

SECTION VI

LETTERS AND PAPERS : 1805-1806

## THE CUYAHOGA DREAM

Near Sandwich, Jan<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 1805

Dear Henry, Being fearfull that I would not have time to write you by this opportunity I requested of M<sup>r</sup> James M<sup>c</sup>Gill to mention a matter to you relative to your Claim to an Indian Tract jointly with me & others but as I see my Letter will be ready for the Post, I will now explain the matter to you.

The Inhabitants of New London having suffered much by fire in the late troubles, the United States has given the preëmption right to 500,000 Acres of Land near Cayahoga<sup>1</sup> and a M<sup>r</sup> Dean one of the Commissioners is arrived at Detroit sometime ago in Order to Assemble the Indians and purchase the native right but he finds it has been sold to you I and several others he therefore told M<sup>r</sup> Brush that if we will Assemble the Nations to whom these Lands did belong and get them to give a Deed of Sale for the Tract he will give 10,000 Dollars as doing this would be attended with much expense and the offer being only two Cents an Acre the Lawyers think we would be much to blame in accepting of it. of Course they will prevail on the Indians to sell them over again and this we must oppose with all our Interest for if they cannot accomplish this they must come up to our price we therefore mean to endeavour to get Captain M<sup>c</sup>Kee's Interest who has more influence with the Indians than any man in this Country and for this purpose in Order to recompence him I think we should admit him as an equal Partner in this Tract without his paying anything therefore it will be necessary for Mess<sup>rs</sup> Isaac Todd & James M<sup>c</sup> Gill with yourself for they have half my original Share) to send me a very full power to Act. my plan would be this and what I think fair that we should receive from the people of New London 10,000 Dollars a

<sup>1</sup> This grant, made May 11, 1792, by the Connecticut Legislature, is the origin of the tract known in Ohio history as "The Firelands." It included modern Huron and Erie counties.

year for Nine Years, one of which and the first to be employed or the greater part of it to purchase for Indians Presents and be given them at the ratifying or Confirming their Sale to us and the Trans[fer] from us to to the said New London C<sup>o</sup> in geting them to give a fresh Deed in their name. there would then remain 10,000 Dollars for each of the partners and a like sum for Captain M<sup>o</sup> Kee. This is a good Dream if it becomes a true one.

All here well may health and happiness attend you and yours is my Dear Old Friend always the Sincere wishes of

*Addressed:* Alexander Henry Esquire at Montreal

*Endorsed:* Near Sandwich Jan<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>h</sup> 1805 Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin to Alex<sup>r</sup> Henry Esq<sup>r</sup> at Montreal.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN WASHINGTON

E Brush Esq<sup>r</sup>

D<sup>r</sup> Sir. I have at last completed my probation at this place, and shall leave it in the morning. A law has this day passed both houses of Congress upon the subject of our land in all respects similar to the bill, I have sometime past forwarded to the County of Wayne. If it meets the signature of the Pres<sup>d</sup>, of which I have no doubt, it becomes a law, such as it is, it must be received I could get no better. Judge Chases trial,<sup>2</sup> which closed yesterday by his acquittal, has operated much against us. It became impossible that it could be debated for want of time and to press an amendment, would have lost the bill. As it now stands equitable claims arising under possession and improvement will be brought fairly before congress for their consideration. I expect that where they are proved bona fide & free of speculation they will be confirmed to a reasonable extent But where predicated upon speculation they will meet a formidable opposition in the House of Representatives. I am of opinion that the remarks of the Commissioners will have great weight in the final decision.

<sup>2</sup> The impeachment of Judge Samuel Chase of Maryland, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and an associate justice of the U. S. Supreme Court, was the initial step in a general Republican assault upon the Supreme Court judges. The failure to convict

I have learnt to day that the respective officers of the Territory of Michigan have been appointed.<sup>3</sup> Genl. Hull,<sup>4</sup> Gov<sup>r</sup> Stanley Griswold<sup>5</sup> of New Hampshire, Secretary.

Chase, here alluded to, caused the abandonment of the remainder of the program. See Edward Channing, *History of the United States* (New York, 1917), IV, 286-89.

3 On Oct. 13, 1804, a mass meeting in Detroit adopted a resolution to petition Congress for the erection of a new territory, and James May and Robert Abbott were chosen to prepare the petition. It was presented to Congress on December 4 following, and on Jan. 11, 1805, President Jefferson approved the act creating the Territory of Michigan. It was to take effect on June 30, 1805, and on March 1 the President appointed the territorial officers here mentioned. Huntington, however, declined the office, and the vacancy thus created was filled by the appointment of John Griffin of Indiana. See Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, I, 137.

4 William Hull was born in Derby, Conn., June 24, 1753. He was graduated from Yale College in 1772 and having studied law, was admitted to the bar in 1775. He was shortly elected captain of a militia company of his native town and he served throughout the Revolution with much credit, winning the confidence of such leaders as Wayne, Steuben, and Washington, and taking a prominent part in such enterprises as the capture of Stony Point. Upon the reduction of the army at the close of the war, he was selected by Washington as lieutenant colonel of the one regiment retained in service and stationed at West Point. In 1781 he had married Sarah Fuller of Newton, Mass., and in 1786 he retired from the army and began the practice of law in that place. He subsequently served as judge of the Court of Common Pleas, as state senator for many years, and as major general of the Massachusetts militia. Upon the organization of Michigan Territory in 1805, Hull was appointed governor by President Jefferson and his service continued until the surrender of Detroit by him to General Brock in August, 1812. For this surrender he was overwhelmingly condemned by public opinion and was court-martialed and sentenced to death by the government. The vexed issue of the merits of Hull's conduct at Detroit we have no space to discuss. It seems clear, however, that to considerable extent he was made a scapegoat to bear the sins of folly and inefficiency of others. He spent his later years on his wife's ancestral farm in Newton. Not until 1824 was he permitted access to documents in the War Department necessary to a vindication of his conduct of the campaign of 1812. He then published (in 1825) his *Memoirs of the Campaign of 1812*, which together with the softening influences of the passage of time, worked a considerable revision of public opinion in his favor. A critical and impartial account of the campaign of 1812 at Detroit still awaits writing. He died at his home in Newton, Nov. 29, 1825. He had eight children, born in the years 1783-99. His only son, Abraham Hull, perished in the forefront of the desperately waged conflict at Lundy's Lane in July, 1814. His nephew and adopted son, Isaac Hull, is one of America's most renowned naval heroes. One of Governor Hull's daughters, Ann, married Capt. H. H. Hickman of the U. S. army. Another daughter, Rebecca, married Dr. Samuel Clarke and became the mother of Rev. James Freeman Clarke. Another daughter, Julia, married Joseph Wheeler of Augusta, Ga., and became the mother of General Joseph Wheeler. Information adapted from Charles H. Weygant (comp.), *The Hull Family in America* [Pittsfield, Mass., 1913], *passim*, and other published sources.

5 Stanley Griswold was born in Torrington, Conn., Nov. 14, 1763. He served in the Revolution and in consequence of injuries received, exchanged his prospective patrimony for a college education. He was graduated from Yale in 1786, and having studied theology, began his ministerial career in 1789. In time he developed both religious and political views which were condemned by the contemporary public opinion of Connecticut. In 1802 he withdrew from the pulpit, and the following year became editor of a Democratic newspaper in Walpole, New Hampshire. His service as Secretary of Michigan Territory, here noted, lasted until 1808, when, having incurred the hostility of Governor Hull, he was compelled to resign his office. On leaving Detroit, he located in Ohio, where Samuel Huntington, a graduate of Yale in 1785, was governor. In March, 1809, U. S. Senator Edward Tiffin of Ohio resigned his office, and Huntington appointed Griswold to the vacancy thus created. This same spring the government of Illinois Territory was organ-

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Huntington<sup>6</sup> Bates and Woodward<sup>7</sup> Judges.

ized, and one of the three judges appointed by the President was Obediah Jones. For some reason he did not assume the office, and in March, 1810, President Madison appointed Griswold to the position. He held this office until his death in Shawneetown, Aug. 21, 1815. On Aug. 5, 1789, Griswold married Elizabeth Flagg of East Hartford, Conn., who outlived him several years, dying on Aug. 15, 1822. They were the parents of several children. Information adapted from Franklin B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College* . . . (New York, 1907), IV, 476-81, and references there cited; Farmer, *Hist. of Detroit*, *passim*; and Alvord, *The Illinois Country*, 430.

6 Samuel Huntington was born in Coventry, Conn., Oct. 4, 1765. He was graduated from Yale College in 1785, studied law, and in 1793 was admitted to the bar. In the spring of 1801 he removed to Ohio, locating shortly in Cleveland and subsequently (1805) in Painesville. He was a member of the Ohio Constitutional Convention of 1802, and of the first Ohio State Legislature the following year. By this body he was appointed in April, 1803, one of the three judges of the Supreme Court of the state. In 1804, he was made chief justice, retaining the office until 1808, when he was elected governor. During the War of 1812 he served as paymaster in the army with the rank of colonel. He died in Painesville on June 8, 1817, "leaving behind him a reputation for accomplished scholarship, pronounced executive ability, and acknowledged integrity." By President Jefferson he was tendered the office of receiver of public moneys in Steubenville, and that of judge of Michigan Territory, both of which he declined. See Dexter, *op. cit.*, IV, 419-20; Randall and Ryan, *History of Ohio*, *passim*; and William T. Utter, "Judicial Review in Early Ohio," *Miss. Val. Hist. Rev.*, XIV, 3 ff.

7 Augustus Elias Brevoort Woodward was baptized in New York City, Nov. 6, 1774, his father being a shopkeeper of that place. He attended Columbia College for a time, leaving without graduating, and in 1792 was employed in the U. S. Treasury Department in Philadelphia. Three years later he was in Rockbridge County, Va., where he soon made the acquaintance of Thomas Jefferson and for him developed an intense and life-long friendship. About the year 1797 he located in Washington, where he speculated actively in real estate, practiced law, served in the first council of the city and in the local militia, and published articles on the nature of the sun and of the government of the District of Columbia.

On March 1, 1805, Woodward was appointed one of the judges of Michigan Territory, then newly constituted. It is significant of his masterful personality that, arriving in Detroit on June 29 and finding the city in ashes, he immediately assumed command of the situation without awaiting the arrival of Governor Hull who reached Detroit two days later. Familiar with the plan of Washington City and possessed of an expansive intellect and fertile imagination, Judge Woodward conceived and imposed upon the stricken frontier settlement a new and scientific city plan designed to accommodate the needs of a metropolis of whatever size. This was perhaps his most significant service to Detroit. Although others succeeded later in largely wrecking his plan, to it we owe the existing fragments of Grand Circus and Capitol parks and of Cadillac Square, and the street plan of much of the downtown business section.

As one of the Board of Judges, Woodward arrogated to himself the title of chief justice (a distinction which had no legal existence), and throughout his long career here was at all times the dominating factor on the board, and in many respects in the community as well. Quite naturally, he frequently aroused violent opposition and made many enemies; but after the lapse of a century he looms head and shoulders above all his contemporaries, save Lewis Cass, in the later period of Woodward's career here. Judge Woodward was one of the most original and interesting individuals in all Michigan history; the word, "genius," fitly characterizes him. The best account of his career is by William L. Jenks in the *Mich. Hist. Mag.*, IX, 515-46.

The original scheme of territorial government having become outgrown and inadequate, in 1823 Congress enacted a law materially modifying it, and in this connection the terms of the sitting judges (hitherto conditioned on good behavior) were made to terminate on Feb. 1, 1824. Woodward's enemies sought to have him displaced, and by a false accusation of intemperance, at the last moment prevailed upon President Monroe not to reappoint him. Woodward thereupon severed his Detroit connections and returned to Washington,

I have just received the melancholy news of the death of Col Sproat.<sup>8</sup> He died on the 3<sup>d</sup> Ultimo very suddenly, supposed of the apoplexy. How far this distressing accident may retard my return to Detroit, or what effect it may have on my future residence is uncertain. I hope to see you in the course of May next at farthest when it will be in my power to relate more particularly the occurrences that have come under my observation. I have been somewhat surprised that I have not received a single letter from Detroit since I left it. Party runs high and the Democrats on several questions have split amongst themselves which did not fail to draw forth gross abuse and mutual recrimination. The federalist keep aloft in silence. The crisis is arived & the moderate republicans call a halt.

Present my best respects to your lady & friends

I am Sir, your friend

Sol Sibley

P.S. Please hand the inclosed to Some one of the Gen<sup>t</sup> to whom addressed and oblige yours &<sup>e</sup> S S

City of Washington March 2<sup>d</sup> 1805

*Addressed:* Elijah Brush Esq<sup>r</sup> Detroit (Michigan Territory)

*Endorsed:* City of Washington March 2<sup>d</sup> 1805 Solomon Sibley Esq<sup>r</sup> to E. Brush.

where in August of the same year the President appointed him to a federal judgeship in Florida Territory. He died in Tallahassee, June 12, 1827. Woodward Avenue, Detroit's most important street, fittingly commemorates his name; and in many ways aside from this, the print of his genius is indelibly stamped upon the city and the state.

<sup>8</sup> Ebenezer Sproat, father-in-law of Solomon Sibley, was born in Middleboro, Mass., in 1752. He served throughout the Revolution with considerable distinction, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel in 1777, and to that of colonel in 1783. After the war, he became a resident of Providence, R. I., where he married Catherine Whipple, whose father, Abraham, was a prominent actor in the infant American navy during the Revolution. Sproat became a member of the famous Ohio Company, organized by Manasseh Cutler, and he led the second division of the colonists who founded Marietta in 1788. He served as surveyor of the company from 1787-91, and as sheriff of Washington County from 1788-1802. In the latter capacity he bore a prominent part in the ceremonial which attended the inauguration of the first American court in the Old Northwest. Sproat was an original member of the Society of the Cincinnati. Sproat Street in Detroit was named for him. Data chiefly derived from Thomas Weston, *History of the Town of Middleboro, Massachusetts* (Boston and New York, 1906), 322-25; Randall and Ryan, *Hist. of Ohio, passim*; and mss. in B. H. Coll.

SALE OF CUYAHOGA GRANT

Montreal 4 March 1805

My dear Askin I received your favour mentioning the proposal for the lands. M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>e</sup> Gill is at Quebec. M<sup>r</sup> Todd has wrote to you on the subject when M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>e</sup> Gill returns which will be the 15<sup>th</sup> Ist. we will forward you a regular power of attorney. in the mean time this shall serve you as authority from me to act and so in any respect in the sale and distribution of shares for the benefit of the concerned the same as you do for yourself provided there is no expense to us. I should think your demands should not be too high for fear of your missing this opportunity which may be the last—and if brought to bear would serve as a president for the remainder. M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>e</sup> Kee could with little expense call the chiefs who signed their right to these Lands, as there would be no occation to call the nation, in my opionion, as it would only be as their acknowledgment of having sold their Lands as by their deeds. I would not recommend to risk breaking of a Treaty for a sale for wishing to get much you may get nothing.

I hope M<sup>r</sup> Br. will have done somthing in Williams affairs and that he will let me know as soon as he can.

There is a woman who was seperated from a James Fraser at Detroit came to me with papers on her seppiration and says there is a sum due her for money in hands of M<sup>r</sup> James Henry who it appears is the agent and is to pay her the money to her—also that she posseses a House at Detroit. this woman is a stranger to me, but seems in the greatest distress & starving. it would be an act of Humanity in any one to inquire if there is any money in Mr. Henrys hands, and get him to send it to her. your feeling for women will I am sure induce you to ask M<sup>r</sup> Henry whether it is so or no and let me know.<sup>9</sup> best wishes for all the family & remain your old friend

A. Henry

<sup>9</sup> In a letter of May 8, 1805, to Henry, responding to this inquiry, Askin wrote: "The poor unfortunate Woman who address'd herself to you is realy M<sup>r</sup> Fraser[s] Wife or was before he obtained a Divorce. she is frequently Mad or nearly so and was sent from this for attempting to burn M<sup>r</sup> Mackintosh's house in day light. I tho doubt that she has money in M<sup>r</sup> Henry's hands but if she has I'm sure he will not keep it from her I will make inquiry. All with me well, may God grant you & yours the like happiness."

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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a sale of Detroit bears sold last fall much higher than the year before A H

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal March 4<sup>h</sup> 1805 Alexd<sup>r</sup> Henry Esq<sup>r</sup>  
to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Rec<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 28<sup>h</sup> April Answ<sup>d</sup> May 8<sup>h</sup>

SALE OF BRUSH FARM

March 22<sup>d</sup>, 1805

Dear Sir I send over Dain to bring me some tar from Cap<sup>t</sup> Fearson and three of your empty barrels if you can send so many as I cannot get one from my cooper to put whisky in.

He takes a little suppon meal<sup>10</sup> over for Alice we did not think of geting it ground before now is the reason there's so little. Please let Alex go with Dain in order to persuade Barthelth the Shoemaker to let him have a pair of shoes now & if he has more [none] to make him a pair soon. I send a dollar for some common Suger I wish Alex<sup>r</sup> to get if of this year & good from Campeau.

I find M<sup>r</sup> Barthe has 400 oak pickets of mine they are at your service, but when you send the boat it will take them one day to bring them down the River as the Water is low untill they get into the lake. I think your men will not get back before the third day, therefore choose good weather.

I cannot agree to your making so many repairs on the farm at your expence. It realy costs more than if you paid rent. I wish it was possible for you to purchase the place for I fear unless something fortunate turns up in spite of all I can do I will have to sell it at last to pay Mess<sup>rs</sup> James & Andrew M<sup>o</sup> Gill £2000 nearly Hf<sup>x</sup> Cur<sup>ov</sup> I owe them I have been able as yet to pay the interest nearly £200 N Y Cu<sup>r</sup> yearly and they desire no better but I wish to get rid of the debt & I know of no other way, (unless I was more fortunate in land matters) than selling the farm and giving some lots of land on this side, If they will take them. were my circumstances different from what they are, I

<sup>10</sup> Suppon (supon, sepon, etc.) is a word supposedly of Algonquin origin, signifying Indian meal or mush. See Hodge, *Handbook of Am. Inds.*



would make the purchase very easy to you but unless I get £1000 Hf<sup>x</sup> for the place where you are and for which I expected £2000 NY Cur<sup>v</sup> I cannot make out, unless I strip myself entirely of my lands here & that would be such an Injury to those who come after me that I wish to avoid it all I can

It would hurt my feelings much that a place which belonged to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin's father and has allways been in the Family would fall into other hands. I wish your affairs would permit you to buy it. I dare say the Mess<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>o</sup> Gill on geting the interest which would be but £60 Hf<sup>x</sup> yearly would give [you] what time I might choose to pay the principal. Cap<sup>t</sup> Fearson & M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum are just arrived which stops Dains Voyage.

I am Dear sir Yours truly

J A

E. Brush Esq<sup>r</sup> at Detroit

*Endorsed:* March 22<sup>d</sup> 1805 Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin to E Brush Esq<sup>r</sup>  
Corry

SALE OF BRUSH FARM

March 22, 1805

Dear Sir, I have this moment returned from the river rouge and find Dean in waiting for me I have given him 3 Bonds and also all your papers relative to Vigo. Relative to the repairs you speak of it is absolutely necessary some should be made otherwise this place except the house would be of no use to any person.

About purchasing I have always had Some Serious ideas of removeing into the Ohio Country which is the reason I have never attempted a purchase before this time, and am Still under the impression that before long I shall leave this place. however if I could take Such a proportion of the debt from off yours Shoulders to Todd & M<sup>o</sup>Gill in this place is reasonably [torn] by paying them the annual interest for the Same for 3 or four years untill I could Turn my property at the Miamis (in case I determin not to go there) I would readily do it, and they Shall have the best security for their principal. I would myself go greater length to purchase this

place on account of Alice than I otherwise would if left to my own individual consideration She has the same desire of being perpetuated in it that M<sup>rs</sup> Askin has on account of the family tradition it has already passed through, and I am extremely desirous that Something should be definitely settled in the business. if we could agree on a price to be given payable to Todd & M<sup>c</sup>Gill in some future time say 4 or 5 years with the annual interest if that would suit them I do not know that I should be averse to closing the business, but if not you have only to say the word and I shall be prepared to [torn] the place at any time but I would wish to know it soon.

If you can let me have a boat I [torn] send for them pickets the latter ind of the next week whether I use them or not. I was thinking of putting cedar pickets around the garden in front of the house, and also of making four new gates for the big gate as well as all the rest are intirely broken down but I will wait to be athe[r]ised by you.

If I should conclude to purchase here and also to sell my property in the Ohio Country I should not want credit a single day, but as yet I am opposed to selling that property.

I have Spoken to Cap<sup>t</sup> Ernest relative to the Suit ag<sup>t</sup> Hembro he Says if Elliott had mentioned the circumstances of the Case to him he would never have directed the Suit to have been commen[c]ed, but that he will now direct Woods to discontinue it Seeing that you are likely to be involved.

I am Dear sir very Sincerely Yours

E Brush

John Askin

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Strabane

*Endorsed:* Detroit March 22<sup>d</sup> 1805 M<sup>r</sup> Brush to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 24<sup>h</sup>.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ALEXANDER HENRY

Strabane Near Sandwich April the 4<sup>th</sup> 1805

Dear Henry, The long and short of the present Story is this, me and mine Thank God are well and you and yours will be glad to hear it.

