

SECTION IX

LETTERS AND PAPERS, 1812

MILITARY PREPARATIONS IN YORK

40 Mile Creek Feby. 28th 1812

Dear Father I am now on my way home from York where I have been some time and from which place I wrote to you a few days ago. a person who I have met here on his way to Detroit gives me a favourable opportunity of writing to you which I embrace, tho I have little to say. The Legislature have done little this Session as yet and as the house is soon to be dissolved there will not be much done. A new Militia Act has passed: In every Reg^t there are to be two flank companies, to consist of one hundred men each which are to be out six days in every month for the purpose of training, untill they are perfect in their exercise. regular soldiers will be employed to drill them I believe. the house has voted £8000 to the President to be laid out in such manner as he thinks best, for having the Militia trained.

a law respecting travellers on the road meeting has also passed the house. all persons meeting in carriages or sleighs are to give half the road and after December next no one is to drive a Sleigh without Bells. M^r Nichol was committed to Gaol in York by a warrant from the Speaker of the house [of] Commons the day before I left it. this was for writing something to Major Hatton offensive to them in justification of his conduct when wrongfully accused by that House of not having accounted for Public money in his hands. its so lengthy a bussiness that I shall not enter more fully into it, as I should then not be able to give you all the particulars of it, and you will have the whole of it from the Members when they return home, which will be soon.¹

Orders have been received lately from Below to fortify York. I met the Engineer here this evening from Niagara on his way there (probably for that purpose).

¹ For an account of this affair, see Ont. Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, XIX, 10 ff.

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

Please give my love to my Dear Mother and to my
Brothers & Sisters

Your Dutiful & Affectionate Son

Charles Askin

John Askin Esq^r Strabane Sandwich

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Sandwich Fav^d by M^r
Witherall

Endorsed: 40 Miles Creek Feb^r 28^h 1812 Charles to
Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 5^h March Answ^d y^e 6^h

INJUSTICE OF LAND BOARD DECISIONS

Strabane April the 14th 1812

My Dear Friend, The only letter I received from you since you got home, was on the 24th November last, and was dated at London the 15th June; by it I was happy to find that you did not complain of bad health, and you gave hopes of returning to Canada this Spring; but I'm very sorry to learn by a Letter of M^r M^cGills dated the 14th February last, that he has no such hopes, which seems to effect his spirits much; he says you are the only one of his first acquaintances left, & now he dispairs of Miss Portius [Porteous]² living long; All his & M^{rs} M^cGills pleasure in this life seems to be at an end; how seemingly hard is this good mans Lot; yet as infinite wisdom directs all for the best, it must be so, and so he thinks it; for the more friends we lose by death or absence, the less our attachment is to this World, & the better we prepare for the next. Nothing could be a greater Loss to M^r M^cGill, than your Society; he loves you as a brother & you always brought him home dayly news, interesting and amusing which he otherwise could not have; his natural turn being, not to mix, but with a few chosen friends. He wrote me

² Mary Charlotte Porteous, daughter of John Porteous, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 144. Porteous had ten children, two of whom died before their father and one of whom (Mary Charlotte) was born after his death. McGill assumed their guardianship, and after the death of Mrs. Porteous, Mary Charlotte was taken into his home and treated like a daughter. In his will, McGill bequeathed her \$5000. She was afflicted with tuberculosis and died either before or soon after her foster father. See "The Early Years of James McGill," by E. Fabre Surveyer, in *McGill News* (supplement), September, 1929.

once his intentions respecting Madelains children, but their father marrying again, rather soon, he never since has said any thing on the subject; being pinched for about 600 Dollars, I wrote him to know if he could accomodate me with that Sum, & take Land to eaqual value in payment; his money seems so placed that he could not, but desired me to Sell half his lands in the Michigan Territory & apply this money where I wanted it; his friendship to me & family has no bounds however there is no money in or about Detroit, for purchasing Lands, or payment of Debts. all is confusion with preparations for war. I fear you & Mr McGill will not recieve next month, your pay^{mt} from Mr Brush, not that I think he would take the advantage, of the misunderstandings between the two Governments, but untill the appearance of war blows over, (if it should) I dont think he can Sell his Lands, or raise the money by other means. I wrote Mr McGill on the 30th December last, that 3 patents were arrived for you, & I fear they are all you will ever get, from your large and fair claims. there could not in my opinion be done more injustice even pointed at some of your claims, than what was shewn by the Commissioners; one instance in a large field near River Rouge, they confirmed Mr McGills claim & rejected yours, though the Surveyor offered to make oath, that they were under the same inclosure; They rejected the claims from the Wind mill Seat to the River Rouge (Mr McGills Lot excepted) Lands I have had possession of, for perhaps 20 years, before I sold them to you; I memorialled the Secretary for redress, but got none; what the Commissioners did, (though many of them glaringly partial & unjust & even remonstrated against) was confirmed or approved by Congress. The Commissioners were Mr Atwater the Secretary, Mr Audrian Recorder & Mr James Abbott. the latter seemed to do all the business & rule the others. perhaps you had some misunderstanding with him, & he took this opportunity to injure your interest. while I live, this subject, when I think of it will disturb my mind. had you been in Canada, I believe I should have been tempted, to have desired you to have bought up an obligation due by one of these Gentlemen Commissioners & thrown him in

prison for payment; as paymt for his injustice to you. The three Deeds come for you are, one for the Prairie Ronde 356 acres, another at River au Raisin for 409 & the third for the house & Lot at the Grand Marrais. These, with 3 Town Lots (for which I have got the Deeds) I fear my Good friend is all you will get, a very poor payment indeed, for all you advanced me, and remained undischarged.

