

SECTION X

LETTERS AND PAPERS, 1813-1820

## LAND TITLES IN DETROIT

Montreal 15<sup>h</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> 1813

My dear Friend My last Letter to you was the 10<sup>h</sup> Octb<sup>r</sup> to which Reffer I there mentioned having wrote to Niagara to obtain an order from Gen<sup>l</sup> Brock respecting the Deeds taken in an American boat.<sup>1</sup> his death will have prevented his interfering but I have no doubt Coln<sup>l</sup> Proctor will allow you, or say M<sup>r</sup> Pollard to examine the papers & to detain such as you want, I still recommend keeping possession of the whole as I am convinced what ever may be [the] fate of the Michigan Teritory no upright court of Justice, can take that property from me or M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill. I observe what you say of the Value of my property on both sides of your River I agree with you that at present there is no disposing of Property as you seem to think M<sup>r</sup> Pattison would still give £200 Cash for Smiths farm, if so I wish you to sell it him as this sum will be of more use to me now then a much Larger some time hence. I perticularly remark what you say about M<sup>r</sup> Brush, that you hold his Bond & Mortgage to me for £460 with near 8 years Interest, that the property is more valuable then when he sold it. this will in part depend on the settlement of the Michigan Teritory at Peace. there is Representations gon[e] home praying it may be made Neutral Ground &<sup>e</sup> I must think it strange M<sup>r</sup> B. has not paid any part of this purchas. he is said to have the means & you think he has the inclination, which I hope may be the Case tho your friend Alex Henry says he has receivd Money for him which he neither can get an Account of nor even an Answer to a Letter. it would be particularly usefull to me could he

<sup>1</sup> The allusion is to the capture at Amherstburg on July 2, 1812, of the *Cuyahoga* on which General Hull had sent his personal baggage, some camp equipment, sick soldiers and several wives of officers from the Maumee Rapids to Detroit. On the vessel, also was Aaron Greeley, who was returning to Detroit from Washington with the titles to certain pieces of real estate in which Todd and James McGill were interested. See *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet*, V, 54-55.

remit me part of the Interest, for I assure you I am now borrowing Money for my expences.

I shoud your Letter to Mr McGill & he has Sent me the enclosed Memod<sup>m</sup> of Letters receivd & wrote you which will no doubt be satisfactory. This Warr is most unfortunate for the Canadas, tho it will occasion a great expenditure of money, and your place will feel the benefit of this.

Remember me kindly to Mrs Askin Mrs McKay [McKee] & all your family it gives me sinc[e]re pleasure to hear you all enjoy Good health Long my dear friend may it Continue Mine thank God is as good as I can expect but my deafness continues and prevents my enjoying Company. Let me hear from you, & bel[i]ve me My Dear friend

Yours Affect<sup>ly</sup>

Isaac Todd

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

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

*Endorsed:* Montreal Jan<sup>y</sup> 15<sup>h</sup> 1813 Isaac Todd Esq<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 12<sup>h</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> 10<sup>h</sup> April

#### NEWS OF RAISIN RIVER BATTLE

Dear Father, I have the happiness of informing you that the American Army was defeated so effectually that every man was either killed or taken prisoners, with the exception of two only who made their escape. the prisoners 450 in number will arrive today. the only person related to us who has suffered is poor Robert Richardson<sup>2</sup> who received a wound in his knee. Our Regular Officers have suffered much in proportion to their numbers. Gouin<sup>3</sup> wounded in

<sup>2</sup> Robert Richardson, second son of Robert Richardson and Madelaine Askin, was born in Queenston, Sept. 10, 1798. At the opening of the War of 1812, he became a midshipman in the provincial marine. Despite his extreme youth, he joined as a volunteer the expedition against General Winchester at the Raisin River, and the wound he received here alluded to, eventually caused his death, which occurred in Amherstburg, June 7, 1819. See Casselman, *op. cit.*, *passim*, especially, 137-39, and Irving, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Ensign Claude Gouin of the Second Essex Militia. He was born in Detroit, June 14, 1789, his parents being Joseph Nicholas Gouin and Archange Boyer, and his grandparents Claude Jean Thomas Gouin and Mary Joseph Cuillerier *dit* Beaubien, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 326. Claude Gouin married Margaret Kerby of Detroit. They had two children

the Shoulder, & Pierre Badichon<sup>4</sup> killed.

I remain, your Affectionate Son

James Askin

General Winchester is taken prisoner.

OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT AT RAISIN RIVER

Amherstburg 7<sup>h</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> 1813

Dear Sir It gives me real Satisfaction to be able to Say I think poor Robert now out of danger his health improves and his leg I think wil[l] be saved. he behaved like a little hero in the field and has born[e] his wound like a man. herewith is enclosed a letter from your grandson John<sup>5</sup> who gives you a detail of this whole business. I was near writing a few days ago to M<sup>r</sup> Powell at York respecting the unpleasant situation I am in here as a Majistrate, under the command and controul of Commanding officers who expect every thing to be done as they wish sometimes without either law or reason. if I had I should have Stole Johns letter to give an account of our River Raisin business. the loss has been very severe, indeed ten times more than was necessary. Our men ought either to have been brought up in Contact with the enemy at once (which they might have been before half of them was fairly awake) or else kept at a sufficient distance for the Guard to drive them out. We Succeeded tis true but we have to thank the fears and want of Conduct in the Enemmy, and a kind and protecting providence, much more than our own good conduct. If the Americans had been sold[i]ers, they would have come out when our men were compleatly broke and nearly half of them kill[e]d & wounded, and would have taken or kill[e]d every man. I am sure two hundred men could not then have been got together, and they had 450 all together.

born in Detroit in the years 1822 and 1824, and three born in St. Clair, Mich., in the years 1826-34. Data derived from Irving, *op. cit.*, and Denissen, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Pierre Labadie dit Badichon was a son of Anthony Labadie and Marie, a Chippewa woman, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 46. Pierre was born in 1775 and was baptized in Sandwich, Nov. 17, 1782. He married Ann Purday and they had seven children born in Sandwich in the years 1799-1812. Denissen, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> John Richardson, eldest son of the writer, for whom see *ante*, 131. The letter here alluded to is printed in Casselman, *op. cit.*, 301-304.



however these observations are only for you I suppose it would be considered high treason to speak out in this way. there is another circumstance which has hurt me more than I can express. That is with respect to some wounded men belonging to the Americans who were left without any proper protection and some of whom I have been informed were the same evening murdered by the Indians. had I been commanding officer I should have considered myself responsible for the lives of every one of them, and within my hearing protection was promised for those poor people. be assured we have not heard the last of this shameful transaction. I wish to god it could be contradicted. I have only to add that M<sup>rs</sup> R. and all home join in best wishes for you M<sup>rs</sup> Askin and family and I am

Yours very faithfully

R Richardson

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire

*Endorsed:* Amherstburgh Feb<sup>y</sup> 7<sup>h</sup> 1813 Doct<sup>r</sup> Richardson to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 8<sup>h</sup>

# FROM CHARLES ASKIN TO JOHN ASKIN

Canborough March 8<sup>th</sup> 1813

Dear Father I have lately had the pleasure of receiving a number of letters from you which I have not yet been able to answer, and two were handed me this morning by Alex<sup>r</sup> who arrived here to day with Edmund Brush, whose Father was obliged to go down to Kingston before he could be allowed to cross the River, for what reason I cannot say. it will be pleasing to you to hear that he met with every attention from General Sheaffe<sup>6</sup> and others and that he was allowed to stay at Queenston and go to Niagara when he pleased, and those who came down under similar cir-

<sup>6</sup> Sir Roger Hall Sheaffe was born in Boston (where his father was serving as deputy collector of the port), July 15, 1763. He became an ensign in the Fifth Foot Regiment, May 1, 1778, from which position he rose to the rank of general in 1828. He served in Canada 1787-97, 1802-11, and 1812-13. Sheaffe succeeded to the command left vacant by the death of General Brock at Queenston, and for his conduct in this battle was created a baronet. From Oct. 20, 1812, to June 18, 1813, he was president and administrator of Upper Canada. In 1810 he married Margaret Coffin of Quebec. He died in Edinburgh, July 17, 1851. See *Dict. Nat. Biog.*; Wallace, *op. cit.*

cumstances were hardly allowed to walk the Streets of Niagara.

I am sorry you were so unfortunate as to lose the Oxen you got of me; but hope they may still be found. The horse on the Island I think you got a tolerable good price for, considering he was not broke and that he would be very troublesome to get over. I shall be pleased to hear that he has paid my mother for him, for I had made her a present of him.

I am now accustomed to sleep on hard beds and can do very well without a feather one, therefore would be happy they were sold and the money received for them sent to Johny. I do not think James or Alex good hands for speculators, and do not think they would make much by buying up things here, and taking them up to sell them again. They would spend as much on the road, as they would clear on the goods, it's most probable. I believe Tea is higher here than it is at Sandwich and Salt also. I do not know if green Tea can now be got for 24/ and Onondaga Salt was selling for fifteen dollars a barrel a few days ago and I fancy is now higher. suger is 1/6. such things as these I would advise you if they can be got at Sandwich to lay in a stock of sufficient to last you five or six months, for I really think the prices of all Kinds of goods will rise in the Spring, as what came up last Summer after the Declaration of War cost more to bring up, than what came in Sleighs this Winter. I return you thanks for the Traveling case and the Rifle which you have sent down, as also for the books &<sup>es</sup> in the case. they have not yet got this far, but I know where Alex<sup>r</sup> left them & fancy I shall soon get them.

There is no newspaper printed now at Niagara, and the York papers I think are very poor ones, yet as you desire it I shall get them and endeavour to have them sent regularly to you.

I send up by Alex<sup>r</sup> and Edmund 1 doz desert knives & Forks & a few needles and thread for my mother which she will please accept of. Alex takes up also Elizabeth Merediths miniature picture and some drawings with it.

Please give my love to my Dear Mother my Brothers &  
Sisters Believe me Dear Father

Your dutiful and affectionate Son

Charles Askin

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Strabane Sandwich

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Strabane Sandwich.