The last time I spoke to M<sup>r</sup> Brush on your business he said he would use his best endeavours to prevent M<sup>r</sup> Williams from getting out letters of Administration and if he succeeded he would send you what Money he had belonging to the Estate.

You are one or two letters in my debt. I wrote you to hire a Man for M<sup>r</sup> Brush and described him I also request you will get one for me used to the common farmers' work. if he could Bake a little so much the better but not hired for that purpose only. a brass sieve you must also send me good for sifting flour for Pan Cakes for the Boys I wrote you for a pair of Suwarrow Boots My Friend M<sup>r</sup> Dean one of the new London Commissioners is trying to get the Indians to sell our Lands to him & I'm trying to get them not to do so unless he pays us. Who will succeed I know not.

Health & Happiness attend you all are our sincere wishes

Yours Dear Henry always

*Endorsed:* Strabane April 4<sup>h</sup> 1805 Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin to Alex<sup>r</sup> Henry Esq<sup>r</sup> at Montreal (Copp)

#### SALE OF CUYAHOGA GRANT

Montreal 19<sup>th</sup> April 1805

My dear old friend I send you a power of attorney which I thing [think] such a one as you would wish to have for giving a share of the Lands to M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Gee [McKee] what M<sup>r</sup> Todd & M<sup>o</sup>Gill, and my self thinks and what we agree upon that no expense whatever is to be made for any arrangements with Indians or otherwise, without your having money in hand from the sale thereof, and then as little as possible. also that in the sale of this part of our land we think it would be best not to be to[o] particular in the price as it will be an inducement to them to do the same in making purchases. I hope you will induce Williams to settle his business it is the best for him as he will recover from Vigo double the amount of what he gives us. as there are no other creditors of any consequence, he will also recover of John Casety[']s] property. the sooner you can settle this the better. M<sup>r</sup> Short is making your Swarrow

Boots which shall be sent by the first opportunity nothing more but what you will have from the States with every wish for your good & the happiness of your family from me and mine [I] remain affectionately

Your old friend

Alexander Henry

NB. I recommend not to refuse the offer of the Americans get as much as you can but dont neglect to sell as times will change the Indians and others so that we are not sure of any thing in this world. A H

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Detroit Fav<sup>d</sup> By Mr. William M<sup>c</sup>Coy

*Endorsed:* Montreal April 19<sup>th</sup> 1805 Alex<sup>r</sup> Henry Esq<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin rec<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> June Answ<sup>d</sup> July 15<sup>th</sup>

#### LAND TITLES AT ST. CLAIR RIVER

Near Sandwich April 15<sup>th</sup> 1805

Sir I was favoured with yours of the 4<sup>th</sup> Instant a few days ago and it gives me much pleasure to find that the Son of an old Friend is as little disposed I find, to hurt my Interest as his late Father was for the present its needless to explain by what title I hold the land your said to be on, as I hope it may not be inconvenient for you to call over here the first time you come to Detroit. you will then be satisfied that my claim is equal to any sellers that even live near Detroit who have not had a Deed from the french Government. I hold it of the third person from the original grantors & have paid a considerable sum for the Lot next above Belle River four others ajoining it I purchased of Cap<sup>t</sup> Cornwell<sup>11</sup> the old Kings ship builder who obtained it of the Indians prior to the year 1780 and a confirmation of the Cheifs afterwards. the four Lots next above where you are of 5 acres in front Each I have sold to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Isaac Todd & James M<sup>c</sup>Gill some years ago and I will thank you not to let any one settle on them without informing me two other Lots next above these I mentioned also belonged to Cap<sup>t</sup> Cornwell who I believe sold them to a Smith, a

<sup>11</sup> Richard Cornwall, for sketch of whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 178.

Tavernkeeper who many years ago lived near where your mother does & afterwards settled at River Trenche.

If the Law will asist me I mean to punish M<sup>r</sup> Jean Babtist Creaty<sup>12</sup> for ever having meddled with Lands belonging to me to which I'm sure he never had the smallest right nor did I ever hear untill very lately by Cap<sup>t</sup> Harrow that any person had been on these Lands since I took Brian from there who lived in a house the Indians made me & for which I paid them.

I am Sir with good wishes &<sup>ca</sup>

J. A.

M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Niff<sup>13</sup> at River Sinclair

*Endorsed:* Near Sandwich April 15<sup>th</sup> 1805 John Askin to M<sup>r</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Niff at River Sinclair care of E. Brush Esq<sup>r</sup> Coppy

LAND TITLES IN WASHINGTON AND YORK

Near Sandwich May the 6<sup>th</sup> 1805

My Dear Sir, Your kind letter bearing date the 1<sup>st</sup> of March reached me on the 28 Instant and it gave me

<sup>12</sup> Probably Jean Baptiste Créti, whose surname was more commonly spelled Créqui. The Detroit Créquis were descended from Jean Aide *dû* Créqui, who was born in the parish of St. Sorler, in the diocese of La Rochelle, in 1661. He migrated to Canada and on Nov. 3, 1689, married at Pointe-aux-Trembles, Que., Catherine Delisle, daughter of Louis Delisle and Louisa Des Granges. For three generations the family resided in Lower Canada, its first Detroit representative being a grandson of the original immigrant, who was also named Jean Baptiste Aide *dû* Créqui. He was born in Pointe-aux-Trembles on Feb. 18, 1729, and on Jan. 11, 1762, he married in Detroit, Magdelene Gastinon *dû* Duchêne, who resided at Grosse Pointe. Créqui secured a farm from the government which later became a part of P. C. 261 in modern Grosse Pointe Farms. He was buried in Detroit, Sept. 26, 1795; his wife was buried here, Dec. 30, 1824.

They reared a family of eleven children, all of whom were born on the Grosse Pointe farm in the period 1764-83. One daughter, Cecilia, married George Cottrell, for whom see *ibid.*, 195. The eldest son, born, Nov. 17, 1767, was the Jean Baptiste Créqui (Creaty) of the present document. He married, Feb. 4, 1793, Cecilia Meny, who was born in Grosse Pointe, May 2, 1776, the daughter of Antoine Meny and Catherine Brillant *dû* Beaulieu. She was buried, May 5, 1804; the date of his death has not been learned. They had six children, born in the years 1793-1802. See Denissen, *op. cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Robert McNiff was a son of Patrick McNiff, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 424. Robert was born in 1784 and died a bachelor on April 16, 1844. Apparently he was a man of somewhat strenuous habits. In February, 1802, James May lodged a complaint with James Henry, justice of the peace, affirming that he was in fear for his life or some personal injury at the hands of McNiff. Robert was for some years a clerk in the employ of Joseph Campau. C. C. Trowbridge in later years related that he was in the habit of going on periodical sprees, when he would sell his clothes for rum and dash naked through the streets. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*; *Proc. of the Land Board of Detroit*, 177.

much pain to learn you had suffered so much. however Thank God you have got clear of your danger, and I hope will soon of the uneasiness you must have endured.

The sale of the Mortgaged property to screen the Debt due to your late Nephew shall not be put off[f] if payment is not made in June as promised.

You or M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill most certainly have had from me a List of the Lots on this side made over by me to Each of you. I sent it on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 1803 however as you also want a Copy from the Register it shall likewise be done.

The inclosed papers or rather under cover with this, One of which for M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill and the other for you I believe will give you all the information you require respecting your property at and about Detroit.

No doubt I expect and mean to remit you and M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill as soon as received whats due by M<sup>r</sup> Brush Park and Harvey.<sup>14</sup>

M<sup>r</sup> Sibly who we sent to congress has not yet returned nor do we justly know what he has done. The Expenses of his Voyage a Thousand Dollars was a voluntary business some was not able to give anything and others contributed largely otherwise no person could have been sent. in Order to make up the sum, I was obliged to give the sum [of] 100 Dollars for you M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill Robertson and myself a third of which M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill and you are charged with.

Your observation respecting the shares of M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill and you hold in all the Indian Tract as well as that I purchased of Huneau is just. This latter is situated near Sandusky but not as I hear where the New London people have got the right of Preëmption. A Major Dean who said he was a Commissioner in conversation said he would give 10,000 Dollars if he would [could] have the Tract confirmed to them by all the Indians but he never came forward with such an offer to me & as I supposed he only wanted to amuse me untill he could settle the matter with the Indians I took care through Captain M<sup>c</sup>Kee to request of the

<sup>14</sup> John Harvey, for whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 233, and *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet*, IV, 1-16. The latter reference gives an account of the long legal contest which was waged over the title to the Reeder farm.

Indians Chiefs not to meet him untill the proprietors to whom they sold were satisfied. I now learn he Major Dean has neither money nor Letters of Credit and its even doubted that he is one of the Commissioners. had he come forward and even given One Thousand Dollars to each of the proprietors and required no more than making over our right in the Indian Deed and promising not to oppose his purchase of 500,000 Acres I would have accepted of it and less was not worth while but to undertake the confirmation of the Deed to us by all the Indians is another matter as being attended with much expense which sum exclusive of what I asked for our right must first be laid down by the commissioners in Order to enable us to call the Indians together. Or if they would give 6<sup>d</sup> p<sup>r</sup> acre in payment 10,000 Dollars yearly and lay the first payment by giving this sum to the Indians no doubt every one of them could be got by us to sign any manner of Deeds of conveyance that the Commissioners would choose to have made out.

You are the best Judge how far a Voyage to England might or might not benefit your health however as a friend I recommend it strongly to you to endeavour to promote your health in preference to every other consideration.

All business to be done at York requires patience and time and though mine is not yet completed nor do I know of any other ones that is, I'm going through as well as I can and hope soon to be done. It must be an older and much keener person who is modest who can get the Officers at York to advance the business. Im sorry to observe that but too true, that I have not had strict justice done me respecting my just Claims to lands in Upper Canada and that in order to avoid condoning fraudulent Claims, the just and unjust not located at a certain period, by order of Council were all registered the mode is short and Effective though not perfectly agreeable to the English Constitution which would rather suffer many criminals to Escape than make one innocent person suffer.

I mean my Son Charles shall soon go to Michilimacinac not with anything to dispose off but to see if he can agree with some Merchant of Montreall to furnish £500 Halifax

worth and take payment in Whisky, Corn flour & Freight these are payments can be made [by him] and his Brother for a certainty and I'm determined whilst I live so far as in my power lies to keep them clear of all Debt and that rather than run the risk of making payments in Cash or Furs which they cannot get but in small quantities, I will employ their time even at Farming.

Poor Robertson I'm sorry for you. Good God, [to] what a deplorable state does the immoderate use of liquor reduce a Man. From Sobriety and care of myself I really thanks to God, enjoy health better and better, See, Hear, Eat, Drink & Sleep well. I most sincerely wish my dear friend and Im sure its also the wish of M<sup>rs</sup> Askin & all the Family who have had the pleasure of knowing you, that you had the like Happiness.

I'm hard drove and kept low in Order to pay the Interest I owe yearly on the Ballance due my Friends the Mess<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gills of nearly £2000 Halifax and this I will not be able to continue to do unless I can at times sell a Lot of land for Cash I'm ashamed after the loss you and M<sup>r</sup> James M<sup>c</sup>Gill has suffered by me to propose lands to them and yet if they took my House on the other side for £1000 Halifax & 10 Lots of 200 Acres each here for £1000 more I cant think in the end they would be losers, for the lot[s] I would give like many of yours are so situated that they must soon sell for money. M<sup>r</sup> Pattinson gave me [for] one by no means good Land 400 Dollars and he sold it for 500 or if they preferred 10 more Lots in lieu of the House, I could get them from my Children in exchange for other property. oh how happy would I be to get clear of this almost last debt but I fear to make the offer though I think I once wrote M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill something to this effect.

I have only to add may health and happiness attend you and yours are the invariable wishes of my Family as well as those of my Dear Sir,

Y<sup>r</sup> ever obliged Friend

Isaac Todd Esq<sup>r</sup> at Montreall



MERCHANDISING PROJECT OF CHARLES ASKIN

Proche de Sandwich 24 de Mai 1805

Monsieur Geasson & Barthollott

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Le Porteur de ceci Mon Fils Charles Askin va faire un tour a Michilimacinac pour voir le paie et au meme temps tacher sarranger avec quelque Commercent de Montreal que fournerent des merchandize et que prandront randue a Michilimacinac dans le Moi de Mai ou Juin Lanne D'ensuite leur payment en farine, Whisky, ou Bled Lassive et des port dans le *Saguinah* quand sa ce trouvera. Car ici on ne peut pas prommeter Largent ni Peltrie tout les deux etant trop rar. Mais comme vous avez un commerce tres Considerable, Je lui ici dit de vous donner la preferance et je crrois que sa cera plus Aisse pour vous D'acheter voter farine, Bled et Whisky pour des Marchandize que de payer D'argent la Quantite dont il ora besoin pour cette Anne ne passera pas La Valeur de £500 Halifax et je suppose que 40 par Cent sur le prix de Londer sera un prix just a vous donner a Montreal et les merchandize a ses fraix et risque, pour ce que vous recevrez en payment vous sera chargai le prix Courant ici avec le droix et port et pas davantage D'abord que vous couvrerez les risque. Si ses proposition vous accomode il vous livrera un Memoire et vous aurez la Bonte de la fair remplir et L'ordanner de eter envoye de Montreal le plutot que vous pourez Car cette un avantage d'avoir les Marchandize de bon heur. Si au cas que cette proposition ne vous convient pas, Je vous serai Obligai de le fair connoiter a quelque un que vous croyez voudra le fair car tout mes ancien connoissance sont partis de Michilimacinac. Je vous a ecrit le 29 du Moi passe au Sujet de nos Vieuz Comp cette Letter et encore ici et il vous sera livrez par mon Fils que sarrangera avec vous pour la Ballance

J'ai L'honneur D'Eter Messieurs

voter tres humble, Serviteur

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Geasson et Bartholott, negot. Michilimacinac

*Translation*

Near Sandwich, May 24, 1805

Messrs. Giasson & Berthelet<sup>15</sup>

Gentlemen: The bearer of this, my son, Charles Askin, is leaving for a journey to Mackinac to see the country and at the same time to arrange with some Montreal merchant to furnish merchandise and to take in payment flour, whiskey, or lye hominy to be delivered at Mackinac the following year in May or June by the *Saguinah* on its regular trips. For one cannot promise either money or peltry from this place. Both are too scarce. Now, as you have a fairly large trade, I am telling him to give you the preference, and I believe that it will be easier for you to buy your flour, wheat, and whiskey in exchange for merchandise than to pay out the cash. The quantity he will need for this year will not exceed £500 Halifax in value, and I should think that 40 per cent advance on the cost in London would be a fair price to give you in Montreal for the goods, including expenses and risk. For what you will receive in payment you will be charged the prices current here, with duties and freight and no more, since they go at your risk.

If his proposition is agreeable to you, he will hand you a memorandum which you will have the goodness to have filled and ordered from Montreal as soon as possible. It is an advantage to have the merchandise up early. If, however, it is inconvenient for you to make this arrangement, I would be obliged if you would introduce him to some one who you think would be willing to do it, since all my old acquaintances have left Mackinac.

I wrote you on the 29th ulto. on the subject of our old account. This letter is still here and will be delivered by my son who will arrange with you for the balance.

I have the honor to remain, Sirs,

Your very humble servant,

Messrs. Giasson & Berthelet, Merchants, Michilamackinac

<sup>15</sup> Jean Baptiste Berthelet (Berthelot, Berthellet, Bertholott) was engaged in the fur trade of the Mackinac and upper Mississippi regions from the beginning of the century until the close of the War of 1812. In 1813, he signed an appeal to Captain Roberts as

## THE CUYAHOGA DREAM

Near Sandwich June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1805

Dear Friend The Principal intent of this is to send the enclosed Paragraph by which you will see that Cap<sup>t</sup> M<sup>o</sup> Kee unless he gets General Hunters Certificate cannot draw back pay as a Cap<sup>t</sup> which M<sup>r</sup> Pattenson [says] amounts to nearly £300 Ster. & without which Cap<sup>t</sup> M<sup>o</sup> Kee must very soon be totally ruined.

I am sure if an[y] man in the two Provinces can obtain such certificate, it is you & I have reason to think that Governor Hunters Humanity and recollection of the service rendered Government by Col. M<sup>o</sup>Kee (notwithstanding any displeasure he may have against Cap<sup>t</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Kee) when urged by you may have the desired Effect. If it is possible to be done with Propriety.

I have and still shall defer writing M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Gill and you on the subject of our Indian Claim untill I know the event. with unremitting Exertion and some expenses I managed so as to keep the principal Chief from going to the Treaty at Cayahoga so that the Land Purchasers have been obliged to come in and hold now the [conference at] Swan Creek. I with others have got some of the Principal Chiefs to make M<sup>r</sup> Brush their agent & he yesterday is gone off[f] with them in their behalf to Bargain for their Lands. they have promised most faithfully that they will not of themselves make any Bargain or agreement but refer all to him & sign any Sale he may make & no other. If they keep their promise them & us will get a considerable sum for I have agreed to share as one nation and there are four more so that a fi[f]th of the whole Expences paid will be ours. If nothing [is] got I will sustain the loss, as M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Gill M<sup>r</sup> Henry and you forbid any Expences on your account the prospect was so fair that by entering into some expence I

a resident of Prairie du Chien, but if not a resident of Mackinac in this period his trade relations there were frequent. After the war, he withdrew, along with other British traders and partisans to Drummond Island, where in 1816, he was granted a lot. In September, 1817, he had a suit for debt collection before the Michigan Supreme Court, in connection with which he is described as the surviving partner of the firm of Giasson and Berthelet. Letters of Robert Stuart in 1824 in the American Fur Company letterbook, owned by P. W. A. Fitzsimmons of Detroit, disclose that Berthelet was still engaged in trade at Drummond Island. No further record of his activities has been found. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, *passim*, especially XIX, 304; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*; and mss. in B. H. Coll.

might get something Hand[so]me for myself and others that I could not think that I was doing my Duty [to] those who confided in me to let such an opportunity slip in particular as two of the concerned are burnt out & have not of their own a loaf of bread. I thank God I want nothing but property to do as I could wish My Health and spirits are as good as ever. Yesterday 33 years married all which time I thank my God I have lived in Peace with my family and on my childrens account never had an unhappy day. When I go (according to the present prospect) After my Debt<sup>16</sup> paid I fear little will remain for the family I could have wished it otherwise, but at same time it does not grieve me. I think their Characters will make them friends which last when money is gone. That has been my case and the same providence which has carried me through I rely on will watch over them so long as their actions will bear the Test & I hope that ever will be the case and that envy itself will not be able to say that my family live at their ease at the expence of others. When I began this Letter I meant only to say a few words. I find I have been preaching. Old people are fond of talking when it is to [a] steady friend. May all the happinsses of this life & that to come attend you and yours are the sincere wishes & Prayers of M<sup>rs</sup> Askin as well as

Your unchangeable Friend

John Askin

Isaac Todd Esq<sup>r</sup> at Montreal

*Endorsed:* Sandwich June 22<sup>d</sup> 1805 Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin to Isaac Todd Esq<sup>r</sup>

OUTCOME OF THE CUAYHOGA DREAM

Detroit 8<sup>th</sup> July 1805

Dear sir I arrived here last evening exhausted with fatigue from the dis[a]greeable voige to Sandwich, the particulars of which I have not time now to relate but the first Leisure moment I shall go over and see you. I have not however succeeded in so well as I had reason some

<sup>16</sup> The words, "Mr. McGill and Robe[rt]son," are interlined at this point in the manuscript.

days before I left this to expect owing entirely to the invincible opposition I met with from Jouett<sup>17</sup> who behaved more like a Savage than a christain. I have however brought 600 Dollars which is all that could be had.

I Send Joe over on purpose to beg Some Cellery plants from M<sup>rs</sup> Askin as many as She can well Spare which I will Set out this evening.

Adeu God Bless you

E Brush

John Askin Esq

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

*Endorsed:* Detroit July 8<sup>h</sup> 1805 E. Brush Esquire to John Askin

LAND TITLES AT DETROIT

Near Sandwich July the 22<sup>d</sup> 1805

Dear Friends, I have now to address you on a Subject which appears to me of a more serious nature respecting your Interest and mine than any I have heretofore wrote you on.

I formerly transmitted you an Act of Congress relative to Lands Claimed by persons at or near Detroit and what

<sup>17</sup> Charles Jouett, Indian agent at Detroit from 1802 to 1805. He was born in Louisa County, Va., in 1772, the youngest of a family of nine children. Before coming to Detroit he had studied law and had practiced some years in Charlottesville, where he enjoyed the acquaintance and friendship of Presidents Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe. In 1803, in response to instructions from the President, Jouett made a careful report upon the settlement of Detroit and vicinity, with particular reference to occupants of lands and their titles. See *Am. State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I, 757-60. Two years later he negotiated, on behalf of the government, two treaties at Fort Industry with the Chippewa, Potawatomi, and other bands. The original copy of one of these is in the B. H. Coll. In 1805 Jouett was transferred to Chicago, where Fort Dearborn had been established two years before. He was the first Indian agent there, serving until 1811, when he resigned and located in Mercer County, Ky., thereby escaping, for himself and family, the massacre which overwhelmed Chicago in 1812. At the close of the war, Jouett was reappointed to the Chicago agency, which he held about two years, when he returned to Mercer County, Ky. Soon after this he was appointed by the President to a judgeship in Arkansas Territory, but ill health caused him to resign the position after a few months. In 1820, he located in Trigg County, Ky.; he died, May 28, 1834.