I have wrote M^{rs} Meredith by this opportunity & advised her to come here; as living in England is so very expensive. I heard indirectly that you had advanced M^{rs} Meredith some money; please let me know how much that I may convey its value in Land; My Family must not deprive your Dear Daughter of her rights; Had y^r worthy friend M^r M^cGill Children or relations, I could not think of taking what he offers, nor have I said I would; I have still Lands worth more than what I owe, If they could be sold for their value, & why take his, for which there is not a readier Sale than my own. He has made no Secret of his intentions, respecting my family, in his will, as well as some others; he more than once, in Letters to me said, that as he had no blood relations alive, he would so something for his friends, & even to some, said, I must be served first. I have nothing but "poor Gratitude[^r]" to offer in paym^t of such great obligations. however unless quite reduced, which thank God is not yet the case, I can not think of being burthensome to my friends. Your property in my hands is certainly growing more valuable, & though the farm got of M^r Smith, is not not yet Sold, I expect it soon will for £300. there was £200 in cash offered, but money has been very scarce, but now there are contracts for Wood etc at Malden, with men employed at the works, which will tis thought cost above £2,000. money must get into the hands of farmers & workmen, who will lay it out, mostly for lands.

My family in general, beg me to return their most sincere thanks, for y^r kind remembrance of them. And I remain My Dear Friend your ever obliged

(Signed) John Askin

Isaac Todd Esq^r London Copy

Endorsed: Strabane April 14th 1812 Copy of a Letter to Isaac Todd, Esquire in London

WAR CLOUDS IN DETROIT

Strabane April the 28th 1812

My Dear Charles, I'm now two letters in your debt, the last of which dated the 16th Instant came to hand two days ago. It makes your mother and I happy that you do not complain of bad health, God be praised, the Family here enjoy the like great blessing.

The Militia-Law has arrived, but I have not yet seen it. indeed, unless on my children's account I have little to do with it. Except my wishes for the success of the British arms, which can only end with my last breath. I can not comprehend how a man of honour & honesty can ever change his allegiance. There are some preparations making at Detroit, and great ones at Malden for War. I hope it may not take place, yet I dread it much. The contracts at Malden for wood etc for furnishing say to repair the Garrison & make a Vessel, its thought will exceed £6,000. this will throw a Good deal of ready money into this part of the Country. Im sorry y^r brothers are so little calculated for business, otherwise I should have endeavoured to have got them, at Montreal, or Queenston, such a cargo, as I'm sure in proper hands could be turned into cash.

I was almost tempted yesterday to have purchased 50 barrells of flour at 6 dollars & draw on the Mess^{rs} Hamiltons for payment: The quality I suppose must be nearly the same as with you, for its's manufactured at M^r M^oGregors famous Mill at the River Thames, and as the freight down is only 4/ the profit would be something in theirs or your pocketts. You may Speak to them on this subject & if they will answer my Drafts, when I see an opportunity of purchasing & sending them down such articles as will immediately sell with them; they Shall have half the profits; but they must keep me regularly advised of the cash price of provisions or liquors with them, so as to enable me to know when I should buy. They may depend on my directions, not involve them or myself, in purchases to too large an amount for their purses & credit, or in buying articles, the Sale of which may be doubtfull. The inhabitants give their flour for 24/ a hundred & do not yet know that the

merchants get seven & a half dollars per barrell from Government, & these latter keep the secret by not offering the farmer more than the 24/.

* * * * *

The indians have done a good deal of mischief in different quarters of the United States. the people of Detroit, not in the Garrison, are much alarmed; Alice was here a few days ago. poor woman, She Suffers amasingly from fear, for I understand none of the Town's people will be recieved into the Garrison. Alex^r was over yesterday & says they are now taking precautions ag^{nst} Indian surprise, & therefore she is not so much alarmed. The Guns, blunderbusses etc here are all loaded & in good order; I hate to be taken prisoner & he who attempts it, if openly may lose his life; having only my children & self we can not do much, but I will try not to be surprised I advised Captⁿ M^oKee to move to Malden there is too great risk here. I believed he moved yesterday. Most of Rob^t M^oDougall's property is on this side. poor Meldrum I think [is] much embarrassed. I think him in his heart [a] true british Subject. the conduct of his boys bears hard on him.

* * * * *

Y^r tender Father
(Signed) John Askin
Copy

M^r Ch^s Askin Merch^t Canbury.

Endorsed: Strabane April 2nd 1812 Copy from John Askin S^{nr} to Ch^s Askin Canbury

AMERICANS OCCUPY SANDWICH

(Copp)

Strabane July 17^h 1812

My Dear sir A few days ago I was favoured with a Letter from you dated the 29^h of April last, covering one from M^r Todd bearing date the 10^h of March: Every thing I thot necessary to Acquaint you or him with, or what I though[t] either of you wished to know, was contained in Letters wrote you both, on the 14^h of April last: with one at same time for M^{rs} Meredith, to your care.