*Endorsed:* Canborough March 8<sup>h</sup> 1813 Charles to Jn<sup>o</sup>  
Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 16<sup>h</sup>

BATTLE OF FORT GEORGE

Dundass Mills Head of the Lake

June 2<sup>d</sup> 1813

Dear Father Your affectionate letter of the 2<sup>d</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup> was handed me at the 40 Mile Creek without a Cover by a Gentleman from Fort Erie who picked it up some where there, by mere accident, just before he retreated from that. You must no doubt before this have heard of our misfortunes in this Quarter. the loss of Fort George after an action which lasted only fifteen or twenty minutes, and our being obliged in consequence to evacuate the whole of our Fortifications, from that place to Fort Erie, and to destroy an immense quantity of Provision and other kinds of stores on our Retreat. On the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup> we commenced cannonading from the five Mile Meadow on some boats going down the River to Niagara, which was kept up on both sides for two or three hours. we recommenced again early the next Morning at some more boats going down; but the Enemy had a much superior Force in Artillery and set fire to Fort George, which was consumed and our troops were obliged to leave it. a great deal was burnt in it, which I am told could have been saved; but very little exertion was made to save anything. on Wednesday everything remained quiet. On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> The morning was very foggy; and the Enemy began to move their fleet and one hundred and fifty boats which they had concealed behind Fort Niagara. two or three thousand of their men landed at the same moment at 2 Mile Run, where they were met by 350 of the Glengary Reg<sup>t</sup> who suffered very much. the



Enemie's Vessels were anchored along our shore from 2 Mile Run on the Lake to nearly where the Ferry was kept in Niagara River; and were po[u]ring such an Immense quantity of Grape on our poor Fellows that they were not allowed to advance to charge them; which they wished to do; until such an immense force had landed that it was thought necessary by General Vincent<sup>7</sup> to order them to retire towards Queenston from that they retreated to Beaver Dams about 12 Mile back in the Country where they were joined by about two hundred of the 41<sup>st</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> under Colonel Bishopp from Fort Erie and by two hundred of the 8<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> who just arrived from Lower Canada. the Army remained at this place all night, and the next day retreated to the forty Mile Creek where they halted and staid two days, after which they marched to the Head of the Lake,<sup>8</sup> where we are now. I was stationed at Fort Erie with part of my Company, the day of the Action and the next day left that with them and retreated along Lake Erie with a small party of the 41<sup>st</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> and some of the Women of the Reg<sup>t</sup> and came to mouth [of] Grand River;<sup>9</sup> but left the 41<sup>st</sup> behind for they came on too slow. After a great deal of Fatigue I arrived at the forty Mile Creek<sup>10</sup> on the 30<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup> alone; for all my men had stop'd at their homes and I knew if I waited to bring them with me I should probably not be able to join the Army myself, which I was very anxious to do. On my arrival at the Forty I was unfortunately taken with a fit of the ague, which detained me there for a day. the next day I came to this place where part of the Army lies. I am staying at M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>e</sup>Kay's who is extremely kind and attentive to me. June 3<sup>d</sup> I yesterday had another fit of the ague but sores are breaking out on my lips today and I am in hopes that I shall soon

<sup>7</sup> John Vincent, successor of Brock and Sheaffe as commander of the Forty-ninth Regiment. He became a major general, June 4, 1813, and lieutenant general, May 27, 1825. His service in the War of 1812 was terminated by his return to Europe on sick leave in July, 1814. He died in London in 1848. See Irving, *op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> Burlington Bay at the western end of Lake Ontario. The city of Hamilton has since grown up here.

<sup>9</sup> Vicinity of modern Dunnville, Ont.

<sup>10</sup> Forty Mile Creek empties into Lake Ontario at Grimsby. This is approximately twenty miles north of the mouth of Grand River on Lake Erie.



get rid of it. Since writing the above I have heard further particulars of the Engagement at Fort George. The Enemy landed about eight thousand troops, and we had not more than two thousand five hundred to oppose them altogether, and of these there were but a very small proportion of Indians (not one hundred) the Glengary Newfoundland and 8<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> with a few of the militia were the only Reg<sup>ts</sup> engaged with the Enemy, and they suffered much. Two hundred of the 8<sup>th</sup> were killed & wounded, nearly one half of the Glengary Reg<sup>t</sup> were cut off. Cap<sup>t</sup> Liddle & M<sup>r</sup> McLean were killed and several of the Officers wounded, among which were two of Doct<sup>r</sup> Kerr's<sup>11</sup> sons. the Grenadiers of the Newfoundland Reg<sup>t</sup> went in the action thirty or forty strong; but only 12 came out of it. The Militia behaved as well as the Regular troops & many say better. we have lost in Killed Wounded & Missing about four hundred and fifty men. the Enemy I believe have not lost so many. Notwithstanding they were so superior to us in numbers, they did not give our troops a chance of charging them, for the Moment we advanced they would run down the bank and leave our men exposed to the Grapeshot from their shipping, which swept them off so fast that they were forced to fall back. a Cap<sup>t</sup> McLellan<sup>12</sup> of the Militia and M<sup>r</sup> Chew<sup>13</sup> of the Indian Department were killed also. The

<sup>11</sup> Dr. Robert Kerr arrived at Quebec as a hospital mate in September, 1776. He served throughout the Revolution, being surgeon of Sir John Johnson's Royal Regiment of New York from 1779 to 1784. In 1788 he became surgeon in the Indian Department of Upper Canada, which position he held throughout the War of 1812. He married a daughter of Sir William Johnson and Molly Brant. Dr. Kerr died in Albany in March, 1823. See Irving, *op. cit.*

<sup>12</sup> Captain Martin McClellan of the Second Lincoln Militia. His father, William, was a resident of Cherry Valley before the Revolution; he was carried off by Indians, but finally escaped and with his wife and two of his sons made his way to Niagara. The third child (Martin, born in 1771) was taken by the Indians to Ogdensburg, where he was rescued by the whites and sent to join his parents at Niagara. Here he grew up; on Dec. 21, 1804, he married Eliza Grant of Niagara; and here he resided at the time of his death. If the family traditions may be credited, General George B. McClellan of Civil War fame was descended from a branch of the family which remained in the States at the time of the Revolution. See *ibid.*, and Ont. Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, XXV, 306.

<sup>13</sup> William Johnson Chew, brother of John Chew, for whom see *ante*, 528. He was named for Sir William Johnson, under whom his father served as Secretary of Indian Affairs, and was remembered by Sir William in his will. He was storekeeper of the Indian Department at Niagara for several years beginning in 1794. In 1799 he was recommended for appointment as Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Niagara. In February, 1806, Governor Gore asked to have him put on the pension roll because his mind was failing. Data adapted from sketch in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XX, 694.

49<sup>th</sup> & 41<sup>st</sup> were hardly engaged at all, and our Artillery did very little. we were fortunate in saving all our Field Pieces. all the Wounded Officers and men fell in the hands of the Enemy among them was Colonel Myers<sup>14</sup> a most Galant Officer and indeed the Principal Officer, in the Field and the 2<sup>d</sup> in Command. The enemy did not pursue us at all; but when the Army got to the twenty Mile creek, there was a false alarm which was the occasion of our destroying a good deal of ammunition & provision there. I must conclude this, by saying that the Enemy have nothing to boast of in taking Fort George; for they had an immense superiority of force.

June 4<sup>th</sup> I am now just going down to the Camp to celebrate the day, which perhaps may be the last time, for an action I think we shall have in a very short time. two thousand Americans are said to be at the forty, we have a fine field to meet them on where our Army now lays and should they advance we will probably best them; but there will be little use in it if even we should unless we get the Superiority on Lake Ontario, where the chances are much against us for we have but five Vessels and the Americans fourteen. We have just had acc<sup>ts</sup> from Kingston by one of Sir George Prevost's Aide Camp's that an attempt had been made by Sir George with 800 men to take Sacket's harbour aided by Sir Lucas Yeo.<sup>15</sup> our troops landed but the Vessels were becalmed and could not get into the harbour. our troops were met by three thousand Americans, which were drove into their Intrenchments, we took 150 prisoners and 3 pieces of Cannon. we lost three hundred men in this Affair, Col. Grey<sup>16</sup> is said to have been killed

<sup>14</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Myers of the quartermaster general's department. In numerous official dispatches he is commended for zeal and ability. At Niagara he commanded one of the three brigades into which General Vincent's entire force was divided. In the battle of May 27, he was thrice wounded and taken prisoner. He was released from his parole and resumed duty in May, 1814; was made colonel on June 4, 1814; and died, March 3, 1817. See *ibid.*, XV, *passim*; Irving, *op. cit.*; Casselman, *op. cit.*, 65, 119.

<sup>15</sup> Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo, commander-in-chief of the British naval forces on the Great Lakes.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew Gray, lieutenant in the Eighth Regiment, Feb. 25, 1808; captain of the Nova Scotia Fencibles, Aug. 1, 1811. A general order issued after the battle said of him: "In him the army lost an active and intelligent officer." Irving, *op. cit.*

and Major Evans<sup>17</sup> severely wounded. two companies of the 8<sup>th</sup> suffered severely.

Our fate is decided now, for firing was heard on the Lake yesterday and it could be nothing but a fight between our fleet and that of the Enemy. we hope for the best but dread to hear the result of the business, as the chances were so much against us. June 5<sup>h</sup> Our Army I think must soon retreat from this whether they will go to Detroit or towards Kingston we do not know. I mean to follow them if possible. Your affectionate letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup> I had the pleasure of receiving the day before yesterday. I never had an opportunity of sending up Eclipse, or I should have done it. I am afraid the Americans have got him. Should M<sup>r</sup> Brush return to Detroit and the Americans get possession of this Country I hope he will try and save as much of my property as possible. a great number of our Gentlemen have taken protection from the Enemy since they have come in the Country. I shall keep out of their hands as long as I can. I wish we had Tecumseh here to help us out of our difficulties. I received a letter from Therese a few days ago which I am sorry I have not time now to answer. I delivered the one for M<sup>r</sup> Sutherland which was with it; and he has promised to send her the things she wants you will please tell her. The Americans behaved very well to the Inhabitants of York, except those any way connected with the Indian Department. Poor M<sup>r</sup> Selby<sup>18</sup> died about the time the Enemy landed at York. Poor old M<sup>r</sup> Warren is also dead. I was in the Room when he expired, two or three days before the Action at Fort George. I am sorry to hear of the Death of my Uncle Grant. His Family in this quarter are well.

Please give my love to my Dear Mother, to James, Alex & my Sisters & remember me kindly to my Relations & Friends. Believe me your dutiful & affectionate Son

John Askin Esq

Charles Askin

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Evans of the Eighth Regiment. He enlisted in the army as an ensign in 1794 and rose to the rank of general in 1855. He was commended by his commander for his conduct at Sackett's Harbor. He married a sister of Charles R. Ogden, attorney-general of Lower Canada, 1833-42, and of Peter Skene Ogden, fur trader.

<sup>18</sup> Prideaux Selby, for whom see *ante*, 102.



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*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Sandwich*Endorsed:* recv<sup>d</sup> 8<sup>h</sup> June & Answ<sup>d</sup> partly same day

## BATTLE OF STONY CREEK

Dundass Mills June 8<sup>th</sup> 1813

Dear Father I wrote you on the 5<sup>th</sup> Ins<sup>t</sup> at which time We were in a melancholy state, and thought that we should be forced to surrender to a very large force which were in pursuit of us or make a precipitate Retreat. an Action which took place on the sixth Ins<sup>t</sup> which terminated much in our favour has quite altered the face of Affairs, and the appearance of our Vessels which hove in sight last night has put us all in high spirits again. the Enemy were advancing three thousand five hundred strong<sup>20</sup> and were within Six miles of us on the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup>. They took a strong position and encamped, determined to attack us next morning. General Vincent after getting correct information of their situation, determined on attacking them that night, and marched down with the whole of the 8<sup>th</sup> & 49<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>ts</sup> with us and one field piece. our force was one thousand strong. we got up to them undiscovered and bayoneted the Centinels, then pushed on with the Bayonet; and took the Enemy by Surprise laying in their Tents. our troops in order to alarm them yelled as much like Indians as they could. this had a bad effect; for it woke the Enemy who would have been skivered otherwise. they kept up a warm fire on our troops for a short time, with musketts and a howitzer, and killed a good many of our men. our brave fellows pushed on took the howitzer and seven<sup>21</sup> field pieces, after which the Americans fled. both

19 The two paragraphs omitted concern matters of no present-day interest.

20 As usual in warfare, the strength of the enemy is here over-estimated. The American army numbered 2700 men, but owing to various detachments made in the course of the advance toward Burlington Bay, only about 1400 were present on the battlefield. See Louis L. Babcock, *The War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier*, Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Pubs.*, XXIX, 85-86.

21 First written "the field pieces"; the number interpolated in not clear, but seems to be "seven."



their Generals fell in our hands Generals Winder<sup>22</sup> & Chandler,<sup>23</sup> and a number more officers and about one hundred men. several Officers who were taken, after giving their word on honour they would not run away: made their Escape. they lost about two hundred in Killed wounded & prisoners. Our loss has been severe also. we had twenty-two killed on the field, about seventy wounded and thirty prisoners taken. Col. Clark<sup>24</sup> of the 49<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> and Mr Drury<sup>25</sup> of the same Reg<sup>t</sup> both mortally wounded, Mr Taylor<sup>26</sup> of the 41<sup>st</sup> severely wounded (not the Mr Taylor who was at Amherstburgh) Major Manners<sup>27</sup> of the 49<sup>th</sup> is also wounded but slightly. Mr Bernard was much hurt by a Fall from his horse who was shot under him. Some officers of the 8<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> were wounded but their names I do not know. the night was dark and occasioned great confusion. General Vincent was missing six or eight hours after the Action and was supposed to be taken; but found his way to us again. for want of horses two of the field

22 William Henry Winder (b. Feb. 18, 1775; d. May 24, 1824) was a native of Maryland, a lawyer, and resident of Baltimore. In July, 1812, he assumed command of the Fourteenth U. S. Infantry, and in March, 1813, became a brigadier general. In May, 1814, he became adjutant and inspector general and was in command at Bladensburg when the British captured Washington. At the close of the war he returned to his law practice. His son, John Henry, after a long career in the U. S. army, joined the Confederacy and during much of the Civil War was commander of the city of Richmond. See *Appleton's Cyclopaedia Am. Biog.*

23 John Chandler (b. 1760; d. Sept. 25, 1841) was a resident of Maine. In earlier life a blacksmith, he later became wealthy. He was a member of the U. S. House of Representatives from 1805 to 1808. An enthusiastic supporter of the war, in 1812 he was made brigadier general. His military experience was very slight. In the battle of Stony Creek he was wounded and captured. He was a U. S. Senator from Maine, 1820-29, and Collector of the Port at Portland, 1829-37.

24 Alexander Clerk (Clerke) of the Forty-ninth Regiment. He became captain and captain lieutenant of the regiment, Dec. 12, 1798. In 1803-1805, he was serving as commandant of Fort St. Joseph in Lake Huron. His wound at Stony Creek was not mortal; he was still in the service several years after the war. See British army lists; Irving, *op. cit.*; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*, especially XXIII.

25 "Ensign Drury, who carried the King's color of the 49th, was mortally wounded, but struggled forward until he could give it into the keeping of another officer." Ernest Cruikshank, in *Niagara Hist. Soc.*, pubs., No. 3, p. 14.

26 Thomas Taylor, commissioned lieutenant in the Forty-first Regiment, Dec. 13, 1810. At the time of the battle of Fort George, he was serving as adjutant of that post. He had been admitted to the bar in England, and in 1819 was called to the bar of Upper Canada. In 1824, he became judge of the Gore District Court. He died in December, 1837, and was interred in the George Hamilton family burial plot in Hamilton. See *Wentworth County Hist. Soc. Journal and Trans.*, IV, 38-40.

27 Thomas Manners, commissioned lieutenant in the Forty-ninth Regiment, Feb. 2, 1796, and captain on June 23, 1803. See British army lists.

pieces which were taken were left but a little way from the field of battle. while we were gone for horses, the enemy came and took them off. the Enemy retreated to the Forty.<sup>28</sup> they are said to have left that and are retreating towards Niagara. I dare say the sight of our Fleet does not please them much. There were no Militia in the Engagement, and only four or five Indians. the Indians have behaved shamefully lately, and do us no service whatever. I hope they will do better. I would not give ten Hurons for two hundred of such as we have here.<sup>29</sup> I fancy a stand will be made here now. some works are going to be thrown up. our fleet has brought us a small reinforcement, and some Ammunition the last of which was wanted very much.

I am sorry to say that many of our great men below, I mean about Niagara, went and took protections from the Enemy as soon as they came over.

Please give my love to my Dear Mother & to my Brothers & Sisters, and Believe me

Your dutiful & Affectionate Son

Charles Askin

P.S. The Action was fought half a Mile this side of Stony Creek.

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Sandwich.

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Grant, W<sup>m</sup> Kerby, and five or six more Gentlemen from this Quarter leave this, this Morning to buy cattle & take them to Amherstburgh. they are sent by Government.<sup>30</sup> I send you by them a few old English Papers, which are the only ones I could get.

Your dutiful & Affectionate Son

Charles Askin

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<sup>28</sup> Site of modern Grimsby.

<sup>29</sup> In a letter to his brother, James Askin, June 15, 1813, the writer said: "There are 300 Indians crossing [here] also from Lower Canada and we look for 500 from your quarter [Detroit] I hope we may not be disappointed in getting them for the Indians of the Grand River are not worth a Farthing."

<sup>30</sup> For an explanation of this movement, see letter of General Vincent of June 2, 1813, printed in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XV, 308-309. Robert Grant was a captain in the Second Lincoln Militia. William Kerby's military unit has not been identified. See Irving, *op. cit.*

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

*Endorsed:* recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 13<sup>h</sup> June Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 16<sup>h</sup>

CONDUCT OF ROBERT DICKSON'S INDIANS

Mackinac, Juin 23 1813

Ma Cher Mere    San doute que vous avez enticipé la joie que nous avons hut de voir Allexandre, malheureusement M<sup>r</sup> Dixson a arrivez deux jours apres lui, ce qui nous a mis dans le trouble et la confussions, mon cher john na pas hut la satisfactions de sasoir une demie journé pour sentertenir avec son frere, il étoit se tourmenté avec les sauvages la maison ne vidait pas du matin au soire, dieu merci ils vienne de partir, ils ont fait bien du homages icit, ils ont tué sis ou sept bête acorne et plussieur mouton la partes est grandes pour ceux qui ont perdu leur vache car il se vend quarante piastre isite. Je suppose que le General sera surprit de voir que quatres ou cinq cent hommes au lieu de trois mil quil esperait ces a dire le Lieutenant Colonel Boucherville a dit ici que M<sup>r</sup> D. a promis au Gouverneur de mené aumoins trois mille. je pensait bien qui se tramperait sa nait pas une choses si aisé dasemblé ten de monde en autre des sauvages quil faut ramassé dun coté et de lautre, cepandant M<sup>r</sup> D. dit quil emmené plus quil na promis je ne sait pas sil se trompe ou non, il dit quil auroit put enmené boucoup plus de sauvages mais quil navoit pas de canan ni de provisions, vous pouvez vous jmaginé sil lui fallait boucoup de vivres, lon ma dit que ses sauvages avoit mangé trois cent poche de farine dans trois ou quatres jours. je sait quil avoit quelque fais icit cinq cent minot de Blé-dainde par jour sen conté la gresse le Boeuf et le poison et le sucre, enfin lon ne peu pas avoir aucu'une idé des depances que ses denmené un nombre de sauvages, le magazin sauvages ait vide et boucoup de Marchandise ont etté achetté et tous les fusil du vilages neuf et vieux, et encore ils ne sont pas sastifait, ils ni a jamais de fin a leur demande, ils ont resté ici quatorze jours, selon mon opinion il naroit pas du resté plus que quatre, mon cher john se travaillié sans delait afin de ne pas le retardé, et en trois jours il avoit tout livré, il faut dire aussi quil sait pas passé une journé sans



quil aie mouillée depuis son arrivé je nait jamais vue un tems pareil depuis que je suis dans ces païyé icit. je crains boucoup que si vous avez un pareil tems aussi preummeis-saux que les fievre seront bien comune chez vous en autre au Detroit ou il y sont si sujet par tout descriptions ils sont assez mallheux sans avoir encore la maladie. la Cocluche a etté bien comune icite lhivert dernierre une chose qui na jamais prie lieu dans cet endroit ici a ce que dise les enciens et sa emporte plussieurs anfans, le vieux M<sup>e</sup>donald est bien malade le docteur ne crois quil en revienne cepandant il na pas envie de mourir, il y-a cinquante trois ans quil sont marié et le vieux avoit tres bonne mine Chivert dernierre javoit Coutume de la rencontré souvant quant je me promenoit le matin devant dejuenné, la vielle ne paressoit pas suporté son age si bien elle étoit plus lassé que son marie, je ne crois pas que M<sup>d</sup> Soloman vivra longtems elle ait bien foible elle garde son lit depuis quelque tems, et elle na pas autre choses a mangé que ce que le mondes lui envoie, et vous savez que lon doné tarde quant lon attend apres les autres. comme Allexandre a etté un silent observateur de tous ce quel ses passez ici, concequament il peu vous dire tout ce quil a trouvé de plus remarquable sur l'îls, et le trait quil a remarqué dans les personne quil vué depuis quil est ici, je concluré donc par vous prié de presenté mes amitié a mon cher pere ainsse que mes frere et soeur, excepté M<sup>d</sup> M<sup>e</sup>Kee ils sont tout des mauvaïse corespondent, car, ils sont tout dans ma dette, je plains pauvre Allice car je crois quel sannui, Adieu ma cher mere que le bon dieu vous conserve mes cher parant est la prierre de votre affectionné

Madelaine Askin

*Addressed:* Madame Askin Strabane

### *Translation*

Mackinac, June 23, 1813

My dear Mother: You have no doubt been anticipating our pleasure in seeing Alexander, but unfortunately Mr. Dickson arrived two days after him with only trouble and confusion in store for us. My dear John has not had the satisfaction of even a half day off to visit with his brother,



he has been so plagued with Indians, the house never empty of them from morning to night. Thank God they are now leaving. They have done much damage here, six or seven cattle killed and several sheep. It is a great loss for those who have had their cows killed, as they sell for forty dollars here.

I am thinking that the General will be surprised to see only four or five hundred men instead of the three thousand that he is expecting, or so Lt. Col. Boucherville<sup>31</sup> said here, that Mr. D. had promised the Governor to take out at least three thousand. Mr. Dickson miscalculated in this, I think. It is not an easy matter to muster so many men, especially Indians, who must be gathered in from every quarter. However, Mr. D. says that he is taking out more than he promised. I do not know how true that is. He says that he might have taken many more Indians but that he had neither canoes nor provisions. You can imagine whether there has been any lack of provisions. I am told that the Indians have eaten three hundred bags of flour in three or four days, and I know that he has had sometimes five hundred minots of Indian corn here per day, not counting the pork grease, beef and fish, and sugar. Indeed, no one can have any idea of the expense in taking out a lot of Indians. The Indian store is empty and much of the merchandise has been sold, and all the guns, new and old, in the village. Still they are not satisfied. There is no end to their wants. They were here fourteen days and in my opinion they need not have remained more than four, for my dear John worked constantly so as not to delay them and had everything delivered in three days. I must say, too, that there has not been a day without rain since his arrival. I have never seen such weather since I have lived here. If you are having the same, so damp and foggy, it will be a bad time for the ague, I fear. Then they are so exposed in Detroit, by all accounts, that the people are unfortunate enough, without sickness.

<sup>31</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Pierre Amable de Boucherville of the Eighth Battalion, Lower Canada Militia. He belonged to a notable Canadian family, and was head of the seignory of Boucherville. He was on the personal staff of Governor Prevost. For his report of his western journey, here alluded to, see *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XV, 315-16. He died in November, 1857, aged seventy-seven years. See Irving, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

Whooping-cough was very prevalent here last winter, something that never happened before in this place, so the old residents say, and carried off several children. Old Mr. McDonald<sup>32</sup> is very ill. The doctor thinks that he cannot recover, but he does not want to die. They have been married fifty-three years, and the old gentleman looked so well last winter. I often met him when I would be out walking in the forenoon. The old lady has not seemed to carry her age so well, more worn out than her husband. I do not think that Mrs. Solomon<sup>33</sup> will live long, she is very feeble and has kept her bed for some time now. She has nothing to eat except what people take in and you know how slow they are giving when one waits for another.

As Alexander has been a silent observer of all that has taken place here he will be able to tell you all that he has found worthy of notice in the island, and the peculiarities of the people he has seen since he came. I will therefore conclude asking you kindly to give my love to my dear Father and to my brothers and sisters. With the exception of Mrs. McKee, they are all bad correspondents, for they are all in my debt. I am sorry for poor Alice.<sup>34</sup> Time will hang heavy on her hands, I am afraid.

Farewell, dear Mother. May the good Lord protect you, my dear parent, is the prayer of your loving

Madelaine Askin

#### BATTLE OF BEAVER DAMS

10 Mile Creek July 8<sup>th</sup> 1813

Dear Father Your affectionate letter of the 15<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup> was handed me by M<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Kerby on the field of Battle when six hundred of the Americans under the Command of Col.

<sup>32</sup> John McDonald, assistant barrackmaster prior to the British evacuation of Mackinac in 1796. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXIII, 340-41, and *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 502.

<sup>33</sup> Probably the wife of Ezekiel Solomon, for whom see *ante*, 525. William Solomon, son of Ezekiel, is said to have been of mixed Jewish and Indian blood. This would imply that Mrs. Solomon was an Indian woman. See *Ont. Hist. Soc., Papers and Records*, III, 126 ff.

<sup>34</sup> Mrs. Brush, sister-in-law of Madeline Askin. The allusion is evidently to the absence from Detroit of her husband and son, for which see *ante*, 750.

Bustler<sup>35</sup> were obliged to surrender themselves prisoners of Warr, to us. this was on the 24<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>. the Enemy had marched out of Fort George to surprise and take a party we had at the Beaver Dams under L<sup>t</sup> Fitz Gibbon<sup>36</sup> of the 49<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> and probably also to attack an advancing party we had at the 10 Mile Creek commanded by Col. De Heran<sup>37</sup> of the 104<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup>. the Enemy were observed in the Morning on their march by some Indian Scouts, who gave the alarm and about four hundred & fifty Indians who lay at 20 Mile Creek marched off immediately to meet them.<sup>38</sup> I joined them with three more young men of the Country, and in about three quarters of an hour after, we came up to their rear guard which were horsemen and attacked them. after killing several of them, we were then forced to retreat into a woods which was a little distance from us. some Infantry followed us across one or two fields, but we forced them to retreat. they then came along the edge of the woods sheltered by a fence but we also drove them from this. they after this came some distance in the Woods; but we forced them to retire to a wheat field where the Enemy remained nearly two hours firing at us from two field pieces with Canister shot, which Kept the Indians from advancing on them. after a short cessation from firing, the Americans began to retreat but in very good order. the Indians

35 Colonel Charles J. Boerstler of the Fourteenth U. S. Infantry.

36 James Fitzgibbon was a native of Ireland, who after several years' service as a non-commissioned officer in the Napoleonic wars was commissioned a lieutenant in the Forty-ninth Regiment in 1806. He was an enterprising character who in the warfare on the Niagara frontier seems to have enacted the rôle of a ranger leader, having organized a company for scouting service which proved a magnet for adventurous spirits. His outstanding exploit in the war was the capture of Colonel Boerstler's force at Beaver Dams. Fitzgibbon became assistant adjutant general in 1822, and in the uprising of 1837 he commanded the force which defeated the rebels near Toronto. In 1846 he returned to England, where he died in 1863. See Wallace, *op. cit.*, and Babcock, *War of 1812*, 93 ff.

37 Peter W. DeHaren, lieutenant colonel of the Canadian Fencibles. He was a veteran soldier, having been commissioned lieutenant in the Sixtieth Regiment, Dec. 30, 1797. He had joined General Vincent shortly before the battle of Beaver Dams, having brought a detachment of several hundred men from Lower Canada. See Irving, *op. cit.*; Matilda Edgar (ed.), *Ten years of Upper Canada in Peace and War, 1805-1815; Being the Ridout Letters with Annotations* (Toronto, 1890), 200.

38 This statement negatives the claim that the British learned of the impending American attack from Mrs. Laura Secord, whose supposed exploit in conveying the warning has caused her to be lionized by the Canadian people. For a discussion of the subject, see Babcock, *War of 1812*, 99 ff.



followed them and the enemy soon took up a good position for their Guns. while they were doing this Lt Fitzgibbon joined us with about 45 of the 49<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup>. these were the first troops who came to our aid. the Americans gave them two or three shots from their field pieces but neither Killed nor wounded a man. Fitzgibbon's party did not fire in return for they were at too great a distance for Musketry to do much execution. The Indians kept firing a few shots, then Fitzgibbon advanced with a flag of Truce and demanded them to Surrender, which after a long parley they agreed to do. while they were settling the terms on which they would lay down their Arms, a party of our Dragoons under Cap<sup>t</sup> Hall, and about two hundred Infantry, under Col. De Heran also joined us. Fitzgibbon who is a most active and deserving Officer gets the whole credit of the business, as he was the person who demanded them to surrender; but the Battle was gained by the Indians for his party as I before said, did not fire a shot. he is one of the most active and deserving Officers we have and has allways been employed in any arduous duty. he was most allways on the rear Guard when we were retreating, and commanded the advance Guard since we have been moving towards Fort George. while the main body of our Troops were at the Forty Mile Creek, he has been with a small party of the 49<sup>th</sup> in Queenston, and then would be at Chippawa, Fort Erie, and flying about in such a manner that the Enemy did not know where to find him he has had some very narrow escapes. his life was saved by M<sup>rs</sup> Kerby and another Woman a short time since. he had by accident met with two of the Enemy's Riflemen when he was alone. they were going to fire on him, but he was in disguise and told them he belonged to their Army, at the same time got near them and seized hold of their Rifles one in each hand and was struggling to get them from them, when one of his Antagonists drew his sword from him, and would have run him through, had not a M<sup>rs</sup> Dufield Kicked it out of the Fellows hand. the Women then threatened to Kill him if he did not surrender, and they both allowed themselves to be taken prisoners. he had hardly got a quarter of a mile from the place with his prisoners when a large



party of Americans, came there, but he got off safe with them. I find by one of your letters that you have understood we have had an engagement soon after the 6<sup>h</sup> June, but there has been none since that except the one on the 24<sup>h</sup>, which I have given the best account of I could but I omitted to mention the loss on both sides that of the Enemy was about 20 Killed and nearly 40 wounded and on the Indians six killed and ten or twelve wounded. The Enemy were Panick struck by a few shot which Sir Lucas Yeo gave them at the Forty and a few shot accompanied with a little yelling from about 20 Indians at the same time they imagined that Gen<sup>l</sup> Proctor and all the *wild* Indians had reinforced us, and that it was a General attack we were going to make on them. they hurried off left their tents, camp Kettles & a number of other things behind them and hardly halted a minute until they got into Fort George. some troops they had at Fort Erie, Chippawa Queenston &<sup>ca</sup> were marched down immediately to Fort George so much alarmed that they hardly dared look behind them at the same time. there was not an Indian nor one of our Soldiers within ten miles of them. had we followed them, we could have taken one half of them or got some of our troops and Indians ahead of them, which could have been done easily by some bye road it's the oppinion of those who saw them on their retreat that the whole of this army which was 5000 strong would have surrendered, but we missed this fine opportunity of geting rid of them and we have lost many others. We have been very fortunate in driving them ahead to Fort George where they are confined and hardly dare venture more than two or three miles indeed there Picket Guard have been driven into the Town, and a number of their men at different times taken prisoner. their Army are said to be very unhealthy. they have eight hundred sick and wounded; but their sick, their Cannon, baggage and most every thing else they have removed to the other side of the River for they are in constant dread of an attack and are continually alarmed.

10 Mile Creek 19<sup>th</sup> July. We have about one thousand men within a Mile of Niagara, and our Head Quarters are now at S<sup>t</sup> Davids about 7 Miles from Fort George. we

have good news from our fleet which we expect in a few days. an attack will be made on the Enemy its supposed the moment our Shipping arrives. I am sorry to say that we have lost one of the most Galant Officers in the Country, Colonel Bishopp<sup>39</sup> who died of the wounds he received on Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> instant at the Battle of Black Rock where we took 3 brass field pieces and some other Guns. The 41<sup>st</sup> suffered much in this Engagement. Cap<sup>t</sup> Saunders<sup>40</sup> was supposed to have been Killed, but was only wounded he is now a prisoner. M<sup>r</sup> Mompesson was also wounded. Col. Thomas Clark rec<sup>d</sup> a wound in the hand but is doing well. we lost about forty men in Killed wounded & missing. the Enemy's loss I believe was very trifling. Our people brought over an immense deal of stores &<sup>ca</sup> before the Engagement commenced, and could have returned without losing a man; but Col. Bishopp was too Galant a Soldier and would not retire till he had given them Battle. he was one of the last to retire from the Field & was carried in the Boat after receiving a wound in the thigh. His loss is most sadly regretted, he was one of the most Gentlemany men I ever was acquainted with; and the best soldier \* \* \*<sup>41</sup>

We have upwards of three thousand regular Troops here I think. we have the Royals, the King's, part 41<sup>st</sup> 49<sup>th</sup> 104<sup>th</sup> Newfoundland, Glengary Light Infantry and Dragoons from Lower Canada. the 19<sup>th</sup> L<sup>t</sup> Dragoons have not yet arrived. It was not my intention to have sent this scrawl, which I am really ashamed of, but an Indian is going to Amherstburgh and would not wait untill I could write another. you will please not show this to any one, but my Mother & Brothers \* \* \*<sup>42</sup>

There is a report here that Sacketts Harbour is taken: but I do not believe it. Give my love to my Dear Mother, my Brothers & Sisters and Believe me

Your Dutiful & Affectionate Son

Charles Askin

<sup>39</sup> For Colonel Bisshopp, see *ante*, 738.

<sup>40</sup> William Caulfield Saunders, commissioned lieutenant in the Forty-first Regiment, Nov. 1, 1797. See British army lists.

<sup>41</sup> The paragraph here omitted consists of a recital of European news.

<sup>42</sup> The sentences omitted deal with unimportant personal matters.

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

P.S. Mr Willson of the Field Train Dep<sup>t</sup> died on Friday or Saturday last.

The remainder<sup>43</sup> of the 41<sup>st</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> in this quarter are now on their March for Amherstbergh, and I believe the Light Company of the Newfoundland Reg<sup>t</sup> are ordered up also. I find by a letter from Therese that you supposed me to have been in the Action at Stony Creek: but I was not. the only action I have been in, was on the 24<sup>th</sup> June, which was near Beaver Dams when we took six hundred. the battle lasted three hours & a half. I saw the whole of it.

Your Affectionate Son

Charles Askin

12 Mile Creek July 19<sup>th</sup> 1813

There is a report that Sackett's Harbour is taken, but I do not believe it.

Your Affectionate Son

Charles Askin

July 19<sup>th</sup> 1813

*Addressed:* John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Strabane Sandwich

*Endorsed:* recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> July

#### NEWS OF BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

Ma chere Mère Je me suis trouve avec mes amies americains ici et je me suis ainformer de votre flotée. il mont dit que il y a voit beaucoup de monde de tuér dun bord et de lautre mes que Richardson et Comodore Berkly etoit tout les deux presonier et quil etoit a bord de le *Queen Charlotte* que le Comodore avez le Bras Casseé, et que les autres etoit toute a fait a leur aisse. Je men vais travessa a present.

adieu chere mere porte vous bien je suis votre

Effectionnée fille

A Brush

*Addressed:* Madame Askin

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<sup>43</sup> This portion of the letter is written on different paper than that which precedes, and apparently at a later time.



*Translation*

My dear Mother: I am with my American friends here and have asked about your fleet. They say that many were killed on both sides but that Richardson and Commodore Barclay were both taken prisoners and that it was aboard the *Queen Charlotte* that the Commodore received the broken arm, and that the others were quite comfortable. I am leaving now to cross over.

Goodbye, dear Mother, keep well. I remain,  
Your loving daughter,  
A. Brush

NEWS FROM ASKIN FUGITIVES

West Minister Oct<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> 1813

My Dear Father To relieve the anxiety of your mind & that of my mother I will merely say that we are all well James, Alick, Cap<sup>tn</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee & Alick M<sup>c</sup>Kee are ahead. My Brother Alick has the ague but the people are all very kind. My Alicks Toe is very bad. God Bless you both my most excellent Parents. I wish I could hear how my D<sup>r</sup> Sister Nelly is, & her children.

Your tru[lly affe<sup>te</sup> Daughter  
T M<sup>c</sup>Kee

Jane<sup>44</sup> is very anxious to find out how her poor father, & Brother John are.

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

*Endorsed:* recv<sup>d</sup> 25<sup>h</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>

SAFE CONDUCT FOR JOHN ASKIN

Territory of Michigan  
Head Quarters at Detroit  
15<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup> 1813

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS MAY COME, BE IT KNOWN:

John Askin Esquire of Sandwich in the Province of Upper

<sup>44</sup> Jane Richardson, daughter of Dr. Robert Richardson. Her father had been captured at the defeat of Barclay's fleet by Commodore Perry on September 10, and her brother John had been captured at the Battle of the Thames, October 5.

Canada having applied to me for protection, the same is hereby granted unto him during his good behaviour, and all Officers and privates of my army are hereby required to observe the same, and to abstain from any acts of violence or outrage towards the said John Askin and his hous[e]hold.

Given under my hand at Detroit the day and year above written

Will<sup>m</sup> Henry Harrison

NEWS FROM ASKIN FUGUTIVES

Head [of] the Lake 23<sup>d</sup> October 1813

Dear Mother, I'm happy to say that Capt<sup>n</sup> M<sup>e</sup>Kee Alex<sup>r</sup> James Johnny & myself are here and all in Good health. Charles & all the Hamiltons and Robinsons are in this neighbourhood House Jane Richardson and Nancy left this the day before yesterday for York where they will be more comfortable than here We are very anxious to know how you are and beg that you may not suffer the least uneasiness with respect to us, as we are as well off as the times will admit of. We have suffered no hardship, but the very unpleasant separation from our parents & friends which I feel in a very great degree. Let my Uncles & relations know that not an hour passes over without my thinking of them. please assure my Dear Friend<sup>45</sup> of my everlasting attachment, & hopes of one Day seeing &c. What satisfaction it would be to hear from you could it be done with propriety.

Y<sup>r</sup> ever tender & affectionate Son

Alex<sup>r</sup> D Askin

Remember me to all my friends

*Addressed:* M<sup>rs</sup> Askin Strabane

DIFFICULTIES AT MACKINAC

Mich<sup>e</sup> 26<sup>t</sup> Oct 1813

My Dear John, An opportunity offering for Matchedash

<sup>45</sup> The allusion is evidently to the writer's sweetheart. The attachment was interrupted by his untimely death. See *ante*, 423.

affords me an opportunity of writing, merely to describe to your [you] our distressing situation, having only two months provisions & very little prospect of obtaining any. the two Canoes & a boat are now sent to get some at Nautawwaysaugui the season is so far advanced that I dont believe we will be able to get them back. to compleat or crown our situation is that we have a Commandant<sup>46</sup> who is only fit to drive about Miscreants & knows very little or pretends to know the difference between Gentlemen & Blackguards. Of late he is tormenting all about him with orders counter orders & in short creates discontentment & disgust for my part I am quite sick of my situation & was it not that we expect the Enemy & it being the duty of every Loyal Subject to put up with thing[s] untill a day of retribution arrives & untill that day arrives to be united & every nerve exerted to maintain our ground I would resign my situation. There was a Corps of fencibles raised here consist<sup>d</sup> of 50 men & instead of keeping these people to defend our little ground they have been sent away to La Baye with Dickson thats to say the greatest part & the remainder goes for the Pro<sup>s</sup> so that we are left with the Veterans & Volunteers the latter I really dont believe will fight, being in dread of being tucked up if found in arms. The Indians are num[er]ous but in a day or two will be gone to their wintering Ground. to keep them would be madness, having no provisions. I really & sincerely believe that we will be obliged to eat every horse that is on the Island before spring if we are not taken prisoners this autumn Should

<sup>46</sup> Richard Bullock of the Forty-first Regiment succeeded Captain Charles Roberts as commandant of Mackinac, Sept. 14, 1813. The British army lists disclose that Richard Bullock became a lieutenant in the regiment, Feb. 28, 1796. He served in most of the actions in the Detroit area during the war, being present at Mongaugon, Aug. 9, 1812, and leading the advance guard of Brock's army in the capture of Detroit a few days later. He was with Procter in the latter's Maumee campaign of April-May, 1813, and on his retreat eastward in the autumn, being the only officer of the Forty-first who escaped capture in the Battle of the Thames, Oct. 5, 1813. There is some confusion in the evidence at this point which we have not succeeded in resolving, for Captain Charles Roberts reports that he yielded the command of Fort Mackinac to Bullock on Sept. 14, 1812, and this taken in conjunction with Askin's present letter would seem to preclude the idea that Bullock could have been with Procter's army on the retreat from Detroit to the Thames. A possible explanation may be that there were two officers of the same name in the regiment, whose whereabouts and activities we are unable to distinguish. Richard Bullock, presumably the Mackinac commandant of 1813, was serving as adjutant general of militia at Toronto as late as 1839. Data derived from documents in *Mich. Pio. Colls., passim*; Casselman, *op. cit.*, *passim*; and British army lists.



the Canoes return w<sup>t</sup> pro & the Enemy leave us alone this fall, in the spring we will with the help of God keep them off[f]. Write me by the Winters Express & let me know where you are & how does matters stand. Your mother & sisters say God Bless you & may you enjoy Health & every Blessing this world affords & am

Your affectionate Father

J. A.

Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin J[r]

My negro wench Madelaine absconded two days ago & I am just informed that Capt Bullock has taken her into his service (if so) he must be a d m n Scoundrel & is beginning similar tricks that Dawson did I can hardly credit the Report, for I cannot think that any man but Dawson would have been guilty of the like I am sorry the sudden departure of his [illegible] is such that I cannot get full proof of his having acted so, for were I certain that he has concealed her after I told him that she was my Slave & shewed him the Act whereby it is expressly mentioned that all those born before 1793 are slaves,<sup>47</sup> I would report him. time will illucedeate all things. dont say any thing on this head to any one untill you hear from me again.

*Addressed:* M<sup>r</sup> John B. Askin S<sup>t</sup> Davids or River Thames  
Recommended to the Care of Duncan Cameron Esq<sup>r</sup> York

#### FROM JOHN ASKIN TO HIS CHILDREN

Strabane Nov<sup>r</sup> the 12<sup>h</sup> 1813

My Dear Children This Letter though Only directed to three of you, its contents I wish you to make known not only to your sister M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Kee but likewise to my grand Children and fr[i]ends in the quarter w[h]ere you may be when it reaches you.

First thanks to Almighty God that we, Our Family and connections in this Quarter Enjoy good health though its a sickly time & many people have died. Your Acquaintances the Families of M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Intosh, F. Baby, M<sup>r</sup> Hands M<sup>r</sup>

<sup>47</sup> The allusion is to the act for the restriction of slavery passed by the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada in 1793. It was a compromise measure, which did not interfere with property in slaves existing prior to the passage of the act, but provided that children born to enslaved mothers subsequent thereto should become free upon attaining the age of twenty-five.

Woods & Mr James Babys, are likewise well: I have further to say That notwithstanding the great troubles I have not suffered any loss in property worth mentioning, Nor received the least Insult and am provided with all the necessaries of life for this Winter therefore was it not for the heavy & Unexpected stroke we have met with in the Death of your Dear & much limented Sister Mrs Pattinson at Mr Jacobs on the 12<sup>t</sup> of last Month Our minds would be tolerable Easy & we would Endeavour to bear your Absence, but those two misfortunes Added to Age bears heavy On us yet the Almighty favours us so much as to give us health of Body with Appetite & rest. Mary Pattinson is with Mrs Park, Richard & Ellen with us, all in good health. the last Child is with a good nurse at river Thames. we thought it unsafe to remove her at this Season. I requested Mr Brush to write Mr Pattinson, as I do not wish to keep up any Corrispondence Except with you, when permitted by the Commanding Officer of Detroit so to do. as he Appears very Indulgent to the British under his Authority, Im in hopes to Obtain this favour.<sup>48</sup> Doct<sup>r</sup> Richardson came home some time ago & is well, he says. your Acquaintance poor Johnston was Only slightly wounded & recovered before he came away. We were told by Mr Brice Woods & Cap<sup>t</sup> Shaw that they both seen you & that you were then well, but had been sick: We hope & depend on your suporting all the losses crosses & disapointment you may meet with in this life as becomes Christians, relying On the Almightys goodness for Our meeting Again in this life when this destructive war will be at an End. We hear Every two or three days from Mr Brush & Allice who with their dear Children are all well.

Mr Barthe having lost a great part of his little property & his Family being in fear, they winter with us & their Company Added to that of Richard & Ellens in some Measure keeps up our spirits.

The Ladyes of Mess<sup>r</sup> Marentetes & Themuses Famil[i]es

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<sup>48</sup> For the kindness and liberality exhibited by General Harrison toward the conquered British people, he was long held in grateful remembrance by them and by their descendants. Statement of Harry Maisenville of Windsor to the Editor, August, 1929. See also, William L. Baby, *Souvenirs of the Past* (Windsor, 1896), 119.

are well. If any or all the articles, Johnny was sending me in the *Nancy* or what I wrote to Montreal for are got where you are, take such of them as you stand in need of. Your mother joins in Blessing with your tender Father

J. A.

Charles James or Alexd<sup>r</sup> Askin with the British Army

#### CAPTURE OF FORT NIAGARA AND LEWISTON<sup>49</sup>

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup><sup>50</sup> I staid last night at Mr Hills<sup>51</sup> went and took an Inventory of Asa Baker's Cattle, who fled to the Enemy from that retur<sup>d</sup> to Queenston where they were preparing to cross the River, but were disappointed in get[t]ing boats and much against Col. Murray's<sup>52</sup> wish had to give it up. heard that seven pieces of Cannon had been found buried near Fort George, & some few prisoners were taken on Sunday morning at Niagara & Fort Erie. Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> Rode to Ball's Mills to send down flour there where I staid all night. Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> Went up 20 Mile Creek pressed a number of sleighs to take flour & some whiskey down from Balls Mills to S<sup>t</sup> Davids. Rode down to Queenston on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> About 10 oClock at night our troops began to cross the River from near Count De Puissay's to the five mile meadow. the 100<sup>th</sup> crossed first then part [of the] 41<sup>st</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> after which the Royals and the remainder of the 41<sup>st</sup> and last the Indians & militia some few militia were over in the first boats, among whom was Cap<sup>t</sup> Kerby<sup>53</sup> who was the first person who landed on the other side. the Grenadiers of the 100<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> pushed on towards Fort Niagara surprised the Enemy's picket at

<sup>49</sup> The manuscript is a fragment of the diary (consisting of several pages) kept by Charles Askin. The earlier portion (not reproduced here) details the doings of the writer from December 7-13 inclusive.

<sup>50</sup> Dec. 14, 1813.

<sup>51</sup> At Beaver Dams, where the detachment of Colonel Boerstler had been captured on June 24, 1813.

<sup>52</sup> Lieutenant Colonel John Murray of the 100th Regiment. He was a native of Jamaica and had been an officer in the army since 1792. He later rose to the rank of lieutenant general. He died, Feb. 21, 1832. Irving, *op. cit.*

<sup>53</sup> Captain James Kerby of the Second Lincoln Militia Regiment. He was given a sword by the Assembly in recognition of his gallantry at the capture of Fort Niagara. He was subsequently a member of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada. He died at Fort Erie, June 20, 1854. *Ibid.*



youngs Town where they killed several men. Cap<sup>t</sup> Fawcett advanced with the Grenadiers to the Gate of the Fort and fortunately got there just while the Guard were relieving the Sentinels by which means they got in at the Picket as they had got the Countersign from two sentinels whom they had taken. M<sup>r</sup> Dawson of the 100<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> led the forlorn hope but Cap<sup>t</sup> Kerby of the Incorporated Militia was in the Fort before any other officer. while the Grenadiers got in in front the Light Company of the 100<sup>th</sup> under Cap<sup>t</sup> Martin scaled the Works in the rear and got in nearly at the same time with the others. Cap<sup>t</sup> Elliott Q<sup>r</sup> M<sup>r</sup> General<sup>54</sup> was with Cap<sup>t</sup> Martin. Fortunately most of the Garrison were sleeping and were so completely surprised that we lost but 6 Men Killed in taking it among whom was L<sup>t</sup> Nowlan of the 100<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup>. the Enemy made as good a defence as could be expected considering the situation they were caught in and lost sixty-five men most of whom were bayoneted. Col. Murray who commanded the storming party was unfortunately wounded. Cap<sup>t</sup> Leonard the commanding officer of the Garrison was sleeping a few miles from the Fort with his Family. he came very early to the Garrison in the morning but was much surprised to be challenged by a British Sentinel who made a prisoner of him. upwards of three hundred men were made prisoners, a number of whom were of their 24<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup>. just as the first boat load of Indians had reached the other shore, the news of the Fort being taken reached them. They immediately pushed off for Lewiston and General Riall<sup>55</sup> with the Royals and the 41<sup>st</sup> marched to the same place. there were but about sixty artillery at that place who toke to their heels as soon as they heard the yells of the Indians. about 12 or 13 of the Enemy were killed at Lewiston, several of them Inhabitants of the place. unfortunately there was Liquor in most of the houses & notwithstanding the exertions of the Officers of the Indian Dep<sup>t</sup> the Indians soon got intoxicated and were outrageous several men of the Regular

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<sup>54</sup> Captain G. A. Eliot of the 103rd Regiment.

<sup>55</sup> Sir Phineas Riall. He had been commissioned a major general on June 4, 1813. He subsequently attained the rank of general. He died in Paris, Nov. 10, 1850. Irving, *op. cit.*

troops got drunk also. the Indians plundered the houses then set fire to them. the poor Inhabitants, Men, Women and Children we were obliged to keep a strong Guard over to prevent them from being killed by the Indians, one of whom killed a young Boy. Indeed the Indians got so drunk that they did not know what they were about. two of their own Indians were killed by them and one of the 41<sup>st</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Caldwell was shot through the thigh by one of them and young M<sup>c</sup>Dougall had his arm broke by another who struck him with a Tomyhawk. Indians, Regulars & Militia were plundering every thing they could get hold of. immense quantities of things were brought over from that place to Queenston at youngstown there were one or two stores from which every thing was taken by the Plunderers. I have never witnessed such a scene before & hope I shall not again.

## DEATH OF JAMES MCGILL

Montreal 3<sup>d</sup> febr<sup>y</sup> 1814John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

My dear friend I wrote you the 30<sup>th</sup> Decemb<sup>r</sup> informing you of the death of our mutual friend M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill & that he had bequeathed you all his lands on the American side of Detroit [River.] at our advanced age we must expect to experience the loss of friends & relatives, and you have lately felt this in the loss of M<sup>rs</sup> Pattison and I am told M<sup>r</sup> Brush, in both of which I sinc[e]rely condol with you & M<sup>rs</sup> Askin. you have a pleasing consolation that tho Death may deprive you of your Children yet in your numerous family none has by their conduct caused you pain. I have a long Letter from M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kay [McKee] which I will answer. I wish I could serve her.

the death of M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill and your advanced time of Life occasions my appointing M<sup>r</sup> Cartwright of Kingston my attorney perticularly for my property in Upper Canada & as the death of M<sup>r</sup> Brush will make it necessary for you to take some steps for securing payment of my property sold him in 1805 which was £460 York with Interest, as the property is improved his Executors or Heirs may keep it on

paying or securing the payment of what is due me. if you take it back for me it may be proper to consider the propriety of selling it immediatly, and if not sold for sufficient to pay me, Mr Brush Estate must make up the deficiency, or of keeping it untill a More favorable time for disposing of it, and in recommend[ing] this respecting my property sold Mr Brush, I suppose the same mode may be per[s]ued respecting that of Mr M<sup>c</sup>Gills sold him indeed by Mr M<sup>c</sup>Gills Will this part may become yours. I will send you an extract of his Will respecting you.

Mr Cartwright is Just Leaving this for Kingston I send this by him to forward. with kind remembrance to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin beli[e]ve me My Dear friend

Yours Senc[e]rily  
Isaac Todd

PS if I am obliged to quit this Country or other accident happen me you will correspond with Mr Cartwright respecting my property in your care

I now send extract from Mr M<sup>c</sup>Gills Will respecting his bequest to you

*Addressed:* John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Strabane near Sandwich  
Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal Feb<sup>y</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> 1814 Isaac Todd Esq<sup>r</sup> to  
Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 7 June

I give and devise all and every [one of] the Lands and Tenements situated within the Territories of the United States of American to me belonging or to which I am in any manner entitled not exceeding in quantity sixteen hundred acres, to John Askin of Strabane his Heirs and Assigns for ever:

Provided always that if the said last mentioned land and tenements should exceed sixteen hundred acres in quantity then and in that case I give and devise all and every such lands and tenements so exceeding and over and above the said quantity of sixteen hundred acres to Robert Reynolds step Father of the said James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Desriviers, his Heirs and Assigns for ever.



*Endorsed:* Extract from the Will of the late James McGill, Esq<sup>r</sup>

TROUBLES OF GEORGE MELDRUM<sup>56</sup>

Dear Sir It's so long since We have had any corospondence that I do not know how to begin first give me leave to Condole with you for the loss of your Daughter M<sup>rs</sup> Pattison as well your Anxiety for your Sons as for [my] part mine have troubled me much and have intirely let every thing on the Farm go to Distruction and my Situation is such that I dare not direct them as to my self I was three months on my back by the Calash wheel going over my foot which had most cut if off but thank God I made a great cure of [it] by sopyknit Root which surprised all the Docters and M<sup>rs</sup> Meldrum since the month of July have not had three Days at one time health Myself for this month past I have been very unWell but am now little recovered We are most reduced to Starvation for the Indian[s] whilst I was on my back killed all my pigs to the number of thirty four Oxen ten sheep all our Fowls and burned our hen house and like to have sett the house in fire and I could [not] let my sons interferr as the Indians knew and reproached them being Yankies and was not able to go out myself We now eat Rye bread for want of better and our Porke which I chans'd of Getting last fall is most out and the worst of all no money to gett more M<sup>rs</sup> Park keeping back the papers of the Copartnership is the occasion of being reduced so low as also the occasion of great loss to Co partnership there is M<sup>r</sup> Boyer who bog<sup>t</sup> a House [from] M<sup>r</sup> Parke he is dead and as I am told hase made over the house to an other which may cause a loss to the Co. with sundrei losses which I can not help for want of Companys books & papers Inclosed you have a Note of sundrie papers of M<sup>r</sup> Frasers and also mine as M<sup>rs</sup> Brush goes over in a day or two you can deliver them to Her I will thank you if [you] can let me have five or six Quarts of salt as I have not a pint in the House I woud be thankful to you if [you] coud inform me where the Martins that bog<sup>t</sup> Sag[*uinah*] sloop lodged the Iron or if they

<sup>56</sup> From the original copy in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

tooke it away M<sup>rs</sup> Meldrum Joins me with Compelements  
to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin and am with great respect Your sincere Friend  
and well wisher

I am, Sir Your Most Obed Serv<sup>t</sup>

George Meldrum

Detroit 29<sup>th</sup> March 1814

John Askin Esquire

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Sandwich

*Endorsed:* Detroit March 29<sup>th</sup> 1814 M<sup>r</sup> Geo. Meldrum  
Jno<sup>o</sup> Askin Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>

CONDITIONS AT MACKINAC

Michilimackinac 1<sup>st</sup> May 1815

My Dear Father, Your esteemed favour of the 17<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>  
per M<sup>r</sup> Reaume<sup>57</sup> afforded Madelaine & myself the greatest  
pleasure we have been bless<sup>d</sup> with since the commencement  
of this unjust declaration of War. I am truly happy to  
learn that all our Relatives, Friends & connections are well  
and that you have not suffered as was reported to me.  
James wrote me from York that he intended to proceed to  
Sandwich for M<sup>r</sup> Pattinsons children. by yours I'm glad  
he has reached you & by the next trust he will be married  
to the Young Lady<sup>58</sup> he so long has sigh'ed for. In March  
last I wrote M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee & enclosed a draft on D. Davids  
for £25 H<sup>x</sup> C<sup>y</sup> in her favour & hope she has received it in  
time to relieve her wants—

<sup>57</sup> Alexis Réaume, for whom see *ante*, 732.

<sup>58</sup> He married Frances Godet *dit* Marentette on Oct. 10, 1815. The bride was born in Sandwich, Nov. 19, 1796. She was a descendant in the sixth generation of Nicholas Godet, who was born in Ige, province of Perche, France, in 1583. He married Frances Gadois, a native of the same place, and migrating to New France, became a resident of Montreal. Here he was slain by the Iroquois, and was buried, Oct. 25, 1657. Jacques Godet, a grandson of Nicholas, born, Oct. 13, 1673, was in Detroit on business as early as 1708, although his place of residence was always Montreal. He married at Three Rivers, Nov. 4, 1698, Margaret Duguay *dit* Marentette, daughter of Jacques Duguay *dit* Marentette, and Jane Baudry *dit* St. Martin. Their youngest child, Francis Godet *dit* Marentette was born in Montreal, March 6, 1720. On Sept. 8, 1755, he married in Detroit Jane Parent, daughter of Laurence Parent and Jane Cardinal. The fourth of their thirteen children was Dominic Francis Godet *dit* Marentette, who was born in Sandwich, May 16, 1763. He married, Oct. 20, 1788, Mary Louisa Robert Navarre, daughter of Robert Navarre and Mary Louisa Marsac, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 36-37. Dominic Godet was buried in Sandwich, April 22, 1808; Mary Louisa Navarre was buried in Detroit, May 15, 1851. They had nine children; the fifth child was Frances who became the bride of James Askin. Data adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*

Reaume has given me a great [deal] of information respecting my old acquaintances about Sandwich &c &c You have been far more fortunate than we have been on the score of cheapness of things. Flour was selling at 20\$ the Cw<sup>t</sup> Rum at 32\$ p<sup>r</sup> Gallon, Butter 1\$ Beef  $\frac{1}{2}$ \$ p<sup>r</sup> lb Potatoes 3\$ Bush<sup>1</sup> Salt 1\$ Corn 10 & 12\$ Bush<sup>1</sup> Maple Sugar from 1/ to 1/3 H<sup>x</sup> per lb The latter Commodity will fall in price I hope before an opportunity offers for your Quarter—None of the Indians are arrived consequently the moment the Market is open I will procure what you want at the lowest rate its sold at. This letter goes by a dispatch sent by our Commandant & is to return immediately you can write by their return for I have desired them to put ashore for your Letter. If you possibly can send me half a Doz<sup>n</sup> Sheep in the course of the Summer to S<sup>t</sup> Josephs draw on me for the amo<sup>t</sup> thats to say I want 6 Ewes & 1 Ram—I have not tasted Mutten for two Years past & wish much to raise a stock. Per an Express arrived from York this day I got a letter from John dated the 4<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>—he was well & states M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee being at Robert Hamiltons—The Schooners *Scorpion* & *Tygriss* arrived here on the 24<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup> with Full Cargos of Irish Pork & Flour for the Garrison. The[y] had 18 M<sup>o</sup> Pro<sup>s</sup> on the Island before this last Supply arrived & as we have to leave this & settle an other place there will not be too much to treat our Indian allies with. I learn that there is a number of Pedlars on Board the *Mink* & *Mary* with Whisky for Trade. I really am afraid they have been rather premature in coming to this before the Indians have been spoken to & fully satisfied as to the mode of their future dependance I trust in God that no accident may happen to any of the poor Wretches—Per the opportunity that takes the sheep I request you will send a good breeding Sow w<sup>th</sup> Pig & young Boar. there is not any to be had at this place. The Indians destroyed all that was on the Island fortunately I saved two Cows & one horse.

Since Gen<sup>l</sup> Harrison took Amherstburg I have only wrote you two Letters I dare not venture any more being fearful that they might have Fallen into the Enemys hands & have caused your being suspected of carrying on a Correspondance & proven injurious to yourself & family—By the York Express which arrived this day I'm sorry to learn that the



New Found land Reg<sup>t</sup> is to go down by the Grande River. our adopted Daughter Theresse who was married to Ensign OBrien of that Reg<sup>t</sup> will have to go down with her Husband. Its a great pity their route was not *via* Amherstburg it would have afforded her an opportunity of seeing some of her Friends. When an opportunity offers to her Uncles the Roberts or Roberre have the goodness to desire them to notify Theresses Father of his Daughters marriage with a decent Sober & well educated Young man, who was formerly in the Comm<sup>e</sup> & volunteered his Services to Sackets Harbour—on his having distinguished himself as a brave man got a Com<sup>n</sup> he is a distant relation of M<sup>rs</sup> England<sup>59</sup> born in Lymerick Ireland has a Brother at Kingston L<sup>t</sup> in the Field train at 15/ p<sup>r</sup> day & an other Brother Lieu<sup>t</sup> in the Royal Navy at Home—

\* \* \* \* \*

Your dutiful Son  
Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Jr

\* \* \* \* \*

John Askin Esquire Strabane

*Endorsed:* Mich: May 1<sup>st</sup> 1815 Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Jun<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Senior Recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Recv<sup>d</sup> May 11

FROM ALEXANDER HENRY TO JOHN ASKIN

Montreal 9<sup>th</sup> May 1815

My dear Old Friend It is three days since I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 21 February. where could it have been so long on the road. I think before this we should have a regular post to your place, but you have been so long separated from us that your place is forgotten,

<sup>59</sup> Wife of Colonel Richard England, last British commandant of Detroit. See *B. H. R.*, I, 444. Mrs. England was a daughter of James O'Brien of Ennistyen, a cadet of the family of the Marquis of Thomond. *Dic. Nat. Biog.* According to O. M. Spencer, Ensign Edward James O'Brien of the Detroit garrison in 1792, who is noted *ante* was a brother of Mrs. England.

<sup>60</sup> The paragraph here omitted conveys greetings to various relations and friends.

<sup>61</sup> A postscript, here omitted, concerns trivial personal matters.

however we are blessed with another peace, which I hope may continue, as long as I live, but we live in a time that such Wonderfull things happens, that we cannot say what may come to pass. Boneparts return to France, will cause another General War in Europe, which I am afraid will extend to America, as they do not approve of the peace. I received a letter a few day[s] ago from our old friend Todd. he was then at Bath taking the Mineral Waters, and says if his leg gets better he will return to this Country, as he has no friends in any other. I expect he will come by New York. It is not only him whom old Age deprives of friends. I must say that I experience every day the want of Old acquaintance. they are all Dead. there is only one alive in Montreal that was here when I came. I know but very few. what do you think of our Beaver Club which commenced in 1786 and consisted of 16 member[s], and I the only one alive. our late Friend M<sup>c</sup>Gill was the last, and a great loss he was to Montreal. he allways continued friendly to the last, and was much regreted. I was happy to hear he was so friendly to you. his sudden Death deprived him of doing more good to those who wanted it. several who he mentiond to me shortly before his death—for he had no idea of going off half an hour before he died. M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill is left comfortable, but young Deriviere<sup>62</sup> will it is said have £60.000. My dear friend are we never to meet in this World. I think it would do you much good to come down. Could I be spared from my business I would go on purpose to say we Meet once more. Old Age should not prevent me having that pleasure, but necessity at my time of life obliges me to be attentive in procuring Necessarys. M<sup>rs</sup> Henry & my Daught[er] Julia has enjoyd uncommon Health. I have only one Daughter & one son living one was killd in the North west the other died in the West Indies, being a Midshipman in the Navey. we are subject to many misfortunes in the world, but our hope is that we will be more happy in the next. the great Ruler of the World orders all for the Best. we must depend on him for our suport in this life, and hope for his protection in the Next, where you & I may meet in these regions of Happiness

<sup>62</sup> François DesRivières, eldest son of Mrs. McGill by her first marriage.

in the Next. that period must soon come. it gives me great pleasure to hear you and M<sup>rs</sup> Askin enjoy Health, and that you have Escaped the ravages of War. poor M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee suffered much while she was here with her unfortunate Husband. he had no command over himself. Continually deranged with Liquor. if he had lived, Government could have no reliance on him. I wish she was with you. I sent by M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Intosh, a keg with some Tea Coffee & Sugar for you, and have never heard from him what he has done with it. I wish you would enquire of him, as I suppose he sold it not supposing while the war continued to be able to convey it to you. as the communication is now open I hope to hear from you frequently. with the most sincere wishes & prayers of me & Mine for you M<sup>rs</sup> Askin & all yours—remain ever

My dear Askin your old friend  
Alexander Henry

N B enclose a Newspaper with all the News.

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Sandwich Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal 9<sup>th</sup> May 1815 Alexander Henry Esq<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin.

#### DEATH OF JOHN ASKIN

Ma tres Cher Mere: Voira Combien je me suis faite de résolutions enfin de prandre ma plume pour lui offrir les consolations que sa situation affligent demande, mais que vous dire—je ma plume refuse de trassé ce que je voudroit exprimer, oui ma tres chere et affligé mere parsonne ne sens plus le poix de votre malleur que nous, vous avez perdu le plus Cherri des mari et nous avont perdu le plus tendre des pere, nos larmes ne nous le rendra pas, il faut donc se soumettre a la volonté de bon dieu, il vous la voit donné et il lui a plut de le rebrandre. Consolé vous donc ma chere mere il vous unira encore une fois, dans cet ter Celeste ou vous ne seré jamais Separré, voyez combien le dieu de bonté vous a menagé dans votre afflition il vous la flessé jusqua ce que vos enfans pouvoit aller vous joindre pour vous consoler dun malleur dans le quel il participe auten



que vous mon cher John est presque inconsolable viola trois mois quil enticipoit ce fatal Coup la dernierre lettre a étté reçu avec des larmes de joie il avoit esperence de le voir jusqu'a quel-que jours passé quil a vue quil etoit impossible pour lui de descendre enfin une melancolie senpara de lui et il me disoit que jamais il ne voirait son pere cetoit pourtant la Seule Chose quil demandoit a dieu, mais quil sentoit quel-que malleur il y-avoit trois jours quil navoit presque pas mange quant la Barque est arrivé qui nous aprit le malleur quil avoit si longtems prevu. il ne pui pas écrire et il ma prie de tacher de la faire je crains que vous auré auten de peine a le lire que jai a lécrire ce nait quau travers de mes larmes que je tache de vous offrir du consolation que nous sommes privé dans cet endroit ou nous avons que des etrangers que non pas la consideration de lessé un home deux heurs chez lui nenporte dans quel affixtion il puise etre tel est sa situation et il faut quil se soumet adieu ma chere mere que le bon dieu vous benise ainssi que mes frere et soeur est la prierre de votre affectionné fille

Madelaine Askin

*Addressed:* Madame Askin. Strabane, Par Capt<sup>n</sup> Keith [note in another writing under address] a Mocok Sugar for M<sup>rs</sup> Askin

### *Translation*

My dearest Mother: How many times have I had it in mind to take up my pen and offer you the consolation due to your great sorrow. But what can I say? My pen refuses to trace the words I wish to express. Yes, dearest, afflicted Mother, no one can appreciate the weight of your sorrow more than we. You have lost the most beloved of husbands and we the tenderest of fathers. Our tears will not bring him back to us, and we must then submit to the will of Almighty God. He gave him to us and it has pleased Him to take him back. Console yourself then, dearest Mother. He will bring you together again in that blessed land where you will never be separated. See with what love He has spared you in your affliction. He had compassion for you

that it came only when your children could be with you to comfort you in a grief which He feels as much as you.

My dear John is almost inconsolable. For three months now he has anticipated this fatal blow. The last letter was received with tears of joy. Up to quite recently he had hoped to see him. Then at last he realized that it was impossible for him to go down and he was beside himself with grief. He said to me that he would never see his father. Nevertheless it was his only prayer, but how oppressed he was with some trouble. For three days he has not eaten, then came the boat that brought us the painful intelligence he has so long foreseen. He can not write and has begged me to try to do so, but I fear you will have as much difficulty to read it as I have to write. It is only through my tears that I try to offer you any comfort. How alone we are in this place! Only strangers about us who are not thoughtful enough to leave a man to himself even for two hours, no matter how great his sorrow. That is his situation and he must bear it. Adieu, dearest Mother. May God bless you and my dear brothers and sisters is the prayer of your affectionate daughter,

Madelaine Askin

*Addressed:* Madam Askin, Strabane, by Captain Keith<sup>63</sup>

#### WILL OF JOHN ASKIN<sup>64</sup>

1—I commit my soul to Almighty God hoping through the merits and sufferings of his dearly beloved son our Saviour Jesus Christ to partake of happiness everlasting in the world to come.

2—I commit my body to the dust from whence it came to be buried in such manner as my directions to Doctor Richardson will show, avoiding all unnecessary expenses and vain pomp.

<sup>63</sup> Captain William Keith, probably at this time skipper of the schooner *Tiger*. He lived for some years in Detroit, where for a time (prior to 1823) he was commander of the revenue cutter *A. J. Dallas*. In 1821, he was one of a committee of seven citizens of Wayne County appointed to promote the candidacy of Judge Woodward for the delegacy in Congress. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*, and entries in Solomon Sibley papers.

<sup>64</sup> Reprinted from an exemplified copy, filed, Oct. 6, 1891, in the Probate Court of Wayne County (P. C. File 16980). The original document was admitted to the Surrogate Court of Essex County, Ont., Dec. 5, 1815, and was recorded in L. 169, p. 102, P. R.

3—After my funeral charges and other expenses incurred during my sickness are paid I next desire that all debts due by me in law or equity be honestly and fairly discharged.

4—That the remainder of my property of every kind or nature whatever, real, personal or mixed whether in upper Canada, the United States of America, or any other country or place whatsoever becomes the property of my dear wife Archange Askin during her widowhood and while she lives as such for her use and at her entire disposal without her or her property being answerable in many manner for what she may have done with the same, whether employed for the purpose of relieving any of my children who may fall into distress or any other purpose she may think necessary, knowing her sentiments relative to those in distress and almost every other matter to correspond with mine.

6—and lastly: I constitute and appoint my dear wife, Archange Askin my sole executrix to put this my last will and testament in force according to the true intent and meaning thereof, judging it unnecessary to nominate or appoint any other executor, knowing I have many relatives and friends capable, willing and ready to assist her if necessary and being at the same time persuaded that none of my children nor their husbands will find fault or oppose what have willed to be done.

7—This article should have been inserted before I will the whole of my property of every kind whatever that may remain at the death of my wife to be equally divided between the whole of my children without exception and if any of them should die before my wife his or her share to be equally divided between his or her children, or if there are none to her or his husband or wife and in default of all these such share to go to my surviving children in equal proportions.

8—In order that it may not hereafter be doubted that this will contains my real intentions, and I have written it with my own hand and signed and sealed it at Strabane near Sandwich this eleventh day of Nov. 1808.



## Codicil

Dated—1811.

I John Askin of Strabane near Sandwich in the Western District of Upper Canada do make this Codicil as part of my will and testament that is to say that the whole of my late Catherine Askins children whether Robertsons or Hamiltons are to have equally amongst them their late mothers share which is the same as any of her brothers or sisters and not before fully expressed in the 7th article of my will it being only said then that such of my children who died before my wife that his or her children should have her or his share whereas I should have said and it was my intention that the children of any of my children though they might have died before I made my will was on the same footing as the children of those who died after.

CONDITIONS AT ST. JOSEPH<sup>65</sup>

St joseph aout 4 1815

Ma tres Cher Mere nous sommes dans une si grande Confusion que a peine puis je trouvé un moment pour vous adressé quel-que ligne—voilà quinze Cens sauvages que mon Cher John habille depuis que nous sommes arrivés ici et il en arrive encore tous les jours imaginé vous comme je suis tourmenté la maison ne vide pas, et comme nous sommes les seuls ici conséquemment tous les allant et les venant restent dinés avec nous nous n'avons pas encore déjeuné seuls et nous n'avons jamais moins de quatre ou cinq personnes à dîner avec nous, enfin je n'ai pas encore nettoyé ma maison ni dépacté le tiers de mon butain, ainsi vous ne serez pas surprise de ne pas recevoir les sarviètes que je me proposais de vous envoyer car je ne sais pas où ils sont, je crains que nous les perdrons du butain car il mouille si souvent et la maison et les hangars sont si humides que tous mois—notre Commandant rend le service si pénible que à peine les personnes peuvent résister il a fait perdre l'esprit à M<sup>r</sup> Monck notre Commissaire de telle façon qu'il s'en est allé dans le bois le 28 du mois passé et il n'a pas été retrouvé que hier au soir je crois que

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<sup>65</sup> From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

mon Cher John navoit pas moins de deux cens sauvages employez pour le Cherché et apres tous ces un soldat quil la trouvai, le pauvre home est bien doux ces suelement ses affaire qui le dérange il a ten fait de chose sur des ordres verbal pour eviter de se crélé avec la Commandant et apres tous il ne pouvoit pas le Contenté, et sa lui a dérangé lesprit jai étté obligé dareté décrire pour recevoir ce pauvre M<sup>r</sup> Monck de celui que je vient de vous écrire il na pas lesprit dérangé mais il est mélancolie et il a la vue bien égarré et il paroît etre dans une grande Inquiétude il a dit quil a souvent vue les sauvages mais quil les a toujours évité il est venu me voir jai réusit a le fair mangé une bouché il la fait seulement pour mobligé, car parsonne ne pouvoit le fair mangé sa me Surprand apres avoir étté sept jours sans avoir prit aucune nourriture que de leau, il vas a ses affair come avant, jesper que le Colonel le fera descendre ces un bon home je crains quil ne reviendra jamais de cet melancolie, sa paroît etre dans la famille il y a un de ses frere qui ses tué avec un pistolet il y a quel qu'année—et ces évident quil vouloit se lessé mourir car devant que de partir il avoit écrit sa lettre d'adieu il navoit auc'une armes avec lui mais je supose quil vouloit se lessé mourir de faim car quant le soldat la trouvé il na pas voulet sen vénir se sont les oficir quil lon amené, il a bien mégrit mais il na pas perdu sa force—il faut que je finise car voila encore quelqu'un qui viénne fait moi donc le plaisir de dire a thérèse que si je peu je lui ècriré devant que cet Barque parte et si elle part trop vite il faudra quel mexcuse jusqua la première occation—fait lui sil vous plait mes amitié ainssi qua Allice et mes frere adieu ma cher mere que le bondieu vous Benise est la prierae de votre affectionné

Madelaine Askin

### *Translation*

St. Joseph, August 4, 1815

My dearest Mother: We are in such confusion that I can scarcely find a moment to write you a line. You might have seen fifteen hundred Indians that my dear John has clothed since we arrived here and still they come, every day. You

can imagine how I am plagued with them. The house is never empty and as we are the only people here everyone coming and going stops to dine with us. Not once have we been alone at breakfast and there are never less than four or five with us for dinner. In fact I have not had time to unpack a third of our things, so you will not be surprised that you have not received the napkins I promised to send you for I do not know where they are. I am afraid that we shall lose some of our stuff. There is so much rain that the house and sheds are damp and things get mouldy.

Our Commandant<sup>66</sup> makes the service so hard that scarcely anyone can stand it. He has driven Mr. Monck,<sup>67</sup> the commissary, crazy. On the 28 of last month he went off into the woods and was not found until yesterday evening. My dear John must have had two hundred Indians out hunting for him, and after all it was a soldier who found him. The poor man is quite harmless. It is only his work that bothers him, and he tried to have things done by verbal orders so as not to conflict with the Commandant, but nothing proved satisfactory and it affected his mind.

I have had to stop writing to receive poor Mr. Monck. What I said about him being crazy is not true. He is melancholy and looks very wild and seems to be in great trouble. He says that he often saw the Indians but that he hid from them. He came to see me and I have succeeded in persuading him to eat a mouthful. He did it just to oblige me for no one else has been able to make him eat—strange, too, after having been seven days with nothing but water. He is going on with his work as usual but I hope the Colonel will send for him to go down. He is a good man. I am afraid he will never recover from this melancholy. It seems to be in the family. One of his brothers shot himself some years ago, and he evidently intended killing himself for he left a farewell letter. He had no weapons and perhaps thought he would starve to death, for when the soldier found him

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<sup>66</sup> This was Lieutenant Colonel Robert McDouall of the Eighth Regiment, commandant at Mackinac from the spring of 1814 until the evacuation the following year. Although Mrs. Askin's letter is written at St. Joseph, the garrison was almost immediately established on Drummond Island, where it remained until 1828. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*, especially XVI, 714.

<sup>67</sup> G. W. Monck, assistant deputy commissary general at Mackinac from June, 1815, until the removal of the garrison to Drummond Island. See *ibid.*, XVI and XXIII, *passim*.



he would not come until the officers went and got him. He is very thin but not weak.

I must stop for there is another person coming. Please say to Therese that if I can I shall write to her before this vessel sails, but if it goes too soon for me she must excuse me until the next opportunity. Give her my love, also Alice and my brothers. Adieu, dear Mother, may God bless you is the prayer of

Your Affectionate  
Madelaine Askin.

# BURIAL OF JOHN ASKIN JR.

Sandwich 2<sup>d</sup> February 1820

Madam Enclosed is an account for four yards Black Cloth, furnished for the purpose of making a Pall, for your late Husband.<sup>67</sup> the Pall was deposited with me by M<sup>r</sup> James Askin, & can be had on application. I am Madam

Your very humble Serv<sup>t</sup>  
James W. Little<sup>68</sup>

Estate of the Late John Askin D<sup>r</sup> To James W Little  
1820 January 3<sup>d</sup>

To 4 yards of Black Cloth furnished for a Pall to M<sup>r</sup> J<sup>s</sup> Askin 68/

S 13 12 New Yk Currey  
Sandwich 2<sup>d</sup> February 1820

*Addressed:* M<sup>rs</sup> Askin Amherstburg

<sup>67</sup> John Askin Jr. died in Amherstburg, Jan. 1, 1820, and was buried in Sandwich, January 3. Burial certificate in St. John's Church Register.

<sup>68</sup> James W. Little was the fourth child of John Little and his wife Elizabeth, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 305, and a brother of Eleanor Little, wife of John Kinzie, for whom see *ibid.*, 305-306. James Little was a resident and merchant of Sandwich in the period subsequent to the War of 1812. On Jan. 4, 1819, he married there Catherine McGregor of Sandwich, daughter of John and Mary (or Martha) McGregor. A daughter, Jane, was born to them, Oct. 5, 1819. See St. John's Church Register, and Burton, Forsyth-Kinzie-Little genealogy.