On Jan. 21, 1803, Peter Audrain issued a marriage license to Jouett and Elizabeth Dode-mead of Detroit; the permit recited that "they may consider themselves licenced, as I will furnish a regular licence as soon as I receive it from the Governor of the Territory." Elizabeth Dodemead having died a few years later, about the beginning of 1809 Jouett married Susan Randolph Allen of Clark County, Ky. Children were born of both unions. Data derived from Henry H. Hurlbut, *Chicago Antiquities . . .* (Chicago, 1881), 102 ff.; Quaife, *Chicago and the Old Northwest, passim*; and mss. in B. H. Coll.

sort of Titles were or would be considered as good. Of all in this Quarter whether French or English the two Commissioners have pronounced only two Valid so that even my Grant from the French Government in the year 1746, The Copy of which is under cover they consider as otherwise its true their Decision is not final untill Congress gives their approbation & though I hope for the best and would think no Govern[ment] would ruin an old Settlement long improved yet I'm warned by a Friend and a good Judge how the Government of the United States Act, to prepare all the proof & support I can to my Claim and that even then perhaps I may fail. from the records of Lower Canada and those of Detroit which were ordered there by the Late General Haldemand something might be collected to strengthen our Claim to those you can have easy access & not only so but are perfect Judges what Documents are most requisite for me to produce in support of my Claims I send you herewith the Act of Congress made after the representation of the Gentleman we sent from this to Congress last fall<sup>18</sup> Its true this Act seems to give us a better chance of succeeding but yet I'm warned to take care. for my own part I'm long since determined what what steps to take if your better Judgment does not point out any other, The best title I know for all Lands possessed prior to the 8<sup>th</sup> September 1760 when the capitulation was signed by the Marquis De Vaudreill & General Amherst is the 37<sup>th</sup> Article of that Capitulation which seems to require no other Title than possession and since that period fair honest purchases from Canadians with undisturbed possession on the part of the British Government during the whole time of their Government at Detroit the step as I before mentioned I meant to take was that If all mild means failed to have recourse to a trial in the Highest Court of the United States and if Cast [lost] there contrary to Treaty, I should suppose on a proper Memorial to our Government it would be looked into for as all the people residing or possessed of property in the limits of Detroit did not quit the English Government but the English Government quit them they were undoubtedly intitled to

<sup>18</sup> The allusion is to the Washington mission of Solomon Sibley, for which see *ante*, 454-57.

protection whilst they behaved well under that Government, & when given over to another their property should be secured in as ample a manner at least as that of the French people were by Capitulation between The Marquis De Vaudreill & the late Lord Amherst if necessity should require it. the Inhabitants on the other side formerly British Subjects will on Memorial expect such relief to support their Claims when just as is reasonable to expect, however not extending to any serious misunderstanding, only such explanations of the Treaty with the Indians as has already taken place where the Late General Waynes Treaty with the Indians in some Articles contradicted that subsisting between the King of Great Britain & the United States.

I have not as yet had the Honor of calling on the Governor of Detroit<sup>19</sup> but intend it soon he bears a good Character and if he has much influence with the President and Congress may render much service. He is now laying out the Town of Detroit in a very diferent manner from formerly & much more in favor of the place, but as its a doubt with many that he can do so untill there is an Act of Congress to authorize him, some dont like to relinquish their old Claims on a promise of geting new ones and some of his Judges having said they could make such changes without the concurrence of the proprietors has been displeasing to some. For my own part I have little doubt but Congress will give the disposal of the Commons and such part of the Burnt Town not private property to the Governor to dispose of as he thinks fit or rather for the purpose of laying it out Agreeable to a plan now drawing but that he has now such Authority I doubt much. Its true the Territory may adopt a Law of some of the States which Authorizes taking private property for Public roads paying for the same and the like may hold good respecting Towns &<sup>ea</sup>

J. A

Isaac Todd & James M<sup>e</sup> Gill Esq<sup>r</sup> Montreal

<sup>19</sup> Governor William Hull. The Michigan territorial act provided that the new government should become operative on June 30, 1805, and Governor Hull arrived in Detroit on July 1.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ELIJAH BRUSH

Aug<sup>t</sup> 12<sup>h</sup> 1805

Dear sir Please send Alex<sup>r</sup> to M<sup>r</sup> Audrain for a fair Copy of an Obligation from Gabriel Hunot to me I think in 1796 for £1455 or nearly that Sum. I think it was registered that year or perhaps the Next M<sup>r</sup> Audrain will soon find Out. W<sup>m</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Intosh has the Original & I want a true Copy as I mean to take some step with the Debtor.

I wish I could possibly see the Laws on which you now Act at Detroit

I am Dear sir Yours

John Askin

PS. You know how much we are distressed for want of a good Table please have One made for me as soon as you can let it be an Oval figure like yours with two leaves to let down, but it must be much stouter in Every respect & measure 4½ feet in the longest part. the feet should be of Stuff 2 Inches Square & the Plank of the leaves not less than a full Inch thick. The Wood Cherry-tree like yours but perfectly plain.

*Addressed:* E. Brush Esquire at Detroit

TITLE TO REEDER FARM

Detroit Aug<sup>t</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> 1805

M<sup>r</sup> Askin

Sir You will recolect some time ago I wrote you on my dissatisfaction of the deed you gave me to Springwell, M<sup>r</sup> Brush then inform'd me that you were ready to give every just explanation and to do away all obstickles that might tend to cause future troubles, I do Sir again request you to a compliance of this thing, the time is advancing when the Office of records will be shut & it will be necessary to enter my claim immideatly, I wish you could make it convenient to come over for that purpose as I think your presence requisit and necessary, my Original Deed I gave into M<sup>r</sup> Brush's hands to be conveyed to you, therefore I can not make any progress in this business without your assistance.



BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

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You will see the necessity of my demand and plan to Act according.

I remain Sir your's Respectfully

John Harvey

*Addressed:* John Askins Esq<sup>r</sup> Sen<sup>r</sup> near Sandwich With speed

*Endorsed:* Detroit Aug<sup>t</sup> 12<sup>h</sup> 1805 M<sup>r</sup> Jn<sup>o</sup> Harvey to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Rec<sup>d</sup> same day and Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 14<sup>h</sup>

TITLE TO REEDER FARM

Near Sandwich August the 14<sup>th</sup> 1805

M<sup>r</sup> John Harvey:

Sir, I was favoured with your Letter of the 12<sup>th</sup> some days ago same day and as you never have met with any molestation in the enjoyment of the Lands I sold you and I firmly believe never will it's now unnecessary to say anything further on the Subject except that it was & is your Duty to comply with the Law and have my Deed of Sale to you Registered in due time & It's now mine to bring forward (& what I shall not omit doing) as Respectable proof as any at Detroit of the long time the Lands I sold you as well as those I sold others have been Cultivated and improved and the different proprietors from the first untill Sold you. With such documents I feel no doubt of the Government of the United States' relinquishing all claim to your Tract among other[s] in Similar Situation, I do not recollect your having wrote me formerly on this Subject. As I generally answer all Letters yet it may be the Case, that M<sup>r</sup> Brush spoke to me on [it] and requested me in your behalf that the payment of your last Note might lie over for some time which I have done, I remain Sir

Your most Obedient very humble Servant

*Addressed:* Mr. John Harvey at Detroit

*Endorsed:* Near Sandwich August the 14<sup>th</sup> 1805 John Askin Senior to M<sup>r</sup> John Harvey (Copy)

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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COLLECTION OF DEBTS IN INDIANA

Vincennes 24 Aug<sup>t</sup> 1805

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

D<sup>r</sup> Sir: On Saturday last I had the pleasure of addressing you by the Mail, which I renew this morning by the opportunity of M<sup>r</sup> Conner who travels across the Country. In my last I acquainted you, for the information of the Miamis C<sup>o</sup> that my colleague John R. Jones who is a member of our Council now in Session had introduced and passed in the Council, a Bill which if it became a Law would deeply wound the Interests of the C<sup>o</sup>, That it was intended to save Vigo, By declaring that creditors must receive lands in payment at two Thirds of the value which a Jury shou'd find; and that Personal Property should not be liable. I added that I would interest my Friends in the other House where the Gentleman I employed for the C<sup>o</sup> is a member, to defeat the object of the Bill, or effect such an amendment as would exclude the Case of the C<sup>o</sup>. All that could be effected was a Section or two subjecting Personal as well as real Estate to be sold if they would bring two-thirds of the valuation; and if not to remain four m<sup>os</sup> in the Hands of the Sherif who would advertise them. But we could not succeed in passing that then the goods should be sold for what they would bring. They are therefore to remain until they shall be accepted by the auditor or sold for two-thirds We then were able to carry a Section declaring that nothing in the law should extend to Contracts before made or to have an expost facto, or retrospective effect. This leaves cases to the decision of the Judges, but in the opinion of some will not avail the C<sup>o</sup> I am preparing a Petition to the Gov<sup>r</sup> to request of him to withhold his signature from the law, altho' I am convinced he will not grant the Prayer of the Pet<sup>n</sup>.

I hope M<sup>r</sup> Abbott will be persuaded of the necessity of repealing the Power given to M<sup>r</sup> Jones and me jointly; and vesting it in me alone or in as many as he pleases provided that none of those who are now known to be unjustly Friends of Vigos or Enemies to him and the rest of the C<sup>o</sup>. I have the satisfaction to observe that almost all the People in Town are against the passage of the law: But I am clear[ly] of opinion it will be approved of by the Gov<sup>r</sup>. In which case

I would advise not to sue Vigo until the next year when the Sense of the Country upon the law will have been taken, and the Legislature be intreated and petitioned to repeal the Law, which will be found to be so prejudicial to the Prosperity of the Country: and the reputation of the Territory. But I shall act as you shall direct and authorise, and shall wait with anxiety your Orders, which I think you ought to transmit by Post if no private opp<sup>y</sup> should offer immediately. A few preliminary steps only have been taken by M<sup>r</sup> Jones and me. I could never prevail on him to act with intention of succeeding. He always alledged a hope of receiving fuller and more discretionary Powers; and denying having ever been retained by M<sup>r</sup> Abbott to sue Vigo. I expect to hear from you in course and remain very respectfully D<sup>r</sup> S<sup>r</sup>

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> humble Serv<sup>t</sup>

Will M<sup>c</sup>Intosh

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO COLONEL DE PEYSTER

Near Sandwich Augu<sup>st</sup> 30, 1805

Dear good Sir, Your much esteemed favour of the 11<sup>th</sup> March 1804, reached me in June of that year and though I was on the Watch for a good opportunity to Answer it & keep up a Correspondence I so much esteem, I let M<sup>r</sup> Mackintosh my next English Neighbour go to Scotland last year and at the time never recollected what I so much wished to do. The Compliment you pay me is due you and your good Lady, for I'm sure few Situated as you & her are would spend their thoughts on such Obscene [obscure] Acquaintances. this attention is an Additional proof to the many you and M<sup>rs</sup> Depyster have given of me & my Family of the Unw[e]arried Friendship you ever had for us. We often thought that perhaps we should have the Happiness of seeing you Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, Were it the Views of Government & they knew you as well as I do no person could be fitter. the task is not so difficult as what I have seen you perform with ease, without assistance & have spare time to Amuse yourself with your Friends, this is more than Our great men of the present times can do with houses full of Secretaries Clark's & C<sup>ca</sup>.

Poor Detroit was lately reduced to Ashes on the 11 June no lives lost & of those You know the Widow M<sup>rs</sup> William M<sup>c</sup>Comb Meldrum & Park Widow Abbott, Dode-mead, Forsyth's Sons & M<sup>r</sup> Mackintosh were the only persons who had Houses not disposed off. The Commodore & Family are still at Gross Point & in tolerable Health. I shewed him your Letter, which pleased him much & read to Maisonville what you said of him. he poor Fellow is something reduced in Circumstances. though [he] still has his Farm yet [he] is much cast down. he who never has had Education cant support Misfortunes. For my own part though I do not see 20 or thirty people at my Table as formerly, my Spirrits have not decreased in the smallest degree or why should they. To those who call I can give a Glass of Wine, my Health thank God is very good, all my Children thank [God] continue to behave as I could wish And I think M<sup>rs</sup> Askin and I have lived so long at peace with each other that I do not dread any rupture will take place in future. I dislike no Man on Earth, though perhaps some deserve it & I know no House where the Door would be shut against me. On[c]e a Year I put on my best Cloths & as Colonel Commands the Militia on the 4<sup>th</sup> June<sup>20</sup> and make them Fire in Honor to the best of Kings. If we dont all Fire at once thats no matter a Drink generally closes the Scene. M<sup>rs</sup> Askin joins with me in Every wish that can tend to the Happiness of M<sup>rs</sup> Depyster here & hereafter & suffer me to assure you, my Dear Good Sir, that I am with great haste, Your ever Obliged Friend. The Old Indian Chiefs you mentioned in your letter are all no more. P. S. Your old Lieu<sup>t</sup> Robert M<sup>c</sup>Dougal<sup>21</sup> has a large Family lives well and works hard on a Farm.

Aran Schuyler Depyster Esquire Commanding a Reg of Volunteers at Dumfries.

<sup>20</sup> The birthday of George III.

<sup>21</sup> John Robert McDougall was a son of Lieut. George McDougall and Mary Frances Navarre, and a brother of George McDougall, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 374. John Robert, the elder brother, was born in Detroit on June 30, 1764. He was commissioned ensign in the Eighth Regiment of Foot, May 6, 1777, and lieutenant on Dec. 12, 1781. In a deed to Alexander and William Macomb of his half interest in Belle Isle, Aug. 15, 1788, McDougall describes himself as "half pay lieutenant" in the Eighth Regiment. See Colonial Records of Detroit (mss.), Vol. D, 288. On Jan. 26, 1786, he married, in Detroit, Mary Archange Campau, daughter of Simon Campau and Veronica Bordeau. Mary

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ELIJAH BRUSH

Sep<sup>r</sup> 23<sup>d</sup> 1805

Dear sir I'm sorry your Attendance at Court prevented your meeting M<sup>r</sup> Wicks<sup>22</sup> at my House at Dinner some time Ago. He was very Severe on Judge Selby in Court in a case where M<sup>r</sup> Selby was Plaintiff & he Attorney for the Defendand.

You some time Ago said you would want a pair of my Oxen to help to Plow. you Afterwards wrote me you had Purchased Cap<sup>t</sup> Ernests & Only wanted a Yoke. Now Charles or Alex<sup>r</sup> say, you want the Plow & some Oxen. If the weather proves good I will finish Plowing this week After which you may have as many Oxen & the Plow as you choose.

When the Court is Over, I wish you and Allice with the Children [would] come Over & passed the whole day. I have Often much to say to you but cannot recollect it when you are in a hurry or [I have] any Other Company which takes off[f] my Attention.

In the Order I sent you for things, I believe you wrote me that you had a stock of Hysen Tea & from that would let me have the Quantity I put in my Order. If so send it by first good Oppertunity.

As your now Bussy I shant say more Except that I am Dear Sir

truly Yours

John Askin

*Addressed:* E. Brush Esquire at Detroit

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Archange was buried in Sandwich, Dec. 4, 1821, and on Aug. 15, 1836, McDougall married (second) Geneveva Meny, daughter of Antoine Meny and Catherine Brilliant *dit* Beaulieu and widow of Lambert Thibault. In 1787 McDougall procured the farm lying on either side of modern McDougall Avenue, later confirmed to him as P. C. 9 and 454, and still known as the McDougall Farm. McDougall was buried in Sandwich, July 24, 1846; Geneveva Meny was buried in Detroit, Oct. 5, 1866. Thirteen children were born to McDougall by his first marriage, and his descendants are still represented in Detroit and vicinity. Data compiled from Burton, George McDougall and Descendants (ms.); British army lists; Denissen, *op. cit.*; and scattering ms. references in B. H. Coll.

<sup>22</sup> Probably William Weekes, a native of Ireland, who migrated to the United States and in 1798 to Upper Canada. He is said to have studied law in the office of Aaron Burr. In Canada he engaged in politics and became a vigorous critic of the faction in control of the government. On Oct. 6, 1806, in the course of an address before the court at Niagara,

## COMMERCIAL DIFFICULTIES IN DETROIT

Near Sandwich Oct<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> 1805

Dear Sir, Your favor of the 19 August reached me yesterday and Im sorry to observe that nothing has as yet been done by the Government of the United States to relieve the distresses of the sufferers of Detroit. they are endeavouring to erect some buildings at a great disadvantage. they are to pay pretty dear for the Lots & I understand are prohibited from cutting Pine as us[u]al and what timber and boards [are] purchased On this side pays a Duty. a Raft or two have been seized and confiscated. however I dont attribute any of these grievances to be the present Governor who I believe to be a very good Man and perhaps when Congress meet some favorable change for the Inhabitants of Detroit may take place. at present all on the other side seems to be hurry, distress and some confusion so that no payments can be got nor are the new Laws yet promulgated so as to find out by what means Compulsive measures can be used. I think M<sup>r</sup> Brush told me the first Courts are to be held in May next. I'm sorry to say that [is] very contrary to my inclination's I do not at present know of any means by which I will be able this year to discharge the Interest on what I owe you. To a man not in business its very strange how many disappointments I have this year met with some of them I shall mention. The *Sagwinah* was chartered for £500, to take a load from Fort Erie to Michilimacinae & return, this she performed, after which she remained at Fort Erie for a very long time without being able to then get or a prospect of getting if she was to stay untill fall a single Packett of freight she therefore returned we discharged the men & she now remains here what she e[ar]ned I fear will not pay expences & some trifling charges of repairs last Spring. many Vessells have this Summer returned Empty & I fear much Except those connected directly or indirectly with the Houses who have a share in

he made a bitter attack upon the administration. William Dickson, the opposing counsel, responded with a violent attack upon Weekes. A day or two later the latter challenged Dickson to a duel, which was fought near a bastion of Fort Niagara, on the American side of the river early on October 10. Weekes was mortally wounded, and died the same day. See Niagara Hist. Soc., pub., No. 30, pp. 23-24; *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, VI, 167-68; and Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, 254-55 *et passim*.

the North West Company will [not] be able to Sail in future without sinking Money. If I with the other proprietors though[t] she would fetch half her Value we would set her up, but the great want of Money gives us no hopes. yet its a pitty that so good a Vessell which with about £300 worth of repairs in the Spring would be perfectly sound should be laid up I wish M<sup>r</sup> Robert Dickson would purchase her his Trade is so extensive he would want a Vessell for himself & as he deals with you and I owe You the mode of payment would be very easy. I sent my Son to Michilimacinac with some Whisky & High Wines he returned without being able to sell a single Gallon though he Offered them for the price of this place & sink Duty & Freight. he left them in care of a M<sup>r</sup> Gee with directions not to part with them except for re[a]dy payment. Sometime after Mess<sup>rs</sup> Dumas Parentt & C<sup>o</sup> had agreed to take them but when they produced my Order at Michilimacinac for the delivery to M<sup>r</sup> Gees Clark (as he was gone a Wintering) he said M<sup>r</sup> Gees had changed them for Suger payable next year which I do not believe having no such directions. This caused a disappointment of nearly £200. M<sup>r</sup> William Mackintosh my agent at Post Vincents received of a Man named Hunot on account of a very large Sum due me 500 Deer Skins in ten Packs he marked them in my name and very thoughtlessly sent them by the same Man who was equiped & owed M<sup>r</sup> Gouie. finding Detroit burnt where he was to have left them he carried them with his other Peltries to M<sup>r</sup> Gouie who persuaded him to lodge them in his Store, and then kept them. I have commenced a Suit which will not end untill the Judges goes the Circuit next year. From the Post where I have legal Demands I have not got one pen[n]y I believe that to be the most rasscally place in any Country and dare not risk a Suit there let the demands be ever so fair. They are now making Laws to support roguery. I'm sure every honest man will think them such. I am fearfull that I have tired you with my misfortunes, your patience with my misfortunes but its to show you that when I promised £200 yearly to keep down the Interest, I had reason to suppose I would be able to command it.

I heard with sorrow the Death of the late M<sup>r</sup> Andrew M<sup>c</sup> Gill<sup>23</sup> and wrote his Brother on that melancholy occasion

I remain with Esteem D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Your most Obedient very humble Servant

Mess<sup>rs</sup> James & Andrew M<sup>c</sup> Gill & C<sup>o</sup> Merchants Montreal

P. S. Much paines have been taken for these three years past by persons from Interested Views to make the *Saguinah* pass for a rotten Vessell its false and shamefull she never sailed yet without being in a situation to meet any weather and always had the necessary repairs so that a single package has not been damaged in her and now when repaired will be as safe & good as any Vessell of her size on the Lakes & will be reduced 5 Tons so as not to have to pay Tonnage in the Ports of the United States; there is not any Vessell has lasted so long & people from her age are easy persuaded to believe she is rotton but the contrary has been demonstrated each time that she has been strip'd for repairs and her timber examined & there is but one Vessell on this Lake that can go to windward of her. I wish some Mercantile House that has much freight for Michilimacinac would take my share in her they like on their own terms and then the present Owners would have her thoroughly repaired, for not having any sure freight we dare hardly commence repairs if you could take a fourth or more share in her you would not have Money to lay out but give me Credit and You shall have the preferance in furnishing Stores to be deducted from your freight. Its certain that though not kept half her time she last Year and the year before made so much that at Settlement last may she owed each of us three Owners only £98-11-6, New York Currency each.