About a week Ago, Our Militia & other force left Sandwich, and [the] same day the Americans came over to this side. Governor now General Hull, keeps up the strictest good order. the soldiers dare not take a Cherry, without the Owners consent. I waited on him two days after his arrival, and he recev^d me not only with Politeness, but Fri[e]ndship, and Exacted no oath, or promise, other than my Word, that I would not, whilest he had Possession here, meddle in the present troubles: Indeed I did not mean to do it, otherwise than giving my Advice to my Sons how they should act, in doing their duty to their King & Country. For in 1809 Lieu^t Governor Gore wrote me a Letter, saying, that from my Advanced time of life & tender constitution, he gave the Command of my Reg^t of Militia, to Col. Caldwell, who did not Accept of it: he having put Col. Elliott, (a Junior officer to both of us) first Col. I dayly see how pro[v]idence, orders all for the best. I had no duty but that of a magistrate to perform, since that time: and not having been consulted, by the president, nor he who now Commands at Malden, on any Public matter. I have not thought it my Duty to my King & country, that I should be officious in giving Information, in particular as the same could be obtained, from those in office, who from Duty & reward should do so: Therefore I have kept myself quiet and were it not for our anxiety respecting our Children & Fri[e]nds, M^{rs} Askin & I have no cause of Uneasiness, That of the fate of a Government I have allways lived under, and that my wife & Children love much excepted. However should it be our lot, to fall under any other Authority, I would not prefer any man, to the present General Hull; who I'm pretty sure will not only respect my property, but that of my Fri[e]nds, so far as he can consistan[t]ly do so, in which he will be Aided & Assisted, by the Talents & Interest of M^r Brush, (who now Commands at Detroit) and who I believe as kind & Fri[e]ndly a man, as ever was. All Our Canadian Militia to a man, being called to Malden: M^r Brush says he will send men to cut down my harvest. On the Subject of the Canadians on Our side, let me Assure you, I never have seen men shew more fidellity. they Volentered to a man, and left their Houses without a single person Except Women & Children.

however Our Enemies have taken no Advantage of their distressed situation, and up to the present time, there has not been a single life lost in this Quarter, in consequence of the War. how long this may continue, God only knows. I'm neither informed nor do I make Any Enquiry into the Views of our Govern^t here. they appear very Extrordinary to many Others as well as me. how far all may have been done in consequence of Orders I'm unacquainted with. I cant write M^r Todd at this time, or rather could have nothing [to] say, but what I now say to you, and which I'm sure you will make him Acquainted with, should this Letter reach you, & yours him. some few Canadians, but many more English of the river[?] Trench, are come of[f] from Malden without leave. I realy think the distressed state of their Families and the harvest being so very near, is the general cause. General Hull has taken no notice of their haveing taken up Arms Agns^t him. he desires them to go home & keep quiet. he wants no service from them, unless such as choose to offer themselves Volenteers. He has no Indians with him on this side, and I heard would not Employ them.

The Crops in this place are the finest that have been seen for many years

No prospect of receiving any paym^t of any Debt for the present. M^{rs} A & I Enjoy good health, which I'm surprised at. May God of his infinite goodness & mercy, preserve you & yours in this time of Danger are the prayers of M^{rs} A as well as those of Your etc

Since writing the Inclosed, General Hull has taken possession of privat[e] property goods & Prov^s belonging to M^r M^cGregor, M^r Baby & M^r David, which he said in my hearing yesterday (y^e 19^h) he would return, when some private property taken in a Vessell near Malden, was given up. Our Canadians now desert in numbers. Our officers will have no men. My son James is Capt & Alexd^r L^t in the Militia at Malden.

Jm^s M^cGill Esquire Montreal

CHARLES ASKIN'S JOURNAL OF THE DETROIT CAMPAIGN,
JULY 24—SEPTEMBER 12, 1812³

Left Warner Nelliss⁴ Sunday afternoon the 24 met on my way up to the Mohawk Castle two or three Indians who appeared alarmed one of them told me that an Indian had just come from Amherstburgh that he said there were a great body of the American troops on their way up the River Thames, horse & foot. this Indian appeared from his dress &c as if he had left home to go and meet the Enemy with the party under Major Chambers;⁵ but had got alarmed and was going back again. after going a little farther I came to a Village where I saw two or three hundred Indians. I found from some of them who rode up with me to Mohawk Castle that they had had a Council and it was their determination not to fight the Americans. I afterwards learnt that General Hull had wrote them a letter which was brought them by the Indian who had as I before mentioned come from Amherstburgh, which was the cause of their holding the Council. I got in the Eve⁶ to the Bridge. there got a fresh horse and rode to Yiegh's where I got about 9 O'clock, I found Major Chamber's with the party under his command, also M^r W^m Crooks,⁶ and Hamilton Merrit⁷ with some Light horse, who had Ebenezar Allan

³ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

⁴ Warner Nelles. Henry William Nelles migrated from the Mohawk Valley region of New York to the then wilds of western Canada about the opening (possibly later) of the Revolution. With the immigrant came six sons and several slaves. One son, known as Major Nelles, settled on the Grand River (modern York, in Haldimand County). Another son was Warner Nelles here noted. Mohawk Castle was Brant's Grand River settlement; it stood a short distance east of modern Brantford, where the ancient Mohawk Church still stands. Warner Nelles' home must have been some distance lower down Grand River. For the Nelles family see E. A. Owen, *Pioneer Sketches of Long Point Settlement* . . . (Toronto 1898), 403 ff.

⁵ Peter Latouche Chambers came to Canada as an ensign in the Forty-first Regiment early in the century. He became a captain in 1808 and brevet-major, Feb. 25, 1815. He served with his regiment in most of the battles on the western front during the war. See Irving, *op. cit.*, 261; Casselman, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

⁶ William Crooks, a captain in the Fourth Lincoln Militia Regiment during the war, was an elder brother of Ramsay Crooks who is notable in the annals of the American fur trade. William was born in Scotland about the year 1775, and came in early manhood to the Niagara region, where several other members of the family had located. A younger sister of William, Joan Crooks, married at Niagara on Dec. 11, 1807, Lieut. William Procter of the Forty-first Regiment, brother of General Henry Procter. See *ibid.*, 120; William Kirby, *Annals of Niagara* (n. p., 1896), 131; Irving, *op. cit.*, 80.

⁷ William Hamilton Merritt was the son of Thomas Merritt, a New England loyalist, who served during the Revolution as an officer in the Queen's Rangers. At the close of

and two other men prisoners, that were taken at Delaware for some treasonable behaviour. Saturday 25th in the Morning M^r Merrit went off with his prisoners to Niagara. Major Chambers, young S^t John & myself rode down to G. R. to the Mohawk Castle, we found Cap^t Norton, there who told us that few of the Indians were ready yet to go with him, but would be in a day or two we returned from the Castle to Woodruffs at the G. R. Bridge direct there. Cap^t N. with us. from this Major C. and myself with Lieu^t Garner a Militia Officer (who volunteered his Services to go with the Major on the Expedition) went to Mount pleasant press'd a few Waggons then rode to Yiegh's. M^r Hamilton, Wilkinson,⁸ and some of the men had left it and gone with part of the baggage to Oxford. Sunday 26th Morn^g Our party left Yiegh's in Waggons and went to Oxford where we found some of the Oxford Militia under Col. Bostwick⁹ I think ab^t seventy five of them. Monday 27th In the Morning Col. Talbot,¹⁰ arrived at our Camp from Long P^t with young M^r Rolph¹¹ and some Other

the war, he settled in New Brunswick, later removing to Upper Canada. William Hamilton (born in Bedford, N. Y., July 3, 1793) thereby became a resident of Upper Canada. He participated in Brock's Detroit campaign of 1812 and subsequently commanded a troop of provincial cavalry. He was taken captive at the Battle of Lundy's Lane and was released only at the close of the war. He founded the city of St. Catherine's and was the promoter of the Welland Canal. He served in the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada from 1832 to 1840 and in the Legislative Council from 1860 until his death, July 5, 1862. In 1815, he married Catherine Rodman of Dutchess County, N. Y., and they became the parents of four sons and two daughters. Data derived from *ibid.*; Wallace, *op. cit.*; Casselman, *op. cit.*

⁸ Alexander Wilkinson, listed as a "gentleman volunteer" in the Forty-first Regiment. He served in the Detroit and Maumee campaigns and in connection with the latter was recommended by General Procter for promotion. See *ibid.*, 165, 167; Irving, *op. cit.*

⁹ Henry Bostwick, lieutenant colonel of Oxford Militia. He commanded in the affair at Nanticoke Creek, Nov. 13, 1813. He died at Woodhouse, July 27, 1816. *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Thomas Talbot, born, July 17, 1771, in Dublin County, Ireland. He entered the army while still a child, becoming ensign in the Sixty-sixth Regiment, May 24, 1783. In 1790, he came to Canada as a subaltern in the Twenty-fourth Regiment, and in 1792 became private secretary to Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe. He subsequently served seven years in Europe, and from 1796 to 1800 was lieutenant colonel of the Fifth Regiment. In 1801 he returned to Canada, and, obtaining a large grant of land, in 1803, became the founder of Port Talbot on the north shore of Lake Erie. Here he ruled a semi-patriarchal domain until his death, Feb. 6, 1853. He lived a bachelor, and bequeathed his estate to his servants. In the War of 1812, he was colonel of the First Middlesex Militia Regiment. See *ibid.*; Wallace, *op. cit.*

¹¹ George Rolph, a lieutenant in the First Norfolk Regiment, participated in the Detroit campaign of 1812. He died in Dundas, July 25, 1875. Irving, *op. cit.*

Officers of the Long P^t Militia who said that their Militia had been on their March to join us had got as far as Mas-acres:¹² but there mutinied and went back.

Tuesday 28th I was taken ill in the Morn^g occasioned by being out a great deal in the Rain. continued ill Wed 29th & 30 in the afternoon on Thursday I went with M^r Carl to stay at his house as it was more comfortable there than where I was staying, and I thought I should soon recover— before I left our Camp (for I know not what else to call it) Col. Talbot, had gone either to L^g P^t or Port Talbot, Cap^t Norton had joined us with Ab^t 12 or 14 Indians, W^m Crooks & M^r Racey had been with us and had gone off with Westbrook of Delaware to take him down a prisoner as he was supposed to have some concern with the Enemy and suspected to have aided in having General Hull's proclamation promulgated. Friday 31st. Doc^r Sumner¹³ paid me a visit and wished to give me an Emetic but I felt myself so much better that I declined taking any. he ad[vised me] then to remain for a few days where I was. The Doct^r Left me and soon after M^r Wilkinson came and informed me that the men were to march for Delaware that evening. I got the few things packed up I had with me and left M^r Carle's where I had been treated with very great attention and politeness. he has a large family most of them sons growing up. they all appear much attached to the British government, which I believe is the case with very few in Oxford Delaware, on the Grand River. On my Arrival at my old Quarters, I found that Major Chambers and M^r Hamilton had been on their way to Delaware but had returned in consequence of some Despatches bought to the Major by young M^r Secord, I also learnt that we had taken Michilimackinac without firing a shot. it was said to be taken by a party of Indians under M^r Rob^t Dickson.¹⁴

¹² Abraham Messacar migrated from New Jersey to Upper Canada and settled on Nanticoke Creek near modern Rockford Post Office. His children and their descendants were numerous. Owen, *op. cit.*, 481 ff.

¹³ Cyrus Sumner, a resident on Twenty-mile Creek. He served in Brock's Detroit campaign and subsequently as hospital assistant on the Niagara frontier. Irving, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ Mackinac surrendered to Captain Charles Roberts, commandant of the British fort on St. Joseph Island, July 17, 1812. Captain Roberts' little army included a few regular soldiers, a considerable number of fur traders and their employees, and a large number of Indians. The latter were mainly led by John Askin Jr., and Robert Dickson.

Saturday Aug^t 1st The Detachment left Oxford with the Dragoons & ab^t 70 Oxford Militia. I was unwell & had to stay behind. Sunday I Left Fuller's with Doct^r Sumner and went to Yeighs. the fatigue of riding put me in a fever. the Doct^r Left me here and went to Join the Detachment which had marched to Long P^t in the Morn^g Monday 3^d I was so unwell that I was confined to bed most all day.

Tuesday 4th Felt much better & heard that a few Light horse from York and about 100 of the York Militia were on their way to Long P^t saw 3 Canadians today who are just from Amherstburgh on their way to Montreal. They mentioned that the Indians had had some skirmishes with the Americans near River Canard and had driven them over it twice. Got a note in the Evening from M^r Hamilton from L^s P^t advising me to join immediately. had a horse press'd in harness and rode [to] Long P^t through a most beautiful [coun]try and very good roads arrived at Dover ab^t 3 OClock in the after-noon saw a great many men there, Norfolk Militia, York Militia Oxford Militia Dragoons & the troop of Hussars also some Artillery with a 6 pounder which was sent up from Niagara. heard on my way up that the General was coming, Wednesday 5th heard that the *Nancy* had been to Fort Erie & had brought up about 60 of the 41^t Reg^t. Was so weak that I could not drill with the men. Wednesday Morning and today the Militia was drill'd by Captain Chambers

Friday 7th Nothing remarkable ocured to day. in the Evening General Brock arriv'd M^r William Hamilton & myself left M^r Nichols where we had [been] staying, and went to M^r Williams where Cap^t Henry [?] & other Officers of the York Militia were. here we staid all night Cap^t [?] Jarvis arrived in the Middle of the night he came with a small party of Indians. Saturday 8^h we all embarked in boats, for Amherstburgh Exce[pt] the Norfolk Militia, under Major Salmon¹⁵ & about 14 or 16 Oxford Do. who embarked in the *Chippewa* and some of the Oxf^d & Norfolk militia were left behind for want of boats. I embarked on board the largest boat with the 41st Major Chambers was

¹⁵ Major George C. Salmon, Second Norfolk Militia Regiment. See Irving, *op. cit.*, Casselman, *op. cit.*, 60.

so sick that he had 10 remain behind.¹⁶ our boat being much loaded having the 6 pounder on board & many other things we did not get off so soon as the other boats we attempted to get to the carrying place but could not find the small creek that lead[s] to it nor could we get on shore therefore anchored among the Rushes and staid there all night. Sunday 9th Early in the Morning we got under way and soon saw the General's Boat and several other[s]. we got in the Creek and went up to the carrying place we had to take out most all our loading and then invite the assistance of the other boats crew had great difficulty to get our boat over. We had to caulk our boat here and then load and were so long doing this that Most of the boats were seven or eight miles a head of us before we saild off but the wind was fair and we came up to them. the General put in at Kettle creek and all our brigade.

Monday 10th Left Kettle Creek early in the Morning, the wind fair and a good breeze the wind increased so and there was such an appearance of a storm, that M^cCaul¹⁷ who sailed our boat thought it advisable to put in at Port Talbot, distance 7 Miles from Kettle Creek. this was a very bad port for our boat, for we could not get her into the Creek, and had to haul her up the beach. here we remained all day. during the day Col. Talbot and Major Chambers arrived, also ab^t 28 Dragoons but these I did not see they were ordered to Delaware immediately during the night it rained so hard, that M^cLean[?]¹⁸ and myself were forced to leave our camp & go up to Col. Talbots, where we slept

¹⁶ From the beginning of the entry for August 1 to this point, the manuscript is so dim as to be semi-illegible.

¹⁷ Three McCalls, Captain Daniel, Captain Duncan, and Ensign James, belonged to the First Norfolk Militia which served under Brock at Detroit. All were sons of Donald McCall, a native of Argyleshire, Scotland, who served in the Seven Years' War in America, located in New Jersey, remained a loyalist in the Revolution, subsequently migrated to Canada, and in 1796 removed to the Long Point Settlement on Lake Erie, where his descendants were numerously represented until a recent date. See Owen, *op. cit.*, 91 ff.

¹⁸ Possibly Archibald McLean, a lieutenant in the Third York Militia. He was born in St. Andrews, Upper Canada, April 5, 1791, the son of Neil McLean and (subsequently) the step-son of Robert Hamilton. He served under Brock at Detroit and Queenston, being wounded in the latter battle, and was taken prisoner at Lundy's Lane. Prior to the war he had studied law, and in 1815 was admitted to the bar of Upper Canada. He served in the Legislative Assembly from 1820 to 1836, and subsequently for many years as a judge, becoming chief justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in 1862. He died in Toronto, Oct. 24, 1865. See Wallace, *op. cit.*

on our blankets before the Kitchen fire very comfortably. we found a man there who had just arrived with an express for General Brock. Today our party was streng[th]ened by a Company of Riflemen in two boats under Cap^t Robertson¹⁹ of York. Tuesday 11th left Port Talbot we sail'd some time, then the wind changed and we had to row. we were left behind by all the boats. at length the wind increased so much that we went a shore and anchored off. the General who had putt on shore a mile further came down & had our boat taken up nearly a mile above where his Boat lay. we staid here the remainder of the day. in the evening we got orders to get under way at 12 OClock but that the General's boat would have a light in it and no boat should pass it. Wednesday 12th ab^t 4 OClock in the Morn^g we saw a boat with a light passing. we got off as soon as possible but all the boats were a great way a head of us the Wind was fair and we passed them all before we got to Point aux Pins the General desired us to Make the best of our Way up the Wind was fair and we got to Point a Pelé at night. here we went on shore to cook something for the men. as we understood a party of American Light horse had been there we patroled all night, not myself for I had not been well since I left port Talbot Thursday 13 Left Point au Pelé before day and arrived at Amherstburgh ab^t 8 OClock in the night. we were saluted by a Number of Indians encamped near Cap^t Elliotts. heard On our way up at a house we stop'd at to day, that the Americans had left Sandwich and returned to Detroit.

Saturday afternoon 15th Aug^t, 1812 the American Garrison was summoned to surrender by General Brock but refused. as soon as their answer came down to Gen. B. the artillery Officer went up to the battery opposite Detroit and [we] soon heard a firing commence which continued for a couple of hours. the party of the 41st which came up with us were called out, and 9 more of the Reg^t joined us we were then I think just 56 men including M^r Hamilton M^r Wilkinson &

¹⁹ Apparently Captain Peter Robinson of the First York Militia Regiment. He was born in New Brunswick in 1785 and died unmarried in Toronto in 1838. He commanded a rifle company at the capture of Detroit in 1812 and figured prominently in the defense of Mackinac against Colonel Croghan in 1814. In 1817, he was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada. He later served as Commissioner of Crown Lands, and became the founder of Peterboro, Ont., which was named in his honor. See *ibid.*

Myself. we were in two divisions the first commanded by M^eLean [?] and the 2^d to which we belonged by Sergeant Blaney. Some Militia joined us and Major Chambers form[ed us] into open Column & then into line several times. every one, and every thing allmost, was at this time in motion, people galloping in every direction. we were ordered to be in readiness at 4 OClock next morning for marching. as soon as we were dismissed the Officers of Militia and most of us were very bussy in preparing every thing for action, pistols sword &^{oa}. Long before day we were up on Sunday 16th then fell in *with the York Militia*.²⁰ Major Chambers commanded the 2^d Brigade—strong, composed of 150 of the 41st including 3 Vol^s M^r Hatt's²¹ company Militia the Norfolk & Oxford Militia—Major Tallen²² commanded the 3^d Brigade in which there was nothing, but the 41st & the 1st Brigade commanded by Col. S^t George consisted of the Essex Militiamen & some New-foundland Corps The 2^d Brigade was halted a short wait at Sandwich then marched down near to Parks Mill, where we embarked. when marching down we saw the 3^d Brigade and the General and his staff crossing the River just below the Springwell I think it was the handsomest sight I ever saw. the Indians were allready over they just crossed before us. when we landed we formed in open collumn in the rear of the 3^d Brigade. a company of Riflemen from York (we all got over without any opposition) went over with us, but did not belong to our Brigade they were most all painted as Indians. we were some time halted here, then marched up the road. I was much pleased to observe how unconcerned Most of the men were both Militia and Regulars the first house we passed we observed the Indians had broke into and were plundering. we found them also running after horses in every direction we marched at Quick time but

20 The words in italics are crossed out in the manuscript.

21 Captain Samuel Hatt of the Fifth Lincoln Militia. He served with Brock at Detroit and Queenston and was wounded at Lundy's Lane. See Irving, *op. cit.*, Casselman, *op. cit.* 60.

22 Captain Joseph Tallon of the Forty-first Regiment. On Aug. 14, 1812, General Brock issued an order at Amherstburg organizing the army under his command in three brigades, commanded respectively by Lieutenant St. George, Major Chambers, and Major Tallon, the whole to be under the command of Colonel Procter. See *ibid.*, 53.

had frequently to halt. the Can[?] Brigade passed us on the Road I think there was about five or six Guns—and [illegible] I believe in front. I saw a number of inhabitants many of whom knew me and seemed happy to see me. we got at last to M^r Henry's about a Mile and a half from Detroit and there halted. from this place sent a flag of truce to the Garrison desiring them a 2^d time to surrender it was a long time before we had an answer therefore was kept a long time in suspense many were wishing them not to capitulate these were young Officers who were anxious to have an opp^y of distinguishing themselves: but most of us wished I believe they should to spare the effusion of blood and for the sake of the poor Women & Children who we knew would not be spared by the Indians should an action once commence. fortunately for us as it will appear afterwards the Americans after some time capitulated and surrendered themselves prisoners of War. I forgot before to mention that while we were marching up a constant firing was kept up from Our Battery at M^r Babys²³ and from the American Fort. the American Guns were 24 pounders. while we staid at M^r Henry's²⁴ two prisoners were brought in, one by an Indian and another by one of the Rifle Company. during our stay here a good many of the Canadian Militia belonging to Col S^t George's Brigade joined us. M^r W^m Forsyth²⁵ was living near M^r Henry's I never saw a

²³ The Baby house, near which the battery was posted, is still standing, and occupied as a residence, in Windsor.

²⁴ James Henry, for whom see *ante*, 305. At Henry's house General Brock and staff paused to breakfast.

²⁵ William Forsyth was a son of William Forsyth, early Detroit inn-keeper, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 307, and a brother of James Forsyth, for whose career see *ante*, 639. William was born, Sept. 9, 1765, the eldest child of the union of William and Ann Forsyth. On March 24, 1794, he married Margaret (Margarethe) Little of Grosse Pointe, daughter of John Little, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 309. In 1798, William Forsyth's elder half-brother, John Kinzie, married Eleanor, a sister of Margaret Little, and the widow of Daniel McKillip. William Forsyth resided for many years in Sandwich, and it was at his home, according to Mrs. Juliette Kinzie, author of *Wau Bun*, that John H. Kinzie, husband of the author, and son of John Kinzie and Eleanor Little (McKillip) was born, July 7, 1803. Forsyth's name appears frequently in the St. John's Church Register over a period of years. In 1806, he is described as "inn-keeper." Several of his children were baptized on the same day, June 16, 1822: William, aged 14 years; George, born May, 1811; Duncan Chambers, born in May, 1815; and Margaret (Margarethe) Eleanor, born, Feb. 6, 1818. Another daughter, Elizabeth, married George Nelson of Sandwich on Nov. 1, 1818. *Ibid.* Still another daughter, Ann, married and had descendants living in Toronto in recent years. William Forsyth died, Dec. 28, 1843. See, in addition to references cited, Burton, Forsyth-Kinzie-Little genealogy.

person more happy than he was to see us he was so overjoyed that he could hardly speak. *I have been told since that there were 32 p^s of cannon in all and about 2900 Stand of arms. There were a great many Waggon^s &^{ca} The numbers I do not know²⁶* We marched up to the Garrison the gun Brigade in front I believe there was —six pounders & the Ammunition Carts.[?] We marched into the town and from that up into Fort Lernow: but there were so many American Troops in it, that we could not all get in. I believe our marching in was improper, and that it was done by mistake, for we were but a few minutes there before we were ordered to march out. I really think there was while we were in the Garrison two Americans for one of us and they had still their Arms. we formed on the West side of the Fort in line, untill all the Americans had marched out, but I was so situated that I could not see them coming out. they did not march with the honors of War though I am told they were allowed to do it by the Capitulation but the Officers of the Am. Army were so mortified that they had to surrender without fighting that they were indifferent about it or anything else then. the American colours were flying nearly an hour after we first marched into the Garrison. After the Americans had all marched out, the Grenadiers & Light Infantry of the 41st Reg^t, and the Volunteers in that Reg^t, that is Mr George Hamilton²⁷ Wilkinson & myself And Jn^o Richardson; commanded by M^r Bullock of the Grenadiers, marched into the Fort, with Drum & fife, to the Tune of the British Grenadiers. I must say that I never felt so proud, as I did just then.²⁸ as soon as we were in the Fort, the American Colours were taken down and ours hoisted.

²⁶ The words in italics are crossed out in the original manuscript.

²⁷ George Hamilton, son of Robert Hamilton and Catherine Askin (for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 14, 188) was a captain in the Niagara Light Dragoons; like Askin, he participated in the Detroit campaign merely as a volunteer. He married Maria Lavinia Jarvis, eldest daughter of William Jarvis, first Provincial Secretary of Upper Canada, and a granddaughter of Rev. Samuel Peters of Connecticut Blue Law fame. On the outbreak of the War of 1812, Hamilton removed his wife and infant son from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Burlington Bay for safety from the enemy. Here he subsequently laid out the village (now city) of Hamilton.

²⁸ This narrative of the occupation of Fort Detroit may profitably be compared with that of John Richardson, another of Askin's grandsons, who participated in the event. See Casselman, *op. cit.*, 56-57.

three Cheers were given as they were hoisted by the Militia and others outside the Fort & the Indians when the Salute with the Cannon was given gave an Indian yell every shot we the Volunteers remained with our Guard until the Colours of the 4th A. Reg^t were brought by part of our Guard After which we got leave to go where we wished and M^r Hamilton went to see M^r Brush, where we dined Two prisoners were taken in the Woods today while we were at M^r Henry's, one by an Indian and another by a rifleman.

There were about 2300 prisoners surrendered, besides the Militia of the Michigan Territory, who gave up their arms that day, with the others. these were 3 or 4 hund[red] strong. most of the American army were composed of Militia from the State of Ohio, who had volunteered their Services for a year, some were cavalry reg^t One company, great number Riflemen, and some infantry there were of the Regular troops, ——— of Artillery ——— of the 1st Reg^t and about 3 hund^d of the 4th Reg^t. this last Reg^t are highly spoken of by the Americans. indeed from the manner they speak of them you would suppose them to be Invincibles.²⁹ the whole of their army were ill dressed, and few of them appeared healthy or well, indeed they seemed to me the poorest looking sett of men I have seen for a long time. their situation and dress may probably have made them appear so ill to me. seven hundred Rifles were taken and a great many Muskets nearly 3000 stand, & 32 p^a Cannon of all descriptions, a great number of Waggon, horses, &^{ca}

Monday 17th Remained at Detroit but did no duty. saw the American prisoners embarking, many of whom were unwell with fever & some wounded. poor fellows I fear few of them will ever get home. All the Vessels from Amherstburgh I believe & those taken at Detroit were taking in prisoners; but there were not a sufficient number to take them all, and those who were on board were very much crouded. by the Capitulation, as I understood, the Regular Troops were to be kept as prisoners of War and the Militia

²⁹ The Fourth U. S. Infantry had constituted the nucleus of Harrison's force at Tippecanoe, in 1811. It was the only regular regiment in Hull's army. Hull's account of its reception at Urbana in May harmonizes with Askin's account of the esteem felt for it by the militia contingents. See Quaife, *Chicago and the Old Northwest*, 207.

Reg^{ts} were to be sent to Cleveland or Sandusky, from whence they were to return home and no[t] serve against the English ag[ain in] this War. of the Regulars I supp[ose]³⁰ there is not more than 400. these I suppose will be sent to Quebec.

Tuesday 18th I crossed the River, we[nt] up to my Father's dined there and then went down to Amherstburgh to see Major Chambers with whom [I] had volunteered to go to River Raizin & Foot of the Rapids. in the Even[ing] I saw General Brock and his Aidcamp Col. M^cDonnell³¹ At Amherstburg M^r Hamilton was down there also; but as he had embarked and I could not conveniently get on board I did not see him. For want of boats or something else, we could not get off this evening for River Raizin. I saw Major Salmon & young M^r Rolph M^r R. had bought a horse for 5 doll^s some were sold for two doll^s I understood from the Indians, who took about three hundred on the Day of the Surrender and the day following, on the American Side. they plundered Knagg's³² house and a few other houses and took a great deal from them. Wednesday 19th amherstburgh Last night or early this Morn^g the *Chippawa*, a small Vessel sailed from this, in which was passengers the General and his two Aide-camps,³³ and M^r Hamilton & M^r Jarvis.³⁴ in the afternoon we got off from Capt Elliotts for River Raizin. Major Cambers Cap^t M^cKee & his son Alex^r³⁵

³⁰ Apparently the omissions noted in this sentence are due to the defect of the photostatic copy of the manuscript, rather than to the manuscript itself.

³¹ Lieutenant Colonel John Macdonell, who perished with his chief, General Brock, in the battle of Queenston, Oct. 12, 1812. He was born in Greenfield, Scotland, April 19, 1785, and came to Upper Canada with his father about the year 1792. He was admitted to the bar of Upper Canada in 1808, and in 1812 became attorney-general of the province. At the opening of the war, he became provincial aide-de-camp to General Brock, and in this capacity negotiated with General Hull the terms of the surrender of Detroit. See Wallace, *op. cit.*

³² Whittmore Knaggs, for whom see *ante*, 120. For a detailed account of his career, see Ross, *op. cit.*, 7 ff. His home, whose plundering is here recorded, stood at the mouth of Knaggs Creek (no longer in existence) in the vicinity of Swain and West Jefferson avenues (P. C. 77). See *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet*, I, 36.

³³ Captain John B. Glegg of the Forty-ninth Regiment and Lieutenant Colonel John Macdonell of the Provincial Militia.

³⁴ Samuel Peters Jarvis, born, Nov. 15, 1792, lieutenant in the Third York Militia, and son of William Jarvis, for whom see *ante*, 299. At Detroit he was attached to the Forty-first Regiment. He served as lieutenant at Queenston and Lundy's Lane, and subsequently as chief superintendent of Indian affairs. In 1818 he married Mary Bayles, daughter of William Dummer Powell, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 436, and five sons and four daughters were born to them. He died at Toronto, Sept. 6, 1857. See Wallace, *op. cit.*, Irving, *op. cit.*

³⁵ Alexander McKee, son of Captain Thomas McKee and Therese Askin, for whom

M^r Bap^t Barthe³⁶ & myself with some others went over in the same boat and landed below Brownstown. Alex M^cKee had his [horse] crossed and I had another taken over he had lent me. we waited some time here, for the Indians to join us, at length *Tecompe* with a few others came to us. a Gun Boat commanