

SECTION VII

LETTERS AND PAPERS, 1807-1808

SOCIAL LIFE IN DETROIT¹

January the 7th 1807

Dear Brother, We arrived safe from Moravian Town the Sunday after we left you, & have been Dancing almost [constantly] since. Having been at a famous Dance last Evening at Cap^t Burbanks² where M^r Mackintoshs Family, Nelly, and a party from the other side were, I am not in as good Order to write as at any other time.

There is nothing new here worth mentioning several of the French Ladies on the other side are invited to the Detroit Assemblies however not one went to the last which has been the only one since you are gone. Nelly Grant's being unwell has prevented our Sister Nelly from going

M^r Eastman³ & Denham,⁴ are not yet gone perhaps waiting for M^r Hanks's⁵ Wedding. he was Married to Miss

¹ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

² Jesse Burbank was a lake sailor, being mate of the *Charlotte* in 1797. From 1789 to December, 1800, he and Mary Sutton cohabited as man and wife and five children were born to them. Contention arising, they submitted the matter to James May, Jacob Visger, and Charles Curry as arbitrators, and on separating Jesse kept two of the children and Mary the remaining three. On June 6, 1803, Burbank was married at Fort Erie to Sarah Hickley by John Warren, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 584. At the time of his death, which occurred prior to Aug. 3, 1814, Burbank was living in Buffalo, but his will was probated in Wayne County, where he owned a farm on the Rouge River. His widow survived him, and was still living at the time of taking the census of 1827. Data chiefly adapted from ms. notes by C. M. Burton in *B. H. Coll.*

³ Presumably Jonathan Eastman, who married Eleanor McNiff, daughter of Patrick and Catherine McNiff, on Oct. 16, 1808. For the career of Patrick McNiff, see *B. H. R.*, I, 424. Eastman became an ensign in the First Infantry, July 14, 1803. He later served as lieutenant in the First Artillery, and was honorably discharged, June 1, 1814. On Dec. 11, 1818, Thomas Rowland, acting as agent for Eastman, filed a protest with the Governor and Judges of the Territory which indicates that Eastman was then living, and that both in January and in August, 1812, he had been present in Detroit. See *Proc. of Land Board of Detroit, passim.*

⁴ Probably Captain Josiah Dunham, who was stationed at Detroit as early as 1802. He became captain in the Sixteenth Infantry, Jan. 8, 1799, and was honorably discharged on June 15, 1800. On Feb. 16, 1801, he became captain in the Second Artillerists and Engineers; he resigned, April 30, 1808.

⁵ Porter Hanks, who became a second lieutenant in the artillery, Jan. 17, 1805, and first lieutenant, Dec. 31, 1806. In November of this same year, he was proceeding to Chicago with a detachment of troops on the schooner *Tracy*, when in Lake Huron the captain turned back to Detroit. Richard Pattinson of Sandwich had contracted to carry the troops to Chicago, and Captain Dyson, the commandant here, formally protested his failure to

Peggy McNiff yesterday. I am glad of it particularly on M^{rs} M^cNiff's account as she has a large Family to maintain.

Many of your Friends beg to be remembered to you, Dedine's Family among the number. I have nothing more to add.

I remain Dear Charles

Your Affectionate Brother

James Askin

P. S. M^r Barthe begs you will try and procure an Elk Skin for him.

Addressed: M^r Charles Askin at Niagara

Endorsed: Jan^y 7th 1807 James Askin to Ch^o Askin rec^d the 17th & answ^d the 18th

SOCIAL LIFE IN DETROIT⁶

Near Sandwich Jan^y 31 1807

Dear Brother M^rPattinson's leaving this for New York furnishes us with an opportunity of writing you. it afforded us a great deal of pleasure to hear that you were well, when Langlois left Niagara he is highly pleased with the reception he met with from you. Big Knife⁷ is in good Order considering such a Voyage as he has made. Robins was much pleased with your Letter I delivered it to him the same Evening at M^r M^cIntoshes where O'Keeffe and several more of your Friends were Dancing, after having Danced

fulfill his contract, which seems to have been occasioned by the unseaworthiness of the *Tracy*. For both Lieutenant Hanks and Margaret McNiff (daughter of Patrick and Catherine McNiff) the ending of the *Tracy's* voyage at Detroit instead of Chicago proved fatal, their marriage following, as here recorded, two months after Hanks's arrival here. In 1811, he was stationed at Mackinac, when the sudden death of Captain Howard, the commandant, brought about his assumption of that position. See *post*, 672-73. In July, 1812, he surrendered his post to the British-Indian force which Captain Charles Roberts led from St. Joseph Island against the place. Hanks was paroled and allowed to proceed to Detroit, where on August 16, shortly before the surrender, he was undergoing court-martial for his action at Mackinac when a cannon ball fired from across the river penetrated the room and killed him instantly. His widow died, Dec. 14, 1869, at the age of eighty-three. For many years she had resided on the north side of Jefferson Avenue between Bates and Randolph streets. Data derived from sketch in *Proc. of Land Board of Detroit*, 177 and mss. in B. H. Coll., *passim*.

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

7 Big Knife was Charles Askin's horse.

two nights at Amherstburg. Duncan is offended with you for writing Robins preferably to him, altho I try'd to excuse you by saying Robins wrote you first. I will pay the small Debts you mention in your last, and take as much care of your Horses as I can. Robins was at a Dance at the Cote des Poux, last Week where your old Flame rendered herself ridiculous by being too fond of Oliver. they were to be Married last Thursday but [it] is put off for a Day or two longer. Captain Dyson⁸ was Married to Miss Dodemead last Week.

Poor Nancy M^cKee⁹ and Charles Brush¹⁰ were much burnt, the former by her Cloaths taking fire & latter falling in a kettle of Scalding Water. however there is no danger for their Lives. M^r Louis Barthe begs you will try & procure for him two Elk Skins, as a cure for his Leg. Dedines Family begs to be remembered to you. having nothing more to add I must conclude by assuring you that I am Dear Charles your Affexionate Brother

James Askin

⁸ Samuel T. Dyson was commissioned lieutenant in the First Artillerists and Engineers, Dec. 19, 1796. The date of his coming to Detroit has not been learned, but he was commandant here from August, 1805, to April, 1807, and was again stationed here as captain of artillery when Hull arrived with his army from Ohio in July, 1812. Farmer, *Hist. of Detroit, passim*. On Jan. 25, 1807, he married Ann Dodemead, daughter of John and Jane Murray Dodemead, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 304. Ann Dodemead was born, Jan. 5, 1789, and died in 1850. During the War of 1812, Captain Dyson was in command of one of the forts in the vicinity of Washington, which he abandoned by reason of some mistake in instructions, thereby facilitating the capture of the city by the British. For this he was court-martialed and dismissed from the army, Nov. 17, 1814. He returned to Detroit to live and subsequently died here, leaving, besides his widow, two children, Samuel T. and Jane Dyson. Ann Dodemead married (second) Charles Jackson, and a daughter, Ann, was born to this couple. See sketch in *Proc. of Land Board*, 188, and mss. in B. H. Coll.

⁹ Marie Anne McKee (familiarily known as Nancy), natural daughter of Captain Thomas McKee, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 376. Nancy was baptized in Sandwich, on March 4, 1800, and the record states that she was then three and one-half years old. A year later (July 28, 1801) Thomas made his will, but for some reason refrained from mentioning Nancy in the document. In the spring of 1815, Mrs. McKee was with the family of George Hamilton in modern Hamilton, Ont., for a time, and in a letter home gave as a reason for delaying her return to Detroit the prospects of Nancy's marriage to a "fine young man," which obligated Mrs. McKee "more than ever to pay her a proper attention which commands respect from others." Apparently the marriage did not take place, since in October, 1815, Mrs. McKee expressed worry over Nancy's financial future. Data compiled from letters in the John Askin papers and other mss. in the B. H. Coll.

¹⁰ Charles Brush was a son of Elijah Brush and Adelaide Askin, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 207. He was born, Dec. 6, 1804, and died, Feb. 7, 1807, presumably from the effects of the accident here noted. On April 25, 1807, another Brush child was born, to whom the name Charles Reuben was given. He was later a prominent citizen of Detroit. Data derived from ms. notes by C. M. Burton on Brush genealogy in B. H. Coll.

P. S. Alex^r being on the other side does not know off this opportunity otherwise would write.

Mr. Charles Askin at Queenston

Addressed: M^r Charles Askin at Queenston favoured by Rich^d Pattinson Esq^r

Endorsed: Cezar is dead his disorder the Bots.

REMOVAL OF MR. AND MRS. MEREDITH TO HALIFAX

Woolwich Feb^y 1 1807

My dear Sir We were made vastly happy by your kind letter [which] arrived with the Fall ships and sincerely rejoice at the excellent account it affords of your Health and that of all The Family. We have upon the whole been toss'd a good deal about since you saw us, and I had expectations that our future days would be somewhat more stationary but a soldiers life is never certain, therefore we Must be content with it's lot. since My Promotion to Liu^t Colonel in the Regiment I have had hints Not to look upon myself as a fixture, and it has so turned out that My Lord Moira¹¹ has ordred me to proceed to Halifax and take Command of the Royal Artillery in Nova Scotia—a situation certainly desireable being a Healthy Climate and some allowances that may assist our circumstances. the Command in Canada had been long applied for by a Senior officer whose Mother resides at Quebec a L^t Colonel Cox. therefore altho I interested myself to obtain it, the priority of right and a promise long made precluded the possibility of my succeeding (for the present) in my wishes. however we are coming much nearer to you than in England and I hope with Gods blessing we shall do well. it is a nice and very Ostensible Command and a cheap Country, matters not to be let pass, for really every thing in England is so enormously dear that with a Family it is almost impossible to live in the requisite line we

¹¹ Francis Rawdon Hastings, first Marquis of Hastings and second Earl of Moira, was born, Dec. 9, 1754. He entered the army as ensign in August, 1771, and two years later was sent to America, where he served for several years. On June 15, 1778, he became lieutenant colonel and adjutant general of the army in America. In 1781, he defeated General Greene at Hobkirk's Hill, and sailed for home that summer. His further career was long and distinguished. In 1803, he became a general, and in 1812, Governor-General of Bengal and Commander-in-Chief in India. He died at sea, Nov. 26, 1826, in the vicinity of Naples. See *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

must appear. My Son David I hope to see in the Royal Military Academy, before our departure or nearly so. Lord Moira has been very civil to me about him, and when he has attained his Commission he will be sent out [as] an officer under my Command. our Two daughters accompany us to Halifax. I should think (by way of the States) we might hear often from you and perhaps be able to take a trip and see you. we just learn that the Russians & Prussians have given Bonapatre a very sound drubbing but we wait the officiality of the News. I think it will prove true, and then depend upon it things will take another turn with him. Respecting the Politicks of this Country, [there is] nothing, very interesting. the minister speaks of our Finances being in a very flourishing state, but as to Peace there is not the smallest idea of [it]. Beunos Ayres retaken by the Spaniard and Sir Horne Popham in disgrace for having undertaken the Expedition against it without orders. I have nothing to add, worth observing and My dear Archange has demanded the residue of the Paper. I therefore cheerfully obey her orders, and with best regards to the worthy Commodore M^{rs} Grant and all the Family united I remain always, My dear Sir,

Truly & faithfully yours

David Meredith L^tColonel R Ay[?]

J Askin Esq^r &c

My dear Father, You may conceive the happiness I experienced on the receipt of your and my dear M^{rs} M^oKee's letters mentioning the good health of all my beloved Family I have also had a confirmation of the same thro one of my Cousin Mercers who had rec^d a letter from you they are I am pleased to say in good health and tolerable spirits but my poor Aunt feels her loss very keenly¹² and we much lament that our want of room and pecuniary circumstances prevent us the pleasure of haveing them with us as [torn] Sea stock we shall be compelled to provide an [torn] a variety of other matters indispensable on a voyage with a suitable assortment of wearing apparel to take out with us will

¹² The allusion is to Mrs. Mercer (née Phyllis Barthe) whose husband, Captain Daniel Mercer, had recently died.

necessarily sink a certain portion of Cash it therefore behoves one to consider the most economical plan to pursue and to avoid any unnecessary expence whilst we remain in England. I am much gratified at the prospect of going to Halifax as it will bring me so much nearer my esteemed Parents and please God we may probably contrive some means of seeing Each other during the time of our stay there. My principal regret at quitting this Country will be at leaving our dear David who is however extremely well disposed and has made us solemn assurances of steadiness of conduct and attention to his studies during our absence I therefore trust he will by that means obtain his comission in the space of two or three years and join us at Halifax I am happy to say we have some sincere friends who have promised to befriend him I therefore trust he will do well.

I have had much conversation lately with Col^l Howard Douglass¹³ who was Captⁿ in the Artillery and some time in Canada he quitted the corps about five years ago and obtained a situation in a military Academy at a place called Wickham in Buckinghamshire he has espoused a very accomplished Woman and appears himself a worthy man he mentioned you all frequently with kindness and thinks my Daughter Anne very like my sister M^{rs} Brush Captⁿ Adye¹⁴ used to say the same Little Elizabeth delights in the idea of our intended Expedition Children are fond of novelty. She is always sick in a Carriage and I fear she will be so in a ship. you will I trust excuse this uninteresting

¹³ Sir Howard Douglas was born in Gosport, England, in 1776. He attended the Royal Military Academy, and in 1795 was sent on an expedition to Quebec. The transport was wrecked, the survivors escaping to the Labrador coast, and Douglas remained four years in Canada. We have no knowledge of his presence in Detroit, save the evidence contained in the present letter. He commanded the Royal Military Academy from 1804 to 1808 and again from 1812 to 1822. From 1823 to 1829, he was Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, being recalled to assist his government in preparing the British case for the arbitration by the King of the Netherlands of the disputed Maine-New Brunswick boundary. He spent most of the remainder of his life in England, where he died, Nov. 9, 1861. See Wallace, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ Ralph Willet Adye became a second lieutenant in the Royal Artillery Regiment, Jan. 1, 1781, first lieutenant on Nov. 26, 1790, and captain lieutenant on March 6, 1795. He was in Canada as early as 1792, when he was engaged in engineer work at Detroit. Thereafter he served in the anti-American operations on the Detroit-Maumee frontier, assisting Lieutenant Pilkington in fortifying Fort Miamis and Turtle Island in Maumee Bay. In October, 1794, he was ordered to supervise the building of a blockhouse at Chatham. He later attained the rank of major. He died in 1831. See *Simcoe Papers, passim*; British army lists, *passim*; and *Mich. Pio. Colls., XXIII, passim*.

*letter and remain assured my dearest Father of the unalterable affection (towards yourself My beloved Mother and all the dear Family) of your ever loving Daughter

A Meredith

Addressed: To John Askin Esq^r Merch^t at Detroit Upper Canada To the care of Mess^{rs} Todd & M^cGill Merch^t at Montreal Lower Canada Via New York

Endorsed: Wool[w]ich Feb^y 1 1807 L^t Col Meredith to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^r 14^h June Answ^d y^o 5 October.

COMMERCIAL DIFFICULTIES IN MONTREAL¹⁵

Montreal 24 March 1807

My dear Askin I received your letter a few days ago. I am sorry to hear of M^r Brushes Misfortune in loosing his Boy. I have wrote two letters to him since I had any from him. Lawyers you know dont like to write without being paid for their trouble. I am much afeard your courts are very slow in desiding Causes, but hope M^r Brush will not neglect the Needfull, for the sooner this business is settl'd the better. I have not wrote to him for some time. you give but little incouragement respecting our Land buseness. this country is all going to destruction. Lester & Managh are bankrupts, Ten thousand pound of their Bills coming back, which will fall heavily on Individuals, many of my friends involved. that scoundrel Bonepart has seized all all the British property in Europe, amongst which is fifty thousand pound, due to this Country for furs purchased last Winter in London and not paid for, nor ever will. by letter, I received of the 10 January from London they say all the deer, Bears, Raccoons, Martins, which went home last fall, cannot be sold at any price, therefore they have put them in the Kings stores & Bonded them, to save paying the dutys untill Bonepart makes peace or dies. I like many more fools speculated in Bears, but fortunately not many. accounts say Congress has refusd to ratify a Treaty which has been made between the Americans & England. Todd is gone to the States to seek amusement and get rid of the

¹⁵ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

vapours. you are happy in being a farmer. I wish I was one. was I not so old I would be one yet. I see a storm gathering which will exceed 84, and nothing can save us except a general shour of half Joes. the Yankees takes all our money out of the Country. the Indian Traders, all except the Nort[h]west, unless a speedy change [comes] must all go to the right about all trad[e] here seeme to be at a stand. no money, and you cannot say who you can Trust. up to day & down tomorrow. John Lees,¹⁶ one of the King Council, director of the Indian store for which he received of Government near £500 p^r Annum, died a few days past considerably in my debt for sundries this winter which he bought, and it is said he will never pay anything. James M^cGill is just arrived from Quebec where he has been at the assembly & Council doing nothing. Frobisher is well, but Lesters business falls hard on him. M^{rs} Henry has been unwell most of the Winter, my daughter in Health and me, old & Tough. I cant complain for want of health, eat & Sleep well, think of you somtimes. wish you would come down and see us. a voyage would do you good, I am sure it would me. I dont know but I may go to see you yet before I die. If I could make business enough to pay expences. you say you cannot speake to M^r Brush on business surely if you asked him whether he had recoverd any thing he would say yes or no. you will be tired before you get half through this letter. all my family desires to be rememberd to M^{rs} Askin & every branch of yours, and so does your old freind

Alexander Henry

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Sandwich Detroit

Endorsed: Montreal March 24^h 1807 Alex^r Henry Esq^r
to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 24^h April Answ^d y^e 7^h May.

¹⁶ John Lees Jr. was the son of John Lees who was a merchant of Quebec as early as 1764 and a prominent citizen of the place for ten years thereafter. His *Journal of J. L. of Quebec, Merchant*, edited by M. Agnes Burton, was published in Detroit in 1911. His son, our present subject, served as a captain of British militia during the Revolution. He later engaged in trade, in 1791 became a member of the Legislative Assembly, and in 1796 of the Executive Council. In April, 1795, he was appointed storekeeper of the Indian Department, holding this office until his death, when he left his accounts in much confusion. See *Journal of J. L.*, 7 and 31.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ISAAC TODD AND JAMES MCGILL

Near Sandwich March 25th 1807

My Dear Friends, Thanks to God & you I enjoy both Health of Body & Peace of mind which has not been the Case for many Years I have not had any disorders yet the mind has great influence on the Body.

I have wrote one or both of you almost every Post. I got a Letter yesterday from M^r Brush saying that he would now get Deeds from the American Government for the Lots gave in Exchange for those you held in the Town of Detroit. The misunderstandings between the Governor, Chief Justice, &^{es} who are Commissionors for Granting Lands has retarded that Business at Detroit very much but I'm now in hopes things will change for the better. I believe Congress has heretofore not decided on Claims in & about DEtroit untill they heard whither or no their misunderstandings with the British Government would be settled to their likeing and as that has now taken place I should hope that their Government would Act with liberality in their decissions on Claims belonging to British Subjects. I'ts to be lamented much that our Government at Home has not been made acquainted with the situation of British Subjects who resided at Detroit. I dare say it would have been an easy matter to have inserted in the new Treaty that all British Subjects Claiming Lands at DEtroit prior to the Evacuation of that Post would be confirmed in their Claims. it would not have been an Object worth the American Minister at London contending for.

Lieu^t Governor Gore has been pleased to say that as soon as Mons^r Chabouillez gives in his resignation Johny shall have his Appointment of Interpreter and Store Keeper at the Island of S^t Josephs. to Your Recommendation I have little doubt this is oweing principally.

Though the Commodore & M^r Hamilton both were so kind as to recommend him, His Excellency has also been pleased to Appoint me Trustee of a Public School to be Errected in the District & likewise sent a Commission for me to Administer Oaths throughout the Whole of the Province of Upper Canada. As I have not yet seen the

Commission I cant well say of what Nature it is, but I understand its giving me an Authority to do some act that could only be done by the Judges of the Court of Kings Bench. To you my Dear Friends, I must be indebted for this preference given by the Governor, for of me he could not know much. I by this opportunity send his Secretary a list of the Names of those who made their Election to continue British Subjects at Detroit prior to the first of June 1797. Agreeable to our Treaty with the United States. my [reason for] doing so is that in his Proclamation he seems very desirous to know those who adhered to the British Government.

There is one situation in this Quarter by which I might make something & I believe the Duties of which I could fullfill, but on account of my Health I would not dare risk and that is District Judge. the present One is going away I hear, & if the place is not promised, Im sure I would obtain it, indeed I'm sure I could many Years ago. I mention this, least you who I know [are] always, on the Watch to serve me might without saying anything to me apply for it on hearing of its being vacant.

I was for two Reasons induced to put my Son Alex^r at M^r Brush's to learn the Profession of a Lawyer rather than to anyone in the Province the first was that I believe M^r Brush's profesional knowledge at least equal to any Lawyer we have, but there seems to be an Act that whoever does not serve his time in this Province is excluded from pleading in it. This However I should hope would not extend to my Son who is an Officer in the British Militia and does his Duty as such & does all others as if residing on this Side & who has constantly refused several Offers made him by the Governor on the other side if he would become a Citizen. I'm very desirous to know Lieu^t Governor Gores Sentiments on this subject & for that purpose requested M^r Hamilton to mention the matter. if either of You should meet His Excellency I wish You would broach the Subject to him.

Whatever May be my Intentions when I begin my Letter, I never can write you a Short one. I must always trouble you with my wants and wishes, Which probably may con-

tinue to be the Case, untill there is an End of,
Your Gratefull Friend
Isaac Todd & James M^cGill, Esquires Merchants at
Montreal

DEATH OF WILLIAM ROBERTSON

Queenston March 28th 1807

Dear Father I take the earliest opportunity of acquainting you with M^r William Robertson's death, who it appears by John's letter to William ended his days in London some time in December. he had been persuaded not to drink, & for some time did not; but he was very much harassed by his credittors. There is some dispute about the wills he left, but which was to be decided a few days after John wrote. it's thought by him that William & himself would be the agents of the Executors, to settle the bussiness in America. I would wish to get the papers which are in the small box I left with you, as well as the books belonging to the deceased which are in it, but the patents had better remain with you untill I go up, which this circumstance will make it necessary for me to do, some time in the summer. I beg you will send the papers down the first safe opportunity, as I will be able to prepare them for the Agent before I go up, although I do not intend to deliver them un[t]ill I see you, or have your Advice.

William's discharge to you, for the debt due his Uncle, has been in M^r Hamilton's hands, since some time before I came down. I do not know why he has not sent it up to you.

John mentions in his letter having seen the Meredith & Mercer family's Cap^t Mercer had then been dead about a month and the family talked of coming out to Canada.

M^r Hamilton has been unwell most all winter & is obliged to alter his diet, and not live so high, he and M^{rs} H. intend visiting the Ballstown springs next summer.

I have nothing more to add but to beg, you will give my kind love to my Dear Mother, my Brothers & Sisters And Believe me to be Dear Father

Your dutifull & affectionate Son

Charles Askin

John Askin Senior Esquire Strabane Sandwich

Addressed: John Askin Senior Esquire. Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston March 28^h 1807 M^r Charles
Askin to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 8^h April Answ^d y^e 10^h

SENIORITY IN MILITIA SERVICE

Strabane April 27^h 1807

Dear Sir I was favoured with a Letter from you the day before yesterday covering the Cobby of one you wrote Commodore Grant on the 16 Ins^t Relative to his giving you a Company in the Militia. You request of me jointly with him to say if there is Impropriety in the Letter you wrote him. I say, and I dare say he would the same, That there is not, as what you Ask for you do not wish he would Grant, if there was Impropriety in him in doing so. from the late L^t Governor Hunters Orders to him he is positively directed not to put a Junior Officer Over a Senior but that promotion should go On regularly. This Order he had left at my House but took back yesterday & will shew it to you if you wish. by this you will see, that he has it not in his power to give the highest Rank to the fittest persons to serve as Officers in the Militia and once when he Intended (by my Advance) to make Cap^t Harrow L^t Col. over Major Parent¹⁷ (a Most Illiterate good Man that could not speak a word of English) it so offended, even the officers that did not belong to the same Battallion, that they wrote a joint Letter as a Complaint to the Commodore which Letter he laid before his Excellency and I suppose produced the Order I Aluded to. As to matters of Right & Agreeable to Law so far as I Understand it If you were a Lieu^t in the Regular Service and taken into the Militia, there you would ranck as oldest Lieu^t & if a Company fell Vacant the next day you should get it in the same manner as Cap^t M^oKee became Major, he by right came in Oldest Cap^t There was no L^t Col. Bap^t Baby was Major & therefore made L^t Col. & Cap^t M^oKee as Oldest Cap^t Major. For my own part I do not think in Order to carry On the Service well that in all cases

¹⁷ For the several Parent lines in Detroit, see *B. H. R.*, I, 418. The individual here noted has not been identified.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

the Senior Officer should be promoted; Otherwise had major Parent not resigned (from his Own knowledge of his Inabilities.) My L^t Col would be a good Man that can Neither read write nor speak English or had any wish to be a Militia Officer, yet this man must have Commanded when I was not present. I do not hesitate to say that I am persuaded the Commodore would prefer you to several of his Captains, but was he to do so & the Law not suport him he would subject himself to further complaint. and I'm sorry to Observe that many of the Militia officers are One day for not puting any one Over an Others head (as I sometimes found) and at Others wish to Exclude Inability Drunkness &^{ea} however the late Governors directions on this Head I supose will be the rule by which the L^t of the County will go Unless the present L^t Governor may think proper to Order Otherwise

I am Dear Sir truly yours

J A

Doc^r Richardson at Amherstburgh

Endorsed: Strabane April 27^h 1807 Jn^o Askin to Doc^r Richardson at Amherstburgh (Copp)

PAYMENT OF CHURCH SUBSCRIPTION

June 1st 1807

Dear Sir: I could not have thought that a Gentleman could have pressed an other as you have done me for 40/ which I did not contract. My Son said he would pay. if he does not I will perhaps be able to collect so much some place. I acted very different with you last year when you wrote me for forbearance of what you owed M^r Robertson

I am Y. Humble Servant

P.S. Moran the mason owes me £14 odd & put me off saying he could not get payment from you.

Endorsed: June 1st 1807 Jn^o Askin to the Reverand Richrd Pollard at Sandwich Copp

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

PAYMENT OF CHURCH SUBSCRIPTION

Sandwich June 1 1807

Sir I am sorry to have given you so much trouble about the 40/ please to pass it to my Credit, in my Acct. with M^r Robertson my Rent was passed on by Morin to M^r Woods, which I paid, & I do not owe M^r Morin one farthing.

I am S^r your most obed serv^t

R Pollard

J Askin Esq

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Strabane

Endorsed: June 1^t 1807 Rev R. Pollard to Jn^o Askin.

REMOVAL OF JOHN ASKIN JR. TO ST. JOSEPH

River S^t Clair 19^h June 1807

My Dear Father We arrived here at 5 oClock & passed over the Bar without unloading or any difficulty the *Wilkinson* was behind us across the lake Captain Mills on approaching the Bar shortened sail & let the *W.* pass in ab^t 5 minutes after she passed us she struck which gave Cap^t M an opportunity of finding a passage immediately, the *W* is now behind us as well as the *Tracy*. Inclosed you have Letters for J.S. which I request you'll forward after you have enclosed the draft that M^r H. M^oKay is to deliver you. I think it [illegible] adviseable to send one of them to Queenston to the Care of Tho^s Clark he will forward [torn] delay Madelaine is in tolerable good spirits Considering her parting with the friends who have always afforded her relief when in sorrow & distress. I will write you again from Harrows remember me to my D^r M[other], sister & Brothers

I remain D^r Father y^r dutiful Son

Jn^o Askin J^r

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane

Endorsed: River S^t Clair June y^o 19 Jn^o Askin Jun^r
to Jn^o Askin Senior. Answ^d y^o 27^h

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

APPOINTMENT TO CLERKSHIP AT ST. JOSEPH

S^t Joseph's 22^d June 1807

My Dear Father, This goes by Le Gros Fusil an Ottawa Chief & his Band who are on their way to Amherstburg, This man is well acquainted with you he says. his Son wintered with Cap^t M^oKee last winter & knows James & Alexander having mentioned their names several times since his return to this. No doubt but they will request a Drink (if so) please let them have a Gallon of Whisky & I'll make it good to you again, & a few Loaves of bread should they be in want, I mean two or three Loaves. As the Governor is with you I beg that you'll have the Goodness to employ those who are his favorites to endeavour to obtain the Clerkship for me, as an Interpreter is on his way to this, which will reduce my pay to 4/8 H per day & not sufficient to support me much less to pay my debts. As your the best Judge of what is to be done I shall wait, impatiently for an answer on that subject by the first Vessel. I wrote you on the 17th which will go by the *Nancy* Now on her return from S^t Marys.

If Sam is as desirous now of coming to see me, as he was last Winter, he can take a passage with these Indians when they return.

Madelaine joins me in best wishes for Your & my Dear Mothers Health & prosperity. our Love to My Brothers & Sisters

I remain My Dear Father Your dutiful Son

Jn^o Askin Jr

John Askin Esq^r Strabane

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Strabane Upper Canada By the Great Gun an Ottawa Chief

Endorsed: S^t Joseph 22^d June 1807 John Askin Jun^r to John Askin Recv^d the 7^h July answ^d y^e 11th

LAND TITLES AND MILITIA ACTIVITIES

Strabane June 27 1807

Dear Sir, About the time I wrote you last, I had a Letter from you dated the 24th of May with much News which I thank you for. I hear Captain Gilkinson is like to get a

handsome situation. I'm glad of it he takes good care of his Family.

I saw Woods on his way down from Gross Point the day before yesterday. he had been up to bring down M^{rs} Woods who was there on a Visit: he says they are all tolerable well and by him I find that Captain Dyson has not yet paid M^{rs} Grant. I therefore now write M^r Brush on the subject. Nothing further has yet been done about Robertson's Debt to you. the last Plann was to seize money in M^r May's hands as I wrote you also the Lots when the Deeds comes out. they have not yet Issued. M^r William Robertson of Queenston declines going [doing] anything further relative to his Late Uncle, as I suppose the Lawyers have told him it would not be lawfull now the Death of his Uncle is Public & I believe that to be the Case.

There seems to be nothing but difficulties to prevent a man from geting his dues, and I think more on the other side than this. however with a Vast Quantity of Patience all may yet come right. The money due You cannot be lost because the Debt is clear, and the late M^r W^m Robertson left a good deal of Property yet it may be some time before you get it. all I fear is rong on the other side. I would not be surprised if the Governor who I have always liked should loose his place and the Secretary get it.

I have sent the return for the 4th June to the Deputy Lieu^t of the County only yesterday. John going away and our Adjutant being Young in Office threw us something back. the Militia behaved remarkably well and fired like regular Troops (when they Fire well) M^r Park complimented us by bringing a small Piece with some men he mustered on a Hill and fired 21 Rounds. I think he has for many Years past sorely lamented the Letter he wrote you and got others to Sign. If You thought proper to restore him and and make him a Captain of Artillery still belonging to my Corps I would spare him some men. as the late Governor you told me always assented to having one of the companies Mounted I can now do it without any Additional expence and as they will be mostly Canadians should the Service require sending a party to some distance by means of their going on Hor[s]e Back it could be soon effected.

for this purpose I have chosen young LaButte's Company under the Command of Major M^oKee I do not from this mean that either them or the Artillery should be separate Corps but all still belong to my Regiment or rather Legion I suppose it would then be called. I have chosen a sett of fine young Men for Captain Pattinson's light Infantry and he is [to] let them have their Clothes for first Cost and expences. Maisonville and Woods means to do the same we therefore hope soon to make a pretty appearance should the Lieu^t Governor Honor us with a Visit. I cannot get Scarlett but M^{rs} Grant having gave her Cloak to Mother [illegible], I will get that which is better than such Scarlett as is now imported. When you find his Excellency at leasure you can mention these Planns respecting the Militia to him

By a Letter from M^r Hamilton I expected to have seen Alex^r Grant before this. what Joy his mother will experience on his arrival.

Doct^r Richardson has been very unwell and [is] still weak. The rest of our Family [are] in tolerable health which Blessing may you long enjoy is the sincere wish of

My Dear Sir Your sincere Friend

The Honorable Alex^r Grant Esq^r at York

Endorsed: Strabane June 27, 1807 John Askin Sen
to The Honorable Alex^r Grant Esq^r at York (Copy)

CONDITIONS AT ST. JOSEPH

S^t Joseph's 4th July 1807

My Dear Father I will not undertake to give you a detail of our Voyage to this as my Dear Madelaine has done it fully I believe to my Dear Mother, nor will I distress you nor my relations in detailing the horrid Ideas I have of the Island. I may reconcile myself to it in time, but the Moment that I have accumulated a Sufficiency to Pay my debts & purchase a good Situation near you I shall depart unless some unforeseen accident should happen in the interim.

Old Chaboiller Seems to be very happy of my relieving him. he says that he will go to lower Canada in One Month. I have not as yet taken charge of the Store but a Survey is

to be held on the 6th for that Purpose I'm told the Poor Old man will be in arrears & will not be able to account for the deficiency however as that part does not concern me it will only involve him in difficulties & he can easily get over them as no Security has been taken of him for the due performance of that Office.

Doct^r Geddis has been very attentive to us & M^{rs} G has enquired repeatedly of Nellys welfare. The Makina Gentlemen¹⁸ have not made their appearance as yet Their Agents have Obtained a large spot of Ground for a town. a number of their men are at work in Clearing & rafting timber to build in time it may become a decent place but the Garrison never will I'm afraid I mean the fort as Its on a spot surrounded by Rocks only. The gentlemen of the Garrison appear to be decent & well inclined to be sociable.

No Kind of fruit is got on this Island or the adjacent shore but Wrasberries, therefore please tell Brush that I expect he will send me Apples & Cyder in abundanc[e] & I will send him in return white fish. I have not obtained any sugar yet, my Stores being left behind. If I had brought wth me the Coin of this Country call^d Whisky I might have exchanged enough to supply myself & friends with a Sufficient Store, tho the Price of it at wholesale is 8/& 9/ P^r Gallon & by Smaller quantities 12/& 14/ Spirits 4^o/ P^r D^o —Sugar rec^d in payment at 7½ H^x C^y. Should the price increase & that I find something handsome may be made in the Spring, I will advise you timely that James may take a Trip to this with a few Barrels.

A few good Bills on Montreal can be got at times but all Adventurers must take advantage of the times of the Season. I'm fully persuaded that if any person had arrived at [the right] time with a small assortment of Groceries he would have made exceedingly well as no Store is at present erected. I should have recommended a tryal if the South West C^o¹⁹ were not abuilding. they seem to be all about Makina &

¹⁸ For the manner in which the South West Company evolved from the older Michilimackinac Company, see *B. H. R.*, I, 278. See, also, Wayne E. Stevens, "Fur-Trading Companies in the Northwest, 1760-1816" *M. V. H. A., Proc.*, 1916-17, p. 287 ff.

¹⁹ The South West Company is commonly said to have been organized by John Jacob Astor in 1811. The present document seems to indicate that an organization employing this name was operating in the Northwest as early as 1807.

pay little or no attention to this place. its probable they may be here after they have Celebrated the independancy of the U S. Young Badishon was to have given me a Yew & Lamb for a note of hand I had of his but he went away before I left Amherstburg for River Thames. I inclosed his note to Johnney (Query, if he has paid him if he has not I beg that James may use his influence if he thinks the N. W C^o Vessel will take them.

Madelaine embraces you & my Dear Mother with all her heart & joins me in prayers for your preservation & all the family

I remain My Dear Father Y^r Dutiful Son
Jn^o Askin J^r

P. S. Madelaine informs me that you labour'd under a difficulty to discharge a small debt that if it was not liquidated & as Captⁿ Mills offered to purchase the Lot he got of you, You'll be pleased to give me immediate notice & I will have the Money ready at your Command.

Madelaine begs of my D^r M^o to send her some prickley Ash seed as none can be procured near this.

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Strabane P^r Captⁿ Mills

Endorsed: S^t Josephes July 4^h 1807 Jn^o Askin Juno^r to Jn^o Askin Senior Rec^d y^e 21st and answ^d the 18^h Aug^t

DIFFICULTIES OF WILLIAM MONFORTON

Sandwich 24 Julliet 1807

Monsieur vous êtes le Seul qui Sensible à mon infortune, ayant voulu me visiter Dans la prison, m'a témoigne y prendre part. je Sai que cette marque de votre Generosité part d'un bon Coeur, aussi ma Reconnaissance ést 'elle veritable

Les hommes dites vous ne Sont pas aujourdhuy Ce qu'ils étoit hier, Et ne seront pas demain Ce qu'ils Sont aujourdhuy, que par consequant il faut Essuiyer Souvant pour Rencontrer le jour favorable et je dis qu'on avu en Europe des ours et des lions aussi tractables que les animaux Domestiques mais on n'a Jamais vu apprivoiser des tigres.

Comme tels je regarde Ceux qui Sacrifiant tout, meme leur propre interest à la vengeance; violent les Loix Sacrées de L'humanité et du Christianisme

vous ajoutés que C'est facheux pour un Chretien de vivre Comme je fais, Si miserablement, et si longtems. je suis Chretien, et je sai que Jesus Christ, mourant pour moi Sur la croix a pardonné et prié pour ses Bourreaux; pourquoi ne pardonnerais je pas aux miens et ne prierais je pas pour Eux. puisse Le Dieu des vengences les pardonner, et Leur Rendre autant de Biens et de joië, qu'ils ont fait du tort, et Causé du Chagrin a ma famille— Une Epouse qu'ils ont renduë veuve du vivant de son Epoux et qui trop souvent arrosant de ses larmes le chemin de ches Elle à la Prison, disons mieux du Lieu ou elle fait sa Residence (car un Des deux qui pretendaint Droit Sur la terre et maison S'en ést Emparé le premiér;) n'apporte a Son triste Epoux que des pleurs, que le long Espace de deux ans n'a pu tarir, et qui Sont pour lui autant des reproaches d'avoir Signé la ruine de sa famille avec la perte de sa Liberté. Cette Epouse dis je n'est a leurs yeux qu'un Nouveau et agreable Sacrifice a leur vengeance.

C'est ainsi Monsieur que voulant Eviter un Ecueil je Suis tombe dans un autre-la peur de la prison m'y a Conduit, et la mort m'en sortira

Eternal Createur Dieu puissant et supreme!
 temoin de ma Langeur, de ma douleur Extreme!
 Arbitre de mes jours sois touché de mon sort,
 Brise vite mes Chaines, ou donne moi la Mort!
 Que me sert en Effet, Cet air, Cette lumière,
 Qui Eclaire De mes maux la funeste Carrière!
 Pardonne . . . O Dieu puissant! . . . ma douleur de trahit!
 J'adhore tes decrets, et mon Coeur y souscrit.
 Augmente si tu veus L'horreur de ma misere,
 A tes ordres, Envain je voudrais me soustraire
 Quel horrible tourment Ébranlerait la foi
 D'un Coeur qui de t'aimer fait son unique Loi.

Mais ou memporte LEcces de mon chagrin! pour quoi abuser de votre complaisance en vous fatiguant par un Long Ecrit, encore ose je vous adresser un papier pour demander votre avis. vous priant, si vous juges utile d'en

faire usage, de rayer Ce que vous trouveres hors de propos

Continuant mes vœux pour votre Santé et la prospérité
de votre famille j'ai L'honneur d'Être avec Respect

Monsieur votre tres humble et obst Serviteur

G^l^m Monforton

Colonel Askin E^{qr} Sandwich

Addressed: Colonel John Askin Es^{qr} Sandwich

Endorsed: Sandwich 24th July 1807 Mons^r Monforton
to John Askin.

Translation

Sandwich, July 24, 1807

Sir: You alone feel for me in my distress and your visit to me in prison proves your solicitude for my fate.²⁰ Such kindness can proceed only from a generous heart and of this I have had sincere evidence.

Men, you say, are not the same today as yesterday, nor will tomorrow find them as they are today. One must, therefore, meet each day as best one can. In Europe bears and lions have been tamed and made tractable as domestic animals, but never has a tiger been so tamed. As tigers I regard these people who sacrifice everything, even personal interest, to their revenge, violating the sacred laws of humanity and of Christian charity. You think it deplorable for a Christian to live thus wretchedly for so long a time. I am a Christian and I know that Jesus Christ, when dying for me upon the cross, pardoned and prayed for his executioners; why, then, should I not pardon and pray for mine? May the God of Vengeance pardon them and render them good and happiness in proportion to the injury and pain they have inflicted upon me and mine.

²⁰ Askin had undertaken to befriend the writer, whose misfortunes were occasioned by a dispute over real estate. In a letter of June 29, 1807, preserved among the Askin papers, Monforton explains that Jacques Bezer Jr. had sold to Monforton's son a tract of land Monforton had formerly purchased of Bezer's father, and had mortgaged to Gregor McGregor. Monforton claimed that he had been intimidated into signing the mortgage by the threats of McGregor, and that the latter by unjust measures had secured possession of Monforton's home and property "up to the very bed of my wife." Whatever legal justification there may have been for McGregor's course, the present correspondence discloses some of the ill effects which flowed from laws permitting imprisonment for debt.

A wife whom they have deprived of a living husband, and who often waters with her tears the road to the prison from her home—let us say rather from the place of her abode, since one of those two who claim a right to the land and house has possession of the first—brings to her sad husband only tears which the long interval of two years cannot dry and which are just so many reproaches to him for having signed the ruin of his family with the loss of his liberty. Her distress is to them a constant and pleasing tribute to their malignant purpose.

Thus have I fallen upon one rock while seeking to avoid another. The fear of prison has brought me to it and only death can give me release.

Eternal God, most powerful and supreme,
 Be witness of my pain, my misery extreme!
 Arbiter of my days, in pity for my fate,
 Break quickly now my chains or give me death.
 What serves me thus the air, the light of sun,
 Shining but to reveal the wrongs that I have borne?
 Pardon, O, God Supreme! Misfortune maddens me!
 I worship Thy decrees and bow submissively.
 Augment then, if Thou wilt, the anguish of my days,
 Nor would I ask nor wish for one day less.
 What torment of despair to shatter thus a faith
 That knew but Love for Thee with every breath.

But whither is my excess of grief leading me! Thus to impose upon your kindness and weary you by many words! Yet I venture to send you an address and to ask your advice about it, begging you, if you judge it worth using, to cancel anything you may find improper.

With renewed prayers for your welfare and for the happiness of your family, I have the honor to remain

With respect, dear sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

William Monforton

Colonel Askin, Esq., Sandwich.

DIFFICULTIES OF WILLIAM MONFORTON

A L honorable francois Gore Ecuyer
Gouveneur de la Province du haut Canada
plaise a votre honeur

Cedidit in sillam volens Evitare Caribdim Gauillaume Monforton Ecuyer Major du Bataillon du Sud E. M. languit depuis deux ans dans la prison de Sandwich Le Conseil Legislatif n ayant prevu ni passe aucune act pour remedier ceux inconvenients que le defaut d une cour d Equité pourroit occasioné surtout dans ce district, qui composé la majeure partie d un pays le peu au fait des Loix peut se trouver Exposé a L'injustice et Linnocence opprimée

Le Suppliant s etant trouvé pressé en 1805 par deux Creanciers pour dettes contractées depuis vingt et six ans, et les aurait satisfait tous les deux si par le Delai que Lun lui donnait pour Contanter Lautre, cet autre eut été d humeur d attendre quoique les deux eussent laissé le Capital en laissant accumuler interest Sur interest mais le dernier sacrifiant Son interest lui disant quil le Loyerait pour le reste de sa vie, il le mit en prison, ou en depit L'un de L'autre ils se repaissent l'un et lautre du Barbare plaisir de le faire mourir en Langeur Sans aucun Egard ni Compassion pour Sa famille

Un viéllard de 70 ans dont 28 passés au Service du Roi a—il pu— meriter un tel traitement!

Il faut donc qu'il attende Son Elargissement de Son innocence qui ne peut se manifester, que remontant au premier tems, un examen de ses anciennes affaires les fasse paraître dans leur veritable lumiere mais la cour d'Equite ne peut S'Etablir dans cette province il faut donc qu il se determine a Subir L'horrible sentence que Ce Creancie a prononcé en le metant en prison a moins que Son honneur le Gouverneur de cette Province en Conseil; de sa Grace, Credit, et autorité ne trouve quelque Expediant pour faire changer ou du moin temperé une Loi qui donne Droit de mors a un Creancier Souvant injuste.

plaise a votre honneur prendre en pitié une veuve du vivant de son Epoux et Les Enfants orphelins du vivant de leur pere et qui avec Ce pere trop infortune joignant leur

faibles accents a la voix Generall du peuple nombreux qui ne peut que se flater du plus heureux avenir sous votre Gouvernement; ne Cesseront &° N. B. Le porteur est extremement inquiet et en quelque façon deconcerte Surtout dans Lidee ou le doute qu il a, Si Lavocat Allet m'ayant si mal servi la premiere fois fera mieux a Cette dernière action je vous prie de le rassurer et le flattir dune bonne reussite

M^r Allan est venu me sonder et paraissant prendre a coeur l'interet pour mon fils ma dit que ne faisant pas son Comparution a Loffice du Depute Clerk il pardrait et qu'il etoit surpris que Lauyer Allet ne leut pas faite pour lui. dites lui la raison pourquoi Lawyer Allet 'a preferé denvoyer a York

Ne Serait-il pas prudent de prendre un autre avocat pour le joindre a Lavocat Allet.

Translation

To the Honorable Francis Gore, Esq.,
Governor of the Province of Upper Canada
May it please Your Honor:

William Monforton, Esq., major in a battalion of South Essex Militia, having fallen upon Scylla in his effort to avoid Charybdis, has languished in prison in Sandwich for the past two years.

The Legislative Council, not having provided for nor passed any act to meet the exigencies occasioned by the lack of a Court of Equity, especially in this district where the people, having very little knowledge of the law for the most part, are exposed to injustice and oppression even when innocent, your petitioner, in 1805, found himself pressed by two creditors for debts contracted twenty-six years ago. He would have satisfied both if, by one giving way to the other, that other had been willing to wait, and although both might have trebled their principal by accumulated interest, this last, to his own detriment, declared he would sue for the rest of his life, and had your petitioner put in prison, where, spitefully opposing each other, these two nourish their barbarous pleasure by causing him to die a languishing death with no regard nor pity for his family.

An old man of seventy years, twenty-eight of them passed in the service of the King, does he deserve such treatment?

He must, however, await the release due to his innocence and this could only be effected by an examination of these affairs from their inception, setting them forth in their true light, but since no Court of Equity is possible in this province he must submit to the revolting sentence of that creditor who had him imprisoned unless His Honor, the Governor of this Province, in Council, by his kindness, consideration, and authority, finds some reason to change, or at least to modify, a law which gives a creditor power unto death, often unjustly.

May Your Honor mercifully pity the widow of a living husband and children orphaned of a father in his lifetime, who, with that too unfortunate father, unite their feeble prayers to those of the public generally, hopefull of a happier future under your government, and who will ever pray, etc.

N. B. The bearer is extremely troubled and in some measure discouraged, especially by the idea of the doubt he has, lest Lawyer Allet,²¹ having given such poor service the first time, may do no better in this last suit. I beg you to re-assure him and to give him hopes of success.

Mr. Allan came to find out about things from me. He seemed to have my son's interest at heart and told me his non-appearance at the office of the deputy clerk would be fatal to his suit. Mr. Allan was surprised Lawyer Allet had not done it for him. You tell him the reason why Lawyer Allet preferred to send to York.

Would it not be well to engage another lawyer to work with Lawyer Allet?

RECOVERY OF FUGITIVE SLAVE

Detroit Aug^t 2^d 1807

John Askin Esq^r

D^r sir, My Daughter informs me that yesterday she found my Negro Nobbin at Pikes Creek and bro^t him with her as far as your House and there left him, (he being appre-

²¹ Probably William Elliott of Sandwich, who is noted *ante*, 503.

hensive that I would whip him on his arrival) I have sent Mr Maclosky²² for him, and have to request that you will have the goodness to use your influence in persuading him to return to his duty and to behave himself better in future in that case I will pledge myself not to lay the wait of my finger on him.

I have one particular piece of advice to give you but must request you will not make it known we have a bad set of people about us and as I have been informed means of [have]

22. James McCloskey (McClosky) is listed among the residents of Detroit in 1806, in which year he appears to have been acting as deputy marshall of Michigan Territory. He was a surveyor, and in November, 1808, at the instance of Governor Hull and Judge Withereil, he drafted a new plan for the city, which the officials noted vainly sought to have adopted. Farmer, *Hist. of Detroit*, 29. On Sept. 14, 1810, an act was passed providing for the election in each district of the territory of a council of five members in which varied and extensive powers over poor relief, taxation, road maintenance, etc., were vested. McCloskey was one of the five councilors elected for the Detroit district in October, 1810, and he was still serving in this capacity in 1812. *Ibid.*, 95.

Whether the James McCloskey thus far noted was identical with the later prominent Detroitier of the same name whose record follows herewith, we are inclined to doubt. James McCloskey of Maryland was commissioned captain and assistant deputy quartermaster general in the U. S. army on June 24, 1813, and honorably discharged on June 15, 1815. Heitman, *Reg. U. S. A.* Most of his service was evidently performed in the Detroit area, for numerous manuscripts in the B. H. Coll. disclose his presence and activities here during much of the years 1814 and 1815. He remained in Detroit, and as late as Feb. 19, 1816, signed as A. D. Q. M. G. a letter to Solomon Sibley directing suit to be instituted for the recovery of property belonging to the U. S. government. This same year (on July 30) James May chose McCloskey as an arbitrator in a suit to which he was a party, although in a letter of Sept. 10, 1810, May had described McCloskey as a dishonest debtor who was totally indifferent to meeting his obligations. From 1815 on, McCloskey held numerous offices of local public trust. In 1817, he was made superintendent of buildings (there was only one) of the University of Michigan; in August, 1818, he was appointed quartermaster general of the territory; in 1819 and 1820, he was elected to the board of trustees of Detroit (created by act of Oct. 24, 1815), serving as chairman of the board the first year. In 1821, he was defeated by Solomon Sibley in the election for delegate to Congress; and in 1823, he was one of half a dozen candidates in the election which was won by Father Gabriel Richard. In 1818, the Bank of Michigan was organized by a group of prominent citizens of Detroit, and McCloskey was made cashier. This office he held until 1825, when he was found to have defaulted in the sum of over \$10,000, and was summarily dismissed. An interesting account of his banking career, by Friend Palmer, is in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXX, 411 ff. Even before his appointment to the bank, the Comptroller General of the Treasury had caused McCloskey to be sued for a shortage of several thousand dollars in his accounts as deputy quartermaster general, but for some reason now unknown the prosecution was dropped.

On Sept. 11, 1815, McCloskey was married by James May to Susanne Godfroy, daughter of Gabriel Godfroy and Mary Therese Bondy, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 347. Six children were born to them in the years 1816-25; one daughter married Senator Isaac P. Christaincy, and another married John Alexander Askin, a grandson of John Askin. A letter of James May to his daughter, Ann Audrain, Jan. 11, 1829, states that McCloskey "died at Zanesville, State of Ohio, on his way home with the Winnebago Indians from Washington." Copy in ms. report of interview between C. M. Burton and Samuel W. May (son of James May), Nov. 25, 1926. Data derived from references cited; mss. in B. H. Coll., *passim*; and Farmer, *Hist. of Detroit*, *passim*. Brief sketches of McCloskey's life are in Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, II, 1386, and in *Proc. of Land Board*, 161.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

been used to persuade your Boy, George to leave you. my information derives from his Mother, whom he consulted on that subject. the old Woman appeared very Angry with him, and reprimanded [him] very severely, for proposing such an Idea to her, and ordered him imediately to go home and never again to entertain such a thought, if he did she would inform you of his intention. I merely give you this information, in order that you may keep a good look out after him and prevent him if possible from crossing over on this side the River.

I will thank you at your Leasure to drop me a line in answer to what I wrote you last spring relative to the proposition I made concerning my Affair with the late W^m Robertson, and at Same time to inclose James M^cGills Letter to me which I sent for your perusal. M^r Brush, has repeatedly told me he expected you over. I should be very happy of the opportunity of seeing you here as I wish much to have about one hours conversation with you. M^{rs} May joins me in our best respects to M^{rs} Askin and family and believe me to be D^r Sir

Your friend & well wisher

James May

Addressed: John Askin, Esquire near Sandwich P^r favor M^r M^cClosky.

Endorsed: Detroit Aug^t 2^d 1807 James May Esq^r to Jn^o Askin

JOHN ASKIN REBUKED

To J Askin, Esquire,
Col^l, Command^t of the Essex Militia,

Sir, As a Minister of the Gospel, and as Curate of this Parish, I cannot help observing to you, my extream surprise to find, an order for the meeting of the Militia, at the hour appointed for divine service! To whom should we look up to for support but to the supreme ruler of the Universe after offering up our prayers at the public service of the Church then it would be proper to call in human aid, and concert such meassures as Wisdom & prudence dictate. Could not this have been done at any other hour than the One allotted to the Service of God?

the Solomn engagements I entered into at my Ordination, the solomne passage addressed to the ministers of the Gospel 3rd Chap of the Prophet Ezekiel is so awfully striking! (17 Verse to the 21st) as to need no Comment.

I hope therefore, attention will be paid, to this letter, & that in any future call of the Militia, the time may be so fixed as not to interfere with Divine Service.

I am Sir Y^rs &c

Endorsed: Aug^t 10^h 1807 The Reverend Richard Pollard to Jn^o Askin Rec^d & Answ^d same day

REV. RICHARD POLLARD REBUKED

August 10th 1807

Reverend Sir I have just received Your Letter by James I suppose wrote to day. All mankind by Your own Doctrine is Subject to error so is John Askin on several occasions on the present it falls to the Lot of the Reverend Richard Pollard of which I will endeavour to convince him when we meet and if I should fail I will at least convince any Man of clear understanding. for the present I have only time to say I respect all religion where the Serving of God is the intention and as all old acquaintances I have a Friendship for M^r Pollard though he feels warmer in his Expressions than some others of the Gown would on such an occasion

I am Dear Sir Yours truly

Endorsed: August 10th 1807 John Askin Senior to Reverend Richard Pollard at Sandwich (Copp)

LIVING CONDITIONS AT ST. JOSEPH

S^t Joseph's 10th Aug^t 1807

Dear Father, I wrote you per Cap^t Cowan & sent per him two Patents one belonging to you, the other thro a Mistake for I intended sending the present patent of Lands sold Pattinson & by no means my Patent of the Toun Lot in Sandwich. Youll please deliver the patent to Pattinson for his 600 Acres of Land & keep my Lot patent untill Madelaine goes down which will be next year to visit you all Cap^{tn} Burbank promises to bring up my Hogs which were left at Amherstburg they Consist of Seven in Number

provided Mr M^cIntoshe's leave can be Obtained for the same Burbank ought to have his leave before he goes to Fort Erie so that he might ship them *en passant*, returning from F. Erie its probable he or Fearson would bring up the Yew & lamb which Johnney left behind. As I can not write Richardson owing to Burbanks short stay, if you see him tell him & William Duff that I expect they will send me all my things. I have no working Horse, Chairs to sit, Bedsteads, Cart Wheels, Flour, Hogs, slays or Carriole tho my store House is furnished with all those things I really wish that my Blk mare may be sent in preferance to the Pacing Horse she will be of service to me in Hawling Wood & answer extremely well as a breeding Mare. Madelaine informs me that she Can not write by this Vessel to her Mother as Burbank is in waiting, but will be fully prepared for the next & at the same time send Pine & spruce plants, likewise sand Cherry plants. I have not heard from James since my departure I hope he is well employed which will make up any neglect or difficiency in Corresponding Madelaine & the Children join me in fervent prayers for Your & my dear Mother's hea[l]th (Our Love to my Brothers Sisters & Relations & Respects to all Acquaintancees) in Haste I remain My Dear Father

Your dutiful Son

Jn^o Askin J^r

John Askin Esq^r Strabane

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane P^r Captⁿ Burbank w^h a Parcel

Endorsed: S^t Joseph Aug^t 10^h 1807 Jn^o Askin Jun^r to Jn^o Askin Senior recv^d y^e 17^h and Answ^d 18^h Aug^t

ORDER FOR MILITIA MUSTER

Sandwich 12th August 1807

You will be pleased to order your Battalion out on Sunday next at 12 oclock before the Church of L'Assumption to be reviewed & Exercised, as you could not do it last Sunday being too bad a day for that purpose

I have the honor to be Sir Your Humble Serv^t

F. Baby

Depy L^t Cy of Essex

Col Askin

Addressed: H. M. S. Col. Askin Com^{dt} Sandwich

Endorsed: Sandwich Aug^t 12 1807 Franc^{is} Baby Esq^r to
Jn^o Askin Rec^d from William Doughty [illegible] 8 oClock
[illegible] night

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR IN DETROIT²³

Strabane August 18^h 1807

Dear Charles, The *Camden* just going past furnishes me with an opportunity of writing You, the only one I have had for a long time past. for that reason I will begin by assuring you that all the Family are well, which Im sure will be pleasing to You. From the appearance of War between Great Britain & the Americans,²⁴ Allice is determined to go to Vermont, where she will stay untill the difference is made up which now subsists. At Detroit they are making great preparations. The Town of Detroit is Picketed in from the Water Side untill it joins Fort Lernoult A Company of Negroes mounting Guard, The Cavalry Patrolling every night, Batries Erecting along the Settlement, and the Militia called out frequently.

We are very Busy about Militia Duty, although in very bad Order If there are not some Alterations made in the Militia Laws, I entertain little hopes of seeing them better Diciplined even in the course of Twenty Years. Many of the most respectable Gentlemen here, are very anxious that part of the Militia should be Embodied.

Duncan, Robins & Dedines Familyly beg to be remembered to You. Doctor Richardson begs to assure you of his Sincere wishes for your prosperity. I have to finish & I remain Dear Charles

Your Affectinate Brother

James Askin

²³ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

²⁴ The attack of the *Leopard* upon the U. S. ship *Chesapeake*, June 22, 1807, had intensified the ill-feeling of the Americans toward Great Britain.

Mr Charles Askin at Queenston.

Addressed: Mr Charles Askin at Queenston.

Endorsed: Amherstburgh 18th Aug^t 1807 Mr James Askin to Ch^s Askin.

FEAR OF WAR WITH UNITED STATES

Queenston Aug^t the 24th 1807

Dear Father, I duly received your kind favours of the 17th and 27th Ult^o which I beg you will excuse me for not answering sooner. The paper you required of Mr W^m Dickson I am told was sent to you some time since; He is now in Lower Canada but before he left this he wrote to you, he told me.

Mr Todd got down to Montreal in four days from this. since his arrival there, he has wrote to Mr Dickson. he appears to be very apprehensive of a War, as they seem all to be there. I have been favoured with a letter from him also, dated at Kingston in which he offers to do any thing he can to serve me.

Mr Ogelvie has appointed W^m & Mr Tho^s Clark his attorneys for the late Mr Robertson's bussiness. W^m was so pressed by him when he was down to give him some statement of the debts, lands &^{ca} that we made one out after his return here, from memory partly as W^m mentioned to him.

I thank you kindly for the company you have given me I believe it a pretty good one. I would like to have my Commission as Cap^t if you can conveniently send it; as it may be of use to me here, in case of the Militia being called out: which there is not the least appearance of yet. the people about this seem to be much easier about the War than at Detroit or in Lower Canada, either; although some small depredations have been committed between this and Niagara by some vagabonds not known, from the other side, who came over and killed a bull & some sheep at night, belonging to some farmers. Vessels from Oswego still come here, there is one now lyeing at the Wharf; they kept away a short time as the Cap^{ts} of them had been told they would be seized.

I shall send this by a Military express which goes by land to Amherstburgh and will leave this to day, and with it I will also send a letter to you from Halifax which appears to be from Colonel Meredith.

M^{rs} Powell has lately heard from Judge Powell; his letters are from Madrid where he had gone to endeavour to get his son liberated, which he was then in great hopes of succeeding in.

We expect M^r Hamilton home in ten days. his last letter was dated at Schenectady on his way home. M^r Clark's returned; he took a large quantity of flour down most of which he sold; and that at seven & a half dollars, barrel.

Please to give my kind love to my Dear Mother, my Brothers & Sisters. that you may all enjoy health, Dear Father are the constant prayers of

Your dutifull & Affectionate Son

Charles Askin

John Askin Senior Esq^r Strabane Sandwich

Addressed: John Askin Senior Esquire Strabane Sandwich.

Endorsed: Queenston Aug^t 24^h 1807 Charles Askin to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 5^h Sep^r Answ^d Sep^r 16^h

INFLUENCE OF SHAWNEE PROPHET

S^t Joseph's 1st Sept^r 1807

My Dear Father, I avail myself of the opportunity of M^r Boucherville²⁵ who leaves this tomorrow for Makina in order to embark on board of the *Adams* for Detroit. We are continually on the look out for the *Gen^t Hunter* in hopes of hearing from you & all our friends in your Quarter. This place is destitute of News since the Montreal Canoes have done plying. All the Ottawas from L'arbe au Croche adhere strickly to the Shawney Prophets advice they do not wear Hats Drink or Conjure. they intend all to Visit him this Autumn, which will occasion a great scarsity of corn at this post & Makina. The Merchants will suffer by it as they have not provided themselves with that Article Whisky &

²⁵ Probably Pierre Amable de Boucherville, for whom see *post*, 762.

Rum is a Drug. the Indians do not purchase One Gallⁿ per month. I saw upwards of 60 of them at one time together spirits, rum & whisky was offered for nothing to them if they would drink but they refused it with disdain. The Chief's reply to the officer Commanding when he offered them some of his Milk was that when they were young & had no teeth to Eat they could not get any of their Fathers milk & used to beg constantly for to suck but now that they were grown up & had good teeth they did not see why their Father should be so generous with offers of giving them some, especially as they could eat all the provisions he might give them. A number of Old men who knew you at Makina address me by [as] the Commissarys son. One of the Chimneys of the House you built at Old Makina²⁶ fell down only last Summer. Several large trees have grown upwards of a fathom in Circumference about the Garden I'm led to believe that they are Pickets which you planted for enclosure, which have taken root as they are populars they could not have grown to that Size Since you left it.

The following persons arrived this day from Makina on their way to Montreal v^z Tous^t Pothier, Campbell,²⁷ Giasson, Dav^d Mitchel J^r²⁸ Pothier & that Poor simple man J Bleakly²⁹ all Members or Partners in the South West C^o

I intend to send down as much Cedar Bark as will Cover my Farm House & Barn as soon as I can [have] them embarked I'm told they make verry good Covering far superior to any other bark. I have not seen half a Dozⁿ of white fish since my arrival. this is [the] most barren place I believe in the whole Western Country, Doct. Richardson praised

²⁶ On the outskirts of present-day Mackinaw City, where the fort and garrison were located during the period of Askin's residence there.

²⁷ John Campbell of Prairie du Chien, for whom see *post*, 608.

²⁸ One of the sons of Dr. David Mitchell, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 85.

²⁹ Josiah Bleakley was located at Mackinac as early as 1783, when he was serving as government Indian storekeeper and clerk. A letter of June 22, 1799 (ms. in B. H. Coll.), shows that he was then involved as a creditor in the tangled affairs of Clamorgan, Loisel and Co. of St. Louis. In 1805 he signed a petition of Montreal merchants protesting against restrictions upon British subjects trading within the territory of the United States; and in 1808 he was a member of the fur-trade brigade belonging to the Mackinac Company which was seized by the American government at Fort Niagara. In 1814 he signed an invoice in Montreal. Further record of his career has not been found. Data derived from documents in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*, and sketch in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 275-76.

this place on Account of Ducks Rabbits Hares & pheasants but they must have all been eat by him, for I have not cast my eyes on any yet.

Madelaine and the Children are well. She presents her love to you & my Dear Mother. Please assure M^r & M^{rs} Barthe of our best wishes for their welfare & family & hope they have not been visited by the fever this year. Accept my sincere wishes for your & my Dear Mothers Health My love to my Brothers & Sisters

I remain Dear Father Y^r Dutiful Son

Jn^o Askin J^r

Jn^o Askin J^r [Senior] Esq^r Sandwich

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Strabane Near Sandwich
Hon^d by M^r Boucherville

Endorsed: S^t Josephes Sep^t 1st 1807 Jn^o Askin Jun^r to
Jn^o Askin Senior Rec^d y^e 17th and Answ^d y^e 25^h Oct^r

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR IN DETROIT

Strabane Sep^t 4^h 1807

My Dear Friend. Your mighty kind Letter dated at Queenston 25th July last came to hand on the 21 of last Month and I do assure you it was a great Mortification to me not being able to attend to your Friendly Appointment and taking so good and Worthy a Man as M^r Frobisher by the Hand, but as Voyages agrees with You and not with me, why my Dear Sir, not come this length next Summer if the Country should get into a settled state which I hope and believe will be the Case at present preparations are still making for War, though nothing offensive committed as yet against us however our run Away Negroes have had Arms given them & Mount Guard I was for a certain time also kept busy endeavouring to get the Militia into some Order, but our Laws gives so little power [to call] them out on certain occasions that not much has been done and they now do no more Duty. Our Neighbours on the Contrary have their Militia constantly out, I think not less in General than once a Week and sometimes oftener. they are realy well disciplined and you must think it grieves me much who is Colonel not to have it in my Power to do as much as I

believe our Men as good and probably as numerous I have not been on the other side for these five or Six Weeks past or hardly any of the Merchants all intercourse between us is at a stand therefore untill the present disturbance is at blows Over. I cannot get anything done at Detro[it] Towards its commencement I wrote M^r Brush two or three times relative to Your and M^r M^cGill matters but I got no Answer, Oweing as I believe to his being Taxed with a Correspondence relative to the Public, if he wrote me, and as there is great Party Work on the other Side, I believe some of them Stick at nothing in Order to injure the opposite party and there are Daily representations going forward from one to the other to the President of the United States, So far as I can learn. I hope a favourable change may soon take place.

The present Law relative to Claims to the Confirmation of Lands on the other Side, thus, if you or even a Citizen of the United States claimed one hundred Tracts only [one] would be confirmed and that provided it does not exceed 650 Acres but if its only 10 its all the same you may make your Choice however the Law does not say that you will or willnot loose the other Lands you may or rather have claimed. the Law seems intended to settle some old French Inhabitants who have only a Farm each. The lands out of the Boundaries of those purchased by the Americans from the Indians are not in a worse situation than those within. Commodore Grant's place at Gross Point is of the former, but whats meant is that The American Government cannot give Deeds for Lands they never purchased of the Indians. they have lately endeavoured to make these purchases and more, but the Indians say they have cheated them out of their Lands and payment also, and that they will not sell them any more.³⁰

³⁰ The manuscript is a rough copy in the hand of Askin's son, of a letter by Askin to Isaac Todd. The latter portion of it, dealing with various unrelated subjects, is not printed here.

CONDITIONS AT ST. JOSEPH³¹St Joseph's 8^h Sept 1807

My Dear Father Your favours of the 18th & 21st of Aug^t came to hand. after looking over my Desk I found the Patent of my Town Lot. therefore am sorry to have given you any trouble about it. I'm rather reconciled to my situation I have a Number of Cabbage plants that are verry promising & two large Turnip Patches in the Woods which will be verry serviceable or agreeable with some of the Kings Own this Winter. my Sellery will do very well & Potatoes I will have an abundant Crop being a Purchase from a Soldier who left this on my arrival.

The appearance of Rupture with America will blow over I hope shortly. the Americans generally make great noise & stick at trifles. they are constantly in Alarm either by an Indian War or at the least shadow of Bands of Indians they imagine their heads in danger of being scalped No wonder poor Devils they have reason to fear the Indians in particular from the latters Cruelty to them. We entertain hopes that all differances will be amicably settled at home before the Winter is over. Its Certain that the Indians in this quarter are verry quiet & are prep[aring] to visit the Shawnee prophet & by no means inclined to Hostilities. I do assure you that Johnney has not directly or indirectly sold a shillings worth except two Kegs of H[igh] Wines which belonged to Duff. in short its well known that I had no goods whatever except my stores of Flour & 4 Barr^{ls} of Pork two of the latter entirely Tainted and good for Nothing the Whole of my flour is in the Kings Store except a Barr^l I gave to get my House plastered. As to Johnney he brought up his Trunck with his wear^s apparel only therefore those who have endeavoured to spread that report must have done it thro malice. So far from Trading M^r R^t Dickson was to have taken him as a Clerk to keep the S. W. C^o shop if the C^o had not been already provided with one. Col. Claus came in the same Vessel with him & M^r Selby & knows verry well that he had not a shillings worth. I spoke to Col. Claus to intercede in getting him appointed Commissary. his answer was that he would have been verry

³¹ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

happy to have Served me on that head but that the appointment came from the Commander in Chief of the forces in lower Canada & not thro the Governor & stated it would be proper for me to apply thro friends below for it. It was never my Intentions that he should commence Trade pennyless & especially when under my Roof. As the Regiment is to be relieved if application was made by persons well acquainted With the Commander in Chief of the forces I'm persuaded he would be appointed, but it certainly [is] being troublesome to worthy persons who have done already a great deal for me. I will leave you to judge of the propriety of applying. I return you thanks for your kind attention respecting the Nails & sugar I rec^d my own in good time Doct^r Richardson has been verry attentive & obliging & thro him W^m Duff & Cap^t Hall I have got almost all my little property up. The Mare is the only thing I want to hawl my wood this winter. the Horse Johnny bro^t is too young to render any service. Cap^t Burbank promised to bring the Mare or Horse provided My Friends could obtain M^r M^cIntoshes leave before the Vessel would be ready to return to this. B. stated that there was some risk in bringing live stock on Deck at the Autumn season, but I'm willing to run the Risk for should he bring [the horse to] me it will save me £18 or 20 H^x C^v It would have afforded Madelaine & myself pleasure had you accepted her Offer We dont want money It [is] our wish to pay our debts & be serviceable to those who are so Dear to Us. Should it happen at any time that you want money for any Purpose apply to Cap^t Mills & he will give you what you may require. I entertain hopes of being able to do something as soon as I have paid off the People below. Madelaine & myself Returns thanks to my Dear Mother for the plants which came to hand in good order. She sends per the *Hunter* a Pine Tree & spruce Tree in kegs they seem to have taken root. Its fortunate that M^r Badishon³² has not sent the Geese for I should have been Necessitated to have paid him in Money having been able only to purchase a Sufficiency of sugar for ourselves to Wit a C^{wt} Since the cold winds have set in we fare

32. Anthony Labadie dit Badichon, for whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 46.

much better we get Ducks & pheasants twice a Week on an average I cannot complain & will do exceeding well in the eating way. I should be highly pleased to get some of Brushes Cyder especially the Barr^l of Old Cyder he gave me previous to my departure. I find he never sent it to Pattensons as he promised. M^r Tallman is to send me Onions & a few Apples but having no Barr^{ls} my Friend M^oKay promised to send two or three empty flour Casks over to them I should be happy If he was reminded of it as I'm afraid I will not be able to write him by this Opportunity. Madalaine & Johnny Joins me in fervant prayers for your Hea[^l]th & prosperity Love to my Sisters & Brothers I remain D^r Father

Y^r Dutifal Son

Jn^o Askin J^r

Madelaine was writing to Madelaine Richardson & says that she intends writing to my Dear Mother by this Vessel. I entertain hopes of being able to send you down good white fish having engaged all I may want from the Sault fishermen. They will not be caught or taken by them before the 1st of Oct. should the *Hunter* return to this before that time Its probable the *Caledonea* will be able to take what I may be able to procure whilst she remains at S^t Marys.

Endorsed: S^t Josephs Sep^r 8^h 1807 Jn^o Askin Jun^r to Jn^o Askin Senior recv^d the 14th and Answ^d y^o 5^h Oct^r

FRENCH AND INDIANS' DISLIKE OF AMERICANS

Montreal 1st Octb^r 1807

My dear Sir I had the pleasure of writing You from Queenstown, and since My Return here I Lately reci'd your favor of the 13th Augst. we are Still in doubt about the event of peace or Warr with our Neighbours I sincerely hope for peace among other evils I dread the consequences of the Indians distroying the Defensles Inhabitants on the Frontiers, but the Americans has themselves to blame that neither Indians nor the Inhabitants of Detroit St Lewis &^{ca} like them as they unjustly want to deprive them of lands that the Latter have been in possession for Many Years and sanctioned by French English & Spaniards, and

the Lands they want to take from us has paid great Rent to French & English & even taxes to themselves. I see a Letter to M^r M^oGill (who is now at Quebec) saying you might be able to sell part of the Lots on your side but no Money, in which case he thinks with me its better to keep them. I hope soon to hear you have secured And^w Todds Debt & if you can send me any thing it will be very Acceptable

God Bless You & believe me D^r Askin

Yours Sincerely
Isaac Todd

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r near Sandwich Detroit

Endorsed: Montreal Oct^r 1st 1807 Isaac Todd Esq^r to
Jn^o Askin Rec^d y^e 23^d Nov^r Answ^d y^e 4 Jan^y 1808

FROM MADELAINE ASKIN TO MRS. JOHN ASKIN

St. Joseph octobre 13 1807

Ma tres Cher mere Jai seulement le temp de vous dire que nous nous partons tous bien et en meme temp je vous prie dencepter un petti macaque de sucre que je vous envoy Je suis mortifié que sa n'est pas a mon pouvoir de vous envoyer un plus gros. mes jesper que jaurai le plesir de me revenger a praintemp prochain je vous envoy aussi une chale c'est le seul grand que jai put acheter icite. Je suis mortifié que je nait pas de voisseau pour vous envoyer plus datocas peutêtre dicite a ce que les autres barque arrive jen trouveré un et pour lors jaurait le plésir de vous envoyez davantage. Je vous envoy trois ou quatre pome dans un petti macaque se sont de votre semenee au vieux fort de Mackinac et ont etté transplanté au nouveau fort chez Docteur Mitchel et il mont etté presente par sa fille M^d Crawford qui est resident icite aprésent elle paroît faire une tres aimable Dame elle est pres daccouché Je me propose danavoir bien soins afin de repeyez les Intentions que sont pere a heu pour Johny le temp quil a étté prisonné il est seulement revenu que de cette Nuit il se porte bien et vous présent ses amitié ainssi qua son grand pere les enfant se joigne amoi pour vous assurer de leur tendres amitié.

Adieu ma cher mere présenté mes tendres amitié a mon cher pere et Nelly James et Allexandre présenté sil vous plait mes respec aux M^r Barthe et Madame jesper quil jouise du'une du'une senté. Adieu encore une fois votres tendres et affectionné fille

Madelaine Askin

P. S. Jenvoye un petti macaque de sucre a ma cher Nelly Je suis mortifié que je n'est pas le ten de lui ecrire car la barque part dans l'enstant M. Askin

Addressed: M^{rs} Askin Strabane P^r Capt. Burbank

Translation

St. Joseph, October 13, 1807

My dearest Mother: I have only time to tell you that we are all well and at the same time beg your acceptance of a little mocock of sugar that I am sending you. I am sorry I could not send a bigger one, but hope to have the pleasure of making up for it this next spring. I am also sending you a shawl, the only large one I could buy here. I am sorry I have no vessel in which to send you some more cranberries. Perhaps between now and the time when the other boats come I shall find one and by then I shall have the pleasure of sending you more. I send you three or four apples in a small mocock. They are from trees of which you planted the seeds at old Fort Mackinac, transplanted at the new fort on Dr. Mitchell's place and were given to me by his daughter, Mrs. Crawford,³³ who lives here now. She seems to be a lovable woman. She will soon be confined. I intend to take every means possible to repay what her father did for Johnny the time he was imprisoned. He only happened to come tonight. He is well and sends his love to you and to his grandfather. The children join me

³³ Lewis Crawford was a prominent trader in the Northwest in the decade prior to the War of 1812. He seems to have remained at St. Joseph until the summer of 1812, when he led the contingent of Canadian volunteers in the expedition against Mackinac which resulted in the surrender of that place to the British. Thereafter, until the end of the war, Mackinac seems to have been Crawford's center of operations. He held the rank of major in the volunteer company, and in this capacity assisted in the defeat of the American attack on Mackinac, Aug. 4, 1814. A letter of John Askin Jr. from Drummond Island, Feb. 8, 1816, speaks of Crawford as having "left the country." In 1806, he married Jessie, daughter of Dr. David Mitchell, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 85. Information adapted from *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*; and Irving, *op. cit.*

in assuring you of their loving remembrance. Adieu, my dear Mother. Give my love to my dear Father and to Nelly, James, and Alexander. Please give my regards to Mr. and Mrs. Barthe. I hope that they enjoy good health. Again adieu.

Your fond and affectionate daughter,

Madelaine Askin

P. S. I am sending a little mocock of sugar to my dear Nelly, and am sorry that I have no time to write to her. The boat is just leaving. M. Askin

WARLIKE MEASURES AT MACKINAC

S^t Joseph's 13th Oct 1807

My Dear Father, The *Caledonia* is just hove in sight & affords me only time to acquaint you that Johnny is a prisoner at M^cKina the [he] left this on the 4th Ins^t with M^r Chiniquy the Collector to visit L'arbe au Croche & on his return stopt'd at Makina & there was arrested by the Commandant Lieu^t Cross³⁴ [h]is reasons for Arresting them was that he suspected they went to that place to Tamper with the Indians in Order to have them in readiness in Case War declared by Great Britain. I Certainly do not believe he means to detain them long it appears that Hoffman & an Interpreter went to get information & they are expected back therefore as they are [not] Culpable of any unlawful Act, must be released Johnny does not seem uneasy therefore I expect him back shortly. If [t]he Commandant had *de quoy* I Certainly would have advised M^r Brush to prosecute him for false imprisonment, but the Information I rec^d is that he spends his pay before it becomes due I consequently must put up with it & Johnny look out better another time The men I sent up to the Sault S^t Marys had not reached it before the *Caledonia* left it. therefore you'll be deprived of white fish till the *Hunter* or *Nancy* arrives. Madelaine sends a shawl to my

³⁴ Joseph Cross of Massachusetts was commissioned lieutenant in the First Artillerists and Engineers, Feb. 16, 1801. He became captain, Nov. 7, 1808, and was cashiered, May 20, 1813. The length of his service at Mackinac has not been learned. See Heitman, *Reg. U. S. A.*

Dear Mother & a Mocock of Cramberries. I send you a Couple of Quires of writing paper.

I addressed several small Mococks of sugar to your care to be sent to Madelaines Relations. If the *Hunter* has not left your place let me know if the Salmon I sent were good I'm rather apprehensive they will not keep from what I experienced with some I kept. The Indians bring in vast Quantities but all speared. Great appearances of a plentiful Crop of Potatoes on this Island, but no Onions beats, parsnip sellery or Carrots. these Vegetables we can not do without verry well. great abundance of Duck at present & verry fine Weather apparently (the Indian Summer [so] call'd at Detroit) Madelain is in good Health & the Children, she is sorry that she cannot write to my Dear Mother by this Vessel but will be ready for the next In the mean time joins me in presenting our Dutiful wishes for your & my Dear Mothers Welfare & Love to Brothers & Sisters

I remain My Dear Father Your Dutiful Son

Jn^o Askin J^r

John Askin Esq^r

I send a Mocock of Cramberries for M^{rs} M^eIntosh³⁵ a^s Comp^{ts} to him & her & the family.

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Strabane p^r Cap^t Jesse Burbank

Endorsed: S^t Josephes Oct^r 13^h 1807 Jn^o Askin Jun^r to Jn^o Askin Senior Rec^d y^e 31st Answ^d 13^h Nov^r

LAND TITLES OF BRITISH SUBJECTS³⁶

Detroit le 22. Octobre 1807

Monsieur John Askin

Monsieur Vous me rendez une parfaite justice en croyant qu'une guerre imaginaire ne changera pas l'estime et l'amitié qui a existé entre nous depuis que nous nous Connoissance. Je dirai plus; une guerre r'elle ne devrait jamais produire aucun changement entre deux hommes qui

³⁵ Mrs. Angus McIntosh, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 293-94.

³⁶ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

S'estiment véritablement. C'en'est ny votre faute ny la mienne Si le gouvernement d'Angleterre et Celui de l'Amérique Sont en dispute; tôt ou tard ils S'accorderont; Si la guerre nous privait du plaisir de nous voir et de nous Visiter, ce Serait un malheur politique, et qui ne peut durer long tems, et le retour de la paix nous ferait goûter le plaisir de nous revoir après un court interval. J'ose prédire qu'il n'y aura point de guerre, malgré que les apparences Soient un peu orageuses; telle chose qui arrive votre propriété et celles de vos amis dans ce territoire ne courent aucun risque;

Vous avez sans doute lû l'acte du Congrès de la session derniere relativement aux titres des terres dans ce territoire. nos pouvoirs (comme Commissaires) sont extremement circonscrits. Par cet acte nous ne pouvons prendre Connoissance d'aucun titre, qui n'a pas été enregistré par les anciens Commissaires et qui n'était pas Cultivé et Occupé avant et depuis le premier de Juillet 1796 jusqu'au 3 Mars dernier.

Nous ne pouvons accorder cest a dire approuver qu'une Seule terre à la même personne, et le nombre d'acres ne peut en aucun Cas excéder 640.

Nous (en notre qualité de Commissaires) avons écrit au Ministre des finances et avons Soumis à Sa Consideration les trois points Suivants. Savoir—

1^{er} Que toute personne puisse obtenir une patente pour chaque terre qu'il possède, S'il peut justifier Son titre a chaque terre en conformité à l'acte du Congrès.

2^e Que toutes les fermes Sur la riviere du Detroit Soient toutes étendües à la profondeur de 80. arpents.

3^e Qu'il Soit accordé un an de plus aux propriétaires pour entrer leurs titres au bureau des terres.

Nous avons de tres fortes raisons de croire que la Congrès accordera ces trois points que nous considerons comme essentiels à la prospérité de ce territoire, et sans lesquels la moitié de nos Habitants Seraient ruinés.

Dans quelqu' autre moment J'aurai le plaisir de vous donner quelqu' autre information; dans cet instant la cour Supreme Siége et prend tout mon tems.

permettez moi de vous renouveler les Sentiments d'estime,
d'amitié et de respect avec lesquels j'ai l'honneur d'être
Monsieur

Votre très humble Serviteur

Peter Audrain

Veillez présenter mes respects à Mad^e Askin.

Addressed: John Askin, Esquire Straban

Endorsed: Detroit Oct^r 22^d 1807 Peter Audrain Esq^r
to Jn^o Askin recv^d same day Answ^d y^e 14^h Dec^r

Translation

Detroit, October 22, 1807

Mr. John Askin

Sir: You understand my sentiments perfectly in thinking that an imaginary war will not change the esteem and friendship that has existed between us from our first acquaintance. I would say further, real war should never make any difference to men who truly respect each other. It is not your fault, nor mine, if the governments of England and America are at variance. Sooner or later they will come to an amicable agreement. If war should deprive us of the pleasure of seeing each other and of social intercourse, it would be a political misfortune, of brief duration, and the return of peace would renew our mutual pleasure in seeing each other, after such an interruption. I venture to predict that there will be no war, in spite of the present somewhat stormy outlook. Whatever happens, you and your friends in this territory are secure with respect to your property.

You have doubtless read the act of Congress of last session relative to land titles in this territory. Our power, as commissioners, is extremely limited. By that act we may not confirm a title that has not been recorded by the former board of commissioners, nor in the case of land not having been under cultivation and occupied before and since July 1, 1796, up to March 3 last.

We may not grant, that is to say, sanction, the grant of more than one tract to an individual, and the number of acres must not exceed 640.

We, as the Board of Commissioners, have written to the Secretary of the Treasury, submitting to his consideration the three points following, viz:

1st That all persons may obtain patents for each tract owned providing the title to each tract can be proved in conformity with the act of Congress.

2nd That all farms fronting on the Detroit River may be extended to a depth of 80 arpents.

3rd That a further extension of one year may be allowed to landholders in which to enter their titles at the Land Office.

We have every reason to believe that Congress will accede to these three points as we think them essential to the prosperity of this territory and without which one-half of the inhabitants will be ruined.

Some other time I shall give myself the pleasure of further information for you. At this moment the Supreme Court is in session and takes all my time.

Permit me to express anew the sentiments of esteem, friendship, and respect with which I have the honor to remain, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

Peter Audrain

Kindly present my compliments to Mrs. Askin.

INDEBTEDNESS OF JOHN ASKIN

Nov^r 3^d 1807

Dear sir I was favoured with Your Letter of the 31st last Month the same day. Had I not been disapointed in one payment of Near 1100 Dollars, and many Others for less Sums, I would most Asuredly have paid you my Note with Interest before this, but at present I have neither Money nor Bills. I proposed and still do selling my Negro nam^d Ben in Order to pay you, & for that purpose offered him to M^r May, or if you will purchase him I will give him at a low Rate.

I have not seen M^r Brush for Above these three months, nor heard from him but seldom. Alise said he talked of coming Over Yesterday. I therefore Expect to see him some

day this Week and will then do all I can to procure payment for you, though I fear he cannot spare Money from himself. I will not neglect any Means in my power to make your payment.

In the mean time I remain Dear Sir &^{ca}
M^r James Fraser at Detroit

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r &c &c &c near Sandwich³⁷
W. Halton

Endorsed: Nov^r 3^d 1807 Jn^o Askin to M^r Jm^s Fraser at
Detroit Copy

INDEBTEDNESS OF JOHN ASKIN

Detroit 10th Nov^r 1807

Dear Sir I have had the pleasure of receiving your kind favour of the 3^d Instant & am sorry to find it is not in your power at present to settle the matter you assumed for Cap^t Currey in 1805. however in order to accommodate you, I will wait with pleasure untill next Spring if you choose.

With regard to the business of the sale of your Negro Man Ben, I wish with all my heart you may succeed in the sale, but I am afraid the times are too critical to risk much in that way; & as the question is not yet known by the general Court, I believe the Ideas of the Government of the United States are not much in favour of Slavery. If you was coming over yourself, or perhaps if you was to get M^r Brush to speak to M^r May probably he might purchase Ben I sent you, % your Son M^r Alex^r Two or Three English News papers of the latest date for June of this year in hopes to afford you a little amusement. when you have done with them please send them back & I will send you a few more for May % Alex^r

I am Dear Sir With Great Esteem Yours Sincerely

Ja^s Fraser

P.S. I will be happy of a line from you when at leisure,
J. F.

John Askin Sen^r Esq^r

³⁷ The address is evidently an error of the copyist.

Addressed: John Askin Sen^r Esquire Sandwich

Endorsed: Detroit Nov^r 10th 1807 M^r James Fraser to
Jn^o Askin Rec^d y^e 12 & Answ^d 13th

AFFAIRS AT ST. JOSEPH³⁸

St Joseph's 11th Nov^r 1807

My Dear Father, The *Nancy* has just made her appearance which is rather unexpected. that's to say I entertained hopes of having time to write you a long letter before she reached this having a great deal to write you, but unfortunately my Office of St. Keeper has kept me constantly occupied day & night the latter in making out the necessary Requisitions & [the] former in issueing. I have Cloathed 300 persons within these three days past. I have hardly time to take my meals in comfort. Per Capt Mills you'll receive a Barr^l of white fish for yourself One for M^r Peltiers & one for M^r Brush I entertain hopes you'll find them good You'll please Pick out the largest Barr^l for yourself I understand that Cap^t Mills is to unload part of his fish at M^r M^eIntoshes if so M^r Brush & M^r Peltier may be put in store untill they send for them, should you find it inconvenient to have them taken to your place. Madelaine has been occupied in attending M^{rs} Crawford Daughter to Doct Mitchel who has been delivered of twins & the Infants died a few days after they were born & M^{rs} Crawford still verry unwell, which prevented her from finishing a Dozⁿ of *Torchons*³⁹ for your kitchen wrappers &c but they will be sent early in the spring. should the Kings Vessel pass near your place & that you have Notice I should be happy to get a Dozⁿ or less of Apple Tree plants the size of half an inch in diameter or more. The Roots may be put in a small keg pressed together & filled w^h earth & the limbs twisted in straw to prevent their receiving any injury. I would rather have few but good stout plants. They can be taken from those that My D^r Brother Charles gave me. I dare say Cap^t Fearson or Burbank will take a few astern of their Vessel, the roots well tied or wrapt in Course linnen

³⁸ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

³⁹ Dish cloths.

& some earth in it to prevent them going to decay or getting dried. We unfortunately lost all our plant[s] of the tree onion. they were all pulled up by Capt Derenzies⁴⁰ men after Capt True⁴¹ left this by mistake & left out in a frosty night by which means there were all frozen & un-serviceable a few Echallots & Garlic would be very acceptable. you'll undoubtedly think I'm a great beggar No wonder I have so many Indians about me Continually who are in the same habit, that I'm become a perfect Indian in that way. I'm afraid Madelaine will not be able to write my Dear Mother for Capt M. finds the season so far advanced that he will give us hardly time to write. I send an Indian sack full of Cramberry for Alice which is all I could procure for the present.

Madelaine & the Children joins me prayers for your & My Dear Mothers Health & welfare. Our Love to my Brothers & sisters. Comp^{ts} to M^r & M^{rs} Barthe & Louison

I remain My Dear Father Your Dutiful Son

Jn^o Askin Jr

John Askin Esq^r Strabane

If you have any influence with the Members of Parliament or any other at York to Recommend M^r Louis Crawford who is one of the partners of South West C^o & a residenter at this place to Act with me in cases unavoidable I should be happy I do assure you he is a well informed man & well educated and as good a Character as ever Trodd Terra ferma M^r Hamilton is well acquainted with him from the acquaintance I have of him I know of no better person & well inclined to do good to all his fellow Creatures.

N. B. two Barr^{ls} are headed & two unheaded Take the largest of those headed & other headed for Brush & other unheaded for M^r Pelter the fourth goes to Malden for Capt Hall I'm sorry that I could not get an other Barr^l for Richardson however I believe that Capt Mills will

⁴⁰ William Derenzy, commissioned captain in the Forty-first Regiment, June 25, 1803. In November, 1805, he was at Amherstburg, where he served on a board of inquiry into the loss of the schooner *Hope*. He was still in Canada as late as the summer of 1813, being commended by General Sheaffe for his conduct in the battle of Queenston, Oct. 13, 1812. See British army list for 1804; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*.

⁴¹ Apparently Arthur True, who was commissioned a lieutenant in the Forty-first Regiment, Feb. 2, 1796. On Aug. 6, 1809, he stood sponsor at the baptism of a child in Sandwich. See British army lists and St. John's Church Register.

be generous w^h his friends below as he has a number of Barrels. Johnny is on a fishing party but not yet ret^d.

If M^oKay⁴² can collect me the newspapers for the opening of the Navigation I will be thankfull M^r Woods of Sandwich was to have paid whatever duties were due to Government to the Receiver General at my departure. it was the am^t of the Duties he Collected that was in arrears I'm afraid he has not fulfilled his promise I'll thank you to speak to him on the subject & if unpaid hope he will discharge the same without [loss] of time & should you have any doubt of his non compliance write to M^r Allan to discharge it & let me know the amo^t to the 1st June last. I will send a draft on my agent at Montreal to repay him, tho at the same [time] it would be an extreame hardship for me to pay & M^r Woods has benefitted the whole. I have not re^d a Line from him since I left Amherstburg on any subject whatever.

Capt Cowan or Capt Elliott may be of service on the Occasion. & any advice they may deem proper to give me on that head can be left wth M^r Allan untill our Winters Courier arrives & will bring their Letter to me

Tell my Friend M^oKay that I'm afraid I will not have time to write him. I'm thankful to M^{rs} Badishon for the Apples & hope I will be able to send her something in the spring.

ESSEX MILITIA MUSTERED

Sandwich 7th Decb^r 1807

Sir Having received instructions from His Excellency the Governor, enjoining me to have the Militia under my command in readiness at the shortest notice, you will therefore be pleased to order your Battalion out on friday next the 11th instant at eleven Oclock to parade before the Church of L'Assumption which I purpose to review Muster &c &c

⁴² Probably Alexander McKay (Mackay), one of three brothers who were active in the Northwest fur trade. Alexander entered the service of the North West Company soon after its formation, and in 1804 became a partner. In 1793, he accompanied Sir Alexander MacKenzie on his famous journey of exploration across the continent to the Pacific. In 1810, he joined Astor's Pacific Fur Company. He was one of the victims of the Tonquin massacre on the Northwest Coast the following year. See Wallace, *op. cit.*

I am Sir Your most obedient Humble Servant
F. Baby
Lieut of the County of Essex

Colonel Askin

Addressed: H. M. S. Colonel Askin Commanding the
Southern Battalion of the Essex Militia

Endorsed: Sandwich Dec^r y^e 7th 1807 The L^t of the
County to Col Askin delivered by Andri La Balaine After
12 Oclock the 8th

ABSENCE FROM MILITIA MUSTER

To John Askin Esquire, Colonel Commanding the
Northern Reg^t of Essex Militia

Sir, Impressed with the Idea of our being highly censored for not appearing in time on Parade last Friday, Yet, conscious of our loyalty, and with a strong wish to appear on that day at the Muster; We sett off from this at 9 o'Clock that Morning on good Horses, but the preceding Night it having rain'd and froze towards day made the Roads so very bad, that we were nearly four hours going to Sandwich, which at other times can easily be done in two; This being the true statement of the case, We request that no wrong Impression be entertained in consequence of our not appearing at the appointed hour that day. We have also a hope that from our having done our utmost to arrive in time, You will not put us on a footing with delinquents, and exempt us from the Fine.

We remain with great regard & consideration, Sir

Your most humble Servants

A. Maisonville

Amherstburgh 14 Dec^r 1807

Capt. N.R.E.M

W^m Smith

L^t & Adj^t N R E M

Addressed: To Colonel John Askin Commanding the
Northern Reg^t of Essex Militia Strabane

Endorsed: Amhurstburgh Dec^r 14^h 1807 Cap^t Maisonville & L^t Smith to Col Askin

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

COUNTY LIEUTENANCY RESTORED TO COMMODORE GRANT

Amherstburg 4th Jan. 1808

Dear Sir My being re[e]stablished in the Lieutenancy of this County was very unexpected & of which I never dreamed, with a very friendly letter from the Lieu^t Governor expressing his Concern from being missinformed and had ordered a new Commission to be made out for me to Supersede M^r Baby.

I received a nother letter from the Chief Justice making also an apologie for the Governors Misstake and Says there is no man in the Province Sorryer for the Misstake than the Governor himself. The Governor says in his letter I must insist your accting the Lieutenancy. I received your letter of the 30th Ult^{mo} I will not be in a hurry in nominating any deputy for some time. You Colonels I think can carry on the Duty Many thanks to you & M^{rs} Askin for your kind wishes for me, have no account of M^r Charles returning. I am told that the late Lieut had a certain portion of Militia Men assembled every Sunday after the French Church come out & during the time of Service of the English Church Exerc[is]ing⁴³ You must point out Some other day than Sunday. I have the pleasure also of telling you & M^{rs} Askin that my Salary while President is received with a very Satisfactory letter from our old friend M^r Todd—but my dear Sir, the deduction of property Tax—6 per cent for geting the money by bill to this Country has almost run away with [an] astonishing portion of the Sum, but it's being an accedental God Send I must be Content

M^{rs} Grant was so glad at my being Superseded in the Lieu^{ty} that I suppose she will be displeased now Remember me Sincerely to M^{rs} Askin & family.

God bless you and them

A Grant

John Askin Esq^r

P. S. I am thanks be to my maker geting very hearty &

⁴³ On this subject, see the correspondence between Askin and Richard Pollard printed *ante*, 563-64.

strong my kind letters from M^r Todd and from [my] Wife enlivens me A. G.

Addressed: John Asking Esq^r Strabane

Endorsed: Amherstburgh Jan^y 4^h 1808 Commodore Grant to Jn^o Askin Rec^d y^e 6th.

ARTILLERY SALUTE ON QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY

Petit Cote 9th Jan^y 1808

Dear Sir I cannot account how I neglected the princpal cause of my calling upon You Yesterday, which was to learn if Your Regiment were to Parade in Sandwich on the Queens Birthday, as you did on the 4th of June last. If so I will bring up my field peice with 21 Rounds of Powder, & according to Custom fire 7 Rounds first, then a Volley from Your Regiment & then seven more Rounds from Me &ca. By which Your Regiment will give the last fire.

I am D^r Sir Yours truly

W Park

John Askin Sen^r Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Sen^r Esquire Strabane

Endorsed: Petite Cote Jan^y 9th 1808 W^m Park Esq^r to Jn^o Askin

CONDITIONS AT ST. JOSEPH⁴⁴

S^t Joseph's 13th Jan^y 1808

My Dear Brother Tho you have not thought proper to Answer my sundry favours yet I'm determined not to discontinue writing in expectation that at some time or other you will recollect that I'm your Brother & then deign to answer my Epistle's. For my part I cannot think you can make a reasonable apology for not writing. the Vessels ply continually during the summer Months & every Winter an Express leaves this in Jan^y for York & returns from York thats to say leaves York about the 1st of Feb^y for this. Should you condescend to write After this Winter (this being to late for you) you can address your Letters

⁴⁴ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

to the Care of M^r Dⁿ Cameron⁴⁵ or Capt Givens⁴⁶ & they will see them forwarded.

If necessary to give you some Idea of this place first its an Island Abounding W^h Rocks & not a Deer Bear, Wolf, Racoon, Moose Cariboux or Muskrat about it. a few Hares is caught & pheasants the Indians live entirely on fish. they even make their Mokasins with the skins of sturgeon & Lace their Snow shoes with the same skin & Skin the Maskelonge for the same purpose. They have Sold to the Merch^{ts} only 5 Beaver skins 20 Martins & 8 Fox skins which is the whole Amo^t of the Hunt of upwards of 120 men since the 24th of Sept last from this statement which is perfectly correct you may Judge what would become of those Poor Miserable Objects if our Generous Government was not to afford them relief.

No doubt you're all verry merry at these times as your

⁴⁵ Duncan Cameron, a native of Scotland, came to America with his parents in 1767 and located in Schenectady. During the Revolution, he sought refuge in Canada, where he soon entered the employ of the North West Company, becoming a partner in 1799. In 1785 and for many years thereafter, he was the company's agent in charge of the Nipigon district. In 1814, he was sent to Red River to checkmate the colonizing project of Lord Selkirk in that region. Much violence followed, and in 1816, the adherents of Selkirk captured Fort Gibraltar, taking Cameron prisoner and sending him to England for trial. There, however, he was released and secured damages from the Hudson's Bay Company for false imprisonment. He returned to Canada several years later and located in Williams-town, Glengarry, where, in 1824, he was elected to represent his district in the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada. In 1820, he married Margaret McLeod. The date of his death is unknown. See Wallace, *op. cit.*, and references there cited.

⁴⁶ Prior to 1791, when he enlisted in the Queen's Rangers, James Givens had acquired a knowledge of the Chippewa and Huron tongues. Upon the organization of the government of Upper Canada, he was commended by Henry Dundas, Secretary of State for Home Affairs, to Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe. From November, 1791, to November, 1802, he was a lieutenant in the Queen's Rangers, serving during the earlier portion of this period as aide to Governor Simcoe, who seems to have entertained a high estimate of his ability. Givens accompanied Simcoe on the latter's tour to Detroit in the winter of 1793, and during the following year, when Wayne's campaign was being waged, served at Detroit and on the Maumee. He was in Fort Miamis when Wayne reconnoitered that post after the Battle of Fallen Timbers, and a few weeks later expressed to Simcoe the conviction that he could have killed Wayne with his pistol.

Givens was made captain in the Rangers on Nov. 19, 1803. On Feb. 28, 1805, he was commissioned in the Fifth Regiment, and his name last appears in the army list for 1806. From the beginning of his army service, the government had utilized his knowledge of the Indians, and about the beginning of the nineteenth century, he was appointed interpreter and agent in the Indian Department. In 1816, he appears as superintendent in York, and in 1830 as superintendent, interpreter, and senior officer of the department in Upper Canada. This post he held until June, 1837, when he retired on full pay. He was with Brock at the capture of Detroit in 1812, and served throughout the war with the rank of major of Upper Canada militia. He died in Toronto in 1846. Data derived from *Simcoe Papers, passim*; *Mich. Pio. Colls., passim*; and information supplied by Francis J. Audet, Chief of Information, Public Archives of Canada, Feb. 13, 1929.

Assemblies & other mode of Amusement has commenced. Our Society is verry small being composed of Cap^t Derenzy, Capt & M^{rs} Muir M^r & M^{rs} Crawford, L^t Craddock⁴⁷ Doct^r Davis & our Family. Thanks to *God* no set of people are more sociable & united than we are, & want no medical Assistance to make us eat our Rations. The Winter has set in verry early & extreamely severe. We have from 5 to 6 feet of snow in some places, but generally 4 feet in the woods, which has prevented the hawling of fuel. The Makina C^o are making great improvements at this place. they have erected a large store House 80 by 40 feet, besides Timber for two others of the same dimentions & a dwelling House to be 120 feet by 50 & 16 feet post. M^r Louis Crawford is the agent & partner at this [place]. Madelaine Joins me in Requesting you'll present our sincere wishes to M^r & M^{rs} Dickson for their Welfare. My Respects to M^r Hamilton & my Love to Robert & his Brothers. Madelaine John & Theresse joins me in praying the Master for your Health & prosperity

I remain My Dear Brother Most Affectionately
Jn^o Askin Jr

M^r Cha^s Askin Queenston

Addressed: M^r Charles Askin Queenston

Endorsed: S^t Josephs 13th Jan^y 1808 From John Askin
Jun^r Rec^d the 10th F[']eb^y.

CONDITIONS AT ST. JOSEPH

S^t Joseph's 14th Jan^y 1808

My Dear Father, This goes by our Express to York & [I] hope it will reach you some time in [the] next Month As this Courier returns immediately to this It will be impossible for me to hear from you before the opening of the Navigation.

In my last per the *Nancy*, I gave you advice of Madelaines sending Towels of course linen to my Dear Mother. I'm sorry I deceived you, thro the Negligence of Sam the Vagabond who had taken them to the Beach with a Keg

⁴⁷ Hedges Cradock, commissioned lieutenant in the Forty-first Regiment, June 25, 1803. No record of his service in Canada has been found.

of Fish addressed to Captⁿ Whipple⁴⁸ & there left them. The keg & Bundle was brought home a few days ago by a Soldier who had taken them to the Block House not knowing to whom they appertained at that time but on enquiry found they belonged to me You'll be pleased to write to Captⁿ Whipple & inform him of the Circumstance; for he no doubt must have been verry pressing on insisting Mills to find his Fish.

The Winter set in verry early & has been verry hard We have 5 feet of snow about our houses & elsewhere about 4 feet regular from the severity of the Weather the Indians do not bring us any Rabbits pheasants or Partridges. they [the] only supply we receive from them is Trout, Maske-longe & Pickrel. I can assure you I never knew any set of poor devils so wretched & miserable as the Savages of this place. They are so far put to the Test of EO Economy that they make Moccasins of the Sturgeon & Maskelonge Skin Their Snow shoes are All laced with those skins & nothing else The Sturgeon skin appears to me to be nearly as strong as Calf skin I'm persuaded great improvement may be made on it by Tanning it properly. From the Great Scarsity of Indian Corn & other grain the Inhabitants of this place have been under the Necessity of killing all their Poultry. All the Hogs are starved to Death & it will be with great difficulty to prevent the Horned Cattle from the same fate owing to the Hay of the country which is verry bad & appears to have no substance thro [though] cut & cured in the proper season. I'm confident that 500 B^{ls} of Corn would have been sold & at any price thats to say from 14/ to 16/ P^r Bush¹. Indeed I have been offered 48/ for a Bush¹. It was verry fortunate that M^r Duff shipt a few Bush^{ls} in the *Nancy* for me, which will keep my mare, three Turkeys

⁴⁸ John Whipple was a native of Manchester, Mass., who became an ensign in the Second U. S. Infantry, July 2, 1797, and came to Detroit in the capacity of an army officer. He became a captain, April 11, 1803, and resigned from the army, Jan. 31, 1807. He was a friend of Governor Hull, and through his influence was appointed associate judge of the Territorial District Court in 1809. He was proprietor of the Mansion House from 1818 to 1824, and register of deeds from 1826 to 1830, when he was appointed keeper of the light-house at La Plaisance Bay.

On Jan. 11, 1800, Whipple married Archange Peltier, daughter of Jacques Amable Peltier and Magdelene Levasseur, who was born in Detroit, Nov. 14, 1782. They had a family of fifteen children. Data adapted from *Proc. of the Land Board of Detroit*, 211-12; Heitman, *Reg. U. S. A.*; and Denissen, *op. cit.*

2 Ducks & a Dⁿ of fowls alive & I'm certainly better off than any one here. I'm confident that this place will be overstocked next year w^t corn. The South West C^o have ordered a large Supply & I hope the poor Devils of Indians will be more industrious in their cultivation of their Corn fields & not neglect them as they did last year.

A fine fishery has been found out lately 21 Miles from this. The White fish much larger than [at] S^t Marys. 45 fills a Barr^l but unfortunately that they do not pass untill the 15th of Nov^r or thereabouts. Ill endeavour next fall to get people who understand curing them as Cod fish [are] in Order to send a Parcel down on trial.

Potatoes & fish is a good & Wholesome food for my part I eat bread at Breakfast only, & fish & potatoes at Dinner & all the family follow my example (Madelaine excepted). We are all well & hearty & have been so Since we began to feed on fish & potatoes The latter have not been in such abundance as usual. They now sell at 3/9 H^x P^r bush^l. My Servants Eat Potatoes & fish for their Dinners for Bread is not to be seen but in the Mornings only. they prefer the same to any other food.

The South West C^o are making great improvements & I understand from M^r Crawford who is one of the Partners & an intimate friend of mine, that there will be upwards of 1500 of their men at this place next spring. It will induce Adventurers to visit this I hope tho I could not with propriety recommend any one to try the experment untill the 15th of June or later.

No doubt but you have seen Chennequy for he is like the Wandering Jew, but a greater scoundrel never was on earth. In short it is not in my Power to write you a full detail of the Rascals Conduct it would require a full quire of Paper. All I can assume you is that he is an Enemy to all Mankind. previous to his departure he Sowed discord amongst the Military & the Merch^{ts} & attempted to do the same between the Merch^{ts} & me but on being called to Account he appol[o]g[iz]ed & swore Never to be guilty of the same. then he immediately went to the Command^r Officer & endeavoured to persuade him to write to the Governor

against me. fortunately for the Vagabond it was not discovered untill his departure. No Set of People are more Sociable & friendly than we are all. We generally Dine, Drink Tea & sup together Once a Week & Once in each Week all meet together & play at Cards.

Should Cap^t Trew [True] Visit you as he promised tell him We are all well & only want him to enliven our Society. The Children intend to write him at the opening of the Navigation agreeable to their promise.

I cannot recollect if you got a Power of Attorney from me for the purpose of preventing My Tenant from making away with my little Property If I have neglected it let me know & at the same time what opinion you have of his honesty &°.

Pray has M^r Woods paid the Receiver Gen^l or not I'm anxious to know as it may injure me. I intended last summer to have sent a Quantity of Cedar Bark in the spring for the purpose of Covering a Barn on my Lot, but from the experience I made of it here I do not intend sending any therefore Edwards must peel Elm Bark for that purpose. I found that Cedar Bark wants continual repairing it rends much more than the Elm.

Have the goodness to write me at the opening of the Navigation what you think respecting a War w^h our Neighbours, or if there is any proba[bil]ity of Cap^t M^oKee being superseded by Elliott. I should be happy to know these as they concern me first on Acc^t of Madelaines friend[s] & the other[s] apprehending want of fortitude on his part to sustain the shock without having recourse to—as to my own friends I know about Amherstburg I cannot trust them on this head.

Madelaine intended to write My Dear Mother but I have persuaded her to the contrary untill the water communication is open (postage of Letters being enormous). The Children are in good health & Join Madelaine & me in praying for your, My Dear Mother, Brother & Sisters hea[l]th & Happiness

I remain My Dear Father y^r dutiful Son

Jn^o Askin J^r

My most respectful Comp^{ts} to the Com^e & family & Cap^t M^eKee, Woods, M^eIntosh & all those who wish me well to wit. Duff, Richardson, Mills, M^eKay & Gilkinson

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Sandwich

Endorsed: St Josephs Jan^y 14^h 1808 Jn^o Askin Jun^r to Jn^o Askin Senior Rec^d the 24^h of Feb^r Answ^d April 18th 1808

MILITARY PREPARATIONS IN AMHERSTBURG

Amherstburg Feb^r 23^d 1808

My dear Sir I arrived here yesterday at 4 oClock P.M. Received my letters. That of the Governors approves mostly of what has been done—has no objection Stationing a detachment of Militia at Sandwich if necessary, but will not admit taken utencials from the Merchants. he hopes the barrack Store at Amherstburg will provide. he dos not confirm the nomination of Richardson, from his stay here being Local, but the matter is that the Militia law are now revising and it seems L^t & deputy of countys are left out of which I am glad so that You Colonels and Adjutants will have the business upon hand. M^r Gilkinson is approved of being Ensign & Adjutant in Your Reg^t. nothing breaths from all letters but that the americans are to go to war with France & Spain God Grant it. Poor Cap^t Hall. I am to order him immediately to Join his vessel at Fort Erie from his coming without his having a regular leave. few or no letters from Niagara. I am with very Sincere Wish for M^{rs} Askin You &^e &^e

Alex^r Grant

John Askin Esq^r

P. S. The Judicature bill has passed the lower house but its thought it will not the upper house. A. G.

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane favord M^r Bryce Wood

Endorsed: Amhurstburgh Feb^r 23^d 1808 Commodore Grant to Jn^o Askin Rec^d the 24^h & Answ^d y^e 25th.

CULTIVATION OF HEMP PROPOSED

Queenston Feb^y 25th 1808

My Dear Father I was extremely happy to receive your affectionate letter of the 27th Ult^o and 3^d Ins^t particularly as I had began to fear from having heard from you very seldom lately, that I had by some means or other incurred your displeasure.

I am not much surprised that that discontented selfish sett at Sandwich are jealous of my holding a Commission in the Militia there, while resident here. I should think it unfair myself, were they embodied and doing duty; but as that is not the case, I would think it very hard indeed if to retain my Commission, I must remain there against my interest, when I Know my Services are not required. So far from wishing to avoid doing my duty, I would be happy to have an opportunity; this I may perhaps soon have, if a report we have here, is true, that M^r Rose⁴⁹ is gone home dissatisfied. Its very well known that many officers of the Army have leave of Absence from their Regiments for a very long time, sometimes years, and draw their pay, while those who remain with it are obliged to do their duty; yet this hardship is not prevented, although there must be great complaints made about it. I suspect one person particularly who would wish me out; because he thinks to get promotion by it, for which he would do anything almost; but I despise him; and in that I am not singular for few I believe who know him; but do. My Commission is dated 10th June 1807 as Cap^t. If my services are required, I shall be ready to attend my duty, as soon as I am ordered; should they be needed you will please let me know; they cannot be I fancy but in case of a War with America, which I must know before you, as we get the News from New York much sooner than you can at Sandwich, therefore I shall be able if there should be a declaration to be up in time [to] receive my orders there.

⁴⁹ Sir George Henry Rose (1771-1855) was sent to Washington by his government in the latter part of 1807 charged with a commission to settle the difficulty growing out of the attack by the British ship *Leopard* upon the American war vessel *Chesapeake*, June 22, 1807. Rose's demands were deemed impossible by the U. S. government, and he shortly returned to England without achieving the object of his mission.

I am much afraid that flour or grain will never bear transporting from Detroit to Montreal; therefore the farmers will be obliged at last to turn their attention to something else; at present I know nothing which has any appearance of answering so well as hemp; but the preparation of it for manufacturing, requires so much labour that I believe it prevents people from cultivating it where labour is dear. The English farmers here do not seem to understand raising and curing of it, so well as I would have thought they did, and as the Canadians do not understand it at all, it will not be easy to get them to attempt it. Cap^t Gilkinson has the Model of a Machine here for breaking & hackling it, which is very simple and would not cost more than £100, if that, to go with a horse. one to go with Water would be Still simpler for it would require but two wheels the water wheel & another small one and it would require a very small quantity of water to make it go.

The hemp of this Country is generally believed to be equal to that of Russia, but its always spoiled in curing. If we could supply the Mother Country with that article, what an advantage it would be to both it, & ourselves.

I am glad of James's coming down; tho sorry of the occasion. I hope he may do well here. I had a letter from him which reached me before yours tho of a later date.

I have more to say, but I am afraid that I will miss the opportunity I have of sending this, if I do; and as there is another opportunity in a few days I shall now conclude.

M^r. Hamilton and the family are well. that you and my Dear Mother may enjoy the same blessing are the prayers of Your Dutiful & Affectionate Son

Charles Askin

John Askin Esq^r Strabane Sandwich

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston Feb^r 25 1808 Charles Askin to
Jn^o Askin Rec^d the 18 March and Answ^d

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

WAR CLOUD WANES IN DETROIT

Amherstburgh 21st March 1808

Sir from the favorable accounts from the States of America, that there is not at present nor for some months to Come; any appearance of actual hostility between them & Great Britain also that the Imbodied detachment of Militia at Detroit are dismissed for the present.

Lieu^t Colonel Grant⁵⁰ referring for the present Calling, or requiring, any Militia into this Garrison to relieve the Detachment doing duty there; the Colonel dispenses after the 25^h Ins^t having any Militia doing du[ty] till further orders. Youl pleas to dismiss the detachment lately ordered from Your Regiment, directing them to be in readiness at a short warning when called upon

I am Sir Your most Humble Servant

Alex^r Grant

L^t of the County [of] Essex

Co^l John Askin Comding the N.E. regiment of Militia

P. S. I write this before hand, waiting for Co^l Grants direction to me concerning his dispencing with requiring [any] body of Militia at present. but my dear Sir he is very tedious in all his undertaken tho a good officer A Grant

Addressed: Colonel John Askin Commanding the North East Regiment of Militia of the County of Essex A.G.

Endorsed: Orders The Lieu^t of the County to Col Askin dated at Amherstburgh March y^e 21st 1808. Rec^d same night

INDEBTEDNESS OF ELIJAH BRUSH

Detroit 25 March 1808

Dear sir I send Horracc over with some grape vines and

⁵⁰ Jasper Grant was commissioned lieutenant in the Fourth (King's Own) Regiment, April 15, 1785, and in the Seventieth Regiment, May 1, 1788. He was made captain in the Forty-first Regiment on Dec. 31, 1793; major, Sept. 22, 1798; lieutenant colonel, Sept. 25, 1803. He was serving as commandant at Amherstburg in October, 1806, and was still there as late as Sept. 15, 1808. See British army lists.

currant bushes for M^{rs} Askin. Alice desires her mother to send her a large basket that she says she has there. With respect to what M^r Todd has said it is true there is yet a ballance of 160 dollars due on the orchard with interest. I have always anticipated to pay off this debt with consider[able] further remittances with the money that I Expected to have got from Gov^r Hull he yet stands indebted to me about 1420 dollars [If] I should not be able to get any money from him before I shall be able to discharge the 160 dollars in June next perhaps before. I have some months ago forwarded the final certificate of this place which entitles me to a patent to the Sec^y of the U. S. Treasury but there are some objections made to giving it at this time the Lord only knows what they are adieu

Yours truly

E Brush

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Straban

Endorsed: March 25 1808 E Brush to Jn^o Askin relative to a Ball. due Mess^s T & McG Rec^d and Answ^d same day

FROM ROBERT HAMILTON TO JOHN ASKIN

Dear Sir That I have not been a regular Correspondent of late dus not arise I assure you from Want of Respect. But the sad Evil which befell my family in the Course of this Winter, damped my Spirits & sett me at Adversion with every exertion that was not Called for by absolute duty.⁵¹ Time with his Lenient powers weakens these unpleasant Sensations, And for most of the Evils of Life Patience is the only solid cure.

I am thankful to my freinds for the kind part they partook in my Affliction. My Young folks have suffered a sad Loss but still have we not Reason to be thankfull. God has given them good Constitutions & he has kindly enabled me to give them the opportunity of procuring [a] Good Education which I esteem the first Duty of a Parent. I hear regularly from my Boys in Schenectady They seem to do as I could wish. My Youngest is still with me, but

⁵¹ The allusion is to the death of his wife, Mary Herkimer Hamilton, on Jan. 26, 1808. On the subject of Robert Hamilton's family relations, see *B. H. R.*, I, 188.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

goes to Niagara next Month where he has already two Brothers. My little Girl will go to Kingston to her Aunts for some time, till of fitt age to go to a publick School at Quebec.

I give you a most irregular Account of my family. I come now to the oldest of Whose Marriage you perhaps have heard. Finding his Attachment so firmly fixed that neither time nor Absence had effect on it, I ceased opposition & let him have his own Way. The Girl he has married⁵² seems extremly well disposed to make him happy, & probably may be more succesful than one taken from a higher Grade. This is his Bussiness. I hope the way he is now put in, will enable him with Industry & Economy to life [live] Comfortably. Wh[ile he] Continues to Merit it, nothing in my power which can be done with Justice to myself & his Brethern Shall be Wanting to promote his Success. Charles now speaks for himself all others here Join in most affectionate Compliments to M^{rs} Askin & all your family & all our freinds

I remain D^r Sir Yours most Sincerly

R Hamilton

John Askin Esq^r

Queenston April 23 1808.

P. S. When either of the Witnesses to the Deed you gave for Land to Nathaniel Howell, John Askin Jun^r or Israel Rulland shall come to Detroit have the goodness to procure their signature to the Memorial sent up, & affidavit that they saw the Deed Executed. This is much wanted. R. H.

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Near Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston April the 23^d 1808 Rob^t Hamilton Esq^r to Jn^o Askin Rec^d y^e 3^d May Answ^d y^e 9th of Sep^t

NEWS FROM DETROIT⁵³

Sandwich 28th April 1808

Dear Brother, From a sense of Duty which I know is

⁵² For the marriage of Robert, eldest son of Robert Hamilton and Catherine Askin, see *ibid.*, 541.

⁵³ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

due, from me to you, and which I have heretofore been difficient in, I avail myself of this, opportunity of writing you, which though Late, I hope will be acceptable

* * * * 54

as I have no News just now, I may as well tell you how I have disposed of myself, as you must undoubtedly feel anxious for my welfare. From political reasons as well as private interests, I have left the other side and have been over here since Last Faul. As I never intended practising on the other Side, It would have been a folly to have continued there, And as our Law directs that a person shall study five years in the Province with an attorney, it would have been so much time lost. My Father has therefore bound me to M^r Elliott, after having tried M^r Dickson at Niagara, who had as many Clerks as he wanted. The terms of the Agreement are; that M^r Elliott is to board, Lodge, and wash me, and my Father is to clothe me. he is a good man, and Im sure will Do, what he can for me. I have been here since the Month of February, and am now very busy writing. I find that there is a great deal more to be learnt here than on the other Side, as there is more formality observed in the practice. James has become very industrious. he goes up to the Point every Day with La Roche, and stays there all Day. James is the only one left of the family, as you have undoubtedly before this time heard of our Dear Sister Nellys being married⁵⁵ poor Nelly regretted very much that you was not here. she hopes it will meet with your approbation, as I suppose it undoubtedly will, it being, the best match in the country he being of an excellent character, and in a Good situation. he is a very good husband, and for my part, I can say he is a good Brother in Law. they both beg to be remembered to you. Captain M^cKee is coming to live at [illegible] in a few days. Colonel Clause being ordered to stay here, has excited some apprehension to Captain M^cKee's being ordered to [illegible] which I hope may not be the case. There still prevails some apprehensions of a war here, with America. They seem to carry

⁵⁴ The lines omitted pertain to family details not of interest to present-day readers.

⁵⁵ Nelly (Ellen Phyllis) Askin married Richard Pattinson. For their careers, see *B. H. R.*, I, 594.

the Embargo act pretty far here for the people can't go over to the Mills. I have no more news, but that we are all well. Weddings, M^r Godfroy & Miss May⁵⁶ were married yesterday, & M^r Hickman & Miss Hull⁵⁷ are to be married today or tomorrow. I remain

Dear Brother in hopes of seeing you next month, as I understood you was coming.

Your forever affectionate Brother
Alex^r D. Askin

Addressed: M^r Charles Askin at Queenstown Favored per M^r Jones.

Endorsed: April 28th 1808 From Alex^r Askin.

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES AND WAR CLOUDS

Amherstburg 6th May 1808

My dear Sir I was favoured with Yours [a] few days Ago by the Chairmaker and would certainly give him part of the money, but cannot get any for bills. So hard to get money here that the Sailors, which is a great shame, has had no pay this five months. Reynolds Says he cannot get money whos bills are immediately answered geting any thing from here to your place is very precarious. I therefore wrote Gilkinson to use his influence with my best respects with

⁵⁶ For the Godfroy family line, see *ibid.*, 63; for the line of James May, see *ibid.*, 307. Gabriel Godfroy, son of Gabriel Jacques Godfroy and Mary Couture and grandson of Jacques Godfroy and Louisa Clotilda Chapoton, was born in Detroit on July 3, 1783. He married Elizabeth Ann, daughter of James May and Rose St. Cosme, April 27, 1808. They were the parents of fourteen children, born in the period, 1808-32. He died in 1848. Data derived from Denissen, *op. cit.*

⁵⁷ Harris Hampden Hickman married Ann Binney Hull, daughter of Governor William Hull, April 28, 1808. Hickman was a lawyer who is said to have come to Detroit from Virginia. In 1807, he served as captain in a militia battalion which was mustered for service during the pending excitement over difficulties with Great Britain. In the spring of 1810, he was appointed by the President collector of customs at Mackinac, but the Senate refused to confirm the appointment; whether he actually entered upon the duties of the office, we have not learned. He was commissioned captain in the Nineteenth U. S. Infantry, March 12, 1812, and contemporary papers in the B. H. Coll. disclose that, in December, 1814, and January, 1815, he was commandant of Detroit. He was honorably discharged from the army on June 15, 1815. A letter of William Woodbridge, Jan. 12, 1822, states that Hickman had not been a resident of Detroit for several years past, while one written by Governor Hull to Solomon Sibley, May 6, 1820, discloses that Mrs. Hickman was then living in Hollowell, Me. They were the parents of two children, Anna, born in 1809, and Sarah, born, June 19, 1811. Data derived from mss. in B. H. Coll., *passim*; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*; Heitman, *Reg. U. S. A.*; and Weygant, *Hull Family*, *passim*.

the M^oIntoshs to get [a few] pounds of paint and a gallon of oil for M^r Barth to paint the Callash if its possible to Collect all the parts together. I have had answers to my application throu the Col^s Burnet & Mathews to the Duke of York. They write me the most expedient way and best is for the recommendation Coming throu Sir J^s Henry Craig⁵⁸ Colonel Burns desires his Compliments to you. all the letters from below dreads a war. large Forces coming out from England horse and foot six or eight field officers as inspectors of the Militia in Nova Scotia & the two Canadas.

You shall hear from me from below. My affection to M^{rs} Askin.

Yours Sincerely

Alex^r Grant

John Askin, Esq

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Strabane

Endorsed: Amherstburgh May 6 1808 Commodore Grant to Jn^o Askin

LAND TITLES IN DETROIT

Montreal 1 June 1808

Dear Sir During M^r M^oGills confinement by sickness & at the time when an agent, M^r Gillespie,⁵⁹ was sent to Washington by the Mackinac Company, we wrote a Letter to M^r Erskin[e] our minister Plenipotentiary,⁶⁰ complaining

⁵⁸ Sir James Henry Craig (1748-1812) was Governor-in-Chief of Canada from 1807 to 1811. For an account of his career, see Wallace, *op. cit.*, and references there cited.

⁵⁹ George Gillespie was engaged in the Northwest trade for two decades prior to the War of 1812. He is said to have had trading establishments at Mackinac and Green Bay as early as 1794; and in 1798 was reported as "preparing to build" near the new blockhouse on St. Joseph Island. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XII, 282. In 1805, he signed a memorial of Montreal merchants to the government complaining of American restrictions upon their trade within the borders of the United States (*ibid.*, XXV, 221); and the visit to Washington here mentioned was made when he went as their spokesman to protest against restrictions imposed by the Embargo and Non-Importation acts (*ibid.*, XXV, 241). The present letter indicates that this mission was successful. See also *post*, 604. He continued his trading activities as late as 1812, after which further knowledge of him is lacking. Data derived from *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*; *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, *passim*. A few scattering Gillespie manuscripts are in the B. H. Coll.

⁶⁰ David Montague Erskine (1776-1855) was the eldest son of Thomas, first Lord Erskine. He was educated at Christ Church, Oxford; was called to the bar in 1802; and in July, 1806, was appointed minister to the United States. In July, 1799, he had married a

[torn] of Congress, which allowed no more then 640 acres of Land, being granted or confirmed to Any Individual for prior Claims on the west Side of the Detroit River. a Copy of that letter has been forwarded to you by M^r Todd, but owing to some misapprehensions, a copy of ours to you, was not kept, so that we do not recollect the date. It would seem however that our application to M^r Erskin[e] has produced some Effect, for a new law has been passed on the subject, and a news paper containing it having come to our hands, we inclose it for your information.⁶¹

You will no doubt remark that by the first section all lands granted by the French Government prior to the treaty of Paris, which we think was in October 1762, and by the British prior to the treaty of G. Britain & America 3 Sept. 1783, may be claimed up to 1 January next & certain things are to be done for that purpose and by the 4 Sect. That part of a former law which allowed of one Tract or Parcel only being granted to any one Person, is done away, and by referring to this last Act you will find all the particulars, therefore we do not subscribe them but refer you thereto. of one thing we deem it proper to advise you that, on no account will we become Purchasers of any Lands whatsoever on the American side. this relaxation by the American Government arises in our opinion (perhaps in part from our representation) chiefly from knowing, that the old French Settlers on this Side & their dependents were & could not be otherwise than highly displeased over the original Grants to their ancestors being set at naught & at this [torn] willing to conciliate them, but be this as it may, we think it will give you an opportunity of serving yourself & us, and we are persuaded you will avail yourself of it

We are, Dear Sir Your very Ob^e Serv^{ts}

James M^cGill
Isaac Todd

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r near Sandwich Upper Canada

daughter of General John Cadwallader of Philadelphia; and as minister he was very friendly to America. Dissatisfaction with his conduct of negotiations over the Non-Intercourse Act led to his recall in 1809. See *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

⁶¹ The allusion is to the Act of April 25, 1808, 10 Cong. 1 Sess., chap. 67.

Endorsed: Montreal June 1st 1808 Isaac Todd & James McGill Esq^r to Jn^o Askin Rec^d y^o 16 & Answ^d the 17^h Aug^t

CONDITIONS AT ST. JOSEPH⁶²

St Josephs 17th June 1808

My Dear Father Your sundry favours of the 13th Nov^r 5th Feb^v & 21st April last I rec^d on the 3^d Ins^t which gave my little family universal joy to find that You, My Dear Mother & all our Relations & friends were well. May the Almighty grant a long continuance of the same to all is our Fervant Prayers.

Madelaine & myself are truly happy to find that Nelly is so well provided for I have every reason to believe that they will be a very happy couple. Please present our Sincere wishes for their welfare & prosperity.

* * * * *

In my Letters p^r the Winters Express I mentioned the favourable prospects I had of this place improving & the flattering hopes of additional Society from the large Building that the South West C^o were putting up to wit, Mess Houses, Dwelling Houses stores &c &c & the langu[a]ge held out that the Agents, Members & *commis* were to live at the post. The whole vanished at the arrival of the Agent of that C^o from Montreal. It appears that they have settled their Business w^h the President of the U. S which is that their Goods will be imported into Makina & their Furs exported to any place they please without any Molestation or interruption whatever on the part of the U. S. There is two fine stores & a Dwelling House remain at their Newly improved point: which is half a Mile distance from the Garrison There was a talk at M^r Gillispies arrival from New York of demolishing the Stores & taking them to Makina but I believe they found it would be attended with a great deal of Expen^ce.

Rum sold at 4/ per Gallon all last winter at this place

⁶² From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

⁶³ The paragraph omitted concerns the collection of certain debts due the writer.

Corn not to be had at 4/ p^r Bushel— No Linen, thread Leather Cloth, Hats Shoes or smoked Deerskins, could be had at any price. Deerskins will be plenty in a short time. Whisky, High Wines Butter & Flour a Drug all winter Whisky could not sell for more than 10/yk H. Wines 14/ to 16/yk. Butter 2/yk. Flour could not be sold at 8½ the Barr^l good Pork sells at this present time at 1/yk p^r lb.

An assortment of Dry goods consisting of Shawls Linens printed Cottons, Teas, Coffee, Spirits, flannels, Hats Stockings Shoes Leather threads, Tapes, calico^s Silk cot thread stript^d Cottons Janes, fustians, & Second Cloths to the Am^t of 5 or 600 Dollars would have sold verry well to the Soldiers, it appears that they have not spent their pay (so report says) I mention this to you (at the same time do not wish that it should be known that the Information came from me for Reasons) first that Im on a good footing w^h the S. W. C^o the 2^d that it does not look well for a person in a Department such as I'm connected w^h to have anything to say about commerce.

Since the Navigation is opened I have found out the Method of geting the Indians to kill Bears they have bro^t me Bear meat several times which was uncommon before my arrival. I cannot complain as yet for want of provisions, the Indians have furnished me w^h abundance of Ducks, fish, Beaver Meat, Hares & Pheasants. its true it has cost me a whole Barr^l of Whisky & Numbers of Loaves of Bread. However I'll be better provided for next year, having planted plenty of Potatoes, a Garden well furnished w^h Cabbage plants for the winter & great prospects of the onions I planted. I have a field of Oats which looks well & promising; Eight bushels were sowed & to tell you the truth my Horses & Cattle were nearly starved in order to save what I did for seed. Excluding of the field where the oats are another field for pasturage was fenced in by Johnny & [some] Indians it contains four Acres well inclosed w^h Cedar poles w^h posts & pins & clover & Timothy Sown in it for the Calves The Apple Tree plants have been planted out & have taken verry well. We have abundance of good Radishes every day and Spanish spinage Greens (Melons, cucumbers, carrots Beats

& Selery the grubs have entirely destroyed). I have been very unsuccessful w^h the two yews I brought w^h me they had two lambs each, & after feeding the old ones well w^h Turnips & paying great attention & attendance they all died I am again with my old stock to commence raising
De nouveaux

Brush disappointed me. he was to have sent me a Barr^l of Cyder if not two. he could as well Smuggle Cyder to our side as wine to his. If he had sent it to Makina addressed to Doc^t Mitchel & wrote the Doc^t that it was intended for me it would have been in my store House long ago. We have a method in this Quarter, unknown below how to import & export into the U. S. Per the *Nancy* youll receive a keg of Sugar marked in your Name which I send you & one keg mark'd P address'd to your Care which is intended for M^{rs} Peltier & Several things which are intended as addressed in a Bundles marked in your Name

19th M^r W^m M^oGilvery⁶⁴ & M^oKay accompany by Count Chabot arrived from Montreal yesterday M^r M^oKay informed me that Jⁿ B^{te} Cadot⁶⁵ was appointed by S^r John Johnson to be Interpreter in my stead & that M^r Todd dined w^h those Gentlemen at LaChine & was greatly displeased at S. J. J. for having taken that appointment from me. I once esteemed hopes that fortune would favour & enable me to pay my debt but Alas the Wheel is turn'd again & unless the Clerkship is added to Storekeeper I cannot live on a Dollar per day & will have to abandon this, which will be very hard after going to such expence as I have in getting my little property. I cannot comprehend the meaning of appointing a Man in my stead without notifying to me the reason, Unless that S^r John has been displeased at the L^t Gov^r having appointed me instead of

64 For the career of William McGillivray, see *B. H. R.*, I, 533-34.

65 For the Cadotte line, see *ibid.*, 52. The precise family connection of Jean Baptiste, here mentioned, has not been determined. Evidently he is the individual whom Sir James Craig, on May 11, 1808, directed Lieutenant-Governor Gore to appoint as interpreter at St. Joseph in place of Askin, whom Sir James had been informed was "not well qualified." *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXV, 247. About the end of January, 1810, Captain Thomas Dawson, commanding at St. Joseph, summarily removed Askin as storekeeper and appointed Cadotte to replace him. This action was repudiated by Governor Gore, who characterized Cadotte as unfit for the place by reason of his habits of extreme intemperance. See *ibid.*, XXIII, 84, 86.

its coming from him. No doubt you'll be able to get some Information on that head from Col Claus who is to reside below. Be pleased to get Richardson or those who are intimate w^h him to ascertain the reason. M^r Todd a wel-wisher of the family show[ed] signs of his sorrow on my occasion. He, M^r M^cGill & Richardson perhaps may be able to get the Clerkship which is 2/4 [illegible] p^r day. as the present clerk has not been here since November last & cannot subsist on that salary its probable he will not return. Madelaine joins me in fervant prayers, for Your, My dear Mother, Sisters & Brothers Health & prosperity I am My Dear Father

Y^r Dutiful son

Jn^o Askin Jr

John Askin Esq^r Strabane

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Strabane

Endorsed: recv^d Ab^t 1st July Answ^d y^e 11th

INDENTURE OF CHARLOTTE MOSES

This Indenture made at Detroit in the Territory of Michigan this twenty-fifth day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eight Between Charlotte Moses a mulatto or pawnee Girl of Detroit now of the one part and John Askin Esquire of Straben in upper Canada of the other part Witnessth that the said Charlotte for the consideration hereafter mentioned and which on the part and behalf of the said John Askin his Executors Administrators and assigns shall be observed fulfilled and Kept hath put placed and bound herselfe and by these presents Doth put place and bind herselfe to the said John Askin his Executors Administrators and assigns as his Covenant servant to serve for the Term of three years from the first Day of November next insueing the date hereof during all which time the said Charlotte her Said Master shall well and truly observe and obey. She shall not at any time absent herselfe from his said service. She Shall do him no injury or knowingly suffer any to be done by others but in all things shall behav herselfe as a good and faithfull servant ought and is obliged to do. In consideration whereof the

said John Askin for himselfe his Executors [and] Administrators Doth covnant promis and agree that at the Expiration of the said Term of three years upon condition that the said Charlotte shall behav herselfe as a good and faithfull servant ought and is obliged to Do he will liberate and discharge hir from bondage and from his said service giving unto hir hir freedom and liberty

the said John Askin will also find and provide the said Charlotte with good and sufficient diet and cloathing during the continuance of her Servitude In testimony whereof the parties to these presents have hereunto interchangeabl[y] Set their hand and affixed their seals at Detroit aforesaid the day month and year first above written

Signed sealed & Del^d In presence of

	her
	Charlotte X Moses
<i>Endorsed:</i> Charlottes Indentures	mark

JOHN CAMPBELL SLAIN

S^t Josephs 17th Aug^t 1808

My Dear Father, My Letter per the *General Hunter* was very short, owing to the Business I had on hand, which consisted of Report of Survey &c & my mind wholly taken up with the narrow escape I had of my being superseded without any reasons assigned for the same. I entertain hopes that my Enemees will let me alone after they have been so compleated frustrated in their operations. Count Chabot will I'm persuaded speak to the Governor in Chief in my behalf, thats to say he will give His Excellency an Account of my Character & abilities.

No doubt you have been informed of the unfortunate meeting between M^r Redford Crawford⁶⁶ of the Mississipi & M^r J Campbell⁶⁷ Agent of Indian Affairs for the United

⁶⁶ Redford Crawford was a brother of Lewis Crawford, for whom see *ante*, 576. Both were actively identified with the fur trade of the upper Mississippi region. For the death of Redford, see *post*, 688.

⁶⁷ John Campbell was engaged in trade on the upper Mississippi for several years prior to his appointment, in 1802, as U. S. Indian agent at Prairie du Chien. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 323.

States of the Ouisconsan. it appears a misunderstanding took place over the Bottle, a Challenge took place, they met & were prevented from accomplishing their ends by the Ma^lina Justice but agreed to meet some place along Lake Huron near or about the Detour (the place I cannot ascertain exactly) where poor Campbell received a Mortal Wound. he was brought to this [place] in a Canoe mann'd by American Soldiers, who put him ashore & immediatly returned to the American Side. the unfortunate man Died the Second day after his arrival & his Corps was taken back to Makina, agreeable to a wish he had expressed on his arrival. Redford Crawford & his second immediately went back to Makina, from the place where the Duel took place w^h his Second Robert Dickson. As its probable that M^r Crawford & Dickson will return to the Country where this mans family resides, I'm apprehensive that they will meet with a great deal of difficulty & its the general Oppinion that they will loose what property they may take in [to] that Country.

I send M^r J B^t Barthe Sen^r a Moccock of Sugar addressd to your Care One for M^{rs} Badishon w^t Madelain & my Compt^{ts}. a Moccock marked IP for M^r Peltier & a Bundle. you'll receive One Moccock Sugar a Bundle of Mats, & a Moccock of dryed Huckleberrys which you'll please accept of. The sugar is very clean I believ[e] having recived it from a Clean woman. Madelaine & the Children are well & all join me in Sincere wishes for Your & My Dear Mother[']s Health & prosperity Our Love to Charles, James, Alx^r Alice, Nelly, Brush & Pattenson. I remain My Dear Father

Your dutiful Son

Jn^o Askin Jr

Comp^{ts} to M^r L. Barthe inform him I have not forgot him but I cannot procure at present what Stone he wants for pipes.

An Indian by the Name of Kayshaymekoquan from Saging a place where the *Weasel* was lost informs me that he found an Anchor at that place & that Jⁿ Marie Bobien claimed it as yours, & rec^d it, but afterward told the Indian that it was not yours, but it had been lost by M^r L. Barthe

when commanding a Kings vessel & that it was to be ret^d to the King. this happened three years ago that Beaubien got the Anchor

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane

Endorsed: S^t Josephs Aug^t 17th 1808 Jn^o Askin Jun^r to Jn^o Askin Senior recv^d y^e 29th & Answ^d then.

AMERICAN RASCALITY DENOUNCED

Montreal 29th Sept^r 1808

John Askin Esq^r

My dear friend By the bearer M M^oGregor you will recive my Letter of the 15th his being detained gives me the opportunity of acknolegi[n]g receipt^t of your favor of the 3^d Ins^t you may remember I predicted that Smiths answering for payment was only to deceive you, and tho I will always be glad to hear from you & to know you are well, yet I am so out of patiance with your Rascally Country, and seeing that every letter only makes me regret I Ever knew it, your writing must be painfull to you as it is to me to read, for I see there is no chance of ever getting any thing for all my property that cost so much and from various disappointments I realy want it. from what you say neither Rulund nor Smith owes the Money and there it ends, and tho you dont say so directly yet I suppose all our property on the American Side is gon[e], and M^r Brush appears no better than the rest indeed I am so vexed altho I must feel the want of so much property, I never expect to hear any thing good from the Country. God Bless you

Isaac Todd

P S it realy exceeds any thing I Ever read of that a Mortgage for a Just debt, is of no use and that Lands bo^t & Registred shall be given to others, it cant be. I will not be surprised if I live until 1st Octt^r 1810 (the time M^r Brush is to pay for the property he bo^t) that he claims it as his without paying a penny principal or Interest such is my opinion from what I have experienced, that if a Man wanted my coat I would give it fearing if I went to Law he would get my shirt allso. indeed the American Govern^t is a

rascally one and calculated to screen Rogues and it seems your side is little better.

Addressed: John Askin Sen^r Esq^r Sandwich

Endorsed: Montreal Sep^r 29^t 1808 Isaac Todd Esq^r to
Jn^o Askin recv^d 7th Nov. Answ^d

DIFFICULTIES OVER LAND TITLES

Strabane October the 8th 1808

My Dear Friend, I have hardly courage to take up the pen to write you; Rascality and disappointments in what relates to your and my good friend M^r M^cGills deb[t]s, & claims as well as my own, has nearly worn me out; and if it was not for poverty & old age; I think I would gladly leave a country where I had lived So Long, but [which] is so changed for the worst; £7 4s is all I received for you since I sent you my last accounts, so far as I can recollect; and though I accounted to you for £100 for a house I sold Doctor Brown, and though he is in as good circumstances as most people at Detroit, I have as yet recieved but £5 and his account will exceed £20, so that I still lye out of about £30. money at Detroit is very scarce; and what's got seems to be laid out in Buildings. The supreme Court, has been Long sitting there and not yet finished, no End to suits, and most of them rascally ones; I often put M^r Brush in mind of what he owes you and M^r M^cGill, and as often he promises soon to make payments, but when the time comes, he finds himself without the means; he like most others is too fond of improvements. the place he bought of me is now in great order and valuable, but he would have done much better to have made it Less so, and been more regular in his payments to you. He certainly in my opinion has more true value than he owes. The G—— I think is pretty deep in his Debt, for his practice Is worth a great deal of money; he is going to his Lands near the Ohio, after Court is over; I have often advised him to sell them and pay you off. I wish he would follow my advice. he has met with no purchasers as yet, for what he bought from M^r M^cGill and you; at the time I imagine he thought to sell it out in Lots being so near the Town, but he has not

as yet disposed of one. M^r Brush is certainly a regular, industrious, sober man, and except in improvements is by no means extravagant for a man who *earns so much by his profession*.

I am quite at a Loss what steps to take relative to M^r M^cGill's and your claims to Land in the Michigan Territory. I may add more expence and yet as the Law now stands not stren[g]then the claims; constant possession & cultivation on all the tracts from July 1796 to 1807 is what the commissioners require, otherwise they can not grant certificates; now though all were possessed before 1796 very few have been constantly occupied and improved since; surely unless congress means to rob people of property for which they paid a valuable consideration; they must alter this Law, and strong representations from Montreal, and this by the Interested should be made for that purpose.

In my Letter of the 3^d & 9th September Last I mention the unpleasant issue of my suit with M^r Thomas Smith relative to the mortgage; neither my Law[y]er or self are yet determined, whether or no to apply for a new trial, the costs of this one will I suppose be £30 or £40 which with twenty pound, formerly for a non Suit is very provoking & expensive, when a man only seeks for what is clearly his right: Ruland does not deny that all that's done is only taking the security of the Land & making the Debt become his and which he is not able to pay; I have one redress yet, which is better than Israel Ruland alone; which is Ebenezer Allan⁶⁸ & Israel Rulands original note, for what was due you £128 with Interest from June 1800. Allan I believe able to pay and perhaps it would be better to sue him, for though he gave a mortgage on Lands to Ruland, & Ruland to me in order to secure that debt with something due me, Yet as he joined to invalidate the mortgage by the Testimony of his Brother; he should be made to suffer; Smith will in all probability get the Land, having bought it of Allan; dishonest men generally play tricks on each other; Smith made me some payments on Rulands Mortgage, but yet there is still due me £246 of which sum 190£ odd, should be yours; Smith & Ruland say they gave M^r Brush in part

68 Probably the individual whose career is sketched in *B. H. R.*, I, 559-60.

payment of the Mortgage, a Saddlers *note* for £100; this he positively denies, and says it was given in part payment of a Judgment he obtained agnst Ruland for a M^r Pell and granted a receipt to Ruland accordingly. however this may be I never received a penny of that £100; and M^r Brush likewise says he can not give [it] to me, as he recieved it in payment for another. I have now explained to you in the best manner I can this dmnd complicated matter and have on this subject only to add that if in the end, you should fall Short of your original sum, with Interest, I will account to you in the proportion your debt against Ruland bore to mine for what payment Smith or Ruland made on the mortgage.

Under cover herewith I send you the copy of a Claim I gave in among many others in April 1803 agreeable to Law. of this Tract I have not got one foot, nor according to the present Law will I have one, and yet I hear that certificates are granted to sundry people on & near that Tract; how this is done I can not concieve, as no people Living (my people excepted), and a M^r Connors family were at that place in 1796 which the Law requires or for Long after.⁶⁹ A Caveat I think should be entered and sent to the Secretary of the Treasury ag^{nst} giving patents on such certificates: the fair Law would be to confirm Tracts of Land purchased honestly & improved before the Americans took possession of the posts, and this is what our Government should insist on so far as it regards *British subjects*.

I believe I forgot an exchange proposed by M^r Park in May Last I now inclose it. The N^o of the Lot he wants is I think 37 between Sandwich & Malden, it has no houses or fences on it now. May health and happiness attend you, are the most sincere wishes of me and mine.

Adieu my Dear Friend

(Signed) John Askin (L. S.)

Isaac Todd Esquire

Endorsed: Copy of a Letter from John Askin Senior, a[t] Strabane to Isaac Todd Esq^r at Montreal. Dated the 8th October 1808

⁶⁹ Apparently this was Askin's purchase from the Moravians near Mount Clemens, for which see *ante*, 496-97.

APPEAL TO BRITISH MINISTER OVER LAND TITLES

Montreal 2^d Decemb^r 1808

Dear Sir The very friendly attention which you gave a letter I wrote you jointly with M^r M^cGill on the 5th March last respecting our Claims to Lands on the Michigan Teretory of the United States induces me again to trouble you on this Subject. In consequence of the Law that was passed by Congress, extending the time for producing proofs to such Lands until the 1st January 1809 we addressed our Agent John Askin Esq^r of Sandwich, advesing him to aveil himself of it and to claim all the Lands we had in that Teretory & tho he has used every endeavour & produced proofs of the Lands having been granted by the French & confirmed, or granted by the British, as appears by the Regesters, was settled & improved, and the regular purchase & Transfere from the former Owner, yet he cannot obtain the necessary Certificates from the Commiss^{rs} & writes as follows, "I am quite at a loss what steps to take relative to M^r M^cGills & your claim to Lands in the Michigan Teretory I may add more expence but (as the Commissioners Interpret the Law) not strengthen your claims. Constant possission & cultivation on all the Tracts from July 1796 to 1807 is what they require otherwise they say they cannot grant Certificates, and tho all were possessed before July 1796 few have been constantly occupied and improved since that time; but assuredly Congress means not to dispoil People of their Property for which they paid a Valuable Conclideration, the Law ought to be alt[e]red otherwise the most flagarent injustice will be done." As we were induced to make those Purchases agreeable to the inclosed State[ment], knowing that by Treaty the Property of British Subjects, were secured to them, and that they ought in Justice nor Law to be deprived of them, I should hope the Law may be alt[e]red so as to preserve the rights of Individuals & especially British Subjects by repealing so much of it, as requires, constant occupation and improvement since 1796, & by extending the period of Ulterior proof until January or June 1810 every person interested would then have time to bring such proof forward. if the Titles are fair & supportable, and that part had been improved,

and I have reason to beli[e]ve the Commissioners appointed to grant Certificates do not act to British subjects, as they ought.

I had the Honor of receiving your very friendly letter of the 13th May also that by your Brother & M^r Sterling to whom I paid every attention in my Power it will give me Pleasure to do so to any friend of yours. if your Brother is at Washington please present my best respects.

With Sentements of respect I have the Honor to be

Your Most Obed^t Humble Serv^t

Isaac Todd

His Excellency The Hon^{bl} D. M. Erskine His Brita^e Majes-
tys Minister Plenepotentiary Washington