*Endorsed:* Near Sandwich Oct<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> 1805. October John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> To Mess<sup>rs</sup> James & Andrew M<sup>c</sup>Gill, Merchants Montreal. (Copy)

<sup>23</sup> For the career of Andrew McGill, see *B. H. R.*, I, 402.



HIGH TAXES IN DETROIT

Near Sandwich Oct<sup>r</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> 1805

Dear Sir, Having wrote both you and the house very fully a few days ago I have only now to say that two days ago I had a Visit from an old acquaintance of mine a Farmer on the other side, who says its the intentions of several to sell their Farms and come over here and as they know I have a good many Lots between River a Trench and those situated on the borders of the Lake or Rivers, for they suppose those I once had still belonging to me. I have no doubt If they put their intentions in execution they will be very desirous to purchase of me. I therefore wish to know if you are disposed to sell any of your own or any of M<sup>r</sup> Todds Lots payable immediately or at least half down for as those people have good Farms on the other side if they dispose of them they will be possessed of money for less than 20/ NY Currency per acre. I would not advise you to sell and though Government, I dare say would give such people Land its now so far back that the Canadians would prefer purchasing on the borders of Rivers or Lakes near other inhabitants to geting Lands for nothing back they like society so much They complain of the Taxes upon the American side, A Dollar for each Dog, twenty shillings for each Carriole and twenty for each Horse with several others, besides being subject to Militia Duty so frequently as to prevent their necessary labour

I have only to add that I am Dear Sir with much esteem

Your most obedient Humble Servant

James M<sup>o</sup> Gill Esquire Merchant at Montreal

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Strabane<sup>24</sup>

*Endorsed:* Near Sandwich October the 7<sup>th</sup> 1805. John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> to James M<sup>o</sup> Gill Esquire, Montreal, Copy.

<sup>24</sup> The address evidently represents a bit of absent-mindedness on the part of the copyist, who was one of Askin's sons.

INDEBTEDNESS OF ROBERT DICKSON

Montreal 14 October 1805

My dear Sir I address you on a Subject which involves almost my all. Mess Robert Dickson & C<sup>o</sup> of Mackinaw owe my House a very large Sum of money indeed and they owe also 20 others who may not be disposed to act candidly & fairly but endeavour to get all they can. I wish therefore to know whether an attachment on Goods or other property can be obtained from the Courts on the American Side, on an open Account proven before one of our Judges or if any other formality is necessary.

I may have occasion for your Son in Laws Services, possibly I may request your own personally, all which you will keep to yourself, except inquiring by what process debts can be come at in the Government of Detroit & how far it extends. My mind has been greatly agitated & must continue so for a length of time, if you can alleviate it I know you will do it. I again recommend the greatest secrecy in this business and request you to believe me My Dear Sir

Your sincere Friend & Obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

James M<sup>c</sup>Gill

P. S. Is there a Bankrupt Law in the Detroit Government, and if so, what is necessary to be done to get out a Statute of Bankruptcy? J. M<sup>c</sup> G

Do not omit writing by every opportunity under cover to a Friend at Queenston or Kingston or York.

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

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

*Endorsed:* Montcal Oct<sup>r</sup> 14<sup>h</sup> 1805 James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esq<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Rec<sup>d</sup> About the 26<sup>h</sup> and Answ<sup>d</sup> about 28<sup>h</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup>

COMMODORE GRANT ASSUMES GOVERNORSHIP

I wrote you My dear Sir two letters one of which I fear you will Never get, From M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Dickson trusting a poor silly drunken body I brought here as a servant with all my western letters for you M<sup>r</sup> Grant Duff & c & c. The wretch

got drunk on his way to Fort Erie no word of him nor letters. When I got first in office,<sup>25</sup> I felt uneasy, but now thank god I begin to see clearer, with the assistance of two very honourable men perfectly know'n the intention and secrets of our worthy late Lieu<sup>t</sup> Governor, regarding the business of this province, The attorney General<sup>26</sup> & Capt<sup>n</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Gill,<sup>27</sup> I mentioned in one of my former letters that Effort were made by a gentleman former[ly] in office, to get hold of the helm after he himself was the principle in Establishing me at first. This I have heard was by an advice of a new Comer, and a Country Gentleman of yours high in the law Department here, You know will how ready some of your natives are to create Disturbances and fond of it, but that gentleman formerly in office and my Colleagues were very stanch in what they understood to be the intention of His Majestys instruction regarding the Death of a Lieu Governor. I beg to lay my injunction on you to have the Goodness, that if the Agents of M<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Robertson do's not Come forward and pay the Interest on his account—That [you] would be pleased to instruct M<sup>r</sup> Brush to sell his W<sup>m</sup> Robertson[s] house on the Common and lots in Town so as to defray my acc<sup>t</sup> and the Expenche of the attachment. Also I request of you to require Doctor Brown's account And get settlement made between him & M<sup>rs</sup> Grant I have wrote M<sup>rs</sup> G. on the subject, do not my dear Sir thumpen [?] out my real and sincere Regard to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Brush, Charles, James, & Nelly, not forgetting Alick. tell him I had a letter by M<sup>r</sup> Baby from Aleck Grant, but do not find he thrives fast in his learning he promises pushing on. C<sup>o</sup>l Shaw<sup>28</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Gill Jarvis &c &c have been Enquiring after you Miss Crookshanks is not married yet remember me to Ernest, the Governor & family Henry & all those of our well wisher's—youl be plagued reading this scrol. I have wrote Mercer,

<sup>25</sup> Lieutenant-Governor Hunter died in Quebec on Aug. 21, 1805. During his term of office he had been frequently absent from York on duties pertaining to his position as commander-in-chief of the army in Canada, and during these intervals the government of Upper Canada devolved upon a committee of executive councilors. Upon the death of Hunter, Grant, as president of the Executive Council, became acting governor, serving in this capacity until the appointment of Governor Gore in 1806.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Scott (1746-1824), attorney-general of Upper Canada, 1801-1806, and chief justice, 1806-16. For his career, see Ont. Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, XX, 126 ff.

<sup>27</sup> John McGill, for whom see *ante*, 234.

<sup>28</sup> Aeneas Shaw, for whom see *ante*, 241-42.

Merideth, Burnett,<sup>29</sup> & David Smith from who I had a letter (by his Successor) all despondency. one sentence, says, I was everything when with you but here no body, or hardly known he tells me he is married again I was glad by your letter to find that John's lady was better & that the Doctor was st[ir]ring about. it is very sickly about here, but I am thank God in perfect health and spirits I must & I cannot help it—obliged to see Company and entertain what I am to have yet I cannot tell L<sup>t</sup> Co<sup>l</sup> Proctor<sup>30</sup> & the gentlemen of the 41<sup>st</sup> Regt are pleasant men.

I am Dear Sir Sincerely your friend

A. Grant

October 24<sup>th</sup> 1805

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

*Addressed:* John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esquire at Strabane

*Endorsed:* York Oct<sup>r</sup> 24<sup>h</sup> 1805 President Grant to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 26<sup>th</sup>

FROM ALEXANDER GRANT TO JOHN ASKIN

York 1<sup>st</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> 1805

This is the fourth Epistle from me to you my dear friend since I have been administering this Government the first of which is intirely lost, with [the] poor silly body that was carr[y]ing it from M<sup>r</sup> Dickson to Fort Erie from drunk[en]-

<sup>29</sup> Probably Lieut. John Burnet of the Eighth Regiment, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 284.

<sup>30</sup> Henry Procter, who subsequently figured prominently in the War of 1812 in the Northwest. Information concerning his parentage and date of birth is lacking. He became an ensign in the Forty-third Regiment, April 5, 1781, and major in the same regiment, May 13, 1795. On Oct. 9, 1800, he became lieutenant colonel of the Forty-first Regiment; colonel, July 25, 1810; and on June 4, 1813, was commissioned major general. He served in Canada for many years prior to the War of 1812. After Hull's surrender of Detroit in August, 1812, Procter was left in local command, his rule continuing until his retreat before the army of General Harrison in the autumn of 1813. For his conduct of this retreat, and the loss of the battle of the Thames, he was subsequently court-martialed and suspended from rank and pay for six months. Thereafter, he remained on the Unattached List of the army until his death in Bath, England, Oct. 31, 1822.

On May 19, 1792, he married Elizabeth Cockburn, daughter of Archdeacon Cockburn, in St. Mary's Kilkenny. They had three daughters (Sarah Anne, baptised in Leominster, Nov. 18, 1794; Frances Sarah, born in Canada, July 15, 1803; Augusta Margaret Firth, born in Canada, Nov. 19, 1808); there was also a son, Henry, who was born about the year 1795. Information supplied by Public Record Office, London, Jan. 30, 1929. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for November, 1822, in reporting Procter's death, gave his age as fifty-nine years; the *Royal Military Calendar* (London, 1920), states that he was sixteen when he entered the army in 1781.

ness & losing the letters for all you good floks [folks] above. I'm tempt now to write from the good oppertunity of a Captain Muir<sup>31</sup> of this Garrison ordered to Join the Garrison of S<sup>t</sup> Joseph, L<sup>t</sup> Colonel Proctor, Comd<sup>t</sup> at this Garrison & the rest of the Gentlemen of the 41<sup>st</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> are pleasant men. them, & I, are on very good footing as I endeavour to be with everybody. As I told you before I live at M<sup>r</sup> Allans. the Military has positive orders not to interfer with the Government house to be left intirely for the L<sup>t</sup> Governor or the person administering the Government, so it rest[s] quite Empty. The August packet is come in, by which I have received many dispatches. The Earl of Camden who was minister of State for the Colonial & war Department is now Succeeded by your Countryman Lord Castlereagh There is some reports which god grant may be true that Lord Gardener has had a battle with the Brest fleet,<sup>32</sup> has taken 6 and sunk three. The hundereth Regim<sup>t</sup> is come 800 strong & the 6 Reg<sup>t</sup> gos home Remember me to my dear friend M<sup>rs</sup> Askin the young Gentlemen & Nelly M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Bush who I hope will be able to make out of some part of Robertson's property what will pay the interest of his account & what will indemnify himself for his trouble

When the Post begins to go, I expect to hear from you by every one to know how both familys are.

Sincerely Yours

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

Alex Grant

<sup>31</sup> Adam C. Muir was commissioned adjutant of the Forty-first Regiment on Sept. 30, 1793, and may have come to Canada in 1800, when the first battalion of the regiment was sent to America. In 1805 he was stationed at Amherstburg, and in December precipitated an affray at Detroit by his attempt to apprehend here a deserter from the Amherstburg garrison. For this he was sentenced by Judge Woodward to be fined and imprisoned but the latter part of the sentence was not inflicted. Shortly prior to this affair Muir had been appointed to the command of Fort St. Joseph, but he seems not to have reached his station until the spring of 1806. In September, 1811, he assumed the command of Fort Amherstburg, where he remained until the opening of war the following summer. He participated in most of the battles in the Detroit area; commanded the British force at Brownstown; and following Hull's surrender was in command of Detroit for a brief period. In September, 1812, he led a combined British-Indian expedition against Fort Wayne, but the advance of General Winchester to the Maumee compelled him to beat a hasty retreat to Amherstburg. His service on the western front was terminated by the defeat of General Proctor at the battle of the Thames in October, 1813, when Muir (now a major by brevet) was captured and conveyed to an American prison. No record has been found of his subsequent career. Data derived from British army lists and documents in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*; and Casselman, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>32</sup> Napoleon had long been devoting his energies to his grand project for invading Eng-

*Addressed:* John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esqr Strabane

*Endorsed:* York Nov<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> 1805 Commodore Grant as  
administrator to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 24<sup>th</sup>: Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 26<sup>th</sup>

DEBTS OF FRANCIS VIGO

Sandwich November 1<sup>st</sup> 1805

William Mackintosh Esquire

Sir, M<sup>r</sup> Askin has shewn us the different Letters you wrote him respecting the situation of the Debt due by Monsieur Francois Vigoe to us, which letters point out to us the little probability there is of ever bringing that matter to a close whilst M<sup>r</sup> Jones and you were our joint Attorneys and as you may well suppose that we now are & for many and for many years past have been much disgusted at the delays and obstacles thrown in the way to prevent our getting our rights and deminish the value we are fairly intitled to and as we find the longer we wait the less we shall have, we therefore a few days ago came to a resolution to make you our sole Attorney in this Business which we have done and at same time revoked our former Power of Attor[ney] to M<sup>r</sup> Jones and you. There being now no Check to your proceedings unless such as the Law directs we intertain hopes that you will without loss of time wind up the matter, the Business you have to do for us being very clear and is as follows. you will get into your possession without loss of time all the property which was mortgaged to us without any regard to whom M<sup>r</sup> Vigoe unlawfully Sold it and for the remainder of the Debt with Interest to the last penny you will sue and take Land in payment as the Law directs since no better can be done. And please observe our Power of Attorney to you does not authorize you to compound or make any other arrangement whatever with Monsieur Vigoe except that of receiving our full payment with Interest. If M<sup>r</sup> Vigoe will impartially examine his own conduct towards us he will find that he is not intitled to the least indulgence from us nor shall he meet

land. The most considerable French fleet was in the harbor of Brest. The battle here reported never occurred, but the complete downfall of Napoleon's project was registered in Lord Nelson's victory of Trafalgar, Oct. 21, 1805.

with any by our consent. Please observe we forgot to make an exception in saying all the mortgaged property should be taken by you. The sale from M<sup>r</sup> James Abbott to Governor Harrison is good and we have received each of us our proportion of the monies arising therefrom. Mr. Brush in drawing out the Power of Attorney from us to you seems to have forgotten to authorize you to make other Attorneys under you if you should think it necessary, therefore if you find it so please let me know and we will send you Authority for that purpose. We need hardly tell you to be much on your guard in your proceedings against Monsieur Vigoe for as he will now find that he has no mercy to expect, and none he deserves he no doubt will employ the Ablest Attorneys he can get to defeat any measure you may take against him, therefore it perhaps would be prudent in you to be before hand with him in that respect before he knows what the concerned intend

Not recollecting anything further necessary to say at present as we expect to hear from you frequently We remain  
Sir,

your most Obedient very humble Servant

Signed	{	John Askin Angus Mackintosh for himself as well as for the Estate of the [late] W <sup>m</sup> Macomb & <sup>o</sup> William Park & for those he represents James Abbott C[?] & Ca
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N. B. By the Earliest conveyance you will please advise What length of time it will take to forclose the Mortgage your communications so as would be best Duplicates for fear of Miscarriage

Signed { James Abbott  
          { John Askin

P. S. This N. B. was suggested by M<sup>r</sup> Park its needless to send it to have it signed by him and M<sup>r</sup> Angus Mackintosh

*Endorsed:* Sandwich November the 1<sup>st</sup> 1805 The Members of the Miamis Company to William Mackintosh Esq<sup>r</sup> (Copy)

FROM ARCHANGE MEREDITH TO JOHN ASKIN

Portsmouth 5<sup>th</sup> November 1805

My beloved Father, The arrival of the Quebec Fleet was most wellcome intelligence to me as I had flattered myself I should have rec<sup>d</sup> packets of letters from my dear friends in Canada but I am sorry to say I have not had one however I trust to be more fortunate another time and impute such disappointment [to] the letters having miscarried as I doubt not many were written to come by that opportunity.

From the rumour of expected augmentation to our Corps I had imagined that we should have been removed to Woolwich long e're this as My dear Meredith wants but two vacancies to give him the next step in the Reg<sup>t</sup> however we have heard nothing more on the subject lately and were it not for the sake of promotion I should prefer remaining here as we find this a very pleasant quarter and a very lively one from the sucession of people to and fro from various parts of the World the weather is delightful for the time of year My dear M. myself and our youngest darling walk out every day to respire the sea Breeze exercise has been reccommended to me as I have been very unwell lately the medical men consulted on the occasion call it nervous. I take Bark every day and find myself much better and my strength greatly recruited and could the most endearing attentions of a truly affectionate husband restore me to health I should soon be quite well. The favorable reports I frequently receive of my dear children's progress at school cannot fail of inspiring me with much comfort they possess very proper ideas and I trust will do well. My dear Meredith is in tolerable health but quite thin to what you knew him you may always know his approach by hearing him sing he is merry and wise

My little Elizabeth is now learning to read and is really very entertaining by the shrewd remarks she often makes she is our daily companion in our rambles and whilst I am writing this is pretending to work I sometimes give her a pretty little pair of scissars to cut out with they belong to a tortoise shell case which my dearest Mother gave me she is fond of shewing them to people and says these scissars belong to My dear Grandmama. We this morning rec<sup>d</sup> a



charming letter from one of my Cousin Mercers I am happy to say that a little coolness which subsisted between the families is now entirely healed up and we have frequent correspondence with them Capt<sup>n</sup> Mercer complains that he has not heard from Canada for a very long time tho' he writes once a year regularly. they are all very well and still live at Uxbridge he has left the Militia as he was so much troubled with the gout that he could not with any pleasure perform his duty. The unfortunate W<sup>m</sup> Robertson is still in being and lives in the vicinity of Billingsgate in a miserable Ale house. It is now a very long time since I have [had] any passengers from Canada when we lived at Woo[lwich] We sometimes were gratified with the sight of some one who had seen you I understand there are many Merchants from Quebec come to England this Autumn you will have the goodness my dear Father to excuse my not writing a very long letter by this opportunity but I was anxious that you should hear from us and I trust soon to send you a very full Epistle in the mean time I beg you will assure my beloved and ever dear Mother of my very sincere affection accept the same for yourself and have the goodness to assure my dear Brothers sisters Uncles Aunts and Cousins of my very affectionate regards My dear Meredith joins in the same with your Ever dutiful and affectionate Daughter  
 Archange Meredith<sup>33</sup>

*Addressed:* To John Askin Esq<sup>re</sup> at Detroit Upper Canada To The Care of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Todd and M<sup>o</sup>Gill Merch<sup>ts</sup> at Montreal Canada

*Endorsed:* Portsmouth Nov<sup>r</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 1805 M<sup>rs</sup> Meredith & Major Meredith to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 10 March 1806

Portsmouth 5<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> 1805 M<sup>rs</sup> & Major Meredith to John Askin

PROSECUTION OF LAND CLAIMS IN YORK

York 20<sup>th</sup> November 1805

My dear Sir I have before me now four letters of yours received by M<sup>r</sup> Woods whos appearance made me very

<sup>33</sup> Appended is a letter from David Meredith to John Askin.

happy indeed, from my anxious wish to hear from Your quarter, & of my family & friends. Regarding your uneasiness that I was fearfull or rather in doubt, of taken upon myself the Administration of this Government, from the generous Manner (though agreeable to the Kings instruction) that the majority of the Executive Council indeed at first the whole of them, addressed me to administer the Government of this Country, I could not avoid falling into their wishes. my friends in & out of Council wished for me by all means to take upon me the management of the Government.

What alarmed me much & put me to an unpluse was mostly all the officers of Government being absent, and had no person to advise with or help me but that good man Captain M<sup>c</sup>Gill Colonel Shaw stays always at his farm only when soummonds to Council. Thank my god, now I am perfectly easy in my mind, which I was not at first, from real anxiety to do well, farr & near I learn yet all seems to be satisfied, with matters gone on queitly. Tho my late good worthy predesessor was Sensible & Clever, he latterly dealt very harse [harsh] with most of the people that had any business with him. thats answering mostly your's of the 1<sup>st</sup> oct<sup>r</sup>.

Your favour of the 27<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>. There is [a] rule of the Executive Council & L<sup>t</sup> Governor, that since such a period [space] that no U. E or military or magistrates &c &c Claimants that pitioned for lands & granted by the Council but not located can have an acre now without paying the full fees, and that in hand before any Steps is taken. Several officers upon half pay had during Gener<sup>l</sup> Simcoes administration procured minutes of council for their lands, Neglected all the rest of the business till lately, but cannot get an acre without paying the full fees, as any Settler from the states of america. Mr. Woods will inform you more fully who takes great pains to inform himself through all the offices.

Captain M<sup>c</sup>Kee, I think I mentioned to you before that I had mentioned to Gener<sup>l</sup> Hunter concerning his having a Troop of horse or Cavalry. his answer was he did not care how many troops they would have, but no expence to

Government. I see nothing to prevent Capt<sup>n</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Kee getting the Commission.

Your favor of the 29<sup>th</sup> Oct regarding Captain M<sup>o</sup>Kee's or any of his Childrens Claim on the indien Huron reserve. I have been sounding my Colleagues in Council they say nothing can be done in the matter till the Chief Justic[e] arrives, and then they think it must be purchased from or dilivered by the Indians I shall make all the Enquiries I can concerning it. And I fear the same objection will be [made] to the late Colonel M<sup>o</sup>Kees lands and his Children as to other Claimants, by not coming forward sooner and locating their right.

I am told Caldwell by his negligence will lose nearly 2000 acres of his Captaincy land I am also told that Several Gentlemen got recommodation [recommendations] for grants of certain tracts from home and after they past the Executive council our late good General kept them up, and [they did] not proceed further. My being here in the station I am in by mere chance, I cannot nor ind[eed] is [it] in my power to change or alter rules ad[opted] by the Executive Council & approved by the late L<sup>t</sup> Governor. The Chief Justice being absent who was at the head of the Council, and knew well the Governor Se[n]timents upon most matters, I miss much. And could bring things more forward with more propriety & Legallity than can be done otherwise no word of his being on his way, or whether he go[e]s to the lower Province, or remain[s] in this

I should be glad to see Charles it will be of Service to him to look & see how business go[e]s on here. Remember my sincere affection to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin and all the rest of your good family and beli[e]ve me dear Sir

Your Sincere Friend

Alex Grant

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

*Addressed:* John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esquire Strabane Sandwich  
Favored by Ja<sup>a</sup> Woods Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Endorsed:* York Nov<sup>r</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> 1805 Commodore Grant  
President to John Askin rec<sup>d</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> the 2<sup>d</sup>  
Jan<sup>y</sup> 1806

PROPOSAL TO RENT THE *SAGUINAH*Detroit 24<sup>th</sup> november 1805

Sir Being informed by Cap<sup>t</sup> Connelly<sup>34</sup> that your small Vessel has done little or nothing last summer & is now laid up at Fort Erie & that the man who had the charge of her could do nothing with her, if so & that you wish to use her the ensuing season if it would meet your approbation I would willingly take her in charge in the spring, or otherwise if you would wish I should take her in a certain share I would have no objection, otherwise perhaps you would wish to dispose of her, if either of the above will please you. I will wait on you at your house by a line from you. I would wish to have an answer from you soon as M<sup>r</sup> C. Clements<sup>35</sup> has been speaking to me to take charge of his Vessel now here but would prefer yours as I think I could make something of her that would be handsome.

I am Sir with respect your verry humble Servant

Tho<sup>s</sup> NowlanJohn Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esq<sup>o</sup>*Addressed:* John Askin Senior Esq<sup>o</sup> Strabane near Sandwich*Endorsed:* Detroit Nov<sup>r</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 1805 Tho<sup>s</sup> Nowlan to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> from M<sup>r</sup> Brush the 10<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> 1806 Answ<sup>d</sup> next day

<sup>34</sup> John Connelly was living in Detroit as early as Jan. 3, 1800, when a daughter, Catherine, was born to his wife, Dorothea Lalor. According to the compiler of the "Daniel Dobbins Papers," the Abbots of Detroit, in 1801, built an eighty-ton schooner which they named the *General Wilkinson* and of which Connelly was made master. It is certain that he was master of the *General Wilkinson* as early as 1803 and as late as 1810 (see Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Publ.*, IX, 463, for the earlier date; a ms. in the B. H. Coll. supplies the later one). In the summer of 1814, he served as pilot of the schooner *Experiment* which conveyed provisions for Col. George Croghan on his expedition against Mackinac Island. In 1816 he was living at Rouge River, and on the occasion of the burning of a neighbor's barn, Connelly assisted in preventing the spread of the fire and shortly thereafter supplied an interesting affidavit which incidentally discloses that he had a son named Will, concerning whom no other mention has been found. Dorothea Lalor was buried in Detroit, March 24, 1819, aged thirty-eight years; John Connelly was buried here, July 31, 1822, aged fifty years. Data derived from entries in Ste. Anne's Church Register, and from mss. in B. H. Coll.

<sup>35</sup> Christian Clemens, founder and "father" of Mount Clemens, was of Pennsylvania Dutch stock, his ancestors having migrated from Holland to Philadelphia about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Garret Clemens, father of Christian, was a Mennonite, and during the Revolution was repeatedly fined for refusal to bear arms. He died, Jan. 5, 1799, and was interred in the Dunkard burial grounds in Germantown. Christian was born in Horsham, Montgomery County, Pa., Jan. 30, 1768. About the year 1795 he came to Detroit where he engaged in leather making. About the year 1803 he located on the

## PROSECUTION OF LAND CLAIMS IN DETROIT

Near Sandwich November 26<sup>th</sup> 1805

Dear Sir I write you a few lines I think on Monday was a week just before I went to Detroit<sup>36</sup> to give evidence in support of the Claims I give in to Lands for you M<sup>r</sup> Todd some others and myself I returned on Saturday night and got through with most of them to my Satisfaction the business was tedious and very troublesome partly oweing to the distance of time and irregular attendance of the Witnesses but by the good patience and good humour of the Commissioners I got mostly through and I must do them the justice to say they took down my proofs in the most favorable lights and I now think it not improbable that congress may confirm all of them except one which being the only Indian Title I claim under the quantity being very large and little improvements made on it perhaps has not their good wishes. I'm sure their oppinion are much altered in regard to my claim's and so will Congress when they see them. from the large quantity of my Claims and representations made that number[s]of the principal British subjects had obtained large tracts of Land for very inconsiderable value and sold it out in small Parcels at a high price to the poor inhabitants. having heard this, I in the presence of the Commissioners put the whole Country to defiance to prove their was a single man in it who ever had bought a foot of Land of me which I had purchased of Indians and that my Claims for large quantities was composed of small tracts of land purchased at high rates from poor people. I mean to have Affidavids of some respectable people here to the foregoing effects and

present site of Mount Clemens, on land acquired from Richard Connor, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 228-29. Here he died, Aug. 25, 1844. He platted the village in 1818, was instrumental in having it made the county seat of Macomb County, and provided sites for the court house, jail, cemetery, and one or more churches. He was the first probate judge of the county, and until his death, the foremost citizen of the town. He was one of the early trustees of the University of Michigan, and a colonel of the Michigan militia.

Clemens married Elizabeth Tallmadge Allen (1777-1824), widow of Deodat Allen, and four daughters were born to them. All married, and all of Clemens' sons-in-law made their homes in Mount Clemens, where for two generations the family influence was an important factor in the life of the community. A considerable group of Christian Clemens' private papers belongs to the B. H. Coll. Data chiefly derived from Rebecca L. Crittenden, Clemens genealogy (ms.)

<sup>36</sup> The numerous errors in the document are due to the fact that the manuscript is a copy of the original, in the hand of one of Askin's sons.

sent by the Commissioners to Congress will not be so favorable in their Decisions to those who purchased of Indians and sold out in small parcells. The principal Claim on behalf of you and M<sup>r</sup> Todd not yet passed is for the old Moravian Town,<sup>37</sup> owing to the people who lived on it for me being on this side & Affeared to go over to the other, but the Commissioners will give a protection for them from the minuet they Land. I therefore expect I will be able to prevail on them to go over. The Summoning of Witnesses and recording every paper relative to my Claims as no precaution should be omitted will be expensive but I'm determined nothing shall be wanting on my part to secure them. M<sup>r</sup> Baby came before the Commissioners in Order to give proofs of Possession Cultivation &<sup>o</sup> but could not be heard, as he entered no Claim prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of this month agreeable to Law. Therefore Congress will only see his Fathers Purchases from Indians they being recorded by which it will appear as if no improvement had been made though in one spott he laid out more than £3,000 in the purchase I would say in erecting two Griss Mills. The claims I gave in to the commissioners in behalf of M<sup>r</sup> Todd and you are conformable to the Sales I made you I would send you a Copy of them but think it would create unnecessary Postage.

Respecting money matters as I before mentioned in my last Letter the prospect is bad. M<sup>r</sup> Park tells me he desired Mess<sup>rs</sup> Forsyth & Richardson to pay your the £60 for the Mill when taxes are got and money paid into the Detroit Treasury I'm promised about £200, which when Received shall be sent you & you made acquainted how to Credit it M<sup>r</sup> Brush is employed about claims when this is over I will require payment for the Orchard with interest he deducting for the Deeds he may have drawn &<sup>ca</sup> untill this payment is made I shall not give him a Deed for it. I will likewise give him Deeds in behalf of You and M<sup>r</sup> Todd for the two different places belonging to you near the Commons taking security for payment of the same in the manner by you directed. I was much surprised to see the number of new Houses and them tolerable good ones already built at Detroit more seems now to be done in that way, notwith-

<sup>37</sup> The allusion is to the Moravian settlement near Mount Clemens, the site of which Askin and Major Ancrum had jointly purchased in 1786. See *B. H. R.*, I, 227 ff.

standing they [the] great [loss] they sustained there [than] was done in several years past I fear Money that should go to other purposes in [is] now employed in Building.

Thank God my family and self enjoy good Health I sincerely hope the like blessing attend you and yours. If I can gather a little Money I mean to send my Son Charles soon to York to take up the few remaining Deeds I have not yet got as no doubt the Commodore will order them to be made out on my paying I will give him Deeds in my own name and take Security on M<sup>r</sup> Todd &, you by mortgage for payment. I have only to add That I am Dear Sir your much obliged very humble Servant

P. S. Since writing I have received an Order on the Treasury and two others for money which when I can collect shall be remitted

James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esquire at Montreal.

FROM ALEXANDER GRANT TO JOHN ASKIN

York decem<sup>r</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> 1805

My dear Sir Your long letter given me such faithfull and Just accounts of all that is dear to me in this world leaves me no Expression Sufficient to thank you I assure you that I am so Cherished with yours and other friends accounts of the reEnstablishing of M<sup>rs</sup> Grant's health that I feel myself growing quite hearty and well danced fifteen couple down the other night.

I am happy you cleared up to the Commissioners Sitting on that head yours & mine pretention to the farm at Gross Point. And I hope the united states will not take the property from the poor divils on that side of the River.

M<sup>r</sup> Wood's leaving this place lately will shorten my letters as he will give all occurrences regarding this place and what is doing about lands &c. Remember me kindly to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin I am glad that you surmise bringing or geting M<sup>rs</sup> G. now and then to your house, as you and her talks now and then la la la, which makes the old lady shake her sides. I have found all my life time the more I have to do the more

good time I have. You'll say that is a paradox when you think serious you'll join me, an idle person has no time. Laziness brings on languor, idleness supposed sickness blues &c &c. There is neither Post or Express yet arrived from lower Canada. I am really sorry for the death of that good Young man poor Donovan poor old distressed Couple, the father & mother. My Compliments to your neighbours, M<sup>o</sup>Intosh and family. It will not do any hurt to Charles to come here should his health admit of it and look about him. I pass many a pleasant hour with Powel & family talking about our families. I think his piveness seems much for the better. I wrote to Richardson some time ago, had he wrote M<sup>o</sup>Gill regarding his lodging money he would have got it instead of Co<sup>l</sup> Shaw, Who the late Gener<sup>l</sup> took a dislike to also to a nother good man Doc<sup>t</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Caully. Would not see the Doct<sup>r</sup> at Quebec. forget not [to] remember me to Brush & lady Charles James, Nelly, And my fellow Alexander.

Your friend & humble Ser<sup>t</sup>

Alex Grant

John Askin Sen Esq<sup>r</sup> Strabane.

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

*Endorsed:* York 19<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> 1805 Commodore Grant to John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Rec<sup>d</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> 1806 Answ<sup>d</sup> the 4<sup>th</sup>

*Stamped:* YORK 23 Dec 1805

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT HAMPERS BRITISH TRADERS

January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1806

Dear Sir I answered all your letters fully about a month ago since which M<sup>r</sup> Pattinson tells me he this fall seen a man named Bison<sup>38</sup> at S<sup>t</sup> Josephs of Lake Michigan who told him that General Wilkinson<sup>39</sup> had detained M<sup>r</sup> Dickson with all his men near six weeks at the entrance of the Missourie and before he would let him go in he was obliged to hire other engages

<sup>38</sup> Probably Louis Buisson, for whom see *ante*, 292.

<sup>39</sup> General James Wilkinson was appointed governor of Louisiana Territory in 1805. The trade of the upper Mississippi region was at this time chiefly in the hands of a group



I have not rec<sup>d</sup> a dollar in payment since I wrote you last. The Detroit treasury nor no other who [are] owing having any money It's with great difculty I scratch out these few lines owing to a sore finger that prevents my holding my pen as Usual

I remain Your ever obliged Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>  
James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esquire at Montreal

*Endorsed:* Jan<sup>y</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> 1806 John Askin to James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esq<sup>r</sup> (Copy)

FROM ALEXANDER HENRY TO JOHN ASKIN

Montreal 18 January 1806

My dear old friend It is with much Pleasure I received a few lines from you yesterday dated 30<sup>th</sup> November, but at same time am sorry you lost your Boots I sent them by I think a M<sup>r</sup> Dubois the 10 of September, whose father lives in this Place and he has been for some time past a trader from this to Detroit. I received from M<sup>r</sup> Brush the bill for the amount of cash in his Hands. you say you have 32 dollars in Hand for money recoverd from the Indians for our Claim I hope you will be able to recover what you mentioned. let me know what the expectations are in re-covering this. our friend Todd went Home and remains there very bad. I am afraid we will never see him more. we are all rejoicing for the victory gaind by Lord Nelson, but the News from the continent of Europe is very bad. am much afraid Bonepart will over run the old World, and then step over the water to pay us a Visit but I dont think it will be in our Time we have reports of the Indians Threatening the americans at Detroit, but I hope peace will continue with you. I wrote to you when I sent the Boots, whether the man has kept the boots or no [I] cannot say. you will enquire for him. his name is Fran<sup>cois</sup> Dubois a

of British traders, one of the foremost of the number being Robert Dickson. American efforts at westward expansion were being vigorously prosecuted, and one of Wilkinson's early measures was to dispatch Lieutenant Zebulon Pike, in the summer of 1805, to assert the authority of the American government over that region. To the opposition interposed by the government to the activities of British traders within the boundaries of the United States was largely due the growth and success of the American Fur Company.

young man of about 25 years of age a Trader. dont be long before you write to me, and hope Mr. Brush will get something from Vigo. he has a quantity of Lands which in time may be valuable and if good deeds can be procured they may easily be disposed of in the States. the post is just going off therefor conclude this but will soon write you again with my family best wishes for your happiness & that of your family [I] remain sincerely your affectionate friend

Alexander Henry

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Detroit

*Endorsed:* Montreal Jan<sup>y</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> 1806 M<sup>r</sup> Alexander Henry to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 10th March Answ<sup>d</sup> April 4<sup>th</sup>

OBLIGATIONS OF GABRIEL HUNOT

Near Sandwich Jan<sup>y</sup> 25, 1806

Dear Sir, I yesterday promised to give you further information respecting the grounds on which the suit which you are to commence against M<sup>r</sup> Robert Gouie is founded they are as follows viz<sup>t</sup>

Gabriel Hunot an Indian Trader many years ago fell in my Debt in a ballance of above £1400 N. Y. Currency for which he gave me his obligation wrote in the French manner to which there is a seal, since which I have from time to time given him a letter of Licence, without which perhaps he wouldn't have been trusted, but for these t[h]ree or four years last past he has had no letter of Licence from me. understanding that he has latterly been successfull I directed my Agent M<sup>r</sup> William Mackintosh at Post S<sup>t</sup> Vincent that as said Hunot passed that place, on his way to Detroit to insist on his paying him for me about £200 N. Y. Currency in part of his obligation otherwise to sue him. Hunot tells me that he readily complied with the demand knowing it perfectly just, and accordingly delivered said William M<sup>o</sup>Intosh ten packs of deer skins supposed to contain five hundred, which both thought would nearly make the sum demanded. These ten packs were then marked J A and numbered from 1 to 10 and M<sup>r</sup> Mackintosh not apprehending any risk by sending them to him and took his receipt a copy of which is here annexed, said Hunot was

directed to leave them at the house of Richard Donovan Merchant at Detroit, but on his arrival finding the town burnt, he proceeded to his Merchant on this side M<sup>r</sup> Robert Gouie with the whole of the Packs where delivering them in to M<sup>r</sup> Gouies store he said to M<sup>r</sup> Gouie *Voila dix paquets appartenant a Monsieur Askin.* M<sup>r</sup> Gouie replied its all the same, put them in here with the others, I will settle the matter with M<sup>r</sup> Askin. M<sup>r</sup> Hunot not supposing any intentions in M<sup>r</sup> Gouie to detain them put them into his Store, which packs M<sup>r</sup> Gouie has refused to deliver me. my proof is M<sup>r</sup> Hunot himself who I have and will keep here untill trial, there was another man in the Canoe with him whose testimony I will endeavour to obtain, but I am not sure I shall be able to have him at Court being a Voyager on the other side and often in the Indian Country Mr. Hunot tells me that M<sup>r</sup> Gouie has urged him frequently to run away.

From M<sup>r</sup> Baby or M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gregor you will receive twenty dollars which please give M<sup>r</sup> Weeks in preferance to any other Attorney if he comes the Circuit, to assist you in the foregoing case.

Although I now write Captain Cowan, take care that he does not neglect retaining M<sup>r</sup> Weeks also as your assistant in the suit commenced against him and me, by M<sup>r</sup> Gouie, and likewise that he takes the Attorney generals oppinion respecting the sales of the late Doctor Harffy's lands, and do you get the deeds of them from M<sup>r</sup> Dickson also see satisfaction entered on the judgment for what has been received by M<sup>r</sup> Harsens Attorney in his suit against Captain Cowan and me as executors to the late Doctor Harffy, remark the whole sum sued for was £381.5.8 Hfx. Currency which must have been the penalty and not the real Debt please discover what is still due on this judgment so that I may know when satisfied. not recollecting anything more to be mentioned at present I remain Dear Sir

Your most obedient very humble servant

(Copy)

Received Vincenns 10<sup>th</sup> May 1805 in good Order and condition of M<sup>r</sup> William Mackintosh ten packs deer skins marked and numbered J A from N<sup>o</sup> 1 to 10 which I promise

to deliver to M<sup>r</sup> John Askin or order in like good order at Detroit, he paying or accounting with me for customary and reasonable carriage for the same Witness my hand the day and year above written

Witness Signed, Gabriel Hunot  
Signed Richard Donovan

P. S. As neither M<sup>r</sup> Baby or M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gregor are going to York, I will endeavour to send you the twenty dollars by some other opportunity

William Elliott Esquire<sup>40</sup> York

DEBTS OF FRANCIS VIGO

Vincennes 9<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> 1806

Sir A sincere desire to serve a very honest & respectable man must be my appology for addressing a gentleman to whose person I am an entire stranger. I have understood that you have an interest in a bond & Mortgage given by Col<sup>o</sup> Vigo of this place to the late M<sup>r</sup> James Abbot of Detroit for a considerable Sum & which is now put in the Hands of M<sup>r</sup> William M<sup>c</sup>Intosh for Collection. This claim M<sup>r</sup> Dubois has lately made an offer of purchasing and has proposed to M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Intosh as a consideration to convey to the claimants thirty tracts of Donation lands near this place amounting to twelve thousand acres, a valuable House & lot, two other lots appending thereto and about 90 or 100 acres of improved land near to the town. This property altho' it would not perhaps bring two-thirds of the sum if exposed to public sale for cash is in my opinion at the lowest valuation worth at least 16 or 17,000 Dollars And I sincerely believe that after it shall be conveyed & the eight tracts which are offered for the debt due to Williams & C<sup>o</sup>

<sup>40</sup> William Elliott of Sandwich was one of five men admitted to the bar of Upper Canada in 1803 under the authority of an act of that year, who were subsequently characterized as "heaven-born" lawyers. On Sept. 19, 1806, he was married to Sophie Bouchette by Rev. Richard Pollard of St. John's Church, and a son, Robert, was born to them on Jan. 4, 1811. Elliott was long a leading citizen of Sandwich. He was a captain of the First Essex County militia in the War of 1812, serving at Detroit, Frenchtown, and Miami; he subsequently served in the Indian Department, and after the war was a member of the pension board for the Western District of Upper Canada. In the Patriots' War of 1837 (now colonel of militia), he denounced the summary execution of prisoners perpetrated by Colonel Prince, and for this conduct was dismissed from the militia. Data derived from St. John's Church Register; Middleton, *Municipality of Toronto*, 667; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*, especially XII, 618-21; and Irving, *op. cit.*

that there will be left to the Colonel scarcely enough to procure the necessaries of life for his declining age. M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Intosh in his answer to M<sup>r</sup> Dubois which I understand is to be forwarded by this conveyance declares that he is prohibited by his instructions from making any compromise but seems to think that the offer is such as might be accepted by his principals provided some conditions were made to it which have been made agreeably to his suggestion. The rapid population of this part of the Territory induces me to believe that none of the Gentlemen who are interested in the debt would be ultimately losers by a Settlement Made in this way. At any rate I am persuaded that more could not be offered without exposing the old Gentleman to absolute penury. I have heard that some part of Col<sup>o</sup> Vigo's Conduct towards yourself & some other of the claimants had excited great indignation against him & was the cause of the severity Manifested in the late instructions to M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Intosh. Of the precise nature of the offence I am ignorant. I confidently believe however that there has been some mistake in the representation of his Conduct. The peculiar circumstances of his situation ought certainly to be taken into Consideration. you must be sensible Sir that an ignorant and unlettered man must in an affair of this nature give himself entirely to the guidance of others. How far his agents may have conducted themselves properly or otherwise I can not determine, but I am certain that nothing unfair unjust or indecent was ever contemplated by him towards his creditors.

I am with great Respect & Consideration Sir

Your Hum<sup>o</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

Will<sup>m</sup> Henry Harrison

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Addressed:* John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esquire Sandwich Upper Canada

*Endorsed:* Vincent Feb<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>h</sup> 1806 W<sup>m</sup> Henry Harrison to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 16<sup>h</sup> March answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 27<sup>h</sup>

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

DEBTS OF ROBERT DICKSON AND COMPANY

*Private*

Montreal 10 February 1806

My dear Sir I was favoured on the 19 ult<sup>o</sup> with your friendly Letters of 28 & 29 November and am much obliged by the attention you have shown to the unfortunate business of my House with Mess<sup>rs</sup> Robert Dickson & C<sup>o</sup> as well as the kind concern you take in what relates to me personally.

In the inquiries I made as to legal remedies in the Detroit Government, or Michigan Territory, I had in view what others might do & If necessary what we might be able to do; and I [illegible] that attachment in that Territory cannot precede Judgement, tho it may in the Indiana & Mississippi Territories. My wish is not to contest but to have a fair honest share with other Creditors, and this I am afraid is not intended; in such Case my loss will be very heavy, yet there will apparently remain something to go on with in business and I hope enough to enable us to fulfill any engagements we may enter into. we have no share as Partners, nor any other consideration from Mess Dickson & C<sup>o</sup> but the profit on Goods or Commissions such as you know are usually charged on Peltry or money transactions; on that score therefore you & all the Friends of the House may be perfectly easy. I do not think it necessary to write Mess<sup>rs</sup> Macgregor on this Subject, but in conversation you can assure him that you know perfectly well that such is the case. One of the House will go to Mackinac this Spring, in hopes of obtaining our due by fair & temperate means, but if these should fail, Justice to ourselves will require recourse being had to legal measures. when it was your misfortune to be largely debtors to Todd & M<sup>c</sup>Gill, both of us were young & active & the loss we sustained made no deep or lasting impression; at my present time of life, the Case is different and I feel it, perhaps more than I should do, but it will not do to despair but hope for a more favourable issue than I can at this moment foresee or expect.

I have heard from our good Friend Todd up to 6 November when he was still very poorly, I hope his next will inform me that he was better and I now daily look for it—

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

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I am Dear Sir, with undisguised regard

Your's most sincerely

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

James M<sup>c</sup>Gill

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

*Endorsed:* Recv<sup>d</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> April 1806 Montreal Feb<sup>y</sup> 10<sup>h</sup>  
1806 James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esq<sup>r</sup> to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin rev<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 10<sup>h</sup> &  
Answ<sup>d</sup> 23<sup>d</sup> April

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS IN YORK

York February 24<sup>th</sup> 1806

My dear Askin I opened the Session on the 4<sup>th</sup> Inst and as yet the house of Commons do's nothing but vomiting grievance and Complaints Against the Administration of General Hunter and plaguing me, and his favoures. They will do nothing for the the good of the Country tho there is very little wanted so that in few days, I will be under the necessity of proroguing of them.<sup>41</sup> The only act wanted is the renewing of the still duty & Liencens. They keep that back till their Complaints are redressed so that nothing will be done. The October & November mials are arrived at Quebec & Expected hourly here. a letter from Quebec says that General Burton Son of General Christie has got all General Hunters appointments in this Country,<sup>42</sup> that M<sup>r</sup> Alcock go's Chief Justice to lower Canada & our attorney General<sup>43</sup> Chief Justice here, our late puisne Judge<sup>44</sup> with that other Country man of yours M<sup>r</sup> Weeks, are the fomentors of all the disorder amongst the Commons. My real affection to your good wife & Children No news of any kind [We are] waiting with great anxiety for some favourable accounts from the Contenent of Europe

Alex<sup>r</sup> Grant

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<sup>41</sup> For an account of the popular opposition to the administration here alluded to, see D. B. Read, *The Lieutenant Governors of Upper Canada and Ontario, 1792-1799* (Toronto, 1900), 55 ff.

<sup>42</sup> This report proved incorrect; Francis Gore succeeded Hunter as lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada.

<sup>43</sup> Thomas Scott, for whom see *ante*, 486.

<sup>44</sup> Robert Thorpe, puisne judge of the Court of King's Bench of Upper Canada, 1805-1807. He was a principal leader of the opposition to the administration and through Governor Gore's influence his judgeship was taken away from him in 1807. For sketch of

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

*Endorsed:* York Feb<sup>ry</sup> 24<sup>h</sup> 1806 Commodore Grant to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> the 18<sup>th</sup> March.

PROPOSAL FOR SALE OF THE *SAGUINAH*

Strabane February 26<sup>th</sup> 1806

Dear Robert I wrote you a few lines by the Post towards the beginning of this Month my finger was too sore to write more but is now better. I have not as yet looked at your account deeming it unnecessary untill Captain Fearson and M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum comes over to settle about the *Saguinah* the former knowing much better than me what he took up on account of the *Saguinah*. We are as yet undetermined whether we will repair her or not, at all events if we do I prefer the long days to the short for that purpose altho we may loose a trip or more by it indeed not being sure of freight we know not what we would losse or gain. Captain Fearson assures me with a good repair the Vessell would be a good one for many years but this repair would cost about £500. N.Y. Currency and perhaps not so much. Now any person who would have her repaired and fitted out should have my consent (and I dare say that of the other owners) to a half share in her and that when she is in good order must be worth nearly £1000 for she would not then be dear of £2000. I think you purpose continuing a Trade to this Quarter you would do well to take the offer, it will save you much freight money and in the repairs you would not have much money to lay out as a great part of the materials as well as provissions would be always furnished by you besides by dropping the Decks a very little she could go into the American Ports without charges and when not better employed could carry salt to Presquil you had better consider this matter seriously and if you find the undertaking too great for yourself alone I dare say there are some in your Quarter who will readily join you. you know jealousy has made many say that the *Saguinah*

his career, see Riddell, *Life of William Dummer Powell*, 218-19; D. B. Read, *Lives of the Judges of Upper Canada and Ontario from 1791 to the Present Time* (Toronto, 1888), 77 ff.



was rotten its realy false, there are parts of her as sound as ever. I can depend on what Captain Fearson says. If you wish to hold, with any other that has freight a greater share in the Vessell I dare say you may and that M<sup>r</sup> Meldrum for a trifle [will] go out. Hagtaway tells me a man offered 100 or 90 Barrells Salt for the *Surprise* I wish you would take that if no more can be got, or if you will give me equal to it in Pork and take her yourself, I would prefer it, or give me credit for her if she will answer you of the 8 Barrells of Pork remaining at Michilimacinac 5 have been sold payable next year, therefore 3 remained last fall.

I wish you to send me by very first opportunity which I dare say will be early 3 Barrells of Pork provided you can wait some time for your payment for realy since Detroit has been burnt money is scarcer than I ever have known it. You never say anything about Norton. I would even rather take the £77 odd he offered you than let the matter lie over longer. You need not send me any Tea in the Spring, as I have some with other Stores at Niagara that will soon be up.

Nothing new in this quarter. My Family Thank God well, and assure you of their best wishes as does Dear Robert your real Friend

M<sup>r</sup> Robert Nichol Merchant Fort Erie

P. S. Let me know the N<sup>o</sup> of my Lottery Ticketts as well as that of M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Kee so that if either draws a prize we may know to whom it belongs. I wish you could change Voltair for Pork, Even 3 Barrells.<sup>45</sup>

*Endorsed:* Strabane Feb<sup>y</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> 1806 John Askin Senior to M<sup>r</sup> Robert Nichol Merchant Fort Erie (Copy)  
Mr. Robert Nichol Merchant Fort Erie

LAND VALUES IN DETROIT

Strabane March the 6<sup>th</sup> 1806

My Dear Friend The principal intent of this Letter is to inform you not to sell the Lot I got from M<sup>r</sup> Smith &

<sup>45</sup> The concluding sentence is in Askin's hand; the remainder of the letter, in that of one of his sons.

conveyed to you without refering to me for its value. several persons want to purchase, & some I know from its situation will buy it even if more was asked for it than its value. M<sup>r</sup> Pattinson has made several Offers, among others £100 in Cash & an other £100 next year or five hundred Acres of Land in the lower part of this Province. I said I would take upon me to let him have it for £300 and not a penny less. I dare say he will try to get it for less by applying to you and its for this reason I give you this warning M<sup>r</sup> Smith I think said if he would have taken Lumber which sells well he could have got £500 for it. I dont think M<sup>r</sup> Pattinson wants it for himself but I think I know for whom. several who have endeavoured to bargain with me about Lands belonging to M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill & yourself have told me they could get them much cheaper from Yourselves. I know the land to be worth what I ask for them if you can do without what could now be got for them they must soon bring double for the best of the settlement between this & the River Thames, and as there is now a good land & Water communication from them to either the River Thames or here and all other Lands so situated being taken up they are more desirable for situation than others nor is the soil inferior. I must wait for more favourable weather to go to Detroit, after which M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill & you shall have a clear Amount [account] of what of your claims are confirmed & what not brought forward or rejected. I expect soon to hear of Your safe arrival from the United States. please tell M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill that after I have been at Detroit I will answer his favour of the 4<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> which came to hand the 20<sup>th</sup> of last Month

My Family all well and assure you of their best wishes  
Adieu My Dear Friend

Yours always

Isaac Todd Esquire Montreal

P. S. I beg you will endeavour to procure me a Frenchman pretty old and without a Family to do the Work about the House. he should be carefull honest & sober, which I would prefer to hard Work. care of Cattle and small Jobs about the House, & Thrashing when he has nothing else to do, is all will be required of him You or my Good Friend

Mr Henry I think must know of some one of that description he shall be well used & paid. however as he will not be put to hard Work I suppose he cannot ask very high Wages. If he was married and had no Children I would have both him & his Wife. I will speak to Mr Pattinson to give [him] a passage in his Boats when they come, & the earlier the better.

*Endorsed:* Strabane May the 6<sup>th</sup> 1806 John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> to Isaac Todd Esquire (Copy)

GOSSIP FROM YORK<sup>46</sup>

My dear Sir I cannot let this opportunity of Mr Baby go without informing you and my dear Sister in law of my keeping my health. And that we have most glorious news of the Russians and French in one of the most fatal battles<sup>47</sup> that history can relate cut one & other down without given or taken Quarters; And after four or five days of that buse-ness Bonaparte with all his intrepidity obliged to gave way at last—to my namesake at the head of the Brave russians—Alexander is styled the Hero of heros. Baby will relate the whole. during the parliament I have not been able to stir out of the house. two or three of your Countrymen kept me in hot water, by their naturel propensity to disturbence; I do not remember if I informed you of poor David Burnes<sup>48</sup> having killed himself—with that; that you nor I never will die of. Mr Hamilton tells me he had a short letter from W<sup>m</sup> Robertson only saying there was a deal of Moneys due to him in both Canadas of which he wanted some of. Cap- tain Tho<sup>s</sup> Robison<sup>49</sup> our old acquaintance came here with Mr Cartwright on purpose to see me he has in all Proba-

<sup>46</sup> From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

<sup>47</sup> Austerlitz, Napoleon's classic victory, was won, Dec. 2, 1805. The report of a Russian victory which came to Canada may reflect merely a prior expectation of disaster to Napoleon.

<sup>48</sup> David Burns was commissioned surgeon in the Queen's Rangers upon Governor Simcoe's recommendation, Sept. 1, 1791, and the British army lists show that he was serving in this capacity as late as 1795. In addition, in July, 1792, he was made clerk of the Crown and Common Pleas of Upper Canada, with a salary of £100. He died in Toronto prior to Feb. 15, 1806, leaving among other property, a considerable library. Information adapted from *Simcoe Papers, passim*; British army lists; Ont. Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, XXI, 169; and Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, 365-66.

<sup>49</sup> Thomas Robison was buried in Kingston, March 29, 1806. In Buffalo Hist. Soc. *Pubs.*, VI, 75, he is mentioned as a successor in trade at Niagara of Edward Pollard, for whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 107. A letter of Alexander Grant to John Askin, April 28,

bility fixt himself all the rest of his days at Kingston. I am told he is worth one hunder thousand dollars—and connected with one or two of his sons in law. The ocean is the field for industry. John Grant of Lachine came up here to see me, who says he sees my Alexander often and has him out at his house—which your dear Alexander will be glad to hear his namsake is well. Remember me kindly to them all. No account officially of my appointments to this province yet. With gods blessing to you and yours

Alex<sup>r</sup> Grant

16<sup>th</sup> march 1806.

*Addressed:* John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> Esq<sup>r</sup> Strabane favored by the Honorable James Baby

*Endorsed:* York March 16<sup>h</sup> 1806 Commodore Grant to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 31<sup>st</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 6<sup>h</sup> April.

#### FRENCH AND ENGLISH LAND SURVEYS

March 23<sup>d</sup> 1806

Dear Charles You will lay off[f] for M<sup>r</sup> Livernois<sup>50</sup> in Fr<sup>o</sup>nt 4 french Acres Equal to 11 Chains 94 links as near as I can make it being Only 6/66 part of a link too much, for I find M<sup>r</sup> [M<sup>e</sup>]Gills Chain Measures 60 feet 3 Inches French

1806 (ms. in B. H. Coll.) gives this account of Robison's death: "Poor dear fellow Captn Thomas Robison that was here [in York] during the session and looked better than ever I saw him died suddenly within few steps of his own door fell down in a fit and never spoke. he has left one hundred thousand dollars to his family." One of the sons of Richard Cartwright was named Thomas Robison.

<sup>50</sup> Joseph Livernois Sr. and Joseph Livernois Jr., his son, were awarded by the Land Board respectively Private Claims 574 and 171 lying in the vicinity of modern Fort Wayne. Joseph Jr's. tract fronted the rear of P. C. 39, belonging to John Harvey; and Joseph Sr's. adjoined his son's tract on the west. The Detroit line of Livernois is descended from Paul Benoit dit Livernois, who was born in France in 1626. On Sept. 16, 1658, he married in Montreal, Elizabeth Gobinet, a native of Gonest, France. One of their sons, Étienne Benoit dit Livernois, married Jane Campau of Montreal and lived and died in Longueuil. A grandson of this couple, also named Étienne, was the first of the line to come to Detroit. He married here, Jan. 24, 1760, Mary Ann Angelica Peltier, daughter of Jean Francis Peltier and Mary Louisa Robert and widow of Anthony Campau. Benoit was a mason by trade. In 1762, he resided on a farm at the Coast of the Potawatomi on the Southwest Coast of Detroit. Mary Ann Angelica Peltier died in August, 1762, leaving an infant daughter who shortly followed her in death and a son, Joseph, who was born within the stockade on Sept. 10, 1760. He married, Sept. 2, 1780, Mary Therese Meloche, who was born at the Northeast Coast of Detroit, Jan. 7, 1761, daughter of Francis Meloche and Mary Frances Lauzon. Joseph Livernois was buried in Detroit on Sept. 2, 1834; Therese Meloche was buried, Feb. 27, 1810. They had eleven children, the eldest of whom, also named Joseph, was born on Sept. 17, 1781. He was killed by the Indians near the Potawatomi village on Clinton River on June 7, 1814. Genealogical data adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*

and that the proportion between French and English Measure is that 241 feet, Yards, or Arpents French Measure as you like, would make 264 English. The side of a French Arpent is 180 feet French Measure. by the Line Benac<sup>51</sup> run in the rear of Cap<sup>t</sup> Ernests Acre or what Ewing run in the rear of Harveys, this line continued will form the Front of the Land I sold Livernois & LeDuc also LeFranc to whom I sold sometime ago. the direction of their lines runing back must be the same course as that of Cap<sup>t</sup> Ernests. Even should it not be at right Angles with their Fronts. the back line, or rather side line, you need not lay Out to any distance. Once the Course is laid Out, they may do the rest, or have it done as they clear their Land. M<sup>r</sup> Livernois will show you the side line now Existing between his Land & what I sold him. from this you will lay off[f] towards the river rouge in width 4 Arpents for him, next 2 for Dubois, next 3 Vacant & last 3 for LeFranc who is On it, or near the place, this will Extend to the real boundary of Lands claimed by M<sup>r</sup> Baby, if there are any line drawn by them, diferent from where the last reaches, it must be rong, for the Lands in Front & rear have the same width. I dont know any think more necessary to mention.

Your tender Father

John Askin

*Appended:*<sup>52</sup> The front of Livernois lands is to be 11 Chains 95 links being 4 Arpents & the front of Laducks 5 Chains 97½ links or 98—being 2 Arpents then next to Laduck a vacant lot 8 chains 96 links being 3 arpents & then for Le Franck 8 chains 96 links more—being 3 Arpents

A french arpent is 3 English chains less 9 Inches<sup>53</sup>—french—4 acres—is

*Addressed:* M<sup>r</sup> Charles Askin at Detroit

<sup>51</sup> Apparently Joseph S. Porlier *dit* Benalque (Benac), for whom see *ante*, 28.

<sup>52</sup> The body of the document is in John Askin's handwriting, the portion appended is in another hand.

<sup>53</sup> The statement is inaccurate; the French arpent was slightly less than 192 feet, 3 inches, English measure. For a discussion of the subject of French and English land measures, see letter of Judge Woodward, Jan. 4, 1806, in *Am. St. Papers, Pub. Lands*, I, 264.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ALEXANDER HENRY

Strabane April 4<sup>th</sup> 1806

Blessed Henry I received a Letter from you on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March I need not tell you, but I will, that me and mine are always pleased to hear that you and yours are well I wrote you I had received the Boots. No word about Indian Claims as yet for Lands from Congress they seem to have matters of more consequence to them to deliberate on. Mr William M<sup>e</sup>Intosh has obtained a Judgment in favour of the late Thomas Williams & C<sup>o</sup> of Mons<sup>r</sup> Vigoe for a considerable sum & payment has been offered in Land, but Brush will not take it, Though our Late Miamis C<sup>o</sup> have for what was due them by Vigoe. Indeed there is a Law of the Post Vincent Terretory which compells people to take Land in payment but Brush says he will find out one to make them pay the Debt coming to you in Money I believe there is now an appeal to the Federal Court. that was not the case formarly. Buonaparte had got to the top of his Wheel and when once that's the Case he like all mankind must come down whether by the run or not as is sometimes the case we will soon know

There is no indian War nor likelihood of it in this quarter except what may be in the Heads of those who do not know the indians This is an unpleasant but Healthy Spring we thank God are well and wish you the like happiness. Adieu My Dear Henry may God Bless you and yours are our sincere wishes.

Alexander Henry Esquire at Montreal

*Endorsed:* Strabane April 4<sup>h</sup> 1806 John Askin Senior to Alexander Henry Esquire, Merchant (Copy)

RELATIONS OF JAMES MCGILL AND JOHN ASKIN

(Private)

Near Sandwich April 23<sup>d</sup> 1806

My Dear sir Your most fri[e]ndly private Letter of the 10<sup>th</sup> February reached me on the 11<sup>th</sup> Inst; Surely I must be the most ungratefull of men if I did not feel for your Person & Interest all the concern due by a person to his greatest Benefactor. was it not for your, & Our most worthy Fri[e]nd Mr Todds lenity & generosity formerly and yours laterly,

I must long since have seen Myself & Family in real want, nor have you been sparing in Action only not to hurt my Character & feelings but also in words, and I have often declared Publicly and will whilst I live, that in all my Transactions with M<sup>r</sup> Todd & you formerly, nor your House laterly, did I Ever receive a harsh nor Unfriend[ly] line from you, even when I owed you such large Sums, as you knew never could be discharged; Indeed had you wrote me in the Stile, Other Houses have to their Debtors, I have every reason in the world to believe, from what I know of my too tender feelings, that I would many years Ago have been out of the reach of Corresponding with any one this side of the Grave. This is verry weak I know, but man did not make himself. I have courage & Philosophy in many cases, but the loss of old Fri[en]ds or their Fri[en]dship Overcomes me. Well must M<sup>r</sup> Todd & you have known my Natural disposition, to have treated me with the tenderness you have done; I hope & believe you will have your reward in a better world. I fear in a long Letter I wrote you some time Ago, that I bore to hard on your Friendship in Urging you to take 20 Lots and discharge me from the Debt due your present House. I now think I was doing rong considering the Apparent heavy loss you may sustain. In Excuse I have only to say, that I did not know of any means of giving you more, or I would not have done it. Whatever you wish I will do, give mortgages or Otherwise as you like. Where [were] I sure you would live After me, I would feel no Uneasiness respecting your final settlement with my Family, but my Dear sir of whom can I Expect were you gone, or both of us, that feelings for my Family which I know you Possess.

Since the receipt of your Letter I have not seen the Mess<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gregors, but will not fail bringing on a conversation when I do, to make them Acquainted with what you wish them to know, and what gives me much pleasure to hear Viz<sup>t</sup> That you are no Partner in the House of Mess<sup>rs</sup> Rob<sup>t</sup> Dickson & C<sup>o</sup>. Were the Intentions of these other Creditors as liberal as yours, I should still hope that the loss to each would not be very heavy, but when there are many, this can hardly be expected; therefore you will do well to prepare for the worst, & take precautions accordingly. M<sup>r</sup> Brush purposes



JAMES MCGILL

*Reproduced from a miniature owned by George F. Macdonald of Windsor*



being at Mich. in June, and as a Fri[e]nd (knowing what you have done for me & mine) I'm sure will give every Assistance in his power, to whoever may go from your House there

I'm sorry to learn that M<sup>r</sup> Todd is not in good Health. I fear for his situation. yet I hope for the best, such Fri[e]nds are rearly to be met with, & an old one is worth Ten new. Indeed I make few of the latter.

May Health of Body & Peace of mind be your Portion, are the Sincere wishes of My Dear sir

Your Ever Obliged Fri[e]nd

James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esq<sup>r</sup> Merch<sup>t</sup> Montreal

*Endorsed:* Private Near Sandwich April 23<sup>d</sup> 1806 John Askin To James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esq<sup>r</sup> at Montreal Copy

#### TROUBLES OF MONTREAL MERCHANTS

Montreal 25 April 1806

My dear Askin It is a long time since I received any of your letters, you have not informed me whether you received your Boots. I find you have received the first dividend for the Lands. I hope they will not neglect to fulfill their agreements. as you have regular Communication with the States, you know all the European News, which is very bad for us. that rogue Bonapart is not only playing the Devil, but in reality is the Devil Come to Torment the inhabitants of the Earth, and when his reign will end no one knows. I am afraid not until he gets into England, and we are going to have war with America. I have wrote to M<sup>r</sup> Brush. have not received a line from him since he remitted me the amount in his Hands. I hope he has got something from Fagos estate. I observe in his letter he mentions only the debts due to the Estate of Thomas William & C<sup>o</sup> he must observe that equally the debts due to the estate of John Casity must be look<sup>d</sup> into as he is most indebted to Williams estate than any other. the goods seised at S<sup>t</sup> Marys by the American Commessary belonging to the Northwest C<sup>o</sup> is orderd to be given up, and the seizing officer dismisd [from] the service. Todd is much

better and cannot live in England. he is coming out in the first ships. Beaver sold high in England Deer bad, Bears suposed would do well. Money very scarce here. Trade bad. the most of the Merchants will in two years be Bankerupt. unless it should rain a Shower of half Joes. it must be a general one otherwise [it] will not do. nothing can save them else. James M<sup>c</sup>Gill is going to Michilimack<sup>e</sup> to settle with Dixon who owes him near £40,000 currency and he is much affraid of loosing the greatest part. my dear old friend I am happy in all my old acquaintance, to find you live with less Trouble than any of them. may you long continue to do so. for my part I am growing old and suspect life will not hold [me] long. however you shall be amongst the last I think of. may you and your good family enjoy every good thing this world can give is the prayers of me and my famely.

from your affectionate fr[i]end

Alexander Henry

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Sandwich Detroit favour'd by M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Donald

*Endorsed:* Montreal April the 25<sup>h</sup> 1806 M<sup>r</sup> Alex<sup>r</sup> Henry to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 13<sup>h</sup> June Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>

FROM ALEXANDER GRANT TO JOHN ASKIN

York May 9<sup>th</sup> 1806

My dear Friend I have your letter which promises that you will not write a blue letter in a hurry again. god knows they multiply fast enough in my breast, all there is we must wide [wade] through as long as we Can.

Regarding the land business particular[lly] all old Claims That through neglect or other Causes that has not been pushed forward at the time are hardly to be brought on now. From the following reason many rules has been made in Council during the Chief Justice & General Hunters time proclamation have been issued to Come forward again such a period, otherwise they should have no attention paid to their affairs. And one of them is that no womman or Lady are to have lands Except the daughters or wives of U. E The Council at present Consists only of M<sup>r</sup> Russell,

who [is] full of business as receiver General M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill & M<sup>r</sup> attorney General both who has no fee or reward being temporary members, also full of their own business. And hardly can be prevaild on to get through the rottin [routine] and plain business in Council instead of looking and Search-in[g] into matters neglected or not brought properly forward for many years

I was made happy the other day with the arival of M<sup>r</sup> T. Dickson from Queenston with your letter & others from M<sup>rs</sup> Grant & family learning all of you being well. There is letters here dated The 26<sup>th</sup> of February last, then no appointment of L<sup>t</sup> Governor [and] Chief Justice to this Country. The attorney General had a letter from David Smith dated the 3<sup>d</sup> Febr<sup>y</sup> he was very well in high spirits with beneficial Sumptuous appointments from the Duck of northumberland. [He] desires that M<sup>r</sup> Sibley may be acquainted that his daughter is at his house and coming over to this Country with a Capt<sup>n</sup> Paterson. Tell your nelly that Captn Johnston is coming to niagara or so reported in the Quarter master Gener<sup>l</sup> line being not married yet he will fly to Strabane. Remember me kindly to Brush & D<sup>r</sup> Brown. no news of any kind The States papers are full of Congress business when Governor Hull returns let me know Regarding the premises on that Side of the River, and what are to be expected. M<sup>rs</sup> Grant I find has leased the Gross Point farm to Johnny I think the term long. poor dear womman I am sure she has don for the best. I am glad she has reserved the house & Ketchen & Garden which I have wrote her to be put in the best repair The house wants new shingleing and the upper storey wants Clapboarding the Ketchen wants a new Chimny. if it happens luckily that the Gentleman that comes L<sup>t</sup> Governor, has the Command of the Troops And that my health admits of [it], I shall make a trip to Montreal to see my dear boy before I return to the westward my affection to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin the young gentlemen, M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee M<sup>rs</sup> Brush & Nelly

It is so dull here that I intend by & by to take a trip to niagara & Queenston for few days

I remain your sincere well wisher  
Alex Grant

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

*Endorsed:* York May 9<sup>b</sup> 1806 President Grant to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Recv<sup>d</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 28<sup>th</sup>.

DEBTS OF FRANCIS VIGO

Grouseland (Near Vincennes)

21<sup>st</sup> May 1806

Sir I beg you to accept of my thanks for the flattering attention that you were pleased to shew to the requests contained in a former letter upon the subject of the debt due from Col<sup>o</sup> Vigo to certain Gentlemen of your vicinity. the affair has I believe been completely Settled & I have indirectly understood that the agent of the claimants was agreeably disappointed as to the value & quality of the land which has been taken a considerable part of which he has lately seen. Will you pardon me for recommending to you to keep for a short time at least such part of the land as may be allotted to you or if you do sell that you direct your agent to allow a credit of 18 Months or two years by which means it will sell for at least 50 per cent more than if sold for cash. the title may be withheld until payment is Made. As soon as I received your letter I lost no time in communicating to Col<sup>o</sup> Vigo that part of it which relates to his debt to yourself individually. his reply was to this effect. "It was never my intention to wrong M<sup>r</sup> Askin. our accounts were settled during my illness & my notes given for a ballance which appeared to be due to him. One of these had been payed. And an arrangement made with M<sup>r</sup> Dubois to discharge the other upon his return to Detroit when M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Intosh the agent of M<sup>r</sup> A. applied to me for the Money, he was informed that M<sup>r</sup> Dubois had undertaken to pay it to yourself, but nothing but the Money would satisfy M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Intosh. the money was not to be had & a writ was served upon me, the first (or perhaps the second) in my life. irritated at the adoption of a measure which could only be intended to put me to cost & trouble (for Mr. Askin would have certainly received the amount of my note in a few Months) I naturally began to investigate

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

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the origin of my debt & for this purpose I put my papers in the hands of an Attorney by whom I was informed & am still informed that An error was made in the Settlement & that I Justly and legally owed M<sup>r</sup> Askin nothing” I am no lawyer but I cannot conceive that any Court of Justice will allow Col<sup>o</sup> Vigo to adduce any proof to set aside a note of hand upon the ground of a mistake being made in the settlement this objection I urged upon him, but he said that he had been differently informed by his lawyers. However I believe that the affair May still be settled to your satisfaction without a judicial decision. at present he is I believe absolutely unable to raise more money than that which he has engaged to pay on account of the late arrangement (& even this M<sup>r</sup> Dubois advances) but after the two heavy debts of Abbot & Cassady are settled he will still have some property that will command money in the course of 8 or 12 months & I hope & believe that he will immediately settle your affair to your satisfaction. If you know the ground of his objection to the Settlement formerly made between you (for I do not) if you can convince M<sup>r</sup> Dubois of its futility M<sup>r</sup> Vigo will I am sure abandon it immediately, & I beg you to command Me fully on this & on every other occasion where you may suppose I can be of the smallest service to you

I am with much Respect, Sir your Hum<sup>o</sup> Servant

Will<sup>m</sup> Henry Harrison

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

*Endorsed:* Grousland near Vincennes May 21<sup>st</sup> 1806  
Governor Harrison to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recvd 16<sup>th</sup> June & Answ<sup>d</sup>  
y<sup>e</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ALEXANDER GRANT

Strabane May 28<sup>th</sup> 1806

My Dear Sir. Your very friendly letters of the 28<sup>th</sup> April and 9<sup>th</sup> May reached me three days ago and gave us all much satisfaction to learn you were well. The next day I had the pleasure of seeing M<sup>rs</sup> Grant here. M<sup>rs</sup> Askin had been over and as the afternoon was uncommonly Calm she ventured over. she next day went to Sandwich and is

now going the rounds to see her children after which [she] promises to come here. I think she looks nearly as usual but not in [good] spirits. what you are making for the Family must be pleasing to her but yet, I'm sure though she did not say so, she would give up all the profit rather than you should be another season absent. however she approves much of your going to see poor Alexander before you return

We find in the papers a L<sup>t</sup> Governor appointed for Upper Canada at which I'm not sorry for now you must have got a little to help the Family, I think you would rather be with them than siting in state. You not one of those men who prefers honors to Family comforts. I'm sorry indeed for the sudden Death of poor Thomas Robertson and it must have effected you. nothing will save us when the time comes. most certainly nothing can be expected by John unless such vacancy also lately took place or was in your gift, or you could give with propriety a recommendation for

I'm sorry I throubled you about my former claims that were not countenanced, for as I never brought them forward during the reign of [word omitted] when I thought, it cannot be well said that they were. I hope the regulation about Women not geting Lands has nothing to do with Nelly her 600 Acres which has been located for many years ago at least 400 of them M<sup>r</sup> Allen can prove having had a [torn] of Money in his Hands some years ago to take up Deeds as fast as signed and consequently would have taken up Nellys as well as Allices had it been then ready lately he has not had Money ready yet when Deeds are I have always sent to relieve them. David Smiths prosperity will always give me pleasure. I ever found him frien[d]ly.

I have the pleasure of acquainting you that I yesterday seen the Coppy of a Bill sent M<sup>r</sup> Brush relative to the Claims [torn] the other side: your anxiety respecting Gross Point may now be at an end. I have got Alexander to promise to Coppy it off. If he does I will send it to you with this and you must immediately after transmit it to M<sup>r</sup> James M<sup>o</sup>Gill at Montreal

All your connections in this quarter are well and I shall remember you to those you desire when I see them. I'm

sorry to say that Captain Ernest<sup>54</sup> seems to be missing no account where he is or whats become of him. The repairs of your House at Gross Point I believe M<sup>r</sup> Grant will put off untill you return

Not recollecting anything further necessary to mention at present I shall conclude with our best wishes for all your Health & happiness and assurance that I am always My Dear Sir

yours most Sincerely

P. S. We had a Letter from Mr<sup>s</sup> Meredith dated the 31<sup>st</sup> December all well as well as also M<sup>r</sup> Mercers Family.

Should a new Commission [be] Issued I once before recommended Captain M<sup>e</sup>Kee M<sup>r</sup> Barsto and M<sup>r</sup> George Jacobs<sup>55</sup> as fit people for Magistrates now M<sup>r</sup> Iredells Dead River Thames has very few.

The Honorable Alex<sup>r</sup> Grant Esquire. Administering the Government at York

*Endorsed:* Strabane May 28, 1806. John Askin Sen<sup>r</sup> to The Honorable Al<sup>r</sup> Grant York

UNIFORMS FOR ESSEX MILITIA

Amherstburg 7<sup>th</sup> June 1806

Dear Sir I have the pleasure to acknowledge, the receipt of your very kind letter, on the subject of my expected Promotion in the Infantry of your Regiment of Militia which I look forward to with infinite satisfaction; and in consequence lost no time in getting your letter (To His Honor the President) on Board of the *Caledonia*, which is by this well on to Fort Erie.

I am excessively happy to inform you, that my Uniform on the 4<sup>th</sup> gave very general satisfaction so much, that, immediately after the Battalion were dismissed, I got several Recruits, of people of that Class which I am sure will meet your approbation, in fact being of the first.

I can with great propriety, say that the Dress is very handsome, and indeed Elegant, without being dear or extravagant; To tell the truth, the officers of Colonel Elliotts

<sup>54</sup> Matthew Ernest, for whom see *ante*, 114.

<sup>55</sup> For the career of George Jacob, see *B. H. R.*, I, 307.

Battalion, as well as himself, were so much eclipsed, that they appeared perfectly ashamed of themselves.

Johnny & I intend going up to pay our respects to you, as soon as he can get his Uniform made, which is his Coat only, having the rest of the Dress already; several others are making their Preparations, with a degree of emulation. among the rest of my Recruits, is the Count Bobby Reynolds,<sup>56</sup> who conceives himself a great Equestrian We are all well here, & beg to be remembered to you M<sup>rs</sup> Askin, & the rest of the Family, in terms of the Profoundest respect & affection,

Dear Sir most respectfully & truly Your obedient Humble Servant

T. M<sup>c</sup>Kee

John Askin Esquire

*Addressed:* John Askin Esquire Strabane M<sup>r</sup> Woods is requested to forward this as soon as possible

*Endorsed:* June 7<sup>h</sup> 1806 Cap<sup>t</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin

FROM ISAAC TODD TO JOHN ASKIN

Montreal 15<sup>th</sup> June 1806

My dear Askin I got here on thursday after my arrival in England I was 4 Months confined to my Room and from Pain & Sickness much reduced After I began to recover it

<sup>56</sup> Robert Reynolds was a son of Thomas Reynolds of Detroit and (later) Amherstburg for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 308. Robert was born in Detroit in 1781, and was still living at his home near Amherstburg as late as 1864. On Nov. 6, 1803, he married Therese Bouchette DesRivières, who was a daughter of Jean Baptiste Bouchette, a captain in the British naval establishment on Lake Ontario. Prior to her union with Reynolds she had married Thomas Hypolite DesRivières, youngest son of Mrs. James McGill by her first marriage (with Joseph Amable Troitier *dit* DesRivières), who was a captain in the Sixtieth Regiment. In 1801, or shortly prior thereto, he was killed in a duel with a fellow-officer, leaving, besides his widow, a son, James McGill DesRivières. It is this child who is mentioned in James McGill's will as the stepson of Robert Reynolds. See *post*, 777.

The St. John's Church Register records the birth of four sons and one daughter to Robert Reynolds and his wife in the years 1805-17. The daughter, born, April 4, 1809, was named Jean Charlotte McGill Reynolds, and the names of Charlotte and James McGill (evidently signed by someone else) appear as sponsors.

Reynolds, like his father, was commissary in the British military establishment. The fine home he built facing the river road, a short distance below Amherstburg, is still standing. An interesting old-age narrative of his military experiences is given in Coffin, *op. cit.*, 195 ff. See also Casselman, *op. cit.*, 133; entries in St. John's Church Register; and *Bull. Recherches Hist.*, XXIX, 86-88.



was rapid & thank God for 5 Months past I have enjoyed as good health as I can expect but the Pain & swelling in my knee & thigh continues in a small degree & occasions walking painfull. from Quebec I forwarded Letters for you from Maj<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Meredith she is the same affectionate Good little Woman she ever was & she is happy in a fond Good Husband. she has a Daughter almost as big as herself but you will from them hear the particulars. Cap<sup>t</sup> Mercer I saw several Times he is troubled with the Gout M<sup>rs</sup> Mercer & Daughters are well. I have wrote the President telling him how to act to recover payment for the Time he may act as such which will I believe be at the rate of £1000 Ster<sup>s</sup> p<sup>r</sup> Annum. William Robertson is not only a Sot & blackguard but infamous as a Liar & Rogue. Among other of his bad conduct his poor Bro<sup>r</sup> is Starving. He will not pay him what he owes. indeed my friend I begin to think we were all deceived in him & that he never was an honest Man. I have not had time to learn much about my property in your care but M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill tells me he has recev<sup>d</sup> nothing since my departure I was in expectation And<sup>w</sup> Todds money would have been paid & what of our Joint property had been sold, for when I have time to tell you the situation I am in with W<sup>m</sup> Todd you will see I have occasion for all I can get even to live comfortably I hope soon to hear from you. Rememb<sup>r</sup> me kindly to M<sup>rs</sup> Askin & M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kee. could not the President do something for you or your Sons? if he can he ought and if he does not he will not be thanked by his successor. Adieue God Bless you I am in heast My D<sup>r</sup> friend

Yours Sincerely

Isaac Todd

John Askin Esq<sup>r</sup>

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

*Endorsed:* Montreal June 15<sup>th</sup> 1806 Isaac Todd Esq<sup>r</sup>  
to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Recv<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> & Answ<sup>d</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> July.

GOODS OF CHARLES ASKIN AT MACKINAC

Makinack Le 26 Juin 1806

Monsieur Vous recevré cette présente par le Capt Mills en réponse d'une de vos lettre que Jai reçu dernièrement abord de la *thames* dans laquelle vous me demandé soi de l'argent ou de bonne trêtte pour Les cinqs derniers Cave de Lard que Mons<sup>r</sup> Charles Askine votre fils ma lessé icit Leté derniere Comme Mons<sup>r</sup> Solomon mon Comie a suivit les Directions de M<sup>r</sup> votre fils de sorte que ne pouvant poin trouver d'argent pour Le lard il a préféré de le vendre a printent pour du sucre comme il etoit mentionné dans la Lettre de M<sup>r</sup> votre fils, Jai trouvé parmis mes papiers La lettre de M<sup>r</sup> votre fils ainsi que la Direction Soyez persuaddé que Si Je nusse pas oublies ces papier L'automne derniere quand Je fut au Detroit que Je ne vous aurois certennemens pas passé mon billet payable en argent mais ne me rapellent pas beaucoup des directions que M<sup>r</sup> votre fils mavois donné et nément point a proceder, voila la raison pour laquelle Je vous ai passé mon billet et quil seras tres bien payez M<sup>r</sup> Pothier me la presente voila deux Jours, de sorte que vous n'avez rien a craindre a de sujet, a legard des cinq derniers Caves de lard M<sup>r</sup> Solomont Les a vendue pour du sucre suivent le prix mentionné par la lettre de M<sup>r</sup> votre fils et Je vais Lui envoyer par le Capt<sup>n</sup> Mills de sorte que cette exemple icit me serviras pour bien D'autre Cas. Je m'apersoit plus L'on veut obligé unne personne et plus L'on a de Dèfigulté Jose dire ceci Car Je ne l'es pas fette par motife D'interest vue que Jai prèvenus M<sup>r</sup> votre fils en prenent ces effets et quayent de la place dans mon engare quil pouvois Les mettres et que Je ne lui demendois point un seul sols de Commission.

Je suis Mons<sup>r</sup> Votre tres obeissen serviteur

Joseph Guy

*Addressed:* Mons<sup>r</sup> John Askin Pere Proche de Sandwish  
Detroit Faveur M<sup>r</sup> Domq Lacroi

*Endorsed:* Mich. June 26<sup>th</sup> 1806 Mons<sup>r</sup> Joseph Guy to  
Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Rec<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> July

*Translation*

Mackinac, June 26, 1806

Sir: This will be handed to you by Captain Mills in reply to one of yours received lately by the *Thames* in which you demand either the money or good merchandise for the remaining five casks of pork that your son, Charles Askin, left here with me last summer. Mr. Solomon,<sup>57</sup> my clerk, only carried out your son's instructions that, if not able to sell the pork for money, he was to sell it in the spring for sugar as directed in your son's letter. Now I have found that letter among my papers, together with his instructions. Be assured that if I had not forgotten these papers when in Detroit last fall, I never would have given you my note payable in cash, but not remembering about them, and having no desire to be sued, are the reasons why I gave you my note. And it will be paid all right, never fear. Mr. Pothier presented it to me two days ago.

With respect to the remaining five casks of pork, Mr. Solomon has sold them for sugar at the price your son directed in his letter, and I shall send it by Captain Mills.

This experience will stand me in good stead another time. I have learned that the more one wishes to oblige another, the more trouble he has. I can say this because I had no motive of personal interest, seeing that I told your son when I took his things and gave them room in my storehouse that he might put them there and that I would never ask him for a single penny's commission. I remain, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Joseph Guy<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> William Solomon was long an interpreter in the British Indian Department. His father, Ezekiel Solomon, was a German Jew from Berlin who found his way to Canada and upon the conquest of that country was one of the earliest English traders to engage in the northwest trade. He was at Mackinac as early as 1761, was captured at the massacre of 1763, and subsequently ransomed and sent down to Montreal. He continued in the western fur trade for many years, although we have few definite details of his career.

His son, William, our present subject, is said to have spent fifty-six years in the government service. He was at Mackinac during the War of 1812 and at various times was stationed at St. Joseph, Drummond Island, and Penetanguishene. He married a daughter of George Johnston of Sault Ste. Marie. Her mother was a Chippewa woman; one of her sisters married Henry R. Schoolcraft, and another became the wife of Rev. Mr. McMurray. Solomon's later years were passed at Penetanguishene. He reared a family of ten children. The narrative of one of them, Lewis Solomon, is in the Ont. Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, III, 126-37. See also *Mich. Pio. Coll.*, *passim*.

## REAL ESTATE CONDITIONS IN DETROIT

July 5<sup>th</sup> 1806

My Dear Sir The day before yesterday the *Nancy* passed from Michilimacinac & I yesterday went to Sandwich when with the greatest satisfaction on your and your Houses account I learn that M<sup>r</sup> Dickson had done very well & much more so than any other Trader in that Quarter I think you have had a lucky escape, & let his success be what it may this last Winter I dread his Trade being much too extensive to wind up well if continued.

My Son Charles is gone to York to endeavour to take up still more of my Deeds there which has been detained more on Account of the want of Money to pay for the Deeds than any other Cause for money is more scarce now on both sides of the River than I have ever known it.

I hear the Fleet is arrived & I hope in it Our Worthy Friend M<sup>r</sup> Todd in better Health than when he left this.

The Four Houses belonging separately to M<sup>r</sup> Todd & you are in a Street according to the New Plann of the Town. those who purchased have not nor are not able to pay a penny one excepted. I believe they are willing to give them up & the governor also [is] willing to give larger Lotts in good situations & put up the Buildings again in lieu thereof, so as to remove them out of the Street.

M<sup>r</sup> Brush is gone some time ago into the States in Order to sell some Lands he has there on his return if he succeeds, or he thinks now if he does not he will make payment for the Orchard.

I was mistaken respecting what I wrote you of a Law having passed so favorable to Claimants of Land on the other side it had only passed the Lower House and would (as the governor says) [have passed] the Senate had the Commissioners at Detroit made their report before Congress broke up. The Governor who I believe a very Worthy

<sup>58</sup> The Guys were long prominent merchants of Montreal and active in the western fur trade. Pierre Guy (1738-1812) was colonel of the Second Battalion, Montreal militia, and a member of the grand jury which indicted Governor Henry Hamilton and Philip Dejean of Detroit in 1778. He had a son, Joseph, born, March 25, 1775, who may have been the individual here noted. Data supplied by Pierre-Georges Roy, archivist of Quebec, in letter of Sept. 5, 1928. See also, Tanguay, *op. cit.*

Man One of the present Commissioners told was [said] without being asked, that he did not see how any Claim of a British Subject could be rejected that would have been admitted had we continued to keep the Country. The Commissioners I believe wish to Copy what ours have done & the Governor has examined our Law Respecting Claimants to Land & I believe wishes much that Congress may pass a similar one.

From the great scarcity of Money. I fear Harvy will not pay his Note this Fall. but the Money is sure & the Note bears Interest, Though he suffered by the Fire he has built a good new House and carries his Business (which is that of a Baker to good advantage.

Our fall wheat here is good and owing to the dry season will be ready to cut in a Week but I fear the Indian Corn & Oats and most grain sown this Spring

Though much pinched for Money we enjoy good Health Peace & Appearance of Plenty of Bread. M<sup>rs</sup> Askin joins me in best Compliments to M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill & I remain My Dear Sir, y<sup>r</sup> ever obliged very humble Servant

P. S. I formerly mentioned that I was carrying on a suit to recover the Money due M<sup>r</sup> Todd on a mortgage

James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esquire.

*Endorsed:* (Copy) July 5<sup>th</sup> 1806 Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin to James M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esq<sup>r</sup> at Montreal.

## NEWS FROM YORK

York the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 1806

Dear James Yesterday the *Earl of Moira* arrived here from Niagara and in her, my Cousins Archange Phillis & Nancy<sup>59</sup> Miss Wright & W<sup>m</sup> Duff<sup>60</sup> on a visit to my Uncle. I was very much disappointed in not receiving a line from my Father or any of the Family by them. I think now that his letters to my Uncle and myself are lost on the road

<sup>59</sup> Daughters of Alexander Grant; Archange was the wife of Thomas Dickson, and Phillis the wife of Alexander Duff; Nancy (or Ann) later married Simon Maillet of Detroit.

<sup>60</sup> William Duff was a son of Rev. William Duff of Aberdeenshire, Scotland, and a brother of Alexander, for whom see *ante*, 338. On Jan. 25, 1810, he married in Sandwich, Susanne McGregor, daughter of Gregor McGregor and Regina Susanne Robert, for whom

as none have yet come to hand. my Uncle has not yet got the one inclosing the returns of the Militia, which must have left home before I did. By the *Earl of Moira* my Uncle has English letters, from Cap<sup>t</sup> Mercer & two Miss Mercers and also from Major Meredith who has now the pay of a Major, before he had only the rank. I suppose my Father has or will soon have letters from Archange, who no doubt mentions it.

There is a report which I am afeard is too true, that a vessel coming with a detachment of the 100<sup>th</sup> Regiment to Canada was lost, & that a Major and four or five more officers were on board.

By a late army list of my Uncles to the 1<sup>st</sup> April last it appears as if Cap<sup>t</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Kees resignation was accepted of, as his name is not in it. It appears also by it that the two young Baby's who it was said were superceded have got in the army again. It's reported that the 99<sup>th</sup> are coming out to Canada, and if they do, that the 41<sup>st</sup> will be relieved by the 49<sup>th</sup>. Major Bleamire<sup>61</sup> it's said is out of the Regiment, and also Cap<sup>t</sup> Johnston who is now appointed Secretary to the Indian Department in the place of M<sup>r</sup> Chew<sup>62</sup> who died insane at Montreal. he lost his senses after being out as a second to an Officer of the 6<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> who was killed in a duel.

Poor Judge Powell had the melancholy news of his Son Jerry's<sup>63</sup> death, who was one of the unfortunate number who were lately masacred at S<sup>t</sup> Domingo by the blacks.

see *B. H. R.*, I, 292-93. James and Robert, twins, were born to the couple on Oct. 21, 1817, and a son, Alexander, on Sept. 21, 1819. William Duff was for some years barrack master at Amherstburg. During the War of 1812, he was adjutant of the First Essex County militia, which served in most of the battles on the western front. He died, July 12, 1861, and was buried in Christ Church yard in Amherstburg. Data derived from St. John's Church Register; Irving, *op. cit.*; and headstone inscription in Christ Church yard, Amherstburg.

<sup>61</sup> William Bird Bleamire was commissioned lieutenant in the Forty-ninth Regiment, April 22, 1796, and major on Aug. 6, 1803. See British Army lists. A report of an Indian council at Amherstburg, June 8, 1805, represents him as commandant of the garrison. *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXIII, 39.

<sup>62</sup> John Chew became secretary of the Indian Department upon the death of his father, Joseph Chew, in 1799, and continued in office until his own death, here noted, in 1806. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XX, 693-94 for sketch of Chew family.

<sup>63</sup> Jeremiah, fourth son of Judge William Dummer Powell, was born in Boston in 1784. In early manhood he engaged in trade in Haiti, and incurring the hostility of Emperor

I shall send up a copy of such a petition as Themus should send down to get his patent for his land. he will be able to get the three concessions as easy as one I think, and without the fees on the deed being any thing higher. I have already spoke to the Attorney General who is now Chief [Jus]tice to my Uncle the President: and to Judge Powell respecting the situation of Themus and his neighbours with regard to their farms and I am certain they will do what they can to get them their patents. you may assure him I will do any thing in my power for him.

I wish poor Dedine could get money enough to pay for his deed also; (if Themus gets his.) I suppose his Father could lend him that much. I have spoke to my Uncle who will endeavour to get a two hundred acre lot of land a piece for Pisinack and Charlo if the latter is of age and they can pay the new regulation fees which will be ab<sup>t</sup> 40 doll<sup>s</sup> for each Lot. If Bellett and Badon could pay the fees I would speak to my Uncle & try to get them lands also.

As I have seen part of the light Infantry of the 41<sup>st</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> & some of the Grenadiers I will be able to tell you how their coats are made and their uniform.

Let me know when you write me if my Mill has yet made any flour, and if the *Orphan* colt is alive

As I wrote my father by M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>o</sup>Donnell a few days ago and will soon write him again, I shall not by this opportunity. Please to give my kind love to him & my dear Mother to Nelly Alice & Alex. and Believe me to be

Your affectionate Brother

Charles A[skin]

N. B. Present my Compliments if you please to M<sup>rs</sup> & the Mi<sup>ss</sup> Dedines. & Remember me to Dedine, to Robins, and the rest of my young friends. also to Themus & Family

M<sup>r</sup> James Askin Strabane Near Sandwich

Dessalines, was induced by force of circumstances to join Miranda's filibustering expedition to Venezuela in the spring of 1806. The undertaking failed miserably, and those captured were either executed or condemned to long terms of imprisonment. Jeremiah Powell was sentenced to a ten-year term, but eventually, through the efforts and influence of his father, was released. For a full account of the entire affair, see Riddell, *Life of William Dummer Powell*, 96 ff.

*Addressed:* M<sup>r</sup> James Askin. To the care of Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin Esq<sup>r</sup> Strabane

*Endorsed:* York July 18 1806 Charles Askin to James Askin recv<sup>d</sup> 5 Aug<sup>t</sup> Answ<sup>d</sup>

SALE OF BRUSH FARM

To all to whom these presents shall come Greeting. Be it known that I John Askin of Sandwich in the Province of Upper Canada for and in consideration of the sum of six thousand dollars lawful money of the United States to me in hand before the ensealing hereof well and truly paid by Elijah Brush Esquire of Detroit in the Michigan Territory of the United States the receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge and my self therewith am fully satisfied contented and paid and thereof and of every part and parcel thereof do exonerate acquit and forever discharge him the said Elijah Brush his heirs Executors and Administrators by these presents, Have given, granted, bargained, sold, alien'd, conveyd and confirmed; and by these presents do freely fully and absolutely, give grant bargain and sell alien convey and confirm unto him the said Elijah Brush his heirs and assigns forever, All that capital Messuage and tenement or farm and farming Lands Situate lying and being on the Detroit or Streights of Lake Erie, lying mostly in what is now called the New Town of Detroit Containing two arpents or French acres in front upon the said Streights or River Detroit by Eighty in depth (Except as is herein after excepted) being the same tract of land that is to say forty in depth by two in bredth on the Said River or Streights of Lake Erie that was ceded and granted by Charles Marquis-De-Beauharnois knight of the Royal and Military order of St Louis &c &c and Gilles Hocquart knight and member of the kings privy council &c &c on the first day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty Seven to Eustache Gamelin<sup>64</sup> his heirs and assigns &c and afterwards towit on the fifteenth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty Nine other forty arpents or french acres in depth by two in

<sup>64</sup> For the document conveying this grant, see *B. H. R.*, I, 25 ff.



bredth directly in rear of the forty first aforesaid that was ceded and Granted by Piquotee Belestre Military and Civil Commandant for the king at Detroit unto Jacques Pelet<sup>65</sup> his heirs and Assigns &c making in all Eighty arpents or French acres in depth by two in bredth and bounded on all Sides as is perticularly Set forth and explained in the original grants or concessions.

To have and to hold the said granted and bargained premises with all the appurtenances, privalages and Commodities to the same belonging or in any way appurtaining to him the Said Elijah Brush his heirs and assigns forever; To his and their own proper use benefit and behoof forever. And I the said John Askin for my self my heirs Executors and Administrators, do covenant promis and grant to and with the Said Elijah Brush his heirs and assigns that before the ensealing and delivery hereof I am the true sole and lawful owner of the above bargained premises, and am lawfully seised and possessed of the same in my own proper right as a good perfect and absolute estate of Inheritance in fee simple and have in myself good right, full power and lawful Authority to grant bargain, Sell convey and confirm said bargained premises in manner as aforesaid. And that the said Elijah Brush his heirs and assigns shall and may from time to time and at all times forever hereafter by force and Vertue of these presents lawfully peaceably and quietly have hold use occupy possess and enjoy the said demised and bargained premises with the appurtenances free and Clear and freely and Clearly acquitted exonerated and discharged of, from all, and all manner of former or other gifts grants, bargains, Sales, Leases, mortgages, wills, entails, Jointures, douries, Judgments, Executions, or incumbrances of what name or nature soever that might in any measure or digree, obstruct or make void this present deed. This grant is however made subject to the following exceptions towit the Lot of one arpent or French acre in front upon the said River Detroit extending back to the distance of two hundred and Sixty feet from the water edge and which is now owned and possessed by Henry

<sup>65</sup> For this grant to Jacques Pilet, see *ibid.*, 30.

Berthelett,<sup>66</sup> as also the lots adjoining on what was formerly called the Common, and which now lie on the North Side of the Governors hous on the main Street in the new Town of Detroit being all of them one arpent or French acre in depth to the extremity of Baptiste Lapieres<sup>67</sup> Claim and which have heretofore been sold off and conveyed by the said John Askin are exceptions to the foregoing conveyance, and are not conveyed or intended to be conveyed by the Said John Askin unto the Said Elijah Brush.

Furthermore I the said John Askin for myself my heirs Executors and Administrators do covenant and engage the above demised premises (with the exceptions as aforesaid) unto him the Said Elijah Brush his heirs and assigns against the lawful claims or demand of any person or persons whotsoever, forever hereafter to warrant Secure and

66 Francis Berthelet married Frances Ravier and lived in Geneva, Switzerland. Their son, Antoine, born in 1676, came to Canada and lived and died in Montreal. On July 26, 1701, he married Jane Chartier, who was born in Quebec, July 15, 1675, daughter of René Chartier and Margaret Delorme. Antoine Berthelet was buried in Montreal, April 16, 1755; Jane Chartier was buried there, Feb. 5, 1730.

Francis Berthelet *dit* Savoyard, eldest child of Antoine Berthelet and Jane Chartier, was born in Montreal, Feb. 7, 1703. In 1738 he married Jane Boullard, also of Montreal. Several of their children came to Detroit to live, including Pierre, the second son, a physician, who was born in Montreal, April 16, 1746, and married in Detroit, July 24, 1775, Mary Frances Meloche, daughter of Francis Meloche and Mary Frances Lauzon. Mary Frances Meloche was buried here, July 4, 1776, leaving one son, Henry Berthelet *dit* Savoyard, born, April 29, 1776, the subject of our present note. On Nov. 9, 1802, he married in Sandwich, Mary Joseph Bouchette, who was born in Detroit, March 19, 1782, daughter of Jean Baptiste Bouchette and Mary Angelica Duhamel. They were the parents of twelve children, born in the period 1803-25. Henry Berthelet seems to have spent his entire life in Detroit, and there are numerous references to him among the manuscripts in the B. H. Coll., yet no clear account of his career has been formulated. Apparently he was a farmer, who also engaged in trade, and, possibly, in building activities. In 1819 he was granted permission to build a wharf at the foot of Randolph Street. He was elected a trustee of the town in 1804, and in 1807 was a trustee of Ste. Anne's Church. A claim to land in Spring Wells was rejected by the Land Board in 1807, but together with an additional tract, was confirmed to Berthelet in 1823 as (new) Private Claim 32. Berthelet was buried in Detroit, Nov. 16, 1846; Mary Joseph Bouchette was buried on Feb. 6, 1855. Pierre seems to have returned to Montreal after the death of his wife. On Feb. 2, 1779, he married (second) in Boucherville, Margaret Viger. A son of this marriage, Antoine Olivier Berthelet, was wealthy and noted as a philanthropist. See *Bull. Recherches Hist.*, XXII, 183. Information adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*; mss. in B. H. Coll., *passim*; Farmer, *op. cit.*, *passim*; *Proc. of Land Board of Detroit*, 223.

67 Jean Baptiste Aloire (Alloir, Aloir, etc.) *dit* Lapiere was in Detroit as early as February, 1794, when he stood godfather for a baptism in Ste. Anne's Church. On April 10, 1798, a daughter, Marie Magdelene, was born to him and Magdelene Tremblay, his wife. The names of other children, born to the couple, are found in Ste. Anne's Church Register. Jean Baptiste Aloire died, Dec. 30, 1810, aged about forty years. On Oct. 24, 1811, his widow married (second) Hyacinthe Desjardins. Private Claim 120 in Grosse Pointe was confirmed to Aloire in 1808. The present document shows that he also owned a lot in the town, and entries in James Henry's ledger seem to imply that he followed the trade of shoemaker.

defend by these presents. In witness whereof I have hereunto Set my hand and affixed my seal at Sandwich aforesaid this thirty first day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred six.

John Askin

Signed Sealed & Delivered

In presence of  
Louis Barthy<sup>68</sup>

Alexander Askin

the name *adjoining* between the second and third line, and also the words *Governors house on the* between the 4 and 5 lines of this page being first interlined before signing.

*Endorsed:* Deed of Conveyance John Askin to Elijah Brush In fee.

PROPERTY OF ISAAC TODD AND JAMES MCGILL

Montreal 20<sup>th</sup> Decemb<sup>r</sup> 1806

My dear Friend I receivd your favour of the 14<sup>th</sup> Octb<sup>r</sup> & I have seen one of the 11<sup>th</sup> same month to M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill & me. I was in hopes the whole of the property sold by you to M<sup>c</sup>Gill & me on the American side (the Indian Grants excepted) had been confirmed by the Commissioners. I find there is still a part not so. I hope it will be settled next year it is surely wrong to leave property in this doubtfull way. I have no doubt you do for the best in making the exchange. I see you have taken 5 Lots in the square where the French Church is going to be erected in Lieu of two Lots of M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gills & one of mine on the Common. the other of Mine I see sold to Jas. Beagam for £110—which I suppose is good. as you know M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Gill & I have divided our property it may be well to divide the 5 Lots taken by my getting two & he three as near the proportions of what we gave as posible

68 Louis Theophile Barthe, noted in *B. H. R.*, I, 77. He was the eighth child of Charles Andrew Barthe and Mary Therese Campau, for whom see *ibid.*, 34. He was born in Detroit, March 31, 1760. On Nov. 15, 1802, he married Mary Magdelene Trotier *dit* Bellecour, daughter of François Xavier Trotier *dit* Bellecour and Mary Magdelene de Lusignan, and widow of François Xavier Moreau *dit* Duplessy, for whom see *ibid.*, 401. The bride was born at the mouth of Pine River (modern St. Clair, Mich.), March 18, 1774, and Barthe was employed in the pinery there for a considerable period of time. She was buried in Detroit, Sept. 11, 1803; he was buried in Sandwich, May 16, 1825. Denissen, *op. cit.*

and have the Lots described & Numbered so that they may be known if the whole could be sold it would be better I see you have got security for Mr B[r]ush to me and I hope next year Rulands [debt] will be settled I think it probable the Bank<sup>69</sup> &<sup>ea</sup> may make land more valuable as Money gets plenty. pray what have you done with Park about the Mill? his conduct is shamefull. As S<sup>t</sup> Josiph is now going to be the place of Depot & residence of the British Traders it will be more comfortable & better for Johnny if he gets the appointments of Mr Chaboillez and I think he ought to apply immediatly to Gov<sup>r</sup> Gore<sup>70</sup> & he may state that he can assure his Excell<sup>y</sup> of the recommendation of Mr M<sup>c</sup>Gill Mr Richardson, Mr M<sup>c</sup>Gillivray & me the others I am sure of. Mr Hamilton has informed me of his intentions respecting Charles which I am glad of but he thinks he delays too long at Detroit I now write the Commode<sup>e</sup> with best wishes for you Mr<sup>s</sup> Askin & family, health & Happiness believe me My D friend

Yours Sinc[e]rely  
Isaac Todd

P S if any of my property could be realised & paid Next Year it will be verry usefull to me perticularly what is owing me being by your Acc<sup>t</sup> £905 York I am told Mr Chaboillez has resigned & as Mr M<sup>c</sup>Gill corresponds with Gov<sup>r</sup> Gore he now requests his appointing Johnny to succed Mr Chaboillez

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

*Endorsed:* Montreal Dec<sup>r</sup> 20<sup>h</sup> 1806 Isaac Todd Esq<sup>r</sup>  
to Jn<sup>o</sup> Askin recv<sup>d</sup> y 26 Jan<sup>y</sup> 1807 Answ<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 27<sup>h</sup>

<sup>69</sup> The Bank of Detroit, authorized by act of the governor and judges on Sept. 19, 1806, was the first banking institution in Michigan and the only one until after the War of 1812. Its charter was annulled by Congress in 1807, and after a stormy career the institution went out of existence in 1808. See Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, I, 622-27.

<sup>70</sup> Francis Gore, lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, June, 1806 to 1817, was born in Blackheath, Kent, England, in 1769. He served as an officer in the army from 1787 to 1802, retiring with the rank of major. He was absent from Canada from 1811 to 1815, and his rule, when present, was stormy. After retiring to England, he served as deputy teller of the Exchequer from 1818 until 1832. He died in Brighton, Nov. 3, 1852. See Read, *Lt. Govs. U. Can.*, 67 ff.