup>y</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> 1799 Jacob Burnett Esq<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> March Answ<sup>d</sup> April the 3<sup>d</sup>

STATE OF AFFAIRS IN IRELAND

Athlone 30<sup>th</sup> January 1799

My dear Father, I did myself the happiness to address my Mother and Sister M<sup>e</sup>Kee by the last month's Packet I have no letters of my dear Familys to acknowledge since that period tho I live in hopes of receiving some ere long. You will be pleased to hear that my dear Husband enjoys

<sup>18</sup> Jacob Burnet was the son of Dr. William Burnet of Newark, New Jersey, who was a member of the Continental Congress and subsequently physician and surgeon-general of the Eastern District throughout the Revolution. The son, Jacob, was born, Feb. 22, 1770, and was graduated from Princeton in 1791. He was admitted to the bar in the spring of 1796 and immediately thereafter located in Cincinnati. Here he early achieved an influential station, being chosen in 1799 one of five members of the first Legislative Council of Northwest Territory and continuing a member until the formation of the Ohio state government. He became a judge of the Supreme Court of Ohio in 1821 and was elected to the U. S. Senate in 1828. In 1839 he was chiefly instrumental in procuring the nomination of William Henry Harrison to the presidency. Aside from political and legal activities, he was active in the development of educational institutions, and in 1847 published *Notes on the Early Settlement of the Northwestern Territory* (Cincinnati, 1847). He died in Cincinnati, May 10, 1853. See E. O. Randall and Daniel J. Ryan, *History of Ohio* . . . (New York, 1912), *passim*.

A letter substantially identical with the one to Burnet was addressed the same day to Arthur St. Clair of Cincinnati, son of Governor St. Clair.

a good state of health he is not so fat as when in Canada but he looks remarkably well. My dear children have both had bad colds but are now recovering. This Place does not afford any matter entertaining to write about I described my habitation and situation of the Town &c to my mother in my last letter. We have been in a kind of Bustle lately on the subject of an union between England and Ireland most of the first people in this Kingdom objected to it and the lower class of Irish without knowing the meaning of the business objected to it because their superiors did I am not politician enough to comprehend the nature of the Union with regard to the advantages that might accrue to this Country by its taking place but am happy to find that in consequence of the extreme dislike to it by the Irish the matter is dropped and we are likely to remain quiet. We have had Some cold weather this Winter this day reminds me of dear Canada for it is very severe and we have a drift of Snow. I went to a Ball two evenings ago the Ball Room was in shocking condition in regard to the appearance of the Building but we had some pleasant women of the Party and we danced merrily untill two oclock in the morning at which time we were ushered in the Supper Room where we found a very good *repas* prepared after Supper I danced one dance and returned home. I must compliment you my dear Father on the good dancing of your fair Country women they possess great life and spirits and are in general very pleasant in their conversations and manners.

It is now some time since we heard from my Aunt Mercer they were lately at Liverpool. my Cousin Charlotte is a very pretty Girl and is of a most amiable disposition I should suppose she must have some admirers by this time in Canada she would not wait long for a Spouse but in England men always look to the *main chance* a round sum of money and indeed it is highly necessary where Taxes are so plenty. I suppose you [are] by this time comfortably settled on the opposite side of the River I trust you have met with good purchasers for what you had to dispose of the Newspapers gave a pleasing account of great success the Canada Fur merchants met with this last year I did not get a letter from any of the Family by the Fleet of merchant



Ships from Quebec so that I am ignorant of your situation this last Autumn. Should my dear Mother be near to my Sister she will no doubt find great amus[e]ment in her attention to her grandson I trust he continues well as also my Sister and Family to whom I beg to be remembered in the most affectionate manner.

For the information of Adelaide I insert a few Fashions— head dress of Brown velvet the cap in the shape of a Turban trimmed with narrow gold Twist, and white feathers. the Hair dressed in small curls all over the head, B[a]ngle Bandeaux and Feathers are also much worn. Gowns and Petticoats of the same are also much in Fashion, but to save a quantity which a suit of the same must cause, it is customary to tack a kind of apron in the Gown, leaving [part] of the Gown loose the length of a finger, which [makes] it appear a compleat dress. handkerchiefs are also in vogue but very little of them seen as the gowns come high up to the neck. small earrings and Necklaces, narrow girdles, narrow Bracelets are now in Fashion. silk gloves of any colour and very long to come high up the arm. sleeves of Gowns are worn in various shapes, but I have mine quite plain with a small cuff to turn up. so much *pour les modes*. my dear Meredith having desired me to leave him a small space to address you in I shall now think of concluding. my little children beg to assure you of their kind love pray kiss my dear dear Mother for me and assure her of my fervent affection. my best love to my dear Sisters & Brothers Love to Uncle Grant & & Compliments to all acquaintances I remain my dear Father you very affectionate daughter

A Meredith<sup>19</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merc<sup>t</sup> at Detroit Upper Canada To the care of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Todd & MGill Merchants at Montreal Lower Canada

*Endorsed:* Athlone 30<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> 1799 L<sup>t</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Meredith to John Askin

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<sup>19</sup> A letter from David Meredith to John Askin follows the letter of Mrs. Meredith to her father.



PROPOSAL FOR SUPPLYING LOGGERS

Grose Point Thursday

D<sup>r</sup> Sir For fear of any misunderstanding about the price of the Hay which I had cut & stacked near where your People are cutting Pine, I inform you that if you have occasion to take any of it the Price is Twelve Pounds York.

I take this opportunity also to repeat that I will haul out all your Timber at Two Shillings York a pice provided the saw Logs do not exceed ten feet long, otherwise in that proportion, and the largest of the other Timber thirty feet of a foot square except the [illegible] & Traverses which of cours[e] I'll admit in any proportion you find convenient to order, provided also that your people do open the roads to the Timber.

I shall require half of the payment in money and half in goods from your Store. Should this not meet with your approbation, and that your People may want any supplies, these can be had at my House, Corn for 8/ a Minot Pork at 1/ Beef at 10<sup>d</sup> and if possible to get to the mill Flour at 40/ a h<sup>d</sup>. When I consider that I may have two Horses to support and two Men to victuall and pay for at least three Months I cannot undertake the hauling under the terms proposed Mean time I am D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Your Very Obed Sv<sup>t</sup>

Alex. Harrow<sup>20</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Gros Point Feb<sup>ry</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> 1799 Cap<sup>t</sup> Harrow to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> same day & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>

FROM GOTTLÖB SENSEMAN TO JOHN ASKIN

Fairfield Feb<sup>ry</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 99

Dear Sir Your Corn due to you by our Ind<sup>a</sup>, is chiefly all collected and stored; the Ind<sup>a</sup> whom I appointed to measure & store it, tells me, that he received nigh 500 Bhl., and to my own Calculation the Total due to you, comes to above that Sum or Quantity, I shall use my best Endeavors, that

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<sup>20</sup> For the career of Alexander Harrow, see *B. H. R.*, I, 305-306.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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all shall be paid; some Indians, as you know yourself are little concerned about making Payment; without the Creditor himself is present, and peremptorily demands it. There are but very few left, of whom I know, that they are bad Paymasters. two of them promised me, to bring their Corn themselves down in the Spring, and I shall remind them of it at the Time.

Mr W<sup>m</sup> Dealy promised to bring the Corn down in the Spring, in the new Vessel, he is a building for you, but I am a little afraid, it will be laid [late], as I have been told, his Work goes on but slowly; I shall write to him, and hurry him on; and I wish very much you would do the same, that you might receive your Corn at the proper Time, and as early as possible; I have received, not long ago a Letter from Mr Nichol your late Clerk; wherein he mentions to me, that he has entrusted a few Goods to Lodwick, one of our Ind<sup>s</sup> when he was here last; the Payment for which he shall deliver to you; (they were his own Property) I acquainted the Indian of it, and he is willing to do it. it makes 25 Dollars.

I would likewise desire you, to send me my Account, as I had a few Articles from Mr Nichol when he was here with Goods; the Account I had for it, I have lost among my Papers; you will be so good, as excuse the Forbearance of the Payment, as I [do] not come to Town so frequently, as I formerly did, or els I should have pay'd it before now.

I am with due Respect Dear Sir

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & humbl. Ser<sup>t</sup>

G Senseman

Mr J. Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* Mr John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Fairfield Feb<sup>y</sup> 9<sup>h</sup> 1799 Mr Senseman to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 14<sup>th</sup>

SUPPLIES FOR LOGGERS

Detroit 10 feb<sup>y</sup> 99

Dear Sir In answer to your obliging letter from Gros Pointe on Thursday last, I have to Say that the Hay is at

your Credit With me—12— as to the hawling out of the Timber I have made an agreement for that business much under your offer Respecting the provisions, whatever Quantity under the Value of £20 Basile Lafleur may want, please furnish him and I will pay the Rates you require and for St Bernard<sup>21</sup> the bearer I will answer up to £30 for Provisions If he takes So Much. I need not observe that it will be necessary to take the Person's receipt for the Quantity delv<sup>d</sup> I am &<sup>a</sup>

Signed J A

Capt Harrow 1<sup>st</sup> Claim

*Endorsed:* Detroit 10 feb<sup>y</sup> 99 John Askin to Captain Harrow Copy

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR BASIL LAFLEUR

Au Detroit Le 10 de Fevrier 1799

Mons<sup>r</sup> Bazil Lafleur

Monsieur Le Porteur de ceci Mons<sup>r</sup> St Bernard est Arrangé Avec moi pour tirer tous mon Bois que Je aurai à La Pineire Ainssi vous lui ferra[i] commencer per Le Bois qui est pour Le Roi et Le faire mettre apart comme cette Bois doit être dans une Cajeux separé d'Autre Bois. Vous n'êtes

<sup>21</sup> Alexander Bernard married Catherine Girard and lived in the parish of Ambasa, diocese of Limoges, in France. Their son, William, born in the ancestral home in 1717, found his way to Detroit, where on Jan. 10, 1754, he married Mary Joseph Campau, daughter of Antoine Campau and Angelica Peltier *dît* Antaya, who was born in Detroit on March 15, 1740. To them were born seventeen children in the ensuing thirty years. William Bernard was engaged in trade. In 1762 he purchased the farm on the Northeast Coast (between modern Field and Baldwin avenues) which had been granted to Charles Chêne in 1734, and which since the American régime has been designated as Private Claim 16.

Joseph St. Bernard (the prefix "St." seems to have been added to the family name by certain members of the second generation in Detroit), the third child of William Bernard and Mary Joseph Campau, and the individual mentioned in the present document, was born in Detroit, June 21, 1759; on April 26, 1785, he married Geneveva Saucier, daughter of Joseph Saucier and Geneveva Tremblay. The bride's parents resided at Fox Creek in Grosse Pointe, and apparently she and her husband located in this vicinity, for ten of their children were born in Detroit in the years 1786-99; and in 1802 a suit at law resulted in dispossessing Bernard of a house at Grosse Pointe, which he apparently had built on land to which he was now unable to establish legal title. Prior to this, however, the couple seems to have removed to Raisin River settlement, where their eleventh child was born, in January, 1801. Their farm was on Otter Creek, a few miles south of Monroe; Bernard continued to reside here until his death, shortly prior to May 29, 1822. Information adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*, and mss. in B. H. Coll., *passim*.



pas obligé d'Assister à chargé des Pieces, mais il faut faire Le Chemain ou cela est neccessaire. Je dois fournir du foin pour Les Cheaveaux de Mons<sup>r</sup> S<sup>t</sup> Bernard, et Je lui est dit de rendre Le restant pour mon Compte comme elle m'a couté douze Ponts. On quittera contre La Cabane de Micheal Baron Autant de Piyeaux de Ceder qu'il pourra faire En Bardeau et Le reste sera Amminé ou vous ferrez Les Cajeux. Je Suis mortifié que Baron n'est pas content Je Souhaiterai contenter tout Le Monde, vous ferrez bien lui Liveré tant de Lard, tant de farine et tant de pois, et des Pois[s]on comme Les Autre, s'il Employe plus que ce qui est raisonnable, ce sera A lui de Le payer. Je Vous prie bien de manager la Viande, Je ne vois pas jour de vous Envoyer de Avantage mais s'il vous manque de La farine au Pois Vous En Aurez de Cap<sup>t</sup> Harrow par mon Compte, Mons<sup>r</sup> Barthe vous Aurez dit que Le Bois du Roi doit Etre faites Le premiere. Michel Baron a tres mal faites de Vouloir Vendre de Ceder à Mons<sup>r</sup> Boyez Vous ne lui quittera pas prendre une Seul morceau. tout cela est à moi. Comme Je paye tant por Piece grand comme petit pour faire Charier du Bois, J Espere que Les traverses seront belles.

### *Translation*

Detroit, February 10, 1799

Mr. Basil Lafleur,

Sir: The bearer of this, St. Bernard, has arranged with me to draw all my wood that I shall have at the Pinery, so you will have him commence with that for the King, and have it put aside as that wood should be on a separate raft from the other. You need not help with the loading but be sure to have the necessary roads made. I have to furnish hay for St. Bernard's horses and I have told him to give me credit for what is not used as it costs me twelve pounds. Leave near Michael Baron's<sup>22</sup> cabin what cedar he will

<sup>22</sup> Michael Baron was descended from Andrew Achin, who was born in 1646 and married at Three Rivers, on October 24, 1667, Frances Pietou. Their son, Francis Achin *dit* Catin, born in Montreal on June 1, 1684, married on Jan. 7, 1704, Mary Seguin *dit* Laderoute of Longueuil. They had a son Francis, who was born in Longueuil in 1712, and who married there on Feb. 9, 1739, Mary Ann Jeannes. Their second son, Michael Catin *dit* Baron, was born in Longueuil, April 6, 1749. He came west to Detroit and on Nov. 21, 1774, married in Sandwich Mary Louisa Gouyou, who was born in Detroit, Aug. 8, 1759. They had nine children born in Detroit and Sandwich, the last in 1792; four more



need to make into shingles and take the rest where you will make the raft. I am sorry Baron is not satisfied. I should like to please everybody. You might give him as much lard, flour, peas, and fish as the others, then if he uses more than is reasonable, he must pay for it. But pray be careful with the meat, for I do not see when I can send you more, but if you need flour or peas, get some from Captain Harrow on my account. Mr. Barthe will have told you that the wood for the King must be made up first. Michael Baron did very wrong to want to sell cedar to Mr. Boyer. You must not let him take a single piece; that is all mine. As I pay so much a piece, big or little, to have the wood carted out, I hope the roads will be good.

#### INDIAN TITLE TO CONNECTICUT RESERVE

Mr Huntingtons<sup>23</sup> Compliments to J Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> and in reply to his note of this date, has to inform him, that the principal object of his inquiries of Mr M<sup>c</sup>Niff was to Obtain information relative to the situation of the Indian title to that part of New Connecticut or lands the property of the Connecticut Company which lies west of the east line described in the treaty made with the Indians by General Wayne.

The Connecticut Comp<sup>y</sup> have made application to Congress for liberty to treat with the Indians for their title, to the land described, and as Mr H has a number of friends interested in the title granted by Connecticut he thought it his

were born in Raisin River settlement, the first in 1796. Information adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*

<sup>23</sup> Benjamin Huntington was born in Norwich, Conn., March 19, 1777. His family was long prominent in Connecticut, and his father, also named Benjamin, held numerous important public offices. Huntington came to Detroit in early manhood (the present document affords the earliest indication of his presence here that has been found), where he remained about three years. During this time he was engaged in business activities and to some extent in local politics. In October, 1800, he unsuccessfully sought election to the territorial legislature, and engaged in physical combat at the polls with George McDougall. In the spring of 1802, Huntington established himself in business in New York City, where the remainder of his life was spent, and where he died on Aug. 3, 1850. He was long a leading broker of the city. One of his sons, Jedidiah V. Huntington, was an author and editor, and among other activities, was the translator and editor of Gabriel Franchère's Northwest Coast narrative. Another son, Daniel, was a prominent artist of New York. Data compiled from mss. in B. H. Coll., and E. B. Huntington, *A Genealogical Memoir of the Huntington Family* . . . (Stamford, Conn., 1863), *passim*.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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duty to inquire into the situation of the buisness, that he may have it in his power to point out to his friends the best method to obtain the Indian title, M<sup>r</sup> H would readily attend to the interview mentioned by M<sup>r</sup> A if the time previous to his departure was not so short. The letter accompanying M<sup>r</sup> Askins note shall be particularly attend to.

Monday evening Feb<sup>y</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 1799

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire

*Endorsed:* Feb<sup>y</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Huntington to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin  
recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 13<sup>th</sup>

SUPPLIES FOR LOGGERS

Newburgh 19<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> 99

D<sup>r</sup> Sir S<sup>t</sup>Bernard and the other man passed here on Friday, they took a few Bushells of Corn and some Pork, but he was obliged to leave the Slays with all the baggage at a House six miles below Fort Sinclair & proceeded with the Horses only in hopes of crossing at the Rapids. I have not heard how he succeeded. Whatever the Party may require shall be furnished agreeable to your Letter I am with best respects D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Your Very obd. Serv<sup>t</sup>

Alex. Harrow

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Newburgh Feb<sup>y</sup> 19<sup>h</sup> 1799 Cap<sup>t</sup> Harrow to  
Jn<sup>o</sup> [Askin] recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 20<sup>th</sup>

FROM ROBERT NICHOL TO JOHN ASKIN

Queenston February 21<sup>st</sup> 1799

Dear Sir About six weeks ago I had the pleasure of receiving your obliging favor of the 1<sup>st</sup> January, with the different inclosures therein noted. I have seen both the people. Prince positively denies the Debt & says that it must be his brother James who is now at Quebec.

M<sup>c</sup>Clachlan keeps a school a short distance from this & has given me his Note for £4 16 1 Yk payable on the 20<sup>th</sup> March, that being the time he receives his quarterly Salary,

& I have reason to believe he will be punctual. the 10/8 for M<sup>r</sup> Roe he disputed & as I thought it would be more for your interest to give up that point than to have the account disputed and to lay out of your money. I hope you will not be displeased at my taking upon me to deduct it from the acc<sup>t</sup>

It is with the utmost satisfaction I observe you are pleased with my Conduct at Long Point. it was an unfortunate Business & attended with much expence yet I believe none but what was necessary originated with me. the People in general in that quarter are a mere Banditti, & took advantage of the necessity I was in by making me pay exorbitant wages. every thing considered I really wonder that so much was Saved. Dolsen (the vagabond) has absconded to avoid prosecution.

I am no stranger to the good Character given of me by M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Michael. I have reason to believe he wrote that letter in consequence of some Words that took place between us on board of Captain Lee's<sup>24</sup> vessell. however as *his Character* for traduction is well known, I shall not dwell longer on the subject being convinced *you* paid no attention to his insinuations. I shall have the pleasure of paying my respects to you in the Spring, when on my way to Mackinack & shall then give you an ample detail of every thing relative to the Business

Feeling myself deeply interested in the happiness of Captain M<sup>c</sup>Kee's family from whom I have received many obligations, I have heard with the utmost distress the melancholy account of the Colonels death & knowing from Experience what it is to loose the best of Fathers—I can easily conceive the distress which both Captain M<sup>c</sup>Kee's family & yours must suffer on this occasion, & I sympathize & Condole with you on the melancholy event.

I shall say nothing to you on Politicks as a large parcel of News Papers go forward to Your Address. in them you will see the detail of many important actions, which cannot fail to give the utmost satisfaction to every Briton.

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<sup>24</sup> William Lee was sailing the upper lakes as early as 1795 and as late as 1812. Among the different vessels he commanded were the *Erie Packet*, the *Good Intent*, the *Contractor*,



Will you have the goodness to say to M<sup>r</sup> Maisonville that I expected to have received some reply to the many letters I have wrote him from hence.

I have some little business in Detroit to transact with M<sup>r</sup> Robert Grant<sup>25</sup> & have given him a draught upon you for 15 dollars. Which you will oblige me by honoring & the amount shall be placed to your Credit with M<sup>r</sup> Hamilton.

Be pleased to offer my respectfull Compliments to M<sup>rs</sup> & Miss Askin & in wishing that You may all long enjoy together many happy returns of the season I subscribe myself with sentiments of esteem and respect, My Dear Sir

Your Most Obedient & very Humble Servant

Rob<sup>t</sup> Nichol

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merchant Detroit

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merchant Detroit

*Endorsed:* Queenston Feb<sup>y</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Nichol  
to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recvd<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 7<sup>h</sup> March Answ<sup>d</sup> June 10<sup>th</sup>

#### DIFFICULTIES OF JEAN DUSAULT

River Raisin 25<sup>th</sup> feby 1799

John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esquire

Dear Sir Phénon Dusau<sup>26</sup> having called on me & stated the disagreeable predicament he now stands in, from

and the *Friend's Good Will*. In 1799 his home was at Presqu' Isle. Considerable incidental information concerning him can be found in manuscripts in the B. H. Coll., and in Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Pubs.*, VIII, 284 ff.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Grant was a resident of Detroit who, in 1795, signified his intention of remaining a British subject. He subsequently engaged in trade in Sandwich in partnership with Robert Innis, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 464-65, *et passim*. Grant married Mary Scott, and a daughter, Christina, born April 22, 1810, was baptized in Sandwich on Feb. 1, 1818. See St. John's Church Register.

<sup>26</sup> Other documents in the Askin papers indicate that this was Jean Dusault. The Dusault (Dusaut) line in America was founded by Toussaint Toupin, Sieur Dusault, born in 1616, who married Margaret Boucher, born in 1634. He was buried in Chateau Richer, Aug. 10, 1676, leaving sons, Francis (born in 1646) and Jean Toupin, Sieur Dusault, born in Quebec, Dec. 15, 1648. Both brothers married, reared families, and lived and died in Quebec, and descendants of both subsequently came west to Detroit. Our present concern is with the descendants of Jean. His grandson, Louis Joseph Toupin, born in Quebec, Feb. 16, 1735, came to Detroit in 1759 and on Jan. 11, 1762, married at the Church of the Huron (Sandwich), Louisa Margaret Desbutes *dit* St. Martin, daughter of Jean Baudry *dit* Desbutes *dit* St. Martin and Louisa Doyon. Louisa Desbutes was buried in Detroit, July 19, 1766. Louis Joseph Toupin *dit* Dusault was buried at Raisin River, July 7, 1810.

Jean Francis Toupin *dit* Dusault, our subject, was the eldest son of Louis Joseph Dusault and Louisa Desbutes. He was born in Sandwich, Aug. 11, 1762, and married there on Nov. 4, 1783, Mary Jane Raoul, daughter of Jean Baptiste Raoul and Mary Jane Prud-

having purchased with the Mill only twelve Acres, in lieu of Gailliards<sup>27</sup> whole Farm—he appears quite démonté'd; seeing that neither Navarre nor I will allow him to cut even Firewood off our Farms; how is he then to renew the said premises? the Fences Bridges & ditches required for Mill road & the immediate absolute repairs to the Mill & dam thus circumstanced being beyond his feeble Abilities; he has solicited me to Sell him Gailliards Farm & enter into Shares with him; otherwise he sees his inevitable Ruin.

I have told him that I will consent to no other arrangement than the present offer, which you may accept of or not as you please: that if you will throw in Gailliards Farm to me as a Douceur, I will sign the necessary securities jointly with Dusau agreeable to his Arrangement with you dated 18 Nov last & become a joint purchaser on the Terms your said Agreement expresses: this it strikes me was your determination at Detroit, to allow me when you mention'd the day prior to our signing that I might consider Gailliards Farm as mine. indeed your Letter by Col<sup>o</sup> Shabert hints as much.

I do not think necessary to repeat to you what Dusau always told me from the beginning that he understood he not only had Gailliards Farm but also 120 Acres in depth therewith. this he says he desired M<sup>r</sup> Audrain to write down, when he was drafting out your s<sup>d</sup> agreement

I beg an immediate answer, as the work I am contemplating with Mess<sup>rs</sup> Meldrum & Park in building Two Mills at Stoney Creek<sup>28</sup> may interfere with my present offer.

I am very truly D<sup>r</sup> Sir Your ob<sup>t</sup> Servant

George MacDougall

homme. She was buried at Raisin River, July 2, 1804, and Jean Francis married (second) Mary Frances Davignon *dit* Beauregard. Jean Francis Dusault was the father of eight children by his first wife. He died while on a visit to Detroit and was buried here, Dec. 2, 1811. Information adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*

<sup>27</sup> Jacques Gaillard (Galliard) married Mary Bodier and lived in the parish of Notre Dame in the city of La Rochelle, France. Their son, Louis, born there in 1737, became a baker and migrated to Canada. He married in Montreal, Oct. 10, 1763, Margaret Chanazart and about the year 1777 they located in Detroit. Louis Gaillard was buried in Sandwich, Oct. 24, 1804; Margaret Chanazart was buried in Detroit, Jan. 14, 1814. They had twelve children, most of whom were born in Detroit or Sandwich, and several of whom settled at Raisin River. Louis Jean Gaillard, born in Sandwich, Dec. 3, 1778, is the person alluded to in the present document. The farm mentioned was sold by him to John Askin on Feb. 17, 1796. He was buried at Raisin River on March 9, 1822. Information adapted from *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Stony Creek empties into Lake Erie in Monroe County, about midway between the Huron and Raisin rivers.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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*Addressed:* John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esquire Merch<sup>t</sup> Detroit  
Pr Joseph Robert

*Endorsed:* River au Raisin Feb<sup>y</sup> 25<sup>h</sup> 1799 Mr Geo  
M<sup>c</sup>Dougall to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 26<sup>h</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> same day

ADVICE CONCERNING DIFFICULTIES OF JEAN DUSAULT

Detroit 26 feb<sup>y</sup> 99

Dear Sir About an hour ago, I was favoured with a Letter from you, dated yesterday. as M<sup>r</sup> Park was present and Said he was going to the River Raisin to morrow I have Set Down to answer it. Mons Duseau's embarrassment must in a great measure arise from not examining matters properly. Surely in the whole extent of the River au Raisin wood may be found, and Some I'm sure not far from him. however that you and him Should Join about the mill, is an advice I would give to both were you my brothers. at Same time it's only advice, and proceeds from good wishes, for it is no concern of mine. I am sure the Sales to both were fair, and no duplicity made use of nor do I think either dear, and was I not So distant I would not hesitate to Join you both If you chose it; writing on this Subject do[es] not answer any great purpose, but If M<sup>r</sup> Duseau comes in with you at any time and [you] think my advice worth following I will give it freely. I recollect when here last he asked me If I would take you for the mill, on the Same conditions he purchased it. I told him I would do all I could to accomodate both parties when I saw you, & heard what you proposed but as he is a Miller & you not, I think he would make a very good partner and I was almost tempted to say I would take a Share with him, in particular as he said he would Keep the mill in repair without any charge against the concerned.

Signed J A

*Endorsed:* Detroit 25 feb<sup>y</sup> 99 John Askin to Geo.  
M<sup>c</sup>Dougall Copy



## BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

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### PROJECTED ADVENTURE OF EBENEZER ALLAN

Detroit 6. mar. 99

D<sup>r</sup> Sir The Bearer hereof M<sup>r</sup> Ebenezer Allen has applied to me to Know If there is any merchant who I think would advance a Small Indian Cargo on getting Security for the payment. as, I think, you wrote me last year of having ordered out goods of that Kind, and perhaps have not disposed of them, I mentioned you to him he Says his plan is to go to the Ouisconsin on, or Near the fox River, and he will acquaint you with the rest of his Scheme of this, or the place of trade I am no Judge you are a much better yourself. I therefore have no advice to give respecting the intended trade, nor must you consider me as answerable in any respect, Should matters not turn out well. my intentions are to Serve both. M<sup>r</sup> Allen is not my debtor, nor to my Knowledge does he owe any merchant here. I have Seen his deeds from Government for between two & three thousand acres of Land. a part of these he has sold for £3,000 and I believe little or no payment is made yet, nor has he given Deeds, as I understand for what he Sold, but intends to do so, and take mortgages, which mortgages I Suppose is to be the Security for the paym<sup>t</sup> of the goods he may get of you or any other. I have heard that there is a grist & a Saw Mill on his Lands & an excellent pinery therefore must be valuable. I have only to add that Mr Allen is as active & enterprizing a man as any in the province & perfectly Sober. I have now stated the business fair on both Sides So far as is come to my Knowledge therefore do as you think fit.

Signed J A

*Endorsed:* Coppy Detroit March 6<sup>h</sup> 1799 John Askin  
to M<sup>r</sup> Alex<sup>r</sup> Henry of Montreal

### PROPOSAL FOR SUPPLYING BRICKS IN DETROIT

#### Proposals

I will furnish Lewis Bond<sup>29</sup> & John Dodemied Esquires, or whoever may be authorised to receive the Same, Sixty

<sup>29</sup> Lewis Bond was a native of New Jersey who in 1777, still a mere youth, became a

or Seventy Thousands of Excellent Bricks and well burnt, in the course of next Summer, for Eight dollars Per thousand If received at my Brick Kilns at the River Rouge; or for ten dollars Per thousand delivered on the Public wharf or water Side at Detroit, and for my due performance thereof I will give good Security If my proposals are accepted of

Detroit, 15<sup>h</sup> March 1799

*Endorsed:* Proposals for Bricks detroit, 15 March 1799  
Copy

FROM GEORGE McDUGALL TO JOHN ASKIN

River Raisin 23<sup>d</sup> March 1799

John Askin Esquire,

Dear Sir, Having received twenty of your Bags from Mr Ruland agreeable to your Order, I have got them filled with 2000<sup>h</sup> french lv<sup>s</sup> of good Merchantable Flour, which Isidore Robert,<sup>30</sup> his Brother & Charles Lafond now take in to your address. You'll please signify the receipt thereof as complete payment of the Farm I purchas'd of you at Detroit 25 Jan'y last

soldier in the state forces, serving until the close of the war. In 1791 he was commissioned an ensign in the levies raised for St. Clair's campaign and served in that campaign and also under General Wayne, being commissioned as lieutenant in Wayne's Legion, March 19, 1793. According to Heitman he resigned his commission, Jan. 3, 1794. He came to Detroit subsequent to the British evacuation and in 1798 became the second sheriff, under American rule, of Wayne County. He resided here until the War of 1812, in which he served as major of Michigan militia. In February, 1813, he, along with others, was ordered by General Procter to leave the country, and he was a signer of the formal protest made against the order. In 1820 his home was in Monroe, where he was still living in November, 1841. Some time prior to 1820 he married a daughter of Hugh Smith of Vincennes, who died while serving under George Rogers Clark, and whose widow subsequently married Israel Ruland. In 1820 Bond described himself, in a letter to Solomon Sibley, as of advanced years and with a large and increasing family; he asked to be appointed U. S. judge to reside at Mackinac, Green Bay, or St. Peters, anticipating in this the actual appointment of James D. Doty as first judge for the district west of Lake Michigan, four years later. Information adapted from mss. in B. H. Coll. Many of Bond's personal papers are printed in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXXVII, 421 ff.

<sup>30</sup> The Roberts of Detroit and vicinity were descended from Philip Robert of the diocese of Amiens in Picardy, France, who married Jane Depuis of the same place. They had two sons, Louis Robert *dit* La Pomerai (Lapomeraye, La Pomerai), born in 1649, and Michael Robert, born in 1656. Both came to Canada and married there, giving rise to two lines of descendants. Louis married Mary Bourgerie in 1670 and lived in Boucherville. They had several sons, two of whom were Pierre Robert *dit* Lapierre or Lapomerai, born Sept. 21, 1671, and Prudent Robert *dit* Lafontaine, born June 12, 1686. Pierre married in Lachine, Jan. 27, 1698, Angelica Ptolomée. He was in Detroit in the spring of 1706 and

I conceive it necessary at the same time to apprise you, that as I have rented out said Farm, & measures are taken by me to Fence in the whole of the Same up to the Mill Creek; As these Buildings now appear to be yours, I now again repeat to you what I have required before of Dusau, that you make the necessary arrangements to complete the Fences &c on each Side of the Road (so soon as the Weather permits) as far as your Mill, agreeable to my renoncement, as otherwise it will be impossible for us to make the use we intend of the Farm, should We be constantly exposed to the carelessness & caprice of every Fellow going to & coming from the Mill.

I am with much Regard

Your most obedient humble Servant

George Mac Dougall

P.S. I shall write M<sup>r</sup> Sibly soon, to draft out the necessary Deed from you as attorney for Todd & M<sup>c</sup>Gill for s<sup>d</sup> Farm agreeable to your written Sale & declaration & promise.

G M<sup>c</sup>D<sup>31</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esquire Merch<sup>t</sup> Detroit  
C Lafond

*Endorsed:* river au rasin March y<sup>e</sup> 23<sup>d</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Geo  
M<sup>c</sup> Dougall to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin rec<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 24<sup>b</sup> [torn] & Answ<sup>d</sup> same [day]

#### TROUBLES OF GEORGE McDougall

River Raisin 2<sup>d</sup> April 1799

John Askin Esquire,

Dear sir, A late conversation with Dusau, occasions me to address you again, however reluctant, on the subject

removed his family here in May, 1708. He died about 1714. His brother, Prudent, came here in 1710 and a year later married Mary Magdelaine Fafard *dit* Delorme. Pierre Robert's grandson, Pierre Nicholas Robert, born in Longueuil, Nov. 28, 1729, married in Detroit, July 22, 1761, Magdelaine Casse *dit* St. Aubin. In 1773 he was operating a grist-mill at the Southwest Coast of Detroit; about the year 1790 he settled at Raisin River. They had a large family, one of whom was Isidore Robert, here noted. He was born in Detroit, June 12, 1773, and on Jan. 24, 1795, married at Raisin River, Agatha Réaume, daughter of Jean Baptiste Réaume and Agatha Lootman *dit* Barrois. Isidore Robert was buried at Raisin River, Feb. 7, 1816. Agatha Réaume was buried, July 22, 1833. They had thirteen children born in the period 1796-1816. Information adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*

31 At this point occurs the schedule of weights of the consignment of flour.



of the Farm purchased from you at Detroit on the 25 January last:

Give me leave Sir to call to your remembrance the mode upon which a settlement took place twixt us on this subject, & the adjusting our differences regarding the Mill Seat, &c. *Altho' I do not wish to insist upon any other thing than what stands on paper regarding that Transaction*, I am startled at the proposals you make of giving the rear or any part of the Farm from Gailliard to any one. If there is Faith in Man, it can belong to none but myself Sir, & I now call upon you to declare upon your Word, if in answer to your Question "In what manner I wished to settle the matter finally with you", if I did not immediately propose £40 York to you for Gailliards Farm being the Sum I understood it cost you at first; to which you assented on the Spot, upon condition of my signing an entire relinquishment to the Mill Seat afore-said, remarking at same time, "you would pay the difference of £60 to Todd & M<sup>c</sup>Gill yourself for the sake of ending all Trouble."

The next Morning you had wrote out the Acknowledgm<sup>t</sup> & declaration of having sold me "a Tract of Land purchased by You of Lewis Gailliard of Three Acres in Front by Forty in depth." I had every reason to believe *that was the whole quantity* you had got yourself originally, from your professions at the very moment at Signing that you had made no reservations therefrom from a remark you then made, that you relied every thing was done & said with Sincerity. I now leave it Sir to your Conscience to assign me the whole Farm as you have it from Gailliard or not as you please, being still of opinion that its only necessary to recal to an Honest Mans recollection Circumstances which may have slipt his Memory; to induce him to do the right thing at last.

I am with deference Sir

Your most obedient & most humble Servant

George MacDougall

P S I wish for Gods Sake you would at least set about doing some thing towards making up the Fences of the road to the Mill even for Ten Acres only this Season as you promis'd on 25 Jany last & your Letter of the 24 Ult<sup>o</sup> con-

firms. I think "the reasonable Time" you mention was to be allowed, is now almost past

Y<sup>rs</sup> As before

George MacDougall

*Endorsed:* River Rasin April y<sup>e</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Geo M<sup>e</sup>Dougall  
to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 15<sup>h</sup>

INDEBTEDNESS OF FRANCIS VIGO

Poste Vincennes Le 11—avril 1799

M<sup>r</sup> Askin au Détroit

Monsieur J'ai eu L'honneur de recevoir Lettres et n'il point a attribuer a négligence si Je ny ai Pas faite de reponse. mais bien La faute des occasions qui sont ici extrêmement râtre Dans ces mêmes il est inclus un Compte de 1343 P<sup>s</sup>—13—2—Cour D'Yorck pour peltrie vendû a moi appartenant.

Autant que je puisse me Rappeller et ce Dont Je puisse presque sur, J'étoir a vous redevoir un somme de 1700P<sup>s</sup> ou environs y Compris La Dette de Henaud De la somme de Six Cente P<sup>te</sup>. Independamment Du bon Que J'ai Donné a M<sup>r</sup> Tood Je Lui ai fourni 450 piastre Pour une Berge toute ar[torn] et M<sup>r</sup> Bleklee etoit Presant au Marché fait avec Le Dit s<sup>r</sup> J'ai De plus donné a Greeneville suivant votre avis a M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>e</sup>Neail une somme de 77½ Piastre dont J'ai Reçu et Du quelle Je vous ai Imformé dans mes precedante aussi bien que 15 P<sup>tre</sup> Donné a M<sup>r</sup> votre fils

Maintenant M<sup>r</sup> voila Les avoirs du quel vous pouvez me crediter, La Confiance que J'avois en vous La 1<sup>re</sup> fois que j'ai eu Le plaisir de faire des affaires avec vous est encore aujourd'huy La même elle ne Pourra Jamais Dechoir. suivant ce qu'on m'avoit Dit J'aurois Pensé que La vente de peltrie auroit monté plus haut. Mais n'imp[ort] vous voudrez Donc bien être assez Complaisant pour m'envoyer Le C<sup>te</sup> de Ballance et assitot que j'aurai de L'arg<sup>t</sup>. Je vous en ferai Passer le montant

Ne vous Donnez aucun trouble au sujete des ventes de Londre et Du tems ou elles ont été faite Je suis Persuadés que Le montant que vous m'annoncée est suivant ma Confiance Le montant de mes peltrie

J'ai faite Depuis Deux ans une vente assez considerable de terre mais La rareté du necesseraire est Cause que J'ai été manqué Presque dans tout Les payements que Lon Devoit me faire Je ne Dois Rien exactement a personne Qu'au Détroit. mon ambition a toujours été de satisfaire aussi vite Qu'il seroit en mon pouvoir et ma santé quoique Debile encore me Permettra J'espere de partir sous Peu Pour faire un Voyage dans Le mississipi pour Ramasser de Larg<sup>t</sup> et me mettre dans Le Cas par la de vous Prouver ma Course Volonté. Pour de Largeant Comptant qui m'étois Dû J'ai été obligé de prendre du Wisky en payement et maintenant Je suis obligé de travailler pour Le Converter en arg<sup>t</sup> au surplus Personne ne pourra mieux Que M<sup>r</sup> Dubois vous Informer de toute ces affaires

J'ai appris Par voix Indirecte que vous aviez intention de venir ici Ce printems Je Pense Que vous scavez que votre Chambre est toujours Prête chez moi et Que Dans Le cas que Je n'i serois Pas M<sup>dme</sup> Vigo se fera un sensible plaisir de vous recevoir aussy bien que Je Desire Le faire moi même en attant ce plaisir Je Suis avec estime Monsieur

Votre très humble serviteur

Vigo

*Addressed:* Monsieur John Askin Equillé au Détroit  
Par C<sup>pte</sup> Dubois

*Endorsed:* Port Vincent April 11<sup>th</sup> 1799 Mons<sup>r</sup> Vigo  
to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin reçu Le 4 Mai Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 6<sup>th</sup>

### *Translation*

Post Vincennes, April 11, 1799

Mr. Askin, Detroit,

Sir, I have had the honor of receiving your letters and it is not at all attributable to negligence that I have not answered. The fault is entirely due to the extreme rarity of opportunities here these months. There is inclosed an account of £1343—13—2, New York Currency, for peltries delivered, belonging to me.

As nearly as I can recall and of which I can be almost sure, I must owe you still the sum of £1700, or thereabouts,



and this includes Hunot's debt of 600 piastres. Independently of the draft that I gave Mr. Todd, I furnished him with 450 piastres for a boat [torn] and Mr. Blakeley<sup>32</sup> was present at the bargain made with that gentleman. I also gave Mr. McNeal 77½ piastres at Greenville, according to your advice, and have a receipt, and of which I gave you information in my former letter, as well as 15 piastres given to your son.

These, Sir, are the amounts for which you may give me credit. The confidence I had in you the first time I ever had the pleasure of doing business with you is the same today. It can never diminish. From what I have heard, I should have thought that the price of peltries would have gone higher. But never mind. You will be so good as to send me an account of the balance and as soon as I have the money I will hand you the amount.

Give yourself no concern about the London sales nor of the time they occurred. I am quite confident that the sum you mention to me is the amount my peltries have brought.

During the past two years I have sold considerable land but the scarcity of the needful is the reason why I have failed to collect in almost all the payments I should have received. I owe nothing to anyone except in Detroit. My ambition has ever been to discharge my debts as soon as it was in my power, and my health, although weak yet, permits me to hope that I shall soon set out on a journey to the Mississippi to collect money, and by that means place myself in a position to give you proof of my willingness to pay. For cash accounts due me I have been obliged to take whiskey in payment, and now I must work more to change it into money. No one could tell you of all this better than Mr. Dubois.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Apparently Josiah Bleakley of Mackinac, for whom see *post*, 569.

<sup>33</sup> Toussaint Dubois belonged to one of the oldest families of Vincennes, and during the Indiana territorial period was one of the city's prominent residents. He was engaged in trade, and references among the Askin papers indicate that he had frequent dealings in Detroit. He enjoyed the confidence of Governor Harrison, who utilized his knowledge of Indian life by giving him charge of his force of scouts and spies in the Tippecanoe campaign. In 1814 he was offered the appointment of Indian agent, which he declined on the ground of his illiteracy. He was drowned while attempting to ford the Little Wabash River near Vincennes, March 11, 1816. Dubois was twice married, first to Jeanette Bonneau, and

## JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

I have learned indirectly that you intend to come here this spring. I think you know that your room is always ready at my house, and that in case I should not be there Madam Vigo will be truly pleased to receive you just the same as I would wish to do myself. Awaiting this pleasure, I remain with respect, Sir,

Your very humble servant,

Vigo

*Addressed:* John Askin, Esq. Detroit By Captain Dubois.

### HIRE OF BLACKSMITH'S TOOLS

M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Welch<sup>34</sup>

Sir The Smith's tools which I hired you on the 6<sup>th</sup> of february last I will have occasion for, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of next month, as I have made an agreement, or is going to make one with a man for all the work I may have to do, and he has no tools. him with whom I had a former agreement has hired another House and is going away. I give you this timely Notice So as you may not be distressed at the time for want of tools, my Son has a compleat Set perhaps you could get them I am &c

(Signed) John Askin

Detroit 16 april '99

*Endorsed:* Detroit 16 april '99 John Askin to Thomas Welch Copy

second to Jane Baird. By the second union he had three sons, Thomas, James, and Jesse K. Dubois. The last named removed to Illinois, where he became state auditor and a warm friend of Abraham Lincoln. His son, Fred T. Dubois, was one of the first U. S. senators from Idaho, and, more recently, a member of the International Joint Commission in Washington. Dubois County, Indiana, was named in honor of Toussaint Dubois. Data derived from mss. in B. H. Coll.; entries in Ind. Hist. Soc., *Pubs.*, *passim*; Logan Esarey (ed.), *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison* (Indianapolis, 1922), *passim*; and George R. Wilson, *History of Dubois County from its Primitive Days to 1910* (Jasper, Ind., 1910), 397-98, 404-12.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Welch, a blacksmith, was still living in Detroit at the time of the fire of 1805. He had a wife, Elizabeth Welch, and a daughter, Margaret, or Peggy; the latter married Benjamin Packard. See *Proc. of Land Board of Detroit*, 179, 232-33.

## NEWS FROM DETROIT

Detroit 22 April '99

My dear Sir As the vessels now begin to prepare for voyaging and I wish to be always ready, I take up the pen to answer your Kind letter dated the 1<sup>st</sup> January last. I am thankfull to you for your Concern at the loss of my 2 Small vessels, at same time, from their being old, freight decreasing & men's wages rising, I think I have Suffered very little.

Lafontaine's business about the house is all Settled, and tho I had to take back the mill after I Sold her Yet what I got for So doing, and the State She is now in without expence, and prospects I have of disposing of her again makes it twice as well for the proprietors as If M<sup>d</sup>Dougall had got her. I sold him a farm near the Mill and have had more trouble about it than all the Sales of Land I ever made in this Country. his head at times is in a Shocking Situation, and there was but you Could regulate it.

I am glad your opinion of this country is as favourable as that of the lower province as it may induce [you] one day to Settle here. really without flattery, you wanted much. I often hear of matters which pass at the Sessions on the other Side which does not please me, and to go over alone, I might not be able to make any alteration. one man takes the lead and all the others agree to what he does therefore in that case there is but one man on the Bench.

I am glad you mean to pay us a visit We will be happy to See you. poor Harffy has been dangerously ill, but [is] getting better. with all his faults I would be Sorry to Loose him I can readily look over the errors of my old acquaintances as I hope they do over mine.

John & his family are well, I have informed him of your attention for which he is thankful he is gone to Cayahoga to pick up some skins There is a constant war between most of the town Citizens or rather magistracy and the Military. M<sup>r</sup> Dodemead I learn has Sued Col. Strong for interrupting his trade<sup>35</sup> The British are clear of all disputes

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<sup>35</sup> See *ante* 165.



JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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now Please present my best wishes with those of M<sup>rs</sup> Askin to my good friend M<sup>r</sup> Leith I'm always happy to hear he is well

I have only to add that M<sup>rs</sup> Askin & all my family Join in every wish that may tend to your happiness & welfare & believe me with &<sup>a</sup>

Signed J Askin

Geo Sharp Esq<sup>r</sup> Montreal

*Endorsed:* Detroit 22<sup>d</sup> april '99 John Askin to George Sharp Copy

FIREWOOD FOR GARRISON AT DETROIT

Detroit 25 April '99

Sir This minute Captain Nelson has been here to let me Know, that If you will furnish 200 Cords of fire wood for the use of this Garrison and deliver it on the new Wharf which he has made, he will pay you the Same price he gets himself which he says is 18/ N Y Currency and he wants Your answer immediately. If you have 400 Cords now ready or can get it Soon I would advise you to accept of his offer which Seems Very fair, but recollect If you do So, you must turn your thoughts to that business and no other for there must not be any disappointment as the Money is Sure and good. I think you Should prefer this to getting rails or any other matter I expect your answer by the 1<sup>st</sup> opportunity, or If you can come yourself So much the better.

(Signed) John Askin

M<sup>r</sup> William Smith<sup>36</sup> River Ruscom

*Endorsed:* Detroit, 25 April '99 John Askin to William Smith River Roscom Copy

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<sup>36</sup> Documents among the Askin papers (mss.) show that William Smith was a tenant of Askin living on land at Ruscom River (which empties into Lake St. Clair) in this period. Smith was active in supplying firewood for the Detroit market and on Jan. 11, 1799, he bought "a Very large Bateau" from Askin agreeing to pay therefor the equivalent of £100 New York Currency in wood delivered at the current market price. In the summer of 1801, Askin had Smith imprisoned for failure to pay his debts, and rejected the debtor's pleas for his enlargement. Data derived from Askin papers (mss.) in B. H. Coll.

# BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

## WINTERERS ENGAGED IN MONTREAL

Montreal 4<sup>th</sup> May 1799

Dear Sir, We are not altogether certain whether two of your Winterers who have been in Town for some days by mistake & of course at our expence, may not now go forward tho' your Boat is not now sent for want of Rum & Salt, we have orderd & look for from Quebec by the first Vessel, but should we send them forward, it is proper to enclose you their engagements & the advances made to them for your Government—& by your own Boat you will receive the Acco<sup>t</sup> of the whole compleat. we have met with a Smith & Baker for you that will go when the Battoe can be sent. Mean time We are Dear Sir

Your most obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>ts</sup>

James & And<sup>w</sup> Mc Gill

Pierre Dubord to winter at Detroit & its environs...460<sup>lv</sup>

Advanced him 54<sup>lv</sup>.12/

Equipment deliverd & valued 80 .16

—————135<sup>lv</sup>8 sols

J & A M

Charles Lorrain.....450

Advanced him 66 .12

Equipment del<sup>d</sup> value 66 . 6

—————132<sup>lv</sup>.18

J & A M

LaChine 4 May 1799

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

We have not sent your Winterers above noted J & A M

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal May 4<sup>h</sup> 1799 Mess<sup>rs</sup> Jm<sup>s</sup> & An<sup>dr</sup>  
McGill to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin rec<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 5<sup>h</sup> June Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 11<sup>th</sup>

## AGGRESSIONS ON INDIAN LANDS

Detroit 7 May '99

Mr Connor The Chief Wittanessa of your place is come here with an interest to complain to the com<sup>s</sup> Officer that you want to drive him away & prevent him from planting

Corn where he formerly did. luckily my Son John met him & brought him to me & prevented the Complaint being made, which If it had might be very hurtful to, not only you, and me but to all who claim a right to Lands purchas<sup>d</sup> of Indians. the Governor of this territory is Soon expected here. If he found Complaints he might represent to Congress that we were Cheating the Indians out of their Lands (Which I fear they already think to be the case) tho it is not So with us. I therefore, for your Sake, mine & all others Concerned in Indian Lands, advise you Strongly not to have any Misunderstanding at this time with the Chief or his People and for the present to let them plant where they please. I understand next year they mean to go away & then we will not have any more trouble with them

S<sup>d</sup> J A

*Endorsed:* Detroit 7 June '99 John Askin to M<sup>r</sup> Connor  
Copy

## POSTAL SERVICE BETWEEN TORONTO AND DETROIT

River Thames 14<sup>th</sup> May 1799

Dear Sir, I am Sorry to inform you that it is impossible for me to make you any remittance this Spring, as I expected. the Winter has been so long, & Severe, that I have been obliged to feed all my grain away to my Cattle, (having no hay) I hope you will be so indulgent as to prolong the payment 'till after Harvest, when you shall be paid without fail. I have enclosed a Letter for M<sup>r</sup> Maisonville from the Sur Gen<sup>l</sup> which I found Accidentely in a House up the River. the Woman of the House brought me the Letter to Read. She told me She found it out of Doors. when I told her it was from the S G to M<sup>r</sup> Maisonville, she said she thought that the Letter & a number of others had been brought from York last winter by an Old Dutchman, who lived Some time at their house, & that probably the rest of the Letters have been lost.

I remain Sir with the greatest esteem

your Most Ob<sup>t</sup> & Hum<sup>l</sup>e Serv<sup>t</sup>

Hugh Holmes

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>



*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Merchant Detroit

*Endorsed:* River Trench May 14<sup>h</sup> 1799 Mr Hugh Holmes to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> and Answ<sup>d</sup> same day.

CONDUCT OF LOGGING OPERATIONS

Detroit le 15 May '99

Monsieur Bazile Lafleur Je vous envoyé par Baron & Francoeur qui s'en retournent a la pineire, 180 livres de Lard, 122 Biscuits pesant 78 livres, 4 minots de pois, et 200 livres de farine, pour vous et les autres Hommes. Soyer bien menagé du Lard, car il est extremement rare et cher, J'ai aussi livré a M<sup>r</sup> Baron, ses provisions pour Jusqu'au 1<sup>er</sup> Jour de Juillet prochain. Les Boeufs doivent être occupés constamment à tirer le Bois en preference à tout autre ouvrage; c'est à quoi Je vous prie de porter toute votre attention, et Je vous envoie pour les Boeufs, 4 minots de Bledinde. Quand le *Saguinan* passera pour Makinac en quelque Jours, J'envoyerai un Cheval et deux autres Boeufs de tiré pour former un autre Harnois, ainsi que d'autres Provisions.

Aussitot que les Cages soient pretes pour le Bois du Roy qui est equarri, vous equarirai les 36 autres morceaux, des quels Je ferai un cageux, Separement des autres. Mr. Barthe sera avec vous environ le premier de Juin. Si il y a quelqu'autre directions à vous communiquer Je vous en ferai part alors. Je desire que sous aucun pretexte vous ne donniez plus d'une livre de Lard a chaque Homme per Jour. Je suis Mon<sup>r</sup>

Votre tres H<sup>ble</sup> &ca

(Signé) John Askin

*Endorsed:* Detroit 15 May '99 John Askin à Bazile Lafleur Copie

*Translation*

Detroit, May 15, 1799

Mr. Basil Lafleur, I send you by Baron and Francoeur, who are returning to the Pinery, 180 pounds of pork, 122 biscuits weighing 78 pounds, 4 minots of peas, and 200

pounds of flour, for yourself and the other men. Be careful with the pork as it is extremely scarce and dear. I have also given Mr. Baron his provisions till July 1, next. The oxen should be kept constantly busy hauling wood in preference to any other work. Please notice that particularly; and I am sending you 4 minots of corn for them. When the *Saguinah* goes up in a few days on her way to Mackinac, I shall send a horse and two other draft oxen for another yoke, also more provisions.

As soon as the rafts are ready for the King's wood which is squared, square off the 36 other pieces (of which I shall make a raft), separately from the rest. Mr. Barthe will be with you about the first of June. If there are any other directions to communicate to you, I shall send them by him. Under no pretext ought you to give out more than one pound of pork to each man per day. I remain, Sir,

Your most humble etc.,

(signed) John Askin

FROM ROBERT RICHARDSON TO JOHN ASKIN

Fort Erie 17<sup>th</sup> May 1799

Dear Sir I was favored with your letter by the Express and have heard Since of the family being all in good health, which, you may rest assured always gives us the Sincerest pleasure

We felt very much for the loss Sustained by Captain & M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee,<sup>37</sup> however from common report, they are left very handsomely provided for. They Certainly deserve that it should be so.

We are in dayly expectation of moving being under orders for york. the Season is so very backward, there has no Vessel arrived as yet from Kingston We go to York in the first I understand M<sup>r</sup> Hamilton has been over there about ten days ago laying his land Matters before the Council and I am told has got most of them fixed—that is taking off all Quibbling about Transfers &<sup>o</sup> and getting them in his own name. I mention this business of M<sup>r</sup>

<sup>37</sup> The allusion is to the death by lockjaw, on Jan. 13, 1799, of Colonel Alexander McKee, the father of Captain Thomas McKee, whose wife was Askin's daughter, Therese. Doctor Richardson, the writer, was the husband of Therese's half-sister, Madelaine Askin.

Hamilton to you with a *very interested* Motive as I Know you had a good lote [?] of land Matters to arrange, and if you have not got it done We are in hopes you may be induced to pay us a visit. I do not Know any thing that would give Madlaine and Myself greater pleasure if you could do so without hardship or inconvenience to yourself however Sir we would much rather forego even that gratification than that you should endanger your health in the Smallest degree What I mention about Mr Hamilton is only from report I have [not] seen him or heard directly from him Since he was over. He I have no doubt will write you particularly.

I need Scarcely say you have only to command me in any thing you may suppose I can be of the least Service at york.

It gives me much pleasure to Say Madlaine and the Children have enjoyed perfect health all this winter, for which blessing we are sincerely thankfull. Without he[al]th there is little Comfort. Madlaine joins me in best wishes for the health and happiness of all friends at Detroit and Neighbourhood and I am Dear Sir

Your Most Obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

R. Richardson

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Fort Erie May 17<sup>h</sup> 1799 Doc<sup>r</sup> Richardson to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 30<sup>h</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 10<sup>h</sup> June

FROM ROBERT NICHOL TO JOHN ASKIN

Queenston May 28. 1799

Dear Sir When I wrote you last I fully Expected I should have ere this had the pleasure of paying my respects to you at Detroit, but several late occurrences favorable to me, have occasioned me to give up my intention of going to Mich. I make no doubt but you will think me *very very* fickle, but as I do this by the advice of all my friends, I trust it is more to my advantage. what my plans and intentions are you shall know in due time, being convinced that you would be well pleased to here of my *fixing* myself advantageously.



I now inclose by this opportunity an Account of a Barrel of Pork of *my* own curing which I can recommend as good. it cost me £10. Yk at this place & 10/ for carriage up,—a dr<sup>t</sup>ft on M<sup>r</sup> T Forsy[th<sup>2</sup>] Malden for £6.1.4 Yk C<sup>y</sup> and send by the Bearer M<sup>r</sup> Willmot<sup>38</sup> in Cash. the inclosed account will shew you for what purpose. should you wish the Pork for yourself it will be at cost & charges or if you don't want it be good enough to sell it for my Account I also beg M<sup>rs</sup> Askin's acceptance of a few seed Potatoes of a particular kind. they go up herewith and the directions for planting are on the annexed page. The Ice is not yet entirely out of the River here, and it was only yesterday the *Nancy* got in, having laid upwards of a fortnight at Point Ebona [Abino]. However although the Spring has been So Long in coming, Vegetation has been remarkably quick, and I can safely say, I never saw more flattering appearances of good Crops than there is in every part of this settlement.

M<sup>r</sup> Hamilton will of course forward your News Papers. I shall therefore (although a politician) say nothing on politics—

I request my Compliments to M<sup>rs</sup> & Miss Askin & Family particularly to my Favourite Charley<sup>39</sup> from whom I should be happy to hear. and I remain Dear Sir

<sup>38</sup> Alan (Allen) Wilmot, a nephew of Samuel Street of Niagara, came west from Queens-  
ton with an introduction from Robert Nichol to Askin, as this letter shows, in the spring  
of 1799. On June 10, Askin wrote to Nichol characterizing Wilmot as "a very fine young  
man," and saying he had given him a letter of introduction to an old acquaintance at  
Mackinac. From this time until 1812, Wilmot seems to have been engaged in trade in the  
Northwest, particularly on the upper Mississippi. Zebulon Pike encountered him at  
Prairie du Chien in April, 1806, and describes him as "one of the best informed and gentle-  
manly men in the place." He was at this time associated with Robert Dickson in the com-  
pany of which Dickson was the head. In July, 1812, he participated in the British attack  
on Mackinac and was one of the commissioners who negotiated the terms of surrender with  
Lieutenant Hanks. After September, 1812 (when he was still at Mackinac, apparently  
engaged in the fur trade), no further mention has been found of him. Information adapted  
from mss. in B. H. Coll.; *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, *passim*; Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Pub.*, VIII, 302;  
and data supplied by Theodore C. Blegen in letter of June 22, 1926.

<sup>39</sup> Charles Askin, a younger son of John Askin and Marie Archange Barthe, was born  
in Detroit in 1785. For a number of years in his early manhood, he was absent from this  
vicinity, being engaged in business pursuits at Niagara and other points in Upper Canada,  
which were terminated by the War of 1812. He was present at the surrender of Detroit  
as a captain of Canadian militia, and thereafter served actively throughout the war in the  
West. Soon after its conclusion, he returned to Strabane, the ancestral home opposite  
Belle Isle, where he resided until his death, June 1, 1869. He was a man of much local  
prominence, holding various offices of public trust. He married Monique Jacob, daughter  
of George Jacob. See obituary notice in *Detroit Free Press*, June 4, 1869; *B. H. R.*, I, 16;  
and data in B. H. Coll., *passim*.

Very truly Your Most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very Humble Servant  
Rob<sup>t</sup> Nichol

P. S. have the goodness to take up my Note to Anderson cancel it, and send it down Prince Robertsons acc<sup>t</sup> is inclosed

*Appended:* direction for planting the potatoes They must be planted in the old of the moon as soon after you receive them as possible. put straw dung over but none at all under them, & the soil should be Sandy. they will not be fit to dig untill October but when dug they will keep good 12 Months.

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merchant Detroit Fav<sup>d</sup>  
p M<sup>r</sup> A Willmot

*Endorsed:* Queenston May 28<sup>h</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Nichols to  
Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 6 June Answ<sup>d</sup> June 10<sup>h</sup>

INDEBTEDNESS OF LOUIS DERINEAU

Detroit 30 May '99

Captain Gilkison<sup>40</sup>

Sir I inclose for your perusal, a Letter for Louis Derineau on board your Vessel. If he thinks proper to comply with its contents, it is very well, If not he will have himself alone to blame for all future trouble that will attend his refusal. As I understand he is your pilot I do not wish to deprive you of his Services nor injure the proprietors of the Vessell, he probably thinks I could not have taken him. he is much

<sup>40</sup> William Gilkison was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, March 9, 1777, being the eldest of six brothers, all of whom followed the sea. William early took service on a merchantman which was captured by the French, with the result that he underwent a year's captivity in France. Being at length released, he made his way to New York in 1796 and soon thereafter to the upper lakes, where for years he served as master of vessels in the employ of the North West Company. He served for a time in the War of 1812, as a captain of Upper Canada militia. He married Isabella Grant of Detroit, sixth daughter of Commodore Alexander Grant, who was born, Dec. 20, 1783, and to them eleven sons were born, seven of whom grew up. In 1815, Captain Gilkison returned with his family to Scotland in order to procure for his children better educational facilities than Canada then afforded. In 1832, he again returned to Canada, whither several of his sons had preceded him, and located in Brantford. About this time he purchased a large tract of land at the falls of Grand River where stands the town of Elora, which he founded and named. He died, April 25, 1833, and was buried beside the old Mohawk church in Brantford. Isabella Grant died in Glasgow, Scotland, Feb. 10, 1828. Some of their descendants are still living in Brantford. See F. Douglas Reville, *History of the County of Brant* (Brantford, 1920), 80-83; Ont. Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, VIII, 147-48; and mss. in B. H. Coll., *passim*.

mistaken for I have never tried, but left the Shirrif & his deputies to do their duty. my Brother in law M<sup>r</sup> Barthe will be the bearer of this. Should you promise Derineau's return to this place in the Vessel by this trip or he and the Crew Sign the proposed Note, In either cases I promise you I will desist from all pursuit against him for the present, or untill the time given is elapsed.

*Endorsed:* Detroit 30 May 1799 John Askin to Captain Gilkison Copy

## INDEBTEDNESS OF LOUIS DERINEAU

Detroit 30 May '99

M<sup>r</sup> Louis Derineau It is in vain for you to endeavour to escape me whether at Michilimackinack, S<sup>t</sup>Marys, or the grand portage, I will have you taken, unless you give bail to Stand trial, or agree to the following conditions. that is to say, you, and the rest of the Crew, Sign a Note which I send for that purpose, that you will in the Course of this summer, pay me £40 New York Currency, with the costs & Charges I have been at in prosecuting you to the present time, which are however very trifling as yet, but that will no longer be the case, if I am obliged to bring you from any of the above mentioned places. I could have had you taken in the Winter, and this Spring by Sam who worked with you, but I would not have any of my People deputized for that purpose, though often proposed to me by the Sherriff. but now you have left the Country I am Justifiable in employing any Man I choose, and Surely you cannot Know who I may employ, and be on your guard against every Stranger; therefore there is no Safety for you unless you give Security for Standing trial, or agree to the foregoing Conditions. I am willing to take the Captain of the Vessell's word for your appearance, as I mean to injure neither you or the Service you are in. I only Seek a Small recompence for a great injury you have done me, and that, I am determined to have. I have requested M<sup>r</sup> Barthe to go on Board and take the proposed Security which If you do not comply with, will be the last offer of the kind you ever will have of me



*Endorsed:* Detroit 30 May 1799 John Askin to Louis Derineau on Board the *S. Thames* Copy

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ROBERT NICHOL

Detroit 10 June '99

D<sup>r</sup> Sir Weak Eyes (not yet Strong) prevented my writing you Sooner in answer to your obliging letters of the 21 february, 19<sup>h</sup> april & 28 may, and a line of introduction to M<sup>r</sup> Wilmot who I think a very fine young man & have given him a letter to an old acquaintance of mine at M<sup>e</sup>Kinac. It will always afford me much pleasure to learn that you do well & am not Sorry that any friend of mine can get a genteel livelihood without personally trading with Indians. the account you Sent me I believe right & had I got the Barrel Pork, all would be Square. If not already Sent off let me have it by the *Saguinau*, the family are well and M<sup>rs</sup> & Miss A present their Compt<sup>s</sup> & the Boys wish to be remembered to you

I owe a man for taking care of my Corn who owes you 26 dollars at the Mauravian Town, I perhaps will get it for you in that way

*Endorsed:* Detroit 10 june '99 John Askin to Robert Nichol Copy

EXCHANGE OF FLOUR FOR MAPLE SUGAR

Detroit 18<sup>h</sup> June '99

D<sup>r</sup> Morrison I purposed troubling you to exchange 4,000 of flour for me, for Indian Sugar, but I now only Send 2,000 in the *Detroit*. you know the price of flour, Bags, Freight &<sup>ca</sup> here Sugar is from 8 to 10<sup>d</sup> for ready payment by the quantity. If you can't exchange for 8<sup>d</sup> you will have to give 10<sup>d</sup>, but I think that is quite high enough. nothing new Since I had the pleasure of writing you last, we are thank God all well & assure you of our best Wishes, adieu &<sup>a</sup>

Signed J. Askin

*Endorsed:* Detroit 18<sup>h</sup> June '99 John Askin to Charles Morrison<sup>41</sup> Copy

<sup>41</sup> For the career of Charles Morison, see *B. H. R.*, I, 56.

## EXCHANGE OF FLOUR FOR MAPLE SUGAR

Michilimackinac 21<sup>st</sup> June 1799

Dear Askin Your favour of the 6<sup>h</sup> instant came to hand the 17<sup>h</sup>. I am happy to learn that your eyes are getting better & that your family are Well.

When the flour Arrives, I will do the best I can to exchange it for sugar, or dispose of it to the best advantage on your Accot, Sugar by the two or three thousand Weight has lately been Sold here at 12 Sols P lb The demand for it at present seems to encrease. I should have been glad you had Mentioned the price of baggs & the freight of the flour here, Which Would have been a guide for me to dispose of it. I [t]hink if Sugor can be had at the above price, the flour might be exchanged for it at cost & charges.

I am Sorry to hear of the death of Our Old friend John Porteous,<sup>42</sup> but it is a debte that you & I must soon discharge. We have Nothing New here. please Make my kind compliments to Madam Askin & all your famely. And am With esteem. Dear Sir,

Your Very hum<sup>le</sup> Servant,

Charles Morison

N. B. I wrote you a few lines p the *Thames*  
John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit. P the *Nancy Cap<sup>t</sup>*  
Mills<sup>43</sup>

*Endorsed:* Mich. June 21<sup>st</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Charles Morrison  
to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 30<sup>h</sup>

<sup>42</sup> John Porteous was a native of Perth, Scotland, who came to Detroit in 1762 and thereafter for many years was engaged in the northwest trade. Some of his papers (including a partial journal of Pontiac's siege of Detroit) are in the B. H. Coll.; others are in the library of the Buffalo Historical Society; while the great bulk of his lifetime accumulation of papers seems to have been destroyed about half a century ago. Porteous had a number of partners at various times. The one here mentioned has not been identified. About the outbreak of the Revolution he withdrew from the western country and during the British occupation of Philadelphia had a store in that city. He also engaged in privateering (against the "rebel" commerce). After a number of removals, Porteous, about the year 1789, located in Little Falls, New York, where he became an American citizen, and died in 1799. Considerable concerning his activities has been published; see Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Pubs.*, VI, 47-71 and 84 ff.; Ontario Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, VI, 20-36; *Michigan History Magazine*, VIII, 126-33. Information adapted from these sources and from mss. in B. H. Coll.

<sup>43</sup> William Mills was a native of Blyton in Lincolnshire, England, who for many years was a captain on the upper lakes. He was skipper of the *Nancy* as early as 1793, and as late as November, 1805. In 1796 he was one of the residents of Detroit who formally

INDEBTEDNESS OF CLAMORGAN, LOISEL AND CO.<sup>44</sup>

Michilimackinac 22<sup>d</sup> June 1799

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

Sir being informed that its probable M<sup>r</sup> Todd is at your place, I therefore take the liberty of troubling you with the enclosed letters for him. if you do not expect him soon at your place, be so good and enclose these letters for him to the care of M<sup>r</sup> Robert Hamilton of Queenston. I reached here the 16 ins<sup>t</sup> from S<sup>t</sup> Louis which place I only left the 20th Ult<sup>o</sup> and am sorry my mission to that Country on the affairs of M<sup>r</sup> Todd have been very unsuccessful having Not received a Single Sous for him from the unfortunate concern of Clamorgan<sup>45</sup> Loisel & C<sup>o</sup> nor will there ever from all appearances, in future be a Single Cent had from them. M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum and yourself it appears lay a claim against M<sup>r</sup> Todd, for 2500 livres said to be recover'd by M<sup>r</sup> A Todd's succession from Clamorgan Loisel & C<sup>o</sup> in which claim you are most certainly taken the wrong steps. Clamorgan Loisel & C<sup>o</sup> did receive such a Sum in account with a Mons<sup>r</sup> Vallé, but they never paid that Sum to M<sup>r</sup> Todd. they falsley gave credit for this Sum in Accounts with M<sup>r</sup> Todd which they never have nor never did intend to pay. M<sup>r</sup> Bleakley wrote Clamorgan on this

signified their intention to remain British subjects. At some time prior to 1808 he located in Amherstburg, where he had a wharf; in 1812 General Brock's plans for the military establishment of Upper Canada included, as one item, the buying of all cordage from Captain Mills in Amherstburg, in order to promote the growing of hemp in this region. Captain Mills served as a captain in the Second Essex Militia Regiment in the War of 1812, and was wounded in the Battle of Frenchtown (or Raisin River), Jan. 22, 1813. He died in Amherstburg, Dec. 10, 1813, aged fifty-two years. His monument in Christ churchyard describes him as "esteemed and regretted by all who knew him, being a worthy man and a zealous and loyal subject." Information from *Mich. Pio. Colls., passim*; mss. in B. H. Coll., *passim*; and tombstone in Christ churchyard in Amherstburg.

44 For further discussion of the subject of this letter, see *ante*, 177-78.

45 Jacques Clamorgan is supposed to have been a native of the West Indies. He came to St. Louis about the year 1780, where he engaged extensively in the Indian trade. He was the chief promoter of the company of Spanish traders which, in the middle nineties, sought to obtain a monopoly of the trade of the upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Its affairs did not prosper, and Clamorgan's management of them was sharply criticized. He enjoyed the favor of the Spanish authorities and was awarded vast grants of land in Missouri and Arkansas, which were not validated by the U. S. government. He was an early judge of the Court of Common Pleas in St. Louis under the American régime. About the year 1808, he went to Mexico and his subsequent career is unknown. See sketch in Houck, *Spanish Régime in Missouri*, II, 148-49. On the activities of the Commercial Company for the Discovery of the Nations of the Upper Missouri, of which Clamorgan was the leader, see *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XXII, 14 ff.



affair claiming the very same sum in quite another manner. What answer Clamorgan gave Mr Bleakley is more than I know, in fact I imagine he gave him none. if Mr Todd agrees even to pay on this sum in proportion to his receipts from Clamorgan & Co it will be doing a great deal, tho the amount must be small indeed. I am Sir

Your very Obed. Serv<sup>t</sup>

James Swan

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Mich June 22<sup>d</sup> 1799 Mr Jm<sup>s</sup> Swan to Jn<sup>n</sup>  
Askin recvd y<sup>e</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> wrote him 21<sup>st</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup> Montreal

FROM DR. HARFFY TO JOHN ASKIN

Malden June 28, 1799

D<sup>r</sup> Sir I received the China Safe, all parties are Satisfied, and part of the Syrup of punch is drank, for which my thanks are due. the letters are all put on board; but they whar too late until the *Thames* arrived. the three letters which came down with her I received, & have attended to part of one. Mr Backwell<sup>46</sup> cannot say with Certainty that he can take the whole, half he thinks he can promise; if more I will let you know. The Common red wine, *alias* Black Strap if good, Serle<sup>47</sup> will take payable in Pork, but as he has not quite a Barrel at present he can Send 100, or 150, at the usual price, the remainder almost immediately after. Hutchins is down the Lake, *Money hunting*. Caldwell also says he will get a Bill. if it should be agreeable to you to close with Serle, he wishes you would send it down *in my Name*, that it may not appear to Park, who in matters

<sup>46</sup> William Backwell was commissioned captain lieutenant in the Royal Engineers on Aug. 15, 1794. In June, 1798, he arrived at Amherstburg to take charge of the engineer department and therewith assumed direction of the further work on the erection of the fort. His management of affairs was highly commended by Captain Hector McLean, who seems not to have approved of his predecessor, Lieutenant Robert Cooper. No indication of the duration of his stay here has been found. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XX, *passim*, and British army lists.

<sup>47</sup> William Searl (so spelled in formal documents which he signed by making his mark) was an innkeeper in Amherstburg. The document printed in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXIII, 102, seems to indicate that he was still keeping a house of entertainment there as late as 1820. He was of English origin, having married Elizabeth Kelsey in St. George, Hanover Square Parish in Middlesex County, Dec. 31, 1776. A daughter, Ann Searl, born about 1789, married Roderick Drake of Amherstburg, July 8, 1816. See St. John's Church Register, *passim*.

of trade is a *Loup*. Theophile Myers<sup>48</sup> letter is on its passage down. I thank you sincerely for the Calash. It was not in my power to get over. in money matters I was disappointed by Roe, much against my Nephew & Self. as occurrences happen and your moneys come in you will hear from D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Your truly affect<sup>e</sup>

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy

P. S. have you hinted any thing to M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee, y<sup>t</sup> sooner—  
*better* Is it peace or war with France & America,

*Notation:* A small Vial of Goulard.

*Addressed:* Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>re</sup> Merc<sup>t</sup> Detroit. An early answer is requested W. H.

*Endorsed:* Malden June 28<sup>h</sup> 1799 Doc<sup>r</sup> Harffy to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Answ<sup>d</sup>

TIMBERS FOR FORT MALDEN

Detroit 28<sup>h</sup> June 1799

Sir I should be glad to Know If the large Saw Logs for Government's use, of 40 feet, might be squared on the 4 Sides to render them lighter, or If Shorter ones would not do as it is reported to me, that 5 Oxen which I have at the Pinerry *cannot move them*. I am &<sup>a</sup>

Signed John Askin

Thomas Reynolds Esq<sup>r</sup> Amherstbergh

P. S. part of the Wood or Timber for Goverments use will soon be down & the remainder not long after if I may Credit report.

*Endorsed:* Detroit 28<sup>h</sup> June '99 John Askin to Thomas Reynolds Copy

AFFAIRS OF ABRAHAM CUYLER

Montreal 28<sup>th</sup> June 1799

Dear Sir on overlooking some of my papers lately I found that there is a Ball<sup>oe</sup> due me from M<sup>r</sup> William Grant<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> For Martin Theophilus Myers, see *B. H. R.*, I, 305.

<sup>49</sup> For the career of William Grant, see *ibid.*, 132-33.

on a transaction at Makina in June 1783 on acc<sup>t</sup> of an accepted Bill by John Visger<sup>50</sup> of the firm of Greverat & Visger for £640 N.Y Cu<sup>r</sup> pay<sup>l</sup> June 1783 and a Bill drawn by John Visger in my favor on Mess<sup>rs</sup> Frobisher, for £432. NY C<sup>y</sup> by M<sup>r</sup> Grants letter to me dated 7 Sep<sup>r</sup> 1783, he says "I have thoroughly secured the pay<sup>t</sup> of the 2 Notes you left in my hand belonging to M<sup>r</sup> Visger. I have got M<sup>r</sup> George Meldrums Note for £293.9 equil to £469.4. NY C<sup>y</sup>. the remainder I was oblinded to take in things I have not yet disposed off."

on demanding the Ball<sup>e</sup> from M<sup>r</sup> Grant he says that he was oblinded to take corn from Visger which he sold to a disadvantage and that part of the Money for the sale thereof is not rec<sup>d</sup> but [he] has promised to send for his books from Makina and after which to settle my claim, and in Order to be prepared for this settlement, I beg you will have the goodness to call upon Visger whom I am told remains at Detroit, and obtain from him a statement or certificate upon Oath in what manner he discharged those two Bills and at what period of time, how much thereof was paid in Corn or other things and at what price M<sup>r</sup> Grant took the corn or other things he mentions and to send the statement or certificate to me p[er] first opp<sup>y</sup> directed to the care of M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill

I think I mentioned to you in a former letter that I intended to take my future residence at W<sup>m</sup> Henry commonly known by the name of Sorel about 15 Leagues below this, where I lived near two years but found the place so dull and so little society that I removed to this place a few months since and yet continue to pass my days in Idleness on the small pittance I receive from Govern<sup>t</sup> but have it yet in view to enter into business when an Opportunity should present, Assisted by one of my Sons who is very impatient of an inactive life, and as I have been told that the Trade at Detroit has done well for a year or two past,

<sup>50</sup> John Visger, probably originally from Schenectady, came to Detroit prior to the Revolution and here engaged in trade in partnership with Gerrit Graverat (for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 309) and Colin Andrews. An interesting account of the financial vicissitudes which overtook the firm is given in C. M. Burton's *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, pp. 957-58. Askin's reply to Cuyler's present letter indicates that Visger was then (September, 1799) living in Detroit, ill, and in straitened circumstances. See *post*, 247-48. Members of the Visger family were long prominent in Detroit.



I should like to make a begining next year in sending my Son with a Cargo for an early market, if you think it advisable, in that case I wish you would inform me what Articles would be most saleable and if not too much trouble to send me an Acc<sup>t</sup> of the prices such articles might sell in case they were first at Market next season.

I suppose you will have heard before this reaches you of the arrival of Gen<sup>l</sup> Hunter<sup>51</sup> as L<sup>t</sup> Governor for upper Canada, as also of the arrival of Lieu<sup>t</sup> Governor Milne<sup>52</sup> to succeed Gen<sup>l</sup> Prescott<sup>53</sup> for this Province. by this last change I fear I shall be a little disappointd to obtain some lands that were in good train before. report says that your change is for the better. by the last accounts from England it appears that the austrians are successful against the french, and some are so sanguine as to flatter themselves with a speedy peace but from a letter I rec<sup>d</sup> from my Brother<sup>54</sup> he seems to think such an event yet at a great distant. he is gone to Command the British Troops in Portugal, from whence I expect he will soon proceed with the troops to the Medeteranean where some warm work is expected to reinstate his Nepolian Majesty—we have nothing meterial news.

<sup>51</sup> Lieutenant General Peter Hunter succeeded Simcoe as governor of Upper Canada in 1799, and at the same time became commander-in-chief of the army in Canada. He was born in 1746 into a talented Scotch family, two of his brothers, William and John Hunter, being celebrated medical authorities of London. Governor Hunter died in Quebec, Aug. 21, 1805, while on a tour of military inspection. See sketch in Wallace, *op. cit.*, and Henry J. Morgan, *Sketches of Celebrated Canadians* (Quebec, 1862), 139.

<sup>52</sup> Sir Robert Shore Milnes was born in Yorkshire, England, in 1746. He was for a time an officer in the army. In 1795, he became governor of Martinique, and in 1799 came to Quebec as lieutenant-governor of Lower Canada. His administration, which was in no way distinguished, lasted six years, terminating, July 31, 1805. See *ibid.*, 134; and Robert Christie, *History of the Late Province of Lower Canada* (Montreal, 1866), I, 202 ff.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Prescottt was born in England in 1725. He devoted his life to the army and served in America during the Revolutionary War. In 1793, he was ordered to the West Indies, where he served brilliantly both in his military capacity and as civil governor. In 1795, he returned to England and the following spring was sent to Quebec to succeed Lord Dorchester. He governed the province until 1799, when he was recalled to England, although he continued to retain the title and draw a salary as governor of Lower Canada. He had become a major general in 1781; in 1783, he was made lieutenant general; and in 1798, general in the army. He died at his home in Sussex in December, 1816. Information adapted from British army lists and *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

<sup>54</sup> Cornelius Cuyler, member of a family long prominent in Albany, was born there in 1740. He joined the Fifty-fifth Regiment as an ensign in May, 1759, and served throughout the remainder of the Seven Years' War. Practically his entire life was passed in the army and he rose in due course to the rank of general in September, 1803. He served in America throughout the Revolutionary War, being aide-de-camp to General Howe in 1775. He died in England, March 8, 1819. See British army lists and *Appleton, Cyclopaedia of Am. Biog.*

please to present my respectful Compliments to M<sup>rs</sup>  
Askin & family also to Commodore Grant & family and  
beleive me to remain with great regard D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Your old friend & Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>

A Cuyler<sup>55</sup>

let me know if there is not any prospects of recovering  
any thing from Niagara

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merchant Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal June 28<sup>h</sup> 1799 Abram Cuyler  
Esq<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recvd y<sup>e</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> July Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 10<sup>h</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup>

RENTAL OF SALT SPRING

Queenston June 29, 1799

Dear Sir In looking over some old papers I find a  
memorandum from you about your Salt Spring. There are  
often Salt Boilers from Onondago at this pace some of whom,  
would (I am convinced) be glad to rent it, if there is a suf-  
ficiency of water. Should you still wish to rent it out by  
sending me all the information you can respecting it and the  
terms I may probably find you a tenant

I am with respect Dear Sir

very truly yours

Rob<sup>t</sup> Nichol

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merchant Detroit

<sup>55</sup> Abraham Cuyler, a younger brother of Cornelius Cuyler who is noted above, was born in Albany, April 11, 1742. He became a lieutenant in the Queen's Rangers in the Seven Years' War, and commanded a detachment sent to the relief of Detroit in 1763, which was cut to pieces on May 28 at Point Peleé on Lake Erie, not far from the mouth of the Detroit River. From this debacle, Cuyler himself escaped, although wounded, together with about one-third of his men. The remainder, over sixty in number, were conveyed to Detroit and with one or two exceptions were there tortured to death. Cuyler in September, 1770, was appointed mayor of Albany, an office which both his father and his grandfather had held before him. With the advent of the Revolution, he remained loyal to the Crown, and in December, 1776, was forced to take refuge with the British army in New York. Here he remained until the close of the war, when he became inspector of refugee loyalists in Montreal. He enjoyed the favor of Governor Haldimand, and in 1783 the latter instructed Colonel De Peyster in Detroit to afford all possible assistance to Cuyler in the collection of a debt which was owed him by Gerrit Graverat of Detroit. For an account of what followed in Detroit, see Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, 957-58. The present letter indicates that Cuyler's westward journey, in 1783, was extended as far as Mackinac. His later life was apparently spent in Canada. He died in Yorkfield, Feb. 5, 1810. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*, and Cuyler Reynolds (comp.), *Albany Chronicles* (Albany, 1906), 268 *et passim*.

*Endorsed:* Queenston June 29<sup>h</sup> '99 M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Nichol to  
Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 6<sup>h</sup> July Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 8<sup>th</sup>

TIMBERS FOR FORT MALDEN

Amherstburgh June 30<sup>h</sup> 1799

Sir I received your Letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> Ins<sup>t</sup> It is not a Matter of Great Moment if the Large Saw Logs do not come down this year, as they cannot arrive time enough, for any Service they Might have been applied to, had they been here by this time. If you can bring down any of the Shorter ones, without going to any additional expence, of hewing or hauling, I wish you to do it. if not let them remain untill next winter, when perhaps the Season may be more favourable.

I am Sir your most obedient very Humble Servant

Thomas Reynolds

John Askin Esquire &c &c &c Detroit.

MOVEMENTS OF PETER RICHARDS

Amherstburg 1<sup>st</sup> July 1799

Sir yours of the 30<sup>th</sup> came to hand & by the Bearer of this I am sorry to her that Peiter Richards is absent from grose point. he was sent From amherstburg last wedensday to build a Chimney at Commodore Grants as the man tould Me but if you apharhend he has any notion of dirchasion [desertion] please to sackure him till he is Sent for he received from M<sup>r</sup> Reynolds unknnon to me three months pay I have reported Him to the Commandant but saposd he is spndeing the monney in detroit. Sir I houp you will have the goodnes to answar this when Convineant

your most obedn<sup>t</sup> humble Servt,

James Fleet L<sup>ts</sup> M. D.

John Askins Esq<sup>r</sup> Merchant of Detroit

<sup>56</sup> James Fleet, lieutenant in the marine department, was in the naval service on the upper lakes from about the year 1780. In October, 1805, the *Hope*, while under his command was wrecked near St. Joseph Island in Lake Huron. Before the board of inquiry which investigated the affair, Lieutenant Cowan testified that for twenty-five years Fleet had commonly had sole charge of the naval service on the lakes in winter, and had performed his duty satisfactorily. Fleet himself stated that prior to his service on the lakes he had spent seven years aboard a man of war. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XX, and XXIII, *passim*.



P. S. Sir your irons that you left in the Commodors will be s[e]nt the first oppartenuty.

*Addressed:* John Askeins Esq<sup>re</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Amhurstburgh July 1<sup>st</sup> 1799 L<sup>t</sup> Fleet to Jn<sup>o</sup>  
Askin recv<sup>d</sup> & answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 2<sup>d</sup>

#### LOSS OF LAND CERTIFICATES

Dear Sir By our mutual freind the Comodore I received at York several of your favors which I shall Answer more minutely by this oportunity if not gone before I can arrange my bussiness a little behind from this Absence. The Purport of this is to say that the Comodore cannot find among his papers the Certificates you Mention for the 12 or 14 lotts of Land still coming to you & that without these nothing can be done to Secure them. If possible lett them be found & sent down without delay. Much trouble may Attend the Location as Matters now Stand, but should we get a new Governor, & should as is also thought Captain Smith go home this fall it will be almost impracticable. I think they must Remain with you as the Comodore could hardly lose them on the Road. I left him Two days ago in perfect health & he has written to you on this Subject by M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Smith who comes home by land.

We just now hear that the English fleet is in the River. It has been said that General Hunter may be expected a passenger as our Lieut. Governor. M<sup>r</sup> Todd Accompanied M<sup>r</sup> Cartwright & myself to York on the 10<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>. he only staid three days there & is long eer now in Montreal. I am very Glad you did not in your present state of health Undertake a Journey down. Probably you Would have Missed him & perhaps the progress you should have made in Settling your Land Matters might not have been such as to Compensate for the trouble.

The Cheif Justice comes on the Circuit this Year to the Western district & will sitt as Commissioner on Land bussiness there. The time for this Commission has been extended for 2 Years.

We Continue to enjoy Good health here & Cordially join

in best wishes that the same Blessing may Attend you &  
yours. I am D<sup>r</sup> Sir

your very hum. Sert

R. Hamilton

Queenston 2<sup>d</sup> July 99

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

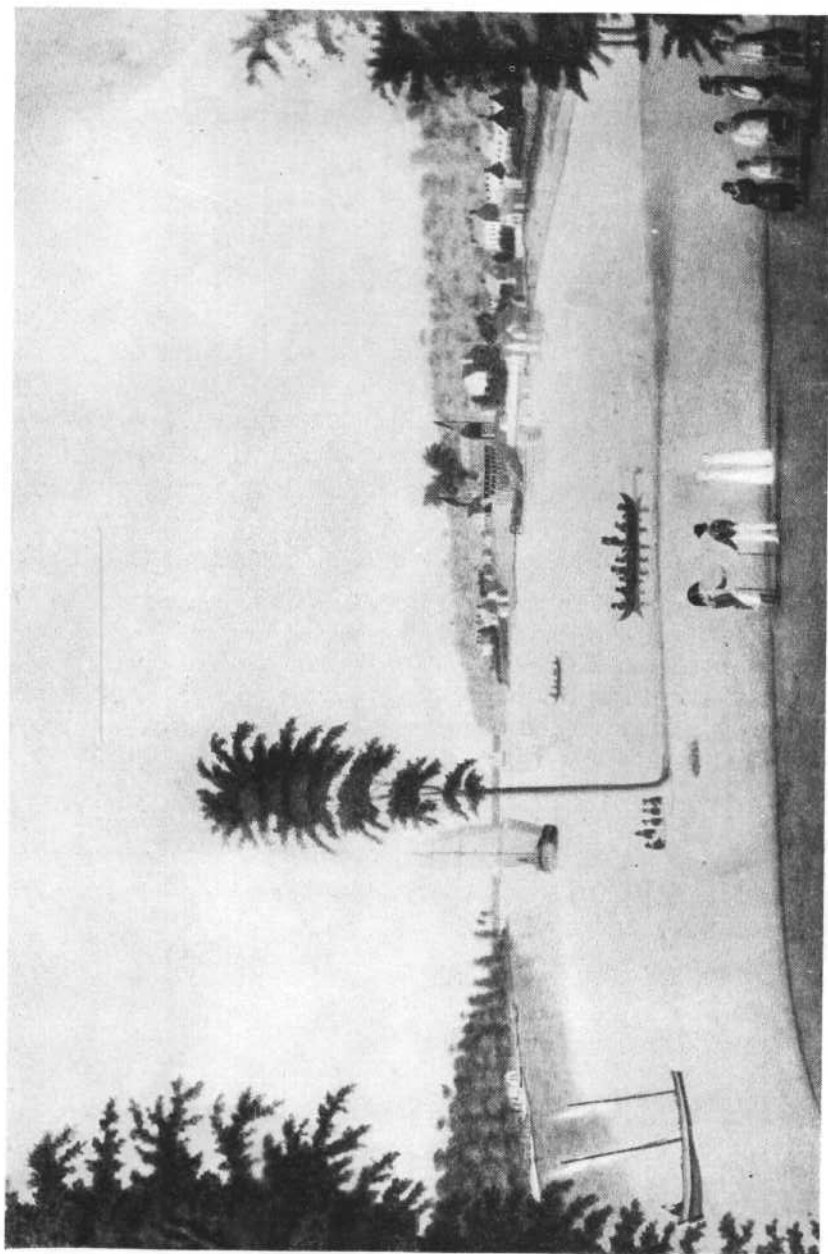
*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Merchant Detroit.

*Endorsed:* Queenston July 2<sup>d</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Hamilton to  
Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 13<sup>h</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> 14<sup>h</sup>

TIMBERS FOR FORT MALDEN

Detroit July 3<sup>d</sup> 1799

Sir I'm just favoured with your Obliging Letter dated the Last of June & thankfull to all those Who have the Direction of the Suply's of Timber for Goverments Use for their Indulgence & wish to serve me but as the Wood wall [was] all Ready (10 large logs Excepted) before the Winter broke up & that the delay has only been Occationed Owing to the Failure of those who Undertook to draw it Out, & that I have remedied that defect by sending 5 Oxen & one Horse to the Pinery with three drivers. I have no doubt of a Great Part of the Timber being now on the Way & I'm sure the Rest will follow soon After, for my Idea is that Whoever contracts should perform without Regard to Expence & that they never fail performing what they Understood Unavoidable Accidents Excepted. I dont know of any raft of Pine Timber Arrived here from the Pinery this Year Earlier than About two Weeks ago & many have not yet Got down, Therefore I hope what I have to Furnish will be so Short a Time After the Others as not to Cause any Loss or Disapointment to Government. I have now no less than 10 men at the Pinery for the Purpose of bringing it down with Cables Anchors &<sup>ca</sup> I wrote more on this Subject than I would Otherwise do, was I not Informed that no small Pains have bee[n] taken to Create a belief that I could not bring down the Timber I had Contracted for. Tho it has run the Risk of being burnt (from Intention or Accident I Shant take upon me to say) & other deficulties thrown in the Way, yet If it is not Cast away on



FORT MALDEN IN 1812, AS SEEN FROM ELLIOT'S POINT  
*From original drawing by Catherine Reynolds owned by Mrs. Francis Cleary of Windsor*



it's passage down, I say the principal part of it will be With you soon & the remainder not long after & Shortly After the Period that the Generality of Rafts Arrives at I am Sir

Your most Obedient Very humble Servant

Thomas Reynolds Esq<sup>r</sup> at Amhersburgh

*Endorsed:* Detroit 3<sup>d</sup> July 1799 John Askin Senior To Thomas Reynolds (Copy)

#### EXCHANGE OF FLOUR FOR SUGAR

Michilimackinac 4<sup>h</sup> July 1799

Dear Askin Your favour of the 18<sup>h</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup> came to hand some days ago. Also the 20 Baggs flour in good Order, The Whole of which I have (agreeable to your order) exchanged With M<sup>r</sup> A. Laframboies<sup>57</sup> for Sugar. He had the flour at cost & Chorges, Which I estimated at 39 livres P Bag & I allowed him 12 Sols the pound for his Sugar, at which rate you have 1300 lbs. Neat, for your 20 Baggs flour. The Sugar is in 32 Barks Marked IA. put on board the *Detroit* in Good Order. Inclosed you have the Acco<sup>t</sup> of the Gross & Neat Weight of it & 2 lbs Suger, Over. The same day I exchanged your flour as a bove, Others exchanged flour P the Bag for 60 lbs Suger, Which Were 5 lbs. less than my exchange. So that on the 20 Baggs flour, you have 100 lbs more than Others exchanged at. The charges here are only 4/ York paid Soldure for brin[g]ing the flour on Shore.

Yesterday I received your favour P the *Russell*. I am happy to learn that your Sight is res[t]ored & that all your

<sup>57</sup> Alexis Laframboise belonged to the Fafard family, whose first American representative came to Canada from Normandy about the middle of the seventeenth century. His grandson, Francis Fafard, *dît* Delorme, born in 1660, moved with his family to Detroit in 1707, where he served as interpreter at the fort. Our present subject, the son of Jean Baptiste Fafard *dît* Laframboise of Canada, was born about the year 1763. He came west to Mackinac in early manhood and is supposed to have been trading at Milwaukee about 1784-85. On March 19, 1792, he married at Mackinac Mary Joseph Adhémar *dît* St. Martin, daughter of Toussaint Anthony Adhémar *dît* St. Martin, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 177-78. She was born at the Northeast Coast of Detroit, April 13, 1775. Alexis Laframboise was captain of militia at Mackinac. He died suddenly on April 2, 1800, and was buried in the church at Mackinac. He is not known to have left descendants. A brother, François, who also traded at Milwaukee and who was killed by the Indians, married a Potawatomi woman, and the descendants of their union figure frequently in the annals of early Chicago and Milwaukee. Information adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*, and *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 158, *et passim*.

family Were Well. We have Nothing New here. Please make my best respects to Madam Askin & all your family. And belive [me] to be Sincerely your Very well wisher & humble Sert.

Charles Morison

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit P favour of M<sup>r</sup> Meldrom

*Endorsed:* Mich. July 4<sup>h</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Charles Morrison to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 9<sup>h</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 10<sup>h</sup>

APPREHENSION OF WINTERERS

Michilimackinac le 5 Juillet 1799

John Askin, Ecuy<sup>r</sup>

Monsieur Ayant oublié de vous ecrire hier pour un homme deserté de il ya environ quinze jours, hyvernant, monté dans les Canots, son nom est Pierre Turcotte et comme il a pris la Route du Detroit et que je crois que vous pourrez le trouver voicy les avances quil à, et son engagement a reçu à Compte à Montreal 94<sup>n</sup> et icy 2<sup>n</sup>.4 et son equipement qui monte à 64<sup>n</sup>. si vous pouvez le prendre vous retirez ce qu'il me doit, si non vous me le Renvoyerez par la premiere Barque.

Je vous envoie aussy le compte et Engagements des trois Lafontaine dit Marion qui mont deserté L'an dernier, un à Niagara et les deux autres au Detroit. Lon ma dit quil hyvernoit au Miamis si vous pouvez les faires Prendre vous le ferez et leurs ferez payér le Montant et de domagement si il est possible.

Je suis Monsieur Avec Consideration

Votre serviteur tres hble

J Giasson & Cie

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Au Detroit

*Endorsed:* Michilimackinac July 5 1799 Mess<sup>r</sup> Jacque Gaisson & C<sup>o</sup> respecting his Engages who run away rec<sup>d</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 8<sup>h</sup> July

*Translation*

Mackinac, July 5, 1799

John Askin, Esq.

Sir: I forgot to write to you yesterday respecting a man who deserted about fifteen days ago, a winterer who took up the canoes, Pierre Turcotte by name; and as he went by way of Detroit, and as I think you might find him, here are the advances made to him, and his contract. He received 94 livres in Montreal, and 2 livres 4 sols in this place, and his equipment, amounting to 64 livres. If you can take him, get back what he owes me. If not, return him to me by the first boat.

I am sending you also the account and contracts of the three men, Lafontaine *dit* Marion, who ran away from me last year, one at Niagara, and the other two at Detroit. I am told that they wintered at the Miamis. If you can have them arrested, do so, and make them pay the amount and damages, if possible.

I remain, Sir, with respect,

Your most humble servant,

J. Giasson & Co.<sup>58</sup>

RENTAL OF SALT SPRING

Detroit 8<sup>h</sup> July '99

D<sup>r</sup> Sir I am favoured with your obliging letters of the 27 & 29 of last month, and thankful to you for the news which when at leisure I beg you will continue,

Please take up my news-Papers and transmit them regularly. M<sup>r</sup> Hamilton will be so kind as to pay the charges, I received the pa[c]k per the *Russel*, but no order on Mr Forsyth as mentioned in a former Letter nor is there occasion to Send one unless you choose, as what is coming from the Mauravian Indian will put a Ballance in

<sup>58</sup> Jacques Giasson was born in 1709 and in 1745 married Marie Angélique Hubert of Montreal. Their son, Jacques, was born in Montreal in 1747. The elder Giasson engaged in the Northwest trade as early as 1747, and ten years later obtained, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, a three-year monopoly of the trade of Green Bay. He died in Canada in 1762.

His son, Askin's correspondent, was engaged in trade at Mackinac during the British and early American periods. He died in 1800. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 197.



your favour. The potatoes are arrived, and tho' late we will give them a trial, M<sup>rs</sup> A is thankful for them, she is fond of what plants, Roots &ca, that are new. I shall not want any Salt. tho' the price is low, that quantity does not answer well I am much obliged to you for your information respecting the getting a tenant for the Salt Spring.

I believe the Quantity of Salt water is considerable and for my part I wish much to let it out for five, or even Seven years, but as M<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Robertson holds a Share in it, I have Sent him your Letter in order to obtain his Sentiments on the Subject. I think the person who wishes to hire Should visit the Spring himself in order to be a Judge. he might purchase If he thought proper, at least a half and there is proper Kettles now here that I believe would be Sold cheap, as the Spring they were intended for, does not answer it's always pleasing to me to hear that your prospects are good, and will be more so when I find they answer your expectations. there is nothing new in this quarter therefore I cannot make any return for your news in that way. the family in general assure you of their good wishes as does

Sign'd J A

*Endorsed:* Detroit 10 July '99 John Askin to Robert Nichol Copy

#### LOSS OF LAND CERTIFICATES

Detroit 10 July 99

My D<sup>r</sup> Sir Your very obliging Letters dated the 8 & 30 last m<sup>o</sup> reached me a very few days ago & I'm very happy to learn that your good Mother & you are well & most Sincerely wish you a prosperous voyage Home, and safe return, for I hope we are not to loose you from this country. I do not know of any commands I now have home, unless my best Comp<sup>ts</sup> to Such of my acquaintances as you may meet with.

the Majestrate's Certificates to the number of 14, with the Sales of them to me, I made up in a bundle and gave to the Commodore with the necessary directions on it, and in same bundle I think (but am not Sure) was my Memorial to the President in Council. If he has the latter I cannot See how he lost the former It is a most unlucky circumstance for

me, as I may never have a better opportunity to have my Claims brought forward, whilst you and so many other friends were on the Spot. I hope your, and their representation (If the papers are lost) will get me an equal quantity of Land, being in all but 2,800 acres. I rely too much on the honor of the President and Council to allow me to be So great a Sufferer where I was not in fault. I can give clear proofs of these Majestrate's Certificates or recommendations having existed, and the names of those to whom they were granted, also by the oaths of my Clerks the Sum I paid for each, and I believe I can find out the greater part of the Majestrates who granted them Specifying to whom. under these fair circumstances I really cannot entertain any doubt, that even Should the Papers be lost (which from what you wrote, I fear is true) but what the Lands will be given me and that there will Issue an order of Council to let me have the quantity aforesaid, in which case I make no doubt you will give Mr Iredell directions to locate So much where any lands may be laid out and not already taken up for God's sake, get me thro' this difficulty. ways & means are better Known to you than me. it badly suits my present circumstances to loose 14 lots. as I know you must be Very busy, I will only add M<sup>rs</sup> A's assurances of unalterable esteem & regard for you & your good mother & that I remain with Sentiments of pure friendship

Signed J A

P S I have not wrote the Commodore now, as I learn he is on his way back. If with you, let him Know what I have said so as to Join with you in doing the needful

*Endorsed:* Detroit 10<sup>h</sup> July 99 John Askin to D. W. Smith Esq<sup>r</sup> Copy

#### INDEBTEDNESS OF FREDERICK GRAETER

Montreal 15<sup>th</sup> July 1799

Dear Askin I wrote you from Queenstown since which I am favord with yours of the 2<sup>d</sup> June you Judged right in supposing I would be [have] Left that place before you arrived however I still hope we will yet meet. I am sorry to hear your health has been so indifferent but hope the warm weather will reestablish it. M<sup>r</sup> Swan is returned to

Michilam<sup>a</sup> without receiving a Shilling from that Rascal Clamorgan & C<sup>o</sup> and I find I will be equally disappointed by others. there is a M<sup>r</sup> Frederick Grattor<sup>59</sup> that owes me by note of hand 5630<sup>n</sup> say five thousand Six hundred & thirty Livers three Sols by Note of hand which ought to have been paid Last year at Michilam<sup>a</sup> he wintered at Post Vincenne and remains there having sent some packs to Detroit to Leith & C<sup>o</sup> to be sent to Montreal for M<sup>r</sup> Blakely. I have wrote M<sup>r</sup> Swan to send you his Note immediatly & I wish you to take the speediest method to recover payment without Letting it be known. you must know whether a writ can be procured there or whether One ought to be sent from Detroit the Latter may be the best. if there was time to send it this summer so that the payment could come in it would be well. however at all events it may be well to take the first opportunity to Get it secured. he has the Chara[c]-ter of an honest Man tho he has not beheaved so to me. if there is no person going to Post Vincenne that you can depend on to secure this I would recommend your sending some person for the purpose, as I suppose you might get a Person for a Little more then 100 Dolers youll observe there will be near two years Interest before the payment can come to me and in taking Peltrey in payment the person ought to be a Judge of the quality & Value there, all of which you can Instruct him in. I suppose you know some *safe honest* Man to recommend the Person you send to at the Post. dont neglect this.

this will be delivered you by our friend Robertson who I am sure is still much your friend. in hopes of hearing from you soon and that you will send me as before requested a state[ment] of the Securitys you got from Hands with your

<sup>59</sup> Frederick Graeter is said to have been a native of Alsace-Lorraine. He engaged in the fur trade, apparently at Mackinac, and about the close of the century spent over a year in Vincennes endeavoring to collect debts, etc. In a subsequent letter to Askin he announced his intention of returning to Mackinac in the spring of 1800, where he held considerable property. Eventually he located in Vincennes, where he served as justice of the peace, and where he died in 1829. A nephew, Christian Graeter, located in Vincennes about the beginning of the century, and descendants of the family are still living in Indianapolis. Christian Graeter kept a tavern and store. He was an officer of Dragoons at Tippecanoe, served in the War of 1812, and was for many years colonel of militia in Vincennes. Two of his daybooks are preserved in the old legislative hall in Vincennes. Information adapted from article by Kate Milner Rabb, "Century Ago in Tavern Record," in the Indianapolis *Star*, Nov. 27, 1927, and data supplied by Fannie C. Graeter of Indianapolis in letter of April 14, 1928.



## JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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opinion I am in heaste reffering you to the Bearer  
ever yours Sincerly

Isaac Todd

M<sup>r</sup> John Askin

P S as I have settled with Clark I wish you would write to his agent at Post Vincenne to pay you the expence you were at in Gonzales business which you charged me as it is the only mode I can be paid

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit favord by W. Robertson Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Endorsed:* Montreal July 15<sup>h</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Isaac Todd to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 19<sup>h</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup>

### LOSS OF LAND CERTIFICATES

Detroit 15 July '99

My dear Sir I wrote you very lately Since which I learn Col. Hunter is coming out, or already arrived Li[e]ut. Governor of upper Canada, If I'm not mistaken I heard [you] say he was your particular friend, If so, perhaps your interest in my favour may be wanted, for Commodore Grant has lost 14 majestrates recommendations for as many Lots with the Sales of them to me, and every requisite Paper. As my friends in council were prepared and would have got an order for the land to be Surveyed to me, and a deed in my name was my motive for sending them, I put them in a bundle directed what it was, and saw them put into his Pocket. either going on board or up the Side, they must have dropt out and been lost, for both M<sup>r</sup> Smith & M<sup>r</sup> Hamilton write me he cannot find them

Signed J A

*Endorsed:* Detroit 15 July 1799 John Askin to Isaac Todd Copy

### CONDUCT OF BLACKSMITH AND BAKER

Detroit 16 July '99

Dear Sirs When I wrote yesterday I forgot to Say that as you have sent me a blacksmith and he proves a very good one I beg you will send me a quantity of Iron of

different Sizes, say 8 or 9 Ct. Steel I have, and as he makes deck nails very well I shall not want any I wish I could Say as much for the Baker, but tho' he may be able to work under another, he cannot have the management of that business to himself, therefore I mean to sell his time to some other.

Signed J A

Mess<sup>rs</sup> James & Andrew M<sup>c</sup>Gill, mercht<sup>s</sup> Montreal

*Endorsed:* Detroit 16 July '99 John Askin to James & Andrew M<sup>c</sup>Gill Copy

LOSS OF LAND CERTIFICATES

Detroit July 19<sup>th</sup> 1799

My Dear sir I wrote you a short Letter last night as the Vessell was then on her way and as far as Sandwich. In hopes that she may still be Overtaken by this at the rivers mouth I send you under cover herewith the Duplicate of the Memorial I gave you with the Certificates or recommendation Sales &<sup>ca</sup>. If the Governor is not yet Arrived perhaps it may still be time to present it. if he is, perhaps it would be right to make him Acquainted with what has happened. My Friend M<sup>r</sup> Smith & you knows whats best. M<sup>r</sup> Cartwright I know has mentioned these recommendations to the Chief Justice & I dare say he will be favourable as well as M<sup>r</sup> Baby. If I'm refused these Lands it's a greater hardship than any Other has Undergone. Hundreds & perhaps Thousands of Majestrates Certificates have passed since mine were given out, & to Characters not so deserving. If Lands will not be Alloted to me on Application to the Deputy Surveyor for two years, (tho frequent applications made) am I to blame? and when I take the mode prescribed by applying to the Governor in Council to suffer or order them to be located, and from Accident all my papers are lost, there Again surely I'm not to blame? I do not wish to throw reflections at same time on Any man, or Any department, but however hope I may not suffer from delay, perhaps unavidable, tho not occationed by me. The people who got the recommendations Imediately Applied for Lands. They were told that none was then laid out but when they were, they should have them. tired with frequent

Applications & delays, they at length sold them to me. I made many applications also to have the Lands located, with as little Success. If it's said that the Lands were only for Actual Settlers, why was a Law made to Admit of Sales, on proof of fair purchases? had the Deputy Surveyor in this District, Allotted to me, or those who had the recommendations their Lands, the Commissioners would have passed them as they did Others, & I would not have had so much trouble, nor give so much to my Friends; I do not Ask for partial favours, but hope to be put on a footing with Others, not more desirving. I may have said on this Subject more than is Necessary, but I wished to give you my sentiments. To end this long Epistle I should think that Governor in Council cannot hesitate to give an Order for my geting 2800 Acres, in 14 single lots of Land, on Condition that I prove to the Commissioners when they sit, That there was Majestrates recommendations for as Many, That they were sold to me & I paid for them, & lastly that said recommendations & Sales were by Accident lost.

Adieu I wish you health & Happiness

Yours most truely

Commodore Grant

*Endorsed:* Detroit 19 July '99 John Askin to Com<sup>re</sup>  
Grant Copy

#### LOSS OF LAND CERTIFICATES

York July 22<sup>d</sup> 1799

My dear Sir The misslying of your letter has distressed me [be]yound measure. And every time I think of it makes me uneasy.

But my dear Sir, I fear should your Claims be brought forward for the Transferring of Majestrats Certificates to you, would have little or no avail in geting them passed; There has been So much Impostion lately discovered regarding Majestrats Certificates and even Certificates from the different land Boards, that the Council has made a possitive rule, not [to] adhere to any Certificate whatever that was not brought forward before the 11<sup>th</sup> of June last and any



Transfers that are not the U. E. or Military Claims will not pass. the fees on lands are risen to a shilling N. York an acre. Tho two years agoe I got an order on Doct<sup>r</sup> Wrights Petition insisting that the deed of L<sup>t</sup> McCan's land was to be made out in Wright's name, the Petition was misslyed in the Council office and could not be found. And now with outmost difficulty I got the deed in Wrights name, paying the half fee tho Doct<sup>r</sup> Wright & L<sup>t</sup> McCan' are U E

And if any of the people that makes the Transfers are in the States of America, they are not attended too. I could not carry thro the additional acres to M<sup>r</sup> John Askin Jun<sup>r</sup> because he was not at present an actual resident on the British Side

On all transferrs from U. E. or Military Claims, the person that gets the deed must pay the half fee that Gover<sup>mt</sup> paid before my most affectionate wishes attend M<sup>rs</sup> Askin and hers. The President has politly in a full Council asked me to accept of the L<sup>ty</sup> of the county of Essex's which I have. Your friend and well wisher David Smith with his mother and four Children Embarked, yesterday on leave of absence for England, and has promised to be out again next June and the old lady declares if she lives she will be out with him he says the only motive he has for takin[g] this Voyage are to recruit his health. Contrary wind made the Vessel come back M<sup>r</sup> Baby and I dines with them to day at Commissery McGills<sup>60</sup> at the Garrison, two miles distant from town. M<sup>r</sup> Baby and I expects [to] leave every day, but His Honor brings up fresh business dayly I fear amusing us till the arrival of our new L<sup>t</sup> Governor General Hunter—and Commander in Chief of all His Majestys forces in the two Canada's till Gener<sup>l</sup> Prescotts return. Compliment to John & his lady, Colonel Strong and his [lady, and] Doct<sup>r</sup> Brown<sup>61</sup> I am really & truely

Your Sincere friend & Servant

Alex Grant

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

<sup>60</sup> John McGill was a native of Scotland, who migrated to Virginia in 1773. During the war that followed, he served in the Queen's Rangers from 1777 to 1783. In the years subsequent to the war, he held various public offices in Upper Canada, aside from that of commissary. He died in York, Dec. 31, 1834. See Wallace, *op. cit.*

<sup>61</sup> Doctor William Brown was born in Massachusetts, Dec. 7, 1773, and located in

*Endorsed:* York July 22<sup>d</sup> 1799 Commodore Grant to Jn<sup>o</sup>  
Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 19<sup>h</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup> Answ sep<sup>r</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> 1799

DIRECTIONS CONCERNING LOGGING OPERATIONS

Detroit le 29 Juillet, 1799

Monsieur Barthe Aussitot que vous aurez fait les Cajoux de tout le bois du Roy, vous enverrai un homme pour m'avertir deux ou trois Jours d'avance, alors J'enverrai un homme pour les conduire puisque vous ne pouvez pas les conduire vous même. vous savez que les homme que J'ai a la Piniere content beaucoup d'argent, ainsni Je ne doute pas que vous ayez fait vos efforts pour les employer au meilleur avantage, c'est a dire au chariage des Pieces, aux chemins &ca quand les cajoux viendront, vous amenerez avec vous tous les hommes, excepté Jaenton & Tom qui resteront pour couper du foin. Vous amenerez aussi la paire de gros Boeufs et vous laisserez l'autre paire avec le cheval. Le *Saguinau* doit vous avoir laisse un ancre que J'ai envoyé dernièrement. Je pense presentement qu'il ne vous manque rien qui puisse arreter l'ouvrage. J'espere que vous avez pu haler toutes les grosse pieces, excepté les 10 de quarante pieds de long que vous avez trouvé trop fortes pour haler Il ne faut pas les ecarir Sur les deux autres faces.

Si le porteur revient assez vite au detroit pour nous avertir avant que vos cajoux Soient fait, vous pourrez ecrire par Se [cet] occasion, cela vous epargnera les fraix d'envoyer un homme expres pour cela

*Endorsed:* Detroit 29 July '99 John Askin to Louis Barthe at the Pinerry Copy.

Detroit in 1798. He soon became locally prominent, and until his death, June 27, 1838, he performed varied activities and was much in the public eye. In May, 1805, he was elected a trustee of Detroit. In 1806 he was appointed surgeon to the garrison, which office he held until the War of 1812. In 1806, he was a shareholder and a director in the Bank of Detroit. For many years he cared for the Indians around Detroit without charge, and they expressed their gratitude by attempting to reward him with grants of land, the validity of which the government declined to recognize. Dr. Brown was included in the list of citizens whom Colonel Procter, in 1813, banished from Detroit. He was an early trustee of the University, member for seven years of the territorial legislative council, and president for five years of the local medical society. He lived for a time on the corner now occupied by the First National Bank, and later on Jefferson Avenue between Bates and Randolph. He never married, and his large estate was claimed by various relatives. See sketch in *Proc. of Land Board of Detroit*, 152-53.

*Translation*

Detroit, July 29, 1799

Mr. Barthe: As soon as you have made up the rafts of all the wood for the King, send a man to give me notice two or three days before; then I shall send a man as pilot, since you cannot conduct them yourself. You are aware that the men I have at the Pinery are a great expense to me, therefore I have no doubt but that you have made every effort to have them work to the best advantage, that is, in hauling the logs, making roads, etc. When the rafts come down, you will bring with you all the men, except Jeanton and Tom, who will stay to cut hay. Bring also the pair of big oxen, and leave the other pair with the horse.

The *Saguinah* must have left you an anchor that I sent recently. I think now you are in want of nothing that can hinder the work. I hope you have been able to haul all the big logs, except the ten forty-foot ones that you have found too much for you. It is not necessary to hew them square on their other two sides.

If the bearer returns to Detroit soon enough to give us notice before your rafts are finished, you might write by that opportunity. That would save the expense of sending a man on purpose.

RECOVERY OF LAND CERTIFICATES<sup>62</sup>

York July 1799

Dear Sir Searching the other day for a paper & directing Charles to bring the papers out of my big trunk, M<sup>r</sup> Askins were the first bundle that presented itself to my eye. All the certificates expresses the transferrers being of the River Raisen except two, and several of the certificates are given by himself which does not look well tho no bad intention. You know how nice the board are regarding Magistrates Certificates. I have privately shewing M<sup>r</sup> Askin's memorial to the Presedent who possitivly [says] he cannot or will not Agree to such transfer. I shall bring it before the board they mark on it what they Judge best.

If a vessel are to Sail Soon for Detroit Acquaint M<sup>r</sup> Askin of finding his papers that was missing, And that I

<sup>62</sup> From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.



have very little hopes, if any of all, of their being of any use. The Presedent Seems determined to detain us here till he hears of Gener<sup>l</sup> Hunter either coming or remaining  
Remember me to your good lady

Sincerely Yours

Rob<sup>t</sup> Hamilton Esq

Alex<sup>r</sup> Grant

AFFAIRS OF JOHN ANDERSON & COMPANY

Detroit 2<sup>d</sup> august '99

D<sup>r</sup> Sir Your favour of the 24 July reached me on the 27<sup>th</sup> but having business at malden I did not return from thence before yesterday afternoon which is in Some measure the reason of my not answering you Sooner.

I assure you I am perfectly disposed to do what ever I can to accomodate & serve you, and If in my power will send out or go, in order to Settle the affairs of the partnership at the time you mention or as soon after as I can, for as to the real time I cannot assure you, owing to the Commissioners for settling the Lands on the british side commencing their Sessions on the 15<sup>th</sup> Instant, and as I have great number of claims to bring forward, where I am the proprietor & M<sup>r</sup> Maisenville the only witness, neither of us can be absent untill the whole matter is over. as you possess the whole Knowledge of what the C<sup>o</sup> owes, what's due them and what property they have on hand, as well as the good & bad of the debts, the most expeditious mode would be for you to make an offer of what you would give me and take the whole upon yourself as If no partnership had taken place. If I think it handsome & near the value I would prefer it to taking up your time & mine in settling a partnership business, valuing Goods &<sup>ca</sup> It is truly in your power to know nearly what all is worth, therefore [you are] able to make an offer, but as I am perfectly unacquainted with most of the matters that relate to the concern, it's not in my power to say what I could take, but you with Safety to yourself may and the Sooner the better for your future business. I have not as yet produced the order on M<sup>r</sup> Pattinson nor asked M<sup>r</sup> Calahan,<sup>63</sup> nor

<sup>63</sup> Hugh Callahan (Calahan, Callaghan) was a contractor who probably came to Detroit

Knags for the am<sup>t</sup> of their accounts with the concern, but will in a short time. for the present I've only to say that we are well & that M<sup>rs</sup> A & I assure you & M<sup>rs</sup> Anderson of our best wishes

Signed J A

M<sup>r</sup> John Anderson Miamis

*Endorsed:* Detroit 2<sup>d</sup> Augt '99 John Askin to John Anderson Copy

#### RECOVERY OF LAND CERTIFICATES

Dear Sir I have now before me your seperate favors of 12 & 14<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>. The barrels spirits & Pork have before now I hope come to hand; The Box of Glass & Pipes of last Seasons importation, I cannot trace, unless you send me the particular Mark & Number of each. In the Portage Account of that year, you will find particular Mention of every package of your mark that passed this place; If either of these are in that Account, I shall think myself bound to shew what has become of them. if not to be found there, the presumption is, that they never came this len[g]th; Our freinds below must in this case shew how & when sent to Kingston. M<sup>r</sup> Cartwright how sent from thence.

The Comodore after much uneasiness and trouble of mind has at last found your Land board Papers. I dare say Charl[e]s had packed them up carefully in a Clean shirt, or pair of stockings. As the best explanation of the bussiness I inclose his letter. I have sent him M<sup>r</sup> Roes Memorandum respecting the Certificates lodged with the Att<sup>y</sup> General, & hope that they will be found in time to come with the Commissioner to your place. Should the Comodore be unsuccessful in the Council with the Men, I still would Maintain the Claim. Perseverance I know will do much, when oposed to what they may affect to Call the public Good; Were the Lands the private property of the present disposers I should have less hopes. Your own presence I am sencible would

shortly after the American occupation. In 1798 he drove a herd of cattle to this place from Hamilton. As army contractor he supplied the government with pork and candles, sending them to the several northwestern posts. He had such a contract on hand at the time of his death, which occurred between March 14 and May 13, 1801. See sketch in *Proc. of Land Board of Detroit*, 196.

do much; A Man can say more, & he generally can say it better, in his own Cause, than any other person can.

I observe your Observation about the Remittances of this Season, which from my own Experience I am Sorry to say I can readily beleive well founded.

I inclose a Scetch of an Account as in my books. if this agrees with yours, you will have the Goodness to Confirm the same. The balance you will pay when convenient to you. I have not added your order in the Comodores favor; I paid a part of this at York, & will [settle] the Balance here. You know the Amount, which I at present do not recollect.

You will be agreeable surprised as I have been by a Visit from our freind Mr Robertson. I refer to him for News.

All here are well & Join most Cordially in best wishes for you & yours, with Dr Sir

Your very hum. sv<sup>t</sup>

R. Hamilton

John Askin Esquire  
Queenston Aug<sup>t</sup> 3, 99

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Queenston Aug<sup>t</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> 1799 Rob<sup>t</sup> Hamilton Esquire to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> sep<sup>r</sup>

PUBLICATION OF NEWSPAPER IN QUEENSTON

Dear Sir We again Attempt a Niagara Newspaper. Anxious to encourage an undertaking which if well Managed may be usefull I have taken the liberty to put your Name down as a Subscriber Should you disapprove, it shall be discontinued at the End of the first Quarter. Should any of your Neighbours wish to Join I will be glad to Communicate their Names & forward their papers. I am Dr Sir

Yours Sincerely

R. Hamilton

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>  
Aug<sup>t</sup> 4. 99

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Merchant Detroit.

*Endorsed:* Queenston Aug<sup>t</sup> 4<sup>h</sup> 1799 Mr Rob<sup>t</sup> Hamilton to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 29<sup>th</sup>



RESPONSE TO APPEAL OF MAGISTRATES OF DETROIT

War Department 8<sup>th</sup> August 1799

Gentlemen I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your representation relative to the conduct of the Military Commandant at Detroit

I can assure you it is the wish of Government to preserve to the Civil Authority its rights every where throughout the Territory of the United States and in no instance to countenance encroachments upon those rights by the Military

That the conduct of the Commandant at Detroit may undergo a regular and due Investigation, I shall refer your remonstrance to Major General Alexander Hamilton, who I have no doubt, will take proper measures to ensure in future a perfect propriety of Conduct in the Military

I have however to observe that a Military Commandant has not only authority, but that it is particularly enjoined upon him to restrain the Soldiary in whatever may lead to Insubordination, endanger a Garrison or prove injur[i]ous to themselves, that with these views he may prevent a too Frequent Intercourse, with the Citizens inhabiting at or near his post, which by affording opportunities of intemperance would produce the worst of consequences, and that generally he has a right to give & enforce on his men under his command such orders as are necessary to their well being and the good of the Service.

I enclose a Copy of the rules and articles for the better Government of the troops of the United States, to which is Annex'd several Military laws, among these: "An Act for the better Organizing the troops of the United States and for other purposes passed 3<sup>rd</sup> March last.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Section of this Act you will observe provides an exemption from personal Arrests for any debt or Contract, for all non-comissioned officers, privates and Musicians who are and shall be inlisted & extends the same provision to the Militia or other Corps who may at any time be in the Actual service of the United States.

To prevent this law from Operating Injuriously to the Citizens it will be incumbent upon them to avoid giving Credit to Soldiers I am &c

Sign'd James M<sup>c</sup>Henry

To Louis Boufett <sup>64</sup>	} Esquires
James May	
Joseph Voyer	
Charles Fra <sup>s</sup> Gerardin	

*Endorsed:* Sec<sup>ty</sup> of War. Answer to the Majestrates of  
 Detroit 8<sup>th</sup> August 1799

## REJECTION OF LAND CERTIFICATES

York, August 13<sup>th</sup> 1799

My dear Sir By this time, I do imagine M<sup>r</sup> Baby has delivered my forth letter since I left AmherstBurg to you, I have now the pleasure of Acknowledging yours of the 5<sup>th</sup> July—also of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Just received. I am distressed beyond measure in not succeeding better, in geting your fourteen Certificates passed the Council. There might have been Some dawn of hope, had I lay'd my hands on them before M<sup>r</sup> Smith I mean David, went away. And then he and Hamilton told me they thought they would not pass. Indeed M<sup>r</sup> Hamilton & M<sup>r</sup> Cartwright had So many Certificates and other matters of land business of their own, that a great part of this business was put off[f] till the last day and [with] some Considerable dificulty they got passed at last. And M<sup>r</sup> Baby was taken up mostly with his own land business. And with some dificulty he got his passed. So that any land business that is not as Clear as noon day And the many frauds that has been Committed in keeping up Certificates and then brought forward by a second or third hand, And other fraudulent practics regarding land, that the Council are indeed very nice in passing any wrighting or given any lands what ever as there is an order from home to sell all the wast lands in this Province to defray Some of the Expe[n]ce,

I shall make a Second attempt I am this forenoon going to speak to the Chief Justice. I shall also Speak to Colonel Shaw<sup>65</sup> and Captain M<sup>c</sup>Gill

<sup>64</sup> Louis Beaufait, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 518.

<sup>65</sup> Aeneas Shaw was a native of Scotland who served in the Revolution in the Queen's

The Six Certificates certified by Mr Roe being left in the attorney Gener<sup>ls</sup> offices deeds are made out for them And in the Secretary office. I shall write by this opportunity to Mr Hamilton for money to pay for them. And I shall endeavor to get a deed for lot N<sup>o</sup> 128 I can my [by] staying indeed being obliged to remain here so long has drained off my £60 York, which was all I brought with me. You could hardly imagine the difficulty there is in carrying land business thru the different office[s] here let it be ever so Clear. I was ten days before I could Convince the Council & President of Doc<sup>tr</sup> Wrights purchase from L<sup>t</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Can, from a Certificate Indorced two years ago being Miss layd in the Council office. And from that mistake Mr Wright will have £5: 11/ halfax to pay.

The Governor are hourly expected. Calms and Westerly winds prevailing here, the last vessels from Kingston war ten days on their Voyage. I belive the Chief Justice & I go together to Sandwich or AmherstBurg, and he tells me he will go to Gross Point. Should I not be able to adjust your matter, perhaps when he sees yourself it may be brought about, but I shall not neglect doing what I can now.

Glorious news of the French being beat by land in all quarters And in the greatest expectation of hearing every moment their fleets being also beat Prince Edward are to be Governor General & Commander in Chief of British america & Gener<sup>l</sup> Hunter to Command in the Canadas. I inclose you a letter from Captain Mercer. please to forward it to Gross Point. I beg my love to Mr<sup>s</sup> Askin and family And belive me my dear Sir

yours Sinc[erely]

Alex Grant

We know nothing how long the Gov<sup>r</sup> Stays here

Rangers, and later in the Thirtieth Regiment. On the organization By Governor Simcoe, in 1791, of the new force known as the Queen's Rangers, Shaw was made a captain in the corps. In 1793, he became a member of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada, and from 1795 to 1807 he was a member of the Executive Council. During the same period, he was an officer of militia, rising in June, 1811, to the rank of major general. He died near York, Feb. 15, 1815. He was twice married, the fruit of the first union being seven sons and six daughters. See *Simcoe Papers*, I, 72, and Wallace, *op. cit.*



INTRODUCTION OF REV. GOTTFRIED OPPELT

Goshen on Muskingum 14 Aug<sup>t</sup> 1799

Dear Sir At the desire of M<sup>r</sup> Zeisberger<sup>66</sup> I beg leave to recommend to your friendly attention, the bearer of this, the Rev<sup>d</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Oppelt,<sup>67</sup> who is going as missionary of the United Brethren to reside with M<sup>r</sup> Senseman on Thames river. We shall be much obliged for any kindness you may shew him & M<sup>rs</sup> Oppelt.

M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Zeisberger and M<sup>r</sup> Edward unite with me in best respects to Yourself and family.

I am, with much esteem Dear Sir

Your most obed<sup>t</sup> h<sup>ble</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

Benj<sup>n</sup> Mortimer<sup>68</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>re</sup> Detroit By favor of the Rev<sup>d</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Oppelt

*Endorsed:* Goshen on Muskingum Aug<sup>t</sup> 14<sup>h</sup> 1799 The Reverend Benjamin Mortimer to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin

PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHING SCHOOL IN DETROIT<sup>69</sup>

Detroit 24<sup>th</sup> August 1799

To John Askin, Esq<sup>r</sup>

Dear Sir, The great importance of education & instruction to youth is so generally acknowledged in all

66 For the career of David Zeisberger, see *B. H. R.*, I, 217, *et passim*.

67 Gottfried Sebastian Oppelt was a Moravian missionary who came, as this letter discloses, from the Moravian town of Goshen, in modern Tuscarawas County, Ohio, to the settlement at Fairfield in the summer of 1799. It seems apparent from later letters preserved in the Askin papers that Oppelt was sent to succeed Senseman in charge of the Fairfield mission. In a letter of Dec. 14, 1799, Oppelt stated that Senseman was very sick with consumption and his "departure" was expected very soon. His death occurred, Jan. 4, 1800. Oppelt continued at Fairfield for several years, as shown by mss. in the B. H. Coll. No sketch of his career has been found, nor have data sufficient to construct one been accumulated.

68 Benjamin Mortimer, one of the Moravian missionaries, accompanied Heckenwelder from Ohio to Fairfield on the Thames in the spring of 1798. Heckenwelder soon returned, by way of Detroit, to Ohio, but Mortimer remained at Fairfield until the autumn, when he and Zeisberger conducted a number of the converts back to Ohio, where in modern Tuscarawas County they founded the village of Goshen. Here Zeisberger died, Nov. 7, 1808, until which event Mortimer remained at Goshen. At a later date he became pastor of a Moravian church in New York City, where he died on Nov. 10, 1834. See Zeisberger's *Diary*, II, 527-28; *History of Tuscarawas County, Ohio* (Chicago, 1884), 318; and Heckenwelder's *Narrative*, *passim*.

69 From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

civilized nations that it would be superfluous to write upon such a topic. It is to be lamented that so many obstacles oppose themselves in countries newly settled to the establishment of proper seminaries & the procuring proper teachers. Should you think it any facility to the forwarding of such an object, You & those concerned may have of me the home on the domain belonging to me for twenty years, at twelve pounds York a year, with liberty at any period, previous to the expiration of the lease, to purchase the premeses for two hundred pounds, for the above purpose, when of course the rent will cease. I am, Dear Sir, &c &c &c

William Robertson

*Endorsed:* Detroit Aug<sup>t</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 1799 W<sup>m</sup> Robertson Esq<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Respecting the Leasing out of his House for the purpose of a School

#### PROPOSAL TO OPEN A SCHOOL

August the 24th. 1799

Sir, On consulting my own mind, I do not like to advertise; but I have taken the liberty to send you a memorandum of an agreement, requesting you to be so kind as to show it to any of your acquaintance, who, you think, would subscribe to the conditions. I know that any writing, to become binding in law, for a sum exceeding 20 dollars, must be written on stamp paper; but I hope none will be permitted to subscribe who is not of both known principle and ability to comply punctually with the agreement; nor do I wish any to subscribe who have not pupils to send to school; for I cannot be under obligations of a pecuniary nature, except for a time after which restitution is to be made; but where no return is to be made I will receive no money. I forgot to mention in the memorandum, that I would continue for another half year if desired; by [but] that is supplied by an additional article on the back of the paper. I am, Sir,

your most obedient, humble servant,

Peter Joseph Dillon.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Peter Joseph Dillon probably first came to Detroit with Hugh Callahan in 1798, when he assisted the latter in driving a herd of cattle from Hamilton to this place. Dillon

*Addressed:* M<sup>r</sup> John Askin, senior.

*Endorsed:* Detroit Aug<sup>t</sup> 24<sup>h</sup> 99 M<sup>r</sup> Dillon to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin.

DIFFICULTY OVER LAND TITLES

Detroit 29 august 1799

D<sup>r</sup> Sir I wrote you a few lines by our Freind M<sup>r</sup> Robertson two days ago, purely to Say, that I then could not, for want of time, answer your Sundry favours, which I now will do.

To begin with what relates to my Claims of land, & which were rejected, were I to Say half what I can with propriety, in Support of them, this Sheet would be too little. I therefore will confine myself for the present to a few observations. If the Commodore could not find my papers (when those who I meant to bring them forward & had a good deal to Say were present) it was badly Judged to do it afterwards, and even after he was discouraged by the President. I excuse all he did, as I know his intentions were to serve me, but he is a most unfit man for any thing of the Kind, nor did I mean he Should enterfere otherwise, than deliver the papers to M<sup>r</sup> Smith & you. I know his Situation in Council that he cannot oppose the head. I never was more hurt in my life, than at these Certificates being rejected. it implies an intentional fraud in me, & what for? to gain the difference between £10 to £15 (what each Lot cost) and what they may fetch, which may be a little more. and who did this? a man, a confidential man, as I'm told the council Says a good Subject, a majestrate, a L<sup>t</sup> Col. of Militia formerly a member of the Land Board, & now a Commissioner this is a great contradiction. he who would Stoop So low as to, *I say bilk* Government of so small a trifle Is very unfit for Office, and If God Spares my life in open Council, I must either be Justified, or my Supposed bad, or fraudulent intention proved.

Of the certificates alluded to, I find I have Signed three one for a man who was Drummer in the 84<sup>th</sup> Regiment and

was married, and both he and his wife are numbered among Detroit's early school teachers. The present document affords indication of the time when he started a school here. His further story, and his vicissitudes as schoolmaster are recounted in Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, I, 710-13.



two others for men Who live at the river Raisin, & I think were recommended to me by Capt Montigny, as men who voluntarily served at fort miamis, who was going to be attack'd. I am Sorry So little distinction is made between paying what Government had pledged their word for and what Land was given on condition of actual Settlement I can assure you as having it from good authority, that one of the executive Council obtained a Grant for Lands to a man here, after he was a Captain of militia (with a large pole & flag before his door) in the Service of the united States. I dont relate this as finding fault with it. If it was promised him by Government why not. but only to point out, Mountains are Ju[m]pled over, & Straws become Stumbling Blocks. If justice is not done me, truths shall be Known in more places than upper Canada, not that I suppose myself of that consequence, that they will make much difference. I am quite at a loss to believe that Such regulations have taken place in Council, as I'm informed has, and will think it a mistake in those who related them untill I have the pleasure of Seeing the Chief Justice and from him Know the truth, and If he confirms what I have hear'd, I must then conclude, that a majority of the executive council does not possess that wisdom which their situations require. Some of [the] Council I Know & others I'm told, possess honor, honesty, & talents; but If those are the lesser number it is to little purpose I can hardly drop the curs'd subject I'm so displeased

I agree to pay for the news papers, but beg to have them forwarded regularly, which has not been the case. the pork is at length come to hand. I have Wrote Mes<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gills about the Glass & Pipes as they did not get your length, and you wrote me that M<sup>r</sup> Cartwright says they did not get to Kingston.

I have look'd at your account but can't Say how far right, owing to the preceeding one from you being mislaid, and for a Copy of which I will be very thankfull, If not too much trouble. Some flour I Know was charged in it, given to Doctor Richardson and there is Some in this, perhaps it was delivered out twice, but one mistake there is, which is the Interest on M<sup>r</sup> Morris's note from the date thereof

untill you received payment, and for which you have not credited me. I'm thankful for the indulgence given respecting payment, and would send you for the mony I wrote you to pay the Comodore but by a Letter from him, he said he did not take it up, and I was to pay a Mr Jackson here I leave the matter unsettled untill I see him but some mony he has applied for to pay for deeds, I must reimburse you when I know what it is. there is some Racoons &<sup>a</sup>, sent also not to my credit. they were not included in the former account. It's not £2—but *frindship* makes me say, that Commissions on Pork you purchase will be disliked by whoever you charge it to but If the same was charged for Interest on Cash paid for Pork, it perhaps would not.

my family [and my] Self, thank God, enjoy good health Mr<sup>s</sup> Grant was safely delivered the 29 this noo[n] today of a Girl,<sup>71</sup> her & Child doing very well Mr<sup>s</sup> A is with her. after Comps to Mr<sup>s</sup> H I remain &<sup>ca</sup>

J A

*Endorsed:* Detroit 29 Augt 99 J Askin to R Hamilton  
Esq<sup>r</sup> Copy

#### TRADE CONDITIONS IN DETROIT

Detroit 10 Sept 99

Dear Sir Your Kind Letter dated at Montreal, the 28 June reached me on the 21 of July last, and I should not have def[e]red answering it So long, had it not been for my waiting to obtain from Mr Visgar, the information you required. at first the only expedient was that he must have time to recollect (not, I fear, having Books to resort to) and unfortunately, he has for some time past, been so unwell, and Still continues So, that no clear information can be obtained from him. however as I hope and think that he is not in danger, So Soon as he recovers I will use my best endeavours to find out what you require. tho' it would afford me much pleasure to See any of your Children here, and render them the Small Services in my power, yet I must Strongly recommend to you as a friend, by no

<sup>71</sup> Jean Cameron Grant, born Aug. 29, 1799. On Feb. 11, 1834, she married William Richardson, postmaster of Brantford, a son of Dr. Robert Richardson, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 441-42 *et passim*.

means this time to enter into business at this post. I fear before this time twelve months, or perhaps Sooner it will be discovered too clearly, that all those in trade at this post are Sinking money fast, one or two exceptions, and they appear to me even doubtful. there are Several very Worthy characters at Montreal, therefore you must be happier in their Society than were you here, but am Sorry your means are not equal to your mind. & that Gover[n]-ment does not do Something more for you Your Brother by Sticking to the army has got far up, and I am very happy at it. God Knows they earn what they get but as we must all go one way or another, perhaps it is no great matter whether we are Killed or die naturally, it is my opinion. M<sup>r</sup> Visgar I'm afraid never will be able to pay you one penny, and I'm Sorry to Say, report has not told truth in Saying that I'm bettered in circumstances, however I endeavour to reconcile myself to my Lot. I have a large family to maintain, and my Trade which is Small, will hardly give a profit to Support them and I have Suffered So much by extensive business that I have dropt it, for I firmly believe now at this place, he who trades most loses most

the Com<sup>r</sup> is at York, his family are well

Signd J A

*Endorsed:* Detroit 10 September 1799 John Askin to L. Col. Abraham Cuyler Copy

AFFAIRS OF WILLIAM ROBERTSON

Montreal 14<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup> 1799

Dear Sir, I arrived here two days ago & found all well at home. As an opportunity now offers for the Upper Province I embrace it to inclose you a more correct invoice of the articles left with you. One of the bed ticks is put down by guess as I could not find the invoice. You will observe I invoice the dry goods as sold here at twelve months & the liquor as cash; hence if any payments previous to 15<sup>th</sup> July next they will bear interest. I have not put down the transport as some of it may probably be charged to you. In a day or two, when I have had time to look about me, you shall hear from me again. In the mean time I hope



you will not forget to forward me your voucher in due form against the estate of Mounsey<sup>72</sup> It would be obliging me very much if M<sup>r</sup> Innis<sup>73</sup> would draw out my claim & certify it in the same manner, which I presume he is able to do, or else M<sup>r</sup> Heward,<sup>74</sup> otherwise I shall never get anything.

M<sup>rs</sup> Robertson joins me in kind compliments & good wishes to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin & the family. I remain, Dear Sir,

Your very H<sup>l</sup> Serv

William Robertson

I shall send you D<sup>r</sup> Harffy's acc<sup>t</sup> next time  
John Askin, Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin, Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit.

*Endorsed:* Montreal Sep<sup>r</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> 1799 W<sup>m</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Esquire  
to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recvd y<sup>e</sup> 16<sup>h</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> 19<sup>th</sup>

#### SUPPLIES FOR FORT MALDEN

Dear Sir I did not intend this afternoon to have troubled you with my *Scrawl* (Spelt well), but this minute I had the pleasure of seeing the Commodore. he is well *fair & Fatt*, think that he cannot be up for a few days. his Eyes altho rather dim, Seems to wish him Self at Gross point. I thought it would give a pleasure to the Family, if I wrote a few incoherent Sentences. I have this morn<sup>g</sup> had a *talk* with Tommy. he has not any objection to give a draft for the wood, admiting the Engineer would receiv it, that is if it was put into the wood Yard, but there is not any men in the King's employ to do it, and to hire it is impossible. as for the Bricks, if he could get [a] true return from Shaw [of] what has been deliver[ed] with the price, a Bill also for them will be given, but he says, he could wish it to

<sup>72</sup> Paul Mounsey was commissioned captain in the Twenty-fourth Regiment, May, 9 1789. He was in Detroit in 1793 and 1794, and in the autumn of the latter year was sent to the Maumee to serve against General Wayne. Apparently he was recalled to England the following year, for Askin's formal certificate of claim against his estate indicates that he died prior to March 11, 1797, and that the claim in question had been sent to Scotland in July, 1795. See Askin papers, *passim*; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXIII and XXV, *passim*; and *Simcoe Papers*, *passim*.

<sup>73</sup> For the career of Robert Innis, see *B. H. R.*, I, 464-65.

<sup>74</sup> For the career of Hugh Heward, see *ibid.*, 227.

be done all in one Draft. hoping this will arrive soon and  
your answer in return will be pleasing to D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Yours

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy

Friday night in a great hurry and at 10 o'clock Sep<sup>r</sup> 27  
1799

recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 28<sup>h</sup>

*Addressed:* Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>, Merc<sup>t</sup>, Detroit

*Endorsed:* Malden Sep<sup>r</sup> 27<sup>h</sup> 1799 Doctor Harffy to Jn<sup>o</sup>  
Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 28<sup>h</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 9<sup>h</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>

AFFAIRS IN IRELAND

London, Sep<sup>r</sup> 29<sup>h</sup> 1799

My dear Sir, It is long since I did my self the pleasure  
to address you, but the only excuse I have to offer for my  
apparent neglect is the very active and uncertain situation  
which for a length of time has attended mein Ireland where my  
services have been for three Years perfectly on the alert—  
which really so deranged our ideas that our Friends as it  
were became a secendary consideration. this you will  
excuse in a Military man who has been so buffeted about  
as your humble servant. however it was always a consol-  
ation for me to know that my dearest Archange never failed  
to embrace such occasions as presented themselves of  
writing as often as possible—but we are sorry to understand  
for Certain that three of her letters have been carried to a  
French Port, a Mortifying circumstance not only to us,  
but to the owners of a Nice Vessell which saild for York  
from the Cove of Cork. thank God I have weathered the  
storm thus far and after battleing with the French and  
Rebels in Ireland in almost all the Actions without any  
material injury but the loss of some Teeth, we are once  
more returned to old England enjoying very good health.  
My good fortune has led me to fall to a Company at Wool-  
wich. in consequence of an Augmentation of the Regiment,  
I am not certain how long I may remain there but I trust  
at least for this Winter & next Spring—as the whole of our  
force for the Expedition to the Continent have Saild—and  
already several brave fellows of them have fall'n by the

Dutch It is a grand Expedition but I begin to fear for its result. as to the Army part of the Story (the Navy you will ere this have heard is fall'n into our hands) [it was] the intention of Ministry to reinstate the Stadholder. restore the antient Sovereignty and afterward penetrate into France in Cooperation with the Russians, Austrians &c &c—but I begin to think the allies will find it difficult to execute there intended plan, as the Dutch have already shewn a determined opposition by land, little expected by the Duke of York and our other Generals. When I left Ireland, things remained in a state of uncertainty, a kind of torpid state in that Country, the People still restless, and ready to rise at the least movement of the French in their favor, who are ever holding out fresh promises of Succour to enflame their Minds into Villanious rebellion, but My Lord Cornwallis, equally Active as Lord Lieutenant and Commander in Chief, is ever ready to put them down upon their Shewing the appearance of a Stir. I dined with the good old Lord the day previous to My leaving Ireland at his Villa in the Phonix Park. he lookd well and feeling determined to hold it out with the United—or rather deluded—Miscreants who know not what their delusion would lead them to, altho so many recent examples are before their Eyes. there is little doubt that the Union with England will take place. I never saw people (upon cool reflection) so much changed in their sentiments on that subject. I think it will prove the Salvation of both Countries, if carried into effect, at same time be a complete stab to the wishes of the Common Enemy, whose seeming interest is to disunite all nations. I have little further to add, as to the Politicks of the day, nor is there any news interesting, to inform you. when I get settled at Woolwich, shall have both leisure and inclination to tell you all that's going. My dearest Archange intends writing to her dear Mother by this oppo[r]tunity You will be pleased to hear that She and our children enjoy exceeding good health, altho they have encounterd in Ireland much trouble and fatigue. we are at present staying at My Friend M<sup>o</sup>Lewes house in Grosvenor Place untill I can get covered in at Woolwich. There are good Barracks for a Cap<sup>a</sup> of a Com-



pany. We intend making use of them, for the Expenditure of House rent & different attending taxes is now extremely high. I sincerely hope my good and dear Mother in law, with yourself and all of the Family Continue to enjoy health. You will ever have our wishes to that effect in their fullest extent. likewise my Friend the worthy Commodore, Mr Grant & Family. We have been unfortunate never to have met Dr & Mrs Wright. Our Friend Mercer we had the pleasure of seeing a day or two ago. he begins to look old from gout. pray remember me kindly to all about you. if you meet with the Newspaper called the *Times* dated Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> Sept—99 you will find in it a very handsome Address to me from the Principal Inhabitants of Athlone and the Vicinity upon my leaving that place with my Brigade:

I promise you to be a better correspondent in future, which a little rest will enable me to practice. in the mean time, shall repeat my wishes in union with those heartfelt ones of your beloved and good Daughter, added to the lispings of our two entertaining children, your grand children that all happiness and health may attend the worthy Family &c &c—and believe me Most affectionately Yours. ever &c.

D Meredith

My dear Sir I am now at breakfast at Woolwich with my Friend Colonel Shand,<sup>75</sup> a relation of my Friend Sharp—he particularly desires to be remember'd to him—is just come from Gibraltar and thought he might probably have met Mr Sharp in England

You[rs] D M

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Merchant at Detroit To the care of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Todd and McGill Merchants at Montreal Lower Canada

*Endorsed:* London 29<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup> 1799 Cap<sup>t</sup> Meredith Royal Artillery to John Askin recvd May 24<sup>h</sup> 1800

<sup>75</sup> Alexander Shand, who became captain in the Royal Regiment of Artillery on Feb. 15, 1778, and lieutenant colonel on Aug. 14, 1794.

STATE OF DEBTS DUE IN VINCENNES

Post Vincennes October 9<sup>th</sup> 1799

Sir On the Morning of the 9<sup>th</sup> of September last, I Was Honoured with your's dated Detroit the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1799 and not until then. I felt and do yet feel a great dissatisfaction that your Letter was kept up so long from me, considering the urgent situation of your affairs in this Quarter, from the age of your Demands & from the falling situation of your Debtors.

I should approve very much of your Principles of Lenity, Provided the People of this Quarter, were Possessed of the Right Idea, of discharging their Debts when in a Situation to do so, But it can with justness be Observed, from the language of a Number of our Citizens, that they will not discharge their just Dues until Obligated, for say they severally, "I owe, and I can't Pay, for in attempting to Pay, I shall either Distress myself or my Family."

I send you, under Cover herewith, "An Answer" being my Candid & Real Opinion & that of the eldest Inhabitants of the place, to your "Memorandum of Debts Due &<sup>ee</sup>"

There has but one Opportunity offered, from this Place to Detroit by Water, within my recollection for some time past, Which was a Maj<sup>r</sup> Hunt,<sup>76</sup> & who departed the evening before I received your Letter. Otherwise I should with Pleasure have embraced them.

As to the Mortgages, you hold for Real Property in this place, You may either Make a private Sale, or Cause a public one to be made of the Property; If the first, that may be perfected, by a Transfer, or Assignment, legally acknowledged before the Proper Authority, to be admissible to record in this County. If the second, That may be perfected, by causing a suit to be Instituted in the Name of the Mortgagee or his Assignee to Foreclose the Equity of Redemption, in the Mortgagor, his heirs &<sup>ee</sup> and the Title Made by the Sheriff. You can at present make your Choise.

If Mr Tousaint Dubois will give you in Prompt Payment, One hundred and fifty Pounds, N. C. for the House, Horse Mill &<sup>e</sup> & Etienne St<sup>t</sup>Mary's Lot, I think you would do as

<sup>76</sup> Probably Colonel Thomas Hunt, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 561.

well to sell to him, in the first Mode, I have prescribed which I make no kind of Doubt, he will accede to, from his repeated act of Ownership exercised & persued with the House and Horse Mill, for I am Credibly Informed, he has rented out, the House, for those Eighteen Months Past; for there is at present a Family residing in the house by Mr Dubois permission; and has permitted a Mr Boyer to use the Mill until she has become Nearly if not entirely Useless.

I shall take the liberty, of considering Myself Generally Retained for you upon similar Engagements, as those of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Sibley, Sinclair & Burnett.

I have fully performed your Injunction as to Madame Gamelin. You will see from my inclosed Mem<sup>o</sup> the situation and Value of the Debts, she offers you, and what other property, she is Possessed of, and It's Value.

If you shall conclude to send forward any Bonds &<sup>ca</sup> for Collection, I will undertake the Collection for Ten per cent, and my Legal Fees, where I succeed in suits If it may or shall be necessary to Commence any. I am Sir

Your Most Obedient & Very Hub<sup>o</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

Gen. W. Johnston<sup>77</sup>

To John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Addressed:* Private John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merchant Detroit.  
Attention of Mr James Abbott jun<sup>r</sup><sup>78</sup> Merch<sup>t</sup>

*Endorsed:* Post Vincent Oct<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>h</sup> 1799 General W. Johnston to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> in Nov<sup>r</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> March 1800

<sup>77</sup> General Washington Johnston was born, Nov. 10, 1776, in Culpepper County, Virginia, near where the leader in whose honor he was named lived for many years. He came to Vincennes in 1793 and entered upon the practice of law. He became influential locally, held many offices, and acquired considerable renown as an orator. He is said to have brought Masonry into Indiana and to have put slavery out. He died in Vincennes, Oct. 26, 1833. See biographical sketch in *Ind. Mag. Hist.*, XX, 123-53.

<sup>78</sup> James Abbott was a son of James Abbott Sr., whose career is noted in *B. H. R.*, I, 304. He was born in Detroit, June 1, 1776, and died here, March 12, 1858. On attaining his majority, he was taken into partnership with his father, as his elder brother, Robert, had previously been admitted. On the death of the elder Abbott, in 1800, the brothers continued the business for a time. Their inherited wealth and abilities made them men of prominence in the community, where James remained a leading citizen until his death in 1858. From 1806 until 1830 he was postmaster of Detroit. In April, 1807, he was appointed associate judge of the District Court of Huron and Detroit; he served as a member of the Land Board, and in numerous ways was identified with the commercial and civic life of his time. In November, 1804, he married, in Chicago, Sarah Whistler, eldest daughter of Captain John Whistler of Fort Dearborn, becoming thereby Chicago's first civilized



FROM WILLIAM HARFFY TO JOHN ASKIN

from M. Baby's Thursday Mor<sup>g</sup>, 10 Oct<sup>r</sup> 1799

Dear Sir I am happy to find by your letter given to me Yesterday at Sandwich, that all My letters came safe to hand, but am sorry that the *Saganah* was sail'd before their arrival; I met her going down yesterday Morn<sup>g</sup>. I came up to M<sup>r</sup> Baby's in the afternoon with an intent of seeing you, but the Wind and bad weather prevented me that pleasure. I have wrote to M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin for the Hinges. I was told by every Carpenter that there was not any to be bought, which made me request one from you. I understand Com<sup>o</sup> Grant has a Boat coming down. *if the weather is fine*, and it is not too much loaded very likely they could bring down the Musick.<sup>79</sup> I understand it is in a wretched state, so that if Charlo calls for [it], pray desire him to be very careful in bringing all the *fragments* of it. when I return I will endeavour to settle with M<sup>r</sup> Reynolds

I am truly yours to command

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy*Addressed:* Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit*Endorsed:* Sandwich Oct<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> 99 Doc<sup>r</sup> Harffy to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Answ<sup>d</sup>LOSS OF THE *ANNETTE*Detroit Oct<sup>r</sup> 13 1799

The A. Q. M. Gen<sup>l</sup> having chartered a Vessel to go to Presq Isle for hospital Stores; The Cap<sup>t</sup> by the mutual agreement of the United States agents and myself, has been directed to touch at Long Point, in order to take on

bridegroom of whom we have record. Sarah Whistler outlived her husband many years, dying, Oct. 4, 1874. Their home for a generation occupied the site of the present Hammond Building at Fort and Griswold streets. They were the parents of two sons and two daughters, all but one of whom (James Whistler Abbott, born Sept. 29, 1805) preceded their father in death. Information adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*; Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet, V, 8-10; Mich. Pio. Colls., *passim*; Casgrain, *Families Casgrain, Baby et Perrault*; and Burton, Abbott genealogy.

<sup>79</sup> The "Musick" was a harpsichord, probably the first in Detroit. There are several references to it in the letters which follow; a short account of our knowledge of the instrument is given by C. M. Burton in his *Amusements in Detroit in Colonial Days* (Detroit, 1909), 48-49.

board and bring to this place such of the public and private property, as was saved from the wreck of my Vessel the *Annette*. I bind myself hereby to take no advantage of the reception of those Stores by a Vessel in public service, and agree that my responsibility (if ever I was responsible) shall remain as formerly, and should I be obliged to make good the damages sustained by the loss of the *Annette* I promise to reimburse the United States the extraordinary charges of send<sup>g</sup> the Vessel by long point.

I certify that the above is a Copy of a paper agreed by M<sup>r</sup> Askin this day

F. Bates<sup>80</sup>

*Endorsed:* Detroit Oct<sup>r</sup> 13<sup>h</sup> 1799 Jn<sup>o</sup> Askins Agreem<sup>t</sup> to take no Advantage of the United States sending for what was lost from the *Annette*

FROM ISAAC TODD TO JOHN ASKIN

Montreal 15<sup>h</sup> Octb<sup>r</sup> 1799

My dear Askin I am favord with your two Letters of the 9<sup>th</sup> ult<sup>o</sup> & one of the 3<sup>d</sup> I am sorry that any change has taken place in your doing business with Ja<sup>s</sup> & And<sup>w</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill I know the former wishes to curtail the business of the House so that he may the more easily retire himself & I belive those you now do [business] with are good men & may answer each of your purposes better. this change I am convinced will make none in friendship between you & James who I am sure will on all occasions be as ready to

<sup>80</sup> Frederick Bates was born in Goochland County, Virginia, June 23, 1777. In the autumn of 1797 he received an appointment in the quartermaster's department of the army and set out on horseback for Detroit. In the summer of 1800 he embarked upon a mercantile career in Detroit, which he continued until the fire of June 11, 1805, destroyed most of his property. Meanwhile, he had studied law and had engaged actively in politics. He was the city's second postmaster, serving from Jan. 1, 1803, to June 1, 1806. In 1804 he was first receiver of the Detroit land office, and was a member of the board of trustees of the town in 1804-1805. In the latter year, he was appointed one of the first territorial justices, and he also served as first territorial treasurer. In November, 1806, he resigned his various offices and removed to St. Louis, where President Jefferson appointed him Secretary of Louisiana Territory. In 1808 he published a compilation of Missouri laws, the first book published in Missouri. He subsequently was elected governor of the state and died in office in 1825. A younger brother, Edward Bates, was attorney-general in President Lincoln's cabinet. See biographical sketches in Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, II, 1130; in Houck, *History of Missouri*, III, 49-50; in T. M. Marshall, *Life and Papers of Frederick Bates* (St. Louis, 1926), I, 1 ff.; and in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, VIII, 563-65.

serve you as ever. I wish Cap<sup>t</sup> Ernest may be induced to purchase your property & ours adjoining the Common as I have many reasons to wish to realize all I can as my situation occasioned by my late Nephew is verry unpleasant & not Likely soon to be otherwise. I wish you had sent a Bill on Philad<sup>a</sup> for the money received for the House this is the Time all matters here must be settled for the year. in sending a Statement of And<sup>w</sup> Todds affairs I have valued the property in your hands taken from Hands at £350—this Curr<sup>cy</sup> Let me know if I am right I hope youll endeavour to get my payment from Gratier M<sup>r</sup> Swan tells me he Left with M<sup>r</sup> Morrison a Letter for you enclosing his Note on which you are to endorse two thousands Livers received this day from Forsyth Richardson & C<sup>o</sup> I observe what you say in your Private Letter M<sup>r</sup> Robertson & I are both of opinion it would be improper to apply at present you know there is but 5 executive Coun[s]ellors recives sallrys the other supernumery ones will expect to get this when a vacancy happens & to be a Coun[s]ellor withot pay would, not answer you. Gen<sup>l</sup> Hunter will be at York most of the Summer & if in my power I will goe there if any thing then could be pointed out Wherein he could with propriety serve you my Interest will not be wanting and you probably may be able to accompany the Commod<sup>r</sup> there in hopes of hearing from you soon and as we are all now verry buisey have only to assure you of my being

Ever Your Sincere & affet<sup>e</sup> friend

Isaac Todd

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal Oct<sup>r</sup> 15<sup>h</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Isaac Todd to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 7<sup>h</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> the 17<sup>h</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> 1800

#### TROUBLES OF WILLIAM HARFFY

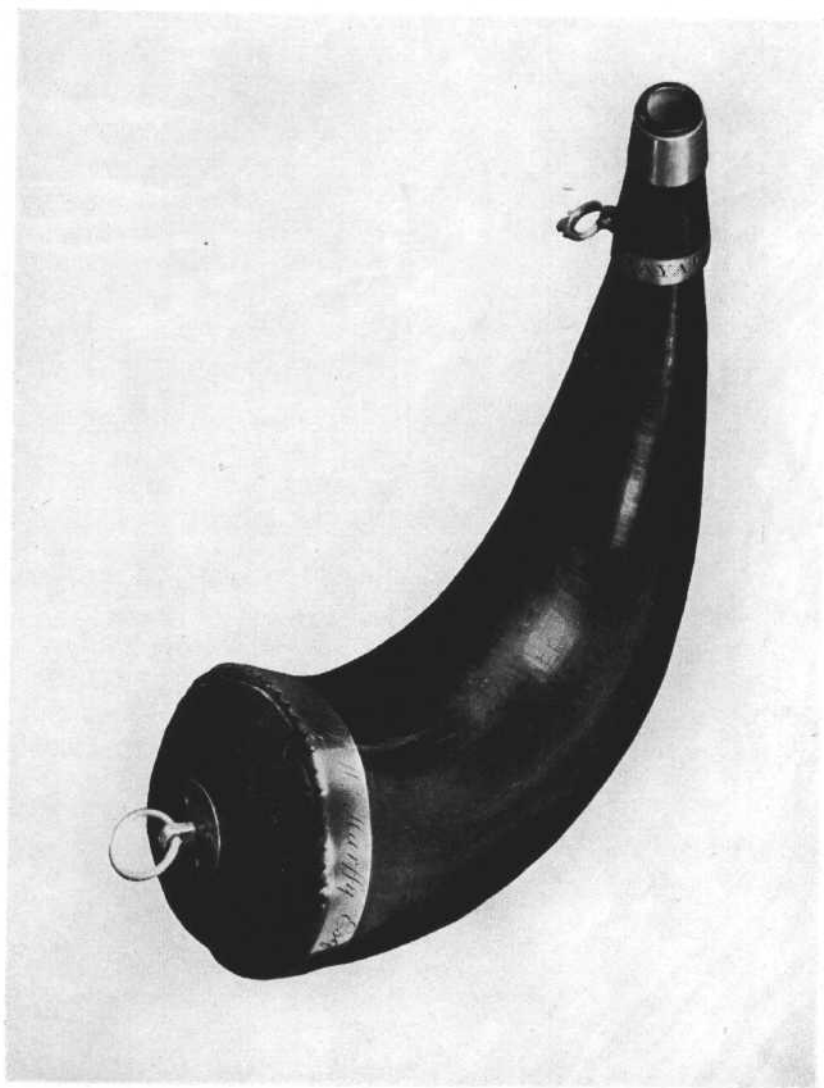
My D<sup>r</sup> Sir I really am a shabby Fellow—long 'ere long so "that is the Text."

Your letters generally come almost together. Some of mine to [you] I think from your last, must have taken a long North-West passage. In some former ones I mention'd



if you could spare a 1000 bricks, paid for on delivery, *no* answer I have received; since that another application 300, on the same terms, as the Kings Vessel will be up on the change of Wind I will endeavour to get them put on board, if you will please to send orders for the purpose. Some time since I wrote for Hinges, avail'd my self of Mr Askin's Jun<sup>r</sup> having them near a fortnight; *it is cold* and the *door wide open*. Mr Cornwall says his price is £100, if that is accepted. if not he will not give a Farthing more; I have inquired of Some peoples who well know the Situation, he must have it, and the land will fatten by keeping another year or two. Reynolds I have not been able to see, altho I have call "*en passant*" thrice, but as more bricks are wanted suppose I delay until they arrive. The Engineer, appears undecided. he has lately live'd free at Cap<sup>t</sup> Mc Kee's. *Curse the Musick* I wish it was sold, I care not for what, as all my wants and wishes to attain are not worth the pains, or trouble *to my Friends*. you will favor me if it could be any way disposed of. an *Ox* I have at the river La Corce at one Bondy's, and I believe all the *Devils in Hell*, stands Sentry against me, as I have try'd every means in my power to get it. you must think me *mad*, *I really am not* but such accumulation of disappointments cannot happen but very rare. Believe me my D<sup>r</sup> Sir I am now only painting to you how I am kick'd about It is impossible for me to leave this place Accounts frequently I have sent on your Side address'd to some "*that once where Friends*"—no answer; but from you & Mr Innis Your enclosed I gave to Ruff<sup>81</sup> immediately on the receipt. he sail'd early this morn<sup>g</sup> I

81 James Rough was a native of Scotland, born about the year 1768, who spent many years of his active career as master of a sailing vessel on the upper lakes. We have not learned when he entered upon this service; the present document contains the earliest mention of him we have found. Augustus Porter's narrative (Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Pubs.*, VII, 321) states that Rough became half owner and master of the schooner *Mary*, built at Erie in 1806. The *Mary* was in the harbor at Mackinac when the British captured the place on July 17, 1812, and was utilized by them as a cartel ship to convey the captured garrison and American traders under parole to Black Rock. At Detroit, however, the *Mary* was seized by General Hull, only again to be captured by the British a few days later, and again to be utilized by them to convey a portion of the prisoners taken, this time to Fort Erie. After the war, Captain Rough was part owner, and for a time master of the *Michigan*, which was said to be the largest American vessel on the lakes. Many years later the *Michigan* was loaded with a miscellaneous zoological collection and sent over Niagara Falls, as an entertainment exploit. Captain Rough superintended this enterprise, and apparently was still interested in the vessel. He was one of the early residents of Buffalo, where he



POWDER HORN OF DR. HARFFY, THE GIFT OF JOSEPH BRANT  
*From the original in the Detroit Historical Museum*

have seen Billiet,<sup>82</sup> he wishes me to ask if you have received any Dollars from Paschal Rheem<sup>83</sup> (I think *nine*) or *eleven* for y<sup>e</sup> house 2 toises & half of Stone, 25 barrels of Lime, 4000 Bricks, Billiet will do the whole work furnishing him Self for £24, you finding him a man & cart to bring the materials from the Water side to the house. in looking over your letter of the 14<sup>th</sup> I thank you for your very great kindness in regard to the Harpsichord, but I am told it is a mere wreck, therefore as I have mention'd befor I wish it sold. In confidence my D<sup>r</sup> Friend, suppose you hint'd to Commodore Grant about the Beef of last Winter, and as I am only a *Toy Doll*, as a physical man at *his* house, you can hint it to him, that my coming up *twice* deserves a *little*. may Heaven bless us all, and altho souer'd with the World at large; I am happy in so sincere a Friend, who can laugh at my *petty* misfortunes, and feel for my real ones.

I am with respects to M<sup>rs</sup> A D<sup>r</sup> Sir,

Your greatly obliged

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy

Malden Thursday night Oct<sup>r</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> 1799

PS. M<sup>r</sup> Seabury of this place will take this with him, as he is going to M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Intosh's to assist at the Launch. he will bring a return

*Addressed:* Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merct Detroit Oct<sup>r</sup> 18

*Endorsed:* Malden Oct<sup>r</sup> 17<sup>h</sup>, 1799 Doc<sup>r</sup> Harffy to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Answ<sup>d</sup> 20<sup>th</sup>

died on Dec. 4, 1828. An interesting epitaph, supplied by a friend, concluded with these words (from Burns's epitaph on Gavin Hamilton):

"With such as he, where'er he be  
May I be saved or damned."

Information compiled from mss. in B. H. Coll., and Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Pubs.*, *passim*.

82. The American founder of the line of Billet was Étienne Biguet *dû* Nobert, born in 1660 in the diocese of Avranches, France, who came to Canada and married in Champlain, Oct. 29, 1691, Dorothea Dubois, a native of Quebec. Their son, Jean Baptiste Biguet, was also called Billet, by which name his descendants were known. François Billet, our present subject, was a grandson of Jean Baptiste Biguet. He was born in Longueuil on Oct. 14, 1751, and married in Detroit, Sept. 28, 1778, Mary Teresa Robidou, daughter of Joseph Robidou and Mary Ann Leblanc. François Billet was a mason and lived on St. Joseph Street. He was buried in Sandwich, Aug. 19, 1812. He had numerous dealings with Askin and figures frequently in the Askin papers. He had six children, all born in Detroit in the period, 1779-94. See Denissen, *op. cit.*

83. For the line of Réaume, see *B. H. R.*, I, 170. One of the sons of Hyacinthe Réaume, there mentioned, was Joseph Réaume, who was born in Detroit, Nov. 2, 1739, and married in Boucherville, July 7, 1766, Mary Charlotte Levasseur *dû* Carmel. Joseph brought his bride to Detroit that same year and settled on St. Joseph Street. He was buried here,



LAND CLAIMS OF WILLIAM ROBERTSON

Detroit October 21<sup>st</sup> 1799

Dear Sir I was a few days ago favoured with Your letter dated the 14<sup>th</sup> last Month & happy to learn that you all Meet in good health pleas present M<sup>rs</sup> Askin & my Compliments. I receiv<sup>d</sup> the Invoice of the Articles you left here & when I find a Safe Sale respecting payment I let them go at 75 per Cent for I find to unsafe sales are made at this rate by some Merchants.

I attended the Commissioners Constantly & have had a long & hard Pull but very little done Owing to Justice Allcock<sup>84</sup> who I may say took all on himself & made as strict Enquiries *in my Opinion* in several Cases as if they had been Criminal ones so that only about 20 as M<sup>r</sup> Roe tells me M<sup>r</sup> Dolsens passed, but Others defered & none wholly Rejected Indeed if they had I would have Appealed in your behalf & would have had no difficulty to prove that the proceedings & Decissions were not agreeable to the act, at same time lett me Observe that I believe M<sup>r</sup> Justice Allcock a very Impartial good man, but so particular & sticks so close to the law, a very unfitt man to act up to the Spirit of the Act. We are asured that the Chief Justice will make his Tour next Year & I learn he has been much more liberal in this Decision respecting Claims to Land than any other of the Judges. As I was your Attorney I did not set when any matter relative to you was before the Commissioners which gave me a better Oppertunity to speak but to no Great purpose as M<sup>r</sup> Judge Allcock did as he pleased without asking the Sentiments of the othe[r] Commissioners in hardly any case The Papers you desired Charley to Copy & send you M<sup>r</sup> Roe shewed me a letter in which you desire him to send you a Copy therefore needless in Charles

April 14, 1796. The sixth of his eleven children was Paschal Réaume, our present subject. He was born on St. Joseph Street, April 2, 1774, and married in Sandwich, April 23, 1798, Cecilia Pouget, daughter of Joseph Pouget and Frances Belleperche. The groom resided in Amherstburg. Denissen, *op. cit.*

<sup>84</sup> Henry Allcock, an English barrister, was appointed a judge of the Court of King's Bench in Upper Canada in November, 1798. In October, 1802, he became Chief Justice, and three years later he became Chief Justice of Lower Canada. He also served as speaker of the Legislative Council in both provinces. He died in Quebec, Feb. 22, 1808, aged forty-five years. See Wallace, *op. cit.*

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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Capt<sup>t</sup> Harrow has agreed to let you have the house Lot &ca for £260 there is some fence rails in the bargain he has wrote M<sup>r</sup> Roe to make out the Deeds in form the Park lot he had got, & is part of the premisses he Sells you. I will Indeavour to get M<sup>r</sup> Innis or M<sup>r</sup> Heward to make out Your claim against the Estate of the late Cap<sup>t</sup> Munsey as you direct, mine must have reached you long ago. All our Family & Connections are well I have only to add that I am Dear Sir

Your Most Obed<sup>t</sup> Humble Servant

*Endorsed:* Detroit October 21<sup>st</sup> 1799 John Askin Senior to William Robertson Esq<sup>r</sup> (Copy)

FROM WILLIAM HARFFY TO JOHN ASKIN

Oct<sup>r</sup> 24<sup>h</sup> 1799 Malden

Dear Sir, I have received letters from you dated y<sup>e</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> this day. Two yesterday of the 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> one this day of the 22<sup>d</sup>. I have work'd hard with Thomas and the Engineer, and altho not as yet succeeded, I do not despair. I shall return to y<sup>e</sup> charge. By some mistake or other Shaw has sent me down 50 tiles. as there is more than I can want, I shall find a Market for them, "so far lucky for once." I *Dread* again to deal in wine, neverthe less, I think Backwell may take it. I shall try him to morrow. I wish you could send a Gill or so down to taste, that may be asked for. I have not been able to see Billiet. where he keeps himself I do not know. I have left word for him to call on me. as for the Hinges you will greatly obliged me if I could have them soon I hope to be in my house about the 1<sup>st</sup> of November pray Sir what may be the price of a very small Cast Iron stove if I can raise the Money for one. then Believe me I can give you as neat a room as any in Malden, and close by the threshold of the *Door* stands ready to receive you a *sincere* and *heartly welcome*. come soon and accept it, is the wish of

D<sup>r</sup> Sir Yours truly

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy

PS. I shall be obliged to you to get off the Musick, after any manner as my *Pipe* is now *out of tune*

*Addressed:* Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit Oct<sup>r</sup> 25<sup>th</sup>  
*Endorsed:* Malden Oct<sup>r</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 1799 Doctor Harffly to Jn<sup>o</sup>  
 Askin Answ<sup>d</sup>

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CAPTAIN THORN

Detroit October the 26<sup>th</sup> 1799

Captain Thorn<sup>85</sup>

Sir You will take on Board 18 Keggs of West India Rum & 2 Barrels of Cydar, all which you will deliver M<sup>r</sup> Traxellar.<sup>86</sup> likewise 3375 Bricks & 100 Tiles & Telling him to sell the foregoing things at the following Prices, & I will pay him for his Trouble.

Rum by the Kegg 12 Bushells Wheat or 16½ Dol.  
 Cydar by the Barrell 8 do do.....or 10 Dollars.  
 Tile—by the Piece.....6<sup>d</sup> Each.  
 Brick by the 100.....1½ dollars.

If he trusts it must be only to such people as will surely pay him before the 1<sup>st</sup> of April next at latest & when in wheat it must be good & Clean but I am willing to take English Measure & if he thinks he could sell more to write me word by you.

You will recieve from him all the Indian Corn he has for me, Measuring it with the half Bushell you have on Board, & if he has any wheat of his own I wish he would send it & Keep as much of what he may get for me in its Stead

<sup>85</sup> William Thorn was a native of Providence, R. I., who found his way to Detroit prior to, or during, the Revolutionary War. He appears as a householder in the Detroit census of 1779, being credited with 1 "woman," 1 boy, 2 girls, 2 horses, and 2 cows. *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, X, 316. In the spring of 1782, he "earnestly" besought his discharge from the naval department; it was granted, and Colonel De Peyster was about to send him to Canada, not deeming it proper for a person with his knowledge of the lakes and the country to be permitted to remain in Detroit; however, he continued in the service, and in 1783 is listed as a master, serving on Lake Erie. *Ibid.*, XXIV, 6. Prior to September, 1789, Thorn located in Cottrellville on St. Clair River, being one of the earliest residents of this vicinity. Here he remained until his death in 1842, and his descendants were represented here until a relatively recent date. He was long a lake navigator, and it is said that he piloted Colonel Croghan's expedition to Mackinac in 1814.

Captain Thorn had two sons, William and John, and several daughters. John Thorn owned and platted the first village lots on the site of Port Huron. See *ibid.*, *passim*, and Jenks, *Hist. St. Clair Co.*, I, 148 ff.

<sup>86</sup> Peter Traxellar (variously spelled in the mss.) lived on the Thames River; in 1799 Askin had announced to Senseman his intention to open a store in Traxellar's house the following season. See Askin papers, *passim*.



You will take any grain Mr Wisewell<sup>87</sup> may have to ship in preference to any other but you must not be detained above one day to wait for any Freight, unless it would make a difference of 8 Dollars or more, but if any wishes you to wait a few days for Freight, & with the Freight they give will make it Equal to 8 dollars a day, you may stay in that case a few days

Please let Mr Traxellar know I had a soar Hand & therefore could not write him

*Endorsed:* Instructions to Mr W<sup>m</sup> Thorn (Copy)  
Detroit October 26. 1799

## SUPPLIES FOR FORT MALDEN

Dear Sir, I am at Mr Mcintosh's so far on my way to see you but the River, and the over hospitallity of Mr Jam<sup>s</sup> Mcintosh<sup>88</sup> will not let me over, [n]or can I get a Canoe. that being the case, and as I must return in the morn<sup>g</sup>, I will on paper mention the purport of my intended Visit. from what I could learn from Mr Grant, you seem much dissatisfied in not geting the Bills from Mr Reynolds. it must *appear* to you that *I* have not acted according to your wishes, as his expression are poor man he is very unhappy in being so treated, as you have heard that the *Cedar Timber* was paid for, and not deliverd, then why not yours. in the first place the *Cedar is not paid* for, altho almost the whole hath been deliver'd. to assist the men Fifty pounds was advanced but not a farthing more at this date Oct<sup>r</sup> 28<sup>th</sup>. Various times I have spoke to Mr R on the Business, but could not get a final answer. I have at last push'd him. he has promised to give a draft for the Bricks (as he has a return of the number from Shaw) *to go by the Nancy*, and altho I must appear to be inattentive to you my Good Sir, I hope to finish [the] matter with Mr

87 Oliver Wiswell was in Detroit as early as 1799, in which year he was living in the Rouge River settlement and stood as candidate for election to the General Assembly of the Northwest Territory from Wayne County. In 1803 his land on the Rouge was sold at sheriff's sale to gratify a judgment obtained against him. The document attesting this transaction speaks of him as "late" of Wayne County. See Sibley papers, *passim*.

88 For James McIntosh, see *B. H. R.*, I, 308. The present document shows that he carried out the intention, there noted, of removing to the south side of the river following the American occupation of Detroit.

Backwell about the wood by that time. Men of the Garrison it is impossible to get to assist in taking up the wood. shall I hire some if I can bring it about. to whom shall the Bills be address'd. a story pathetically told, tells well. however whether I have neglected your interest, or not, I know the integrity of my heart, and we are all liable to failings, some wilfully, some accidentally, and some from what the human mind cannot foresee or avert. Nothing as I have said above but the want of a Canoe prevented my seeing you.

Billiet says he will do all the work, with [will] bring the materials and all to the house, as you have been his great Friend for £24.

I remain Dr Sir ever at your service your oblige'd

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy

Sandwich

Oct<sup>r</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> 7 o'Clock at night. I really am sorry that the Harpsichord was put in M<sup>r</sup> Grant's Boat, for he *talks about it*, "Gods *how he talks about it*"

Cap<sup>t</sup> Allan<sup>89</sup> has paid for the tiles. shall I give the sawyers the mony. he says that he has not received the spirits.

*Addressed:* Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit Oct<sup>r</sup> 28<sup>th</sup>  
M<sup>r</sup>. Donovan will please forward this letter on receipt

Jm I [James McIntosh]

*Endorsed:* Oct<sup>r</sup> 28<sup>h</sup> 1799 Doctor Harffy to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin  
Answ<sup>d</sup>

#### SUPPLIES FOR FORT MALDEN

Dear Sir, I understand by Capt Grant, that you have lately received *two* letters from him, about M<sup>r</sup> Reynolds, he certainly is the most extraordinary man existent. I will not mention any thing about the wood that the Commadore has explain'd. in regard to the *Bricks* he promised to give a Bill, when I call'd yesterday for it. what will you say, when I ask'd for it, he said he did *not* know the price, or the *quantity deliver'd*, altho he told me before he had got

<sup>89</sup> James Allan, for whom see *ibid.*, 307.

the number of Thousands from even *Shaw* himself. what strange conduct. I suppose from all this he wishes not to draw. As I am well convinced this letter will be with you soon be pleased to send down the *price* & the quantity, that he may be for once in his life obliged to draw contrary to his will this is taken up by Cap<sup>t</sup> Caulwells, who will return I believe immediately. I received your letter Yesterday, and thank you for the News. can I get 3000 more bricks if I send for them, or if you think of sending down your own can they be put into the same Vessel

I am yours

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy

Saturday morn<sup>g</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> 1799

*Addressed:* Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> to ye care of M<sup>r</sup> Askin Jun<sup>r</sup>  
Mer<sup>t</sup> Detroit let it be sent immediately

*Endorsed:* Saturday Nov<sup>r</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> 1799 Doctor Harffy to Jn<sup>o</sup>  
Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>

#### DIFFICULTIES OF MATTHEW DONOVAN

Detroit November. 15<sup>th</sup> 1799

D<sup>r</sup> Sir I have been Informed that you are concerned in Establishing a School in this Town, in Opposition to me which amazing Surprised me for I candidly declare, that I always perswaded myself, that you would be the last man in this Town that would do me the least Injury; I acknowledge that my Conduct of the 29<sup>th</sup> of October was irregular, but partly was owing to the want of wood & to the Inclemency of the weather for it was not the concurrence of the will altogether, but rather a fatality impending over me no man is his own keeper, neither is any man altogether perfect; I am not very Subject to this crime, neither do I approve of it, nor is there any person existing more grieved or concerned for it than I am. I hope never to be guilty of such a crime for I have made an absolute promise never to taste any Spirituous liquors as long as I keep School in Detroit and hope with the Concurrence of Heaven to maintain that promise I am bold to Say that I have kept a Good School these four years past and my Scholars will prove it upon examination and to Sum up the Total loss of my time in



that irregular way it will not exceed four days. Notwithstanding I am censured, but I censure none, I own my faults, Since few from faults are free. I perfectly Recollect to hear you Say that you had a tender feeling. I believe you have, pray let it not be extinguished towards me who am willing to Serve you to the utmost of my power

Matthew Donovan

*Endorsed:* Detroit Nov<sup>r</sup> 15<sup>h</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Donovan to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Answ<sup>d</sup>

MARRIAGE OF THOMAS DICKSON

Queenston Nov<sup>r</sup>, 16, 1799

Dear Sir I have now the pleasure to forward your papers received p[er] last Mail & to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favour p[er] the *Nancy*.

The Cyder has been received, and will no doubt soon Sell. I am also to thank you for your obliging present of a Barrel of Apples, though as yet they have got no further than Fort Erie.

I shall not at present descant upon Politicks (though with me a favorite topick) but content myself with informing you that tomorrow Evening M<sup>r</sup> Tho<sup>s</sup> Dickson is to be married to a Young Widow (M<sup>rs</sup> Taylor)<sup>90</sup> a Union which promises much happiness to both parties. M<sup>r</sup> Selby arrived here a Week ago, by whom I was happy to hear that your Family were all in good health I beg you will present them with my most respectfull Compliments, & believe me (though in haste) with much respect Dear Sir

Very Sincerely Yours

Rob<sup>t</sup> Nichol

P. S. Should you have occasion for any Pork in the Spring, I can probably procure you some upon more reasonable terms than any you have had from this lately

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merchant Detroit

*Endorsed:* Queenston Nov<sup>r</sup> 16<sup>h</sup> 1799 M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Nichols to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> 24<sup>h</sup> 1800

<sup>90</sup> For the careers of Thomas Dickson and Mrs. Taylor, see *B. H. R.*, I, 542.

## ABSCONDENCE OF ALEXANDER LORANGER

Fort Miamis 16<sup>th</sup> Nob<sup>r</sup> 1799

D<sup>r</sup> S<sup>r</sup> I write this in grate heast to enform you that Alexander Lorange<sup>91</sup> who owes us £195 by Note was on his way up this River But the water Being So Low Couled not procead he heas Retourned And Stored his goods at Vetocats. And is Started this Morning for Horses to Carey up his goods, he Sais To the River S<sup>t</sup> Joseph, which is out of the Country. So I think we Should not Lose any time In heaving Some thing don with him Eather Seas The Goods or take him but I think to Seas the Beas<sup>t</sup>. But as You Know More about the Law Then Me I will Leave it to You he is fited out by Gearome<sup>92</sup> he told Me him Self & his Mon also [tha]t he was on his oane Account & had to the Amount of £400-<sup>00</sup> which wouled do us Some good. It is My Real opinon he will Not Retourn to this Country. So I hope You will Not Lat one Minet pass But gat Some person to Come out to Sease or take him As You think Beast. But who Eveal Coms out Enform him Not to Mention aney thing of His Busness at the River Reason or at Detroit, as if Gearome hears of it he will take his Goods. when he pased to go up he did Not Call on Me But pased on the other Side of The River. in heast as the Bear[er] is wating I am Sir with Resp<sup>t</sup> your ob<sup>t</sup> & Humb<sup>l</sup> Sernv<sup>t</sup>

John Anderson<sup>93</sup>John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Merch<sup>t</sup> Detroit M<sup>d</sup> by Indian

*Endorsed:* John Anderson's letter To John Askin Relative To Alexander Lorange 1799

<sup>91</sup> On the relationships and descent of the lines of Rivard, Loranger, and Maisonville, see *B. H. R.*, I, 49 and 325. The descendants of Nicholas Rivard, there noted, commonly retained the name of Rivard. The descendants of his brother, Robert, assumed, among others, the names of Loranger and Maisonville.

<sup>92</sup> Jean Baptiste Jerome was born in 1762 and buried at Raisin River, June 7, 1832. He married prior to 1792, Mary Deliennes *dit* Belanger, and their daughter, Mary Archange, born in Detroit, Feb. 17, 1792, married Hubert Lacroix, subsequently a leading citizen of Monroe. Jean Baptiste Jerome settled in Monroe prior to 1802. In 1805 the first court of Monroe County convened in his home. See Denissen, *op. cit.*, and *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*.

<sup>93</sup> For the several John Andersons of Detroit and vicinity, see *post*, 723.

## FROM WILLIAM HARFFY TO JOHN ASKIN

Dear Sir, It is long since I have had the pleasure of a letter from you, therefore yours meets with a pleasing reception. a most Violent Fever prevented me the happiness of Seeing you last Saturday. Six days confined to my bed & I am only just now able to hobble about; Thank God I am daily geting strength, and pleasing to say am in my House, where I reside the whole day, but cannot trust the new walls for the night. The Timber is almost all in the yard, & the men I understand will totally finish next week, and then Tommy cannot frame a Jesuitical excuse, for the Drafts, as with them the papers, or vouchers, or what you will, will go by the Express. You mention about Fraser. he of all men in the World, can I wish to have any transactions with; but if you knew the Drift of this, and the price; you might not almost hesitate to say *Suborning Justice* here it rests, here it finishes, and he will not gain his Sordid Ideas. There is the History of Tommy; and if I ever live to see you, I could raise a smile. Your letter for Theophile myer, I have sent off.

Since my confinement, I have had some very pleasing acct<sup>s</sup> put into my hands, nothing less than *one* Draft on me from Mr<sup>s</sup> Harffy for £40. Sterling, another for £20, a very pretty moderate sum however I hope to be able to get y<sup>e</sup> better of it by the Express. circumstanced thus, it will render it impossible for me to give you my letter of Attorney to draw my pay this Quarter, but you will have to receive it the 24<sup>h</sup> of June & so on. I am sadly in want if you can trust me for a Table Cloth of 3 yards long, if not too dear. I also should like about 4 gallons of Sherry & Six gallöns of good red port a pound of the *best* Hyson Tea, & one pound of very common green tea. as beef is very cheap with you, I think the Commodore cannot have a better opportunity of *returning my* Beef than now, as we understand it is by the Quarter 5½<sup>d</sup> or 6<sup>d</sup> per pound that being the case, and it should take place, I am led to hope I was once enough in Mr<sup>s</sup> Askins esteem to beg her to let her serv<sup>t</sup> put it in some of her nice pickle that I may receive it down keeping out the neck, & shins for Soup, with three or four roasting pieces, for how dismal so ever the Weather



appears yet still we can have a craft down. We cannot get an *Onion* here, I wish I could get a Bushel. I certainly shall take you by Surprise some of these long nights, when we will talk about and about it. pray Sir what may be the price per pound of an Iron pot. I should like a thinn one, that will not weigh too heavy about 3, or 4, gallons; as I am fit for nothing, and very much troubled with the Cacoethies Scribendi (which by the by is of Service to me at present,) that I do not know how to leave off[f]. I have not seen Mr Backwell, but you may depend on my speaking to him at the first interview, if you could send down, a very little of each of the Madeira, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>d</sup>, 3<sup>d</sup>, I would shew it to different person[s]. I know Backwell has none. let the Bottles be *Sealed* down, the last you sent had a taste of the Cask, I shew that to him, but he mention'd the taste, I should think if the [ves]sel, should not arrive there will not be any danger of its going off. Rum here is by the Single Quart. 4<sup>s</sup> Spirits is I a[m told] 18<sup>s</sup>. in short this place is continually drunk.

I have just time to bid you adieu

yours truly

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy

Monday morn<sup>g</sup>

*Addressed:* Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq. to the Care of Mr Askin  
Jun<sup>r</sup> Detroit Dec<sup>r</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> 1799.

*Endorsed:* Malden Dec<sup>r</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> 1799 Doc<sup>r</sup> Harffy to Jn<sup>o</sup>  
Askin recv<sup>d</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 3<sup>d</sup>

#### FROM WILLIAM HARFFY TO JOHN ASKIN

Dear Sir This morn<sup>g</sup> I received your letters of the Second & third instant, and thank you for your kind expression of Friendship towards me as your Sawyers are leaving this place I trust this letter to them I have waited on Mr Reynolds, and Mr Backwell, the remainder of the Scantling will be immediately drawn in the acct then made out, and Mr R. says, He will then give you the draft. Thank God I am perfectly recover'd, and Yesterday I open<sup>d</sup> house and I assure you, your red wine made some of my Friends *very happy* I can now safely say I sleep & eat under my own

roof I know not of any one I wish to see there, more than  
you & the Commodore why cannot we meet *once* more,

My best respects to all your Family & believe me D<sup>r</sup> Sir  
Yr<sup>s</sup> Sincerely

W<sup>m</sup> Harffy

Dec<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>h</sup> 1799.

*Endorsed:* Malden Dec<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>h</sup> 1799 Doc<sup>r</sup> Harffy to Jn<sup>o</sup>  
Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 12<sup>h</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 13<sup>th</sup>

ILLNESS OF GOTTLÖB SENSEMAN

Fairfield Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>, 1799

Sir The kindness, you showed me, when I was in  
Detroit & the kind offer of your service, I received from  
you, gives me the Confidence to trouble you with a Com-  
mission. I have here a letter of some importance, which I  
should send so soon as possible. You would oblige me very  
much, if you would send it, by the first Opportunity to the  
Post. M<sup>r</sup> Senseman is very sick on the consumption & we  
expect his departure very soon.<sup>94</sup> He sends his last Compli-  
ment to you & all his friends in Detroit. I beg the favor of  
you to acquaint with it Mr. Huntington, as I understand,  
Mr. Senseman had some Dealings with him, that are not  
settled. I shall take care to settle it next spring, whene I will  
have the pleasure to see you also in Det. I am Sir

your humble Servant

Gottfr. Seb. Oppelt

*Addressed:* M<sup>r</sup> John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit.

*Endorsed:* Fairfield Dec<sup>r</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> 1799 the Reverend M<sup>r</sup>  
Oppelt to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recd y<sup>e</sup> 23<sup>d</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> same day.

<sup>94</sup> He died, Jan. 4, 1800. For sketch of his career, see *B. H. R.*, I, 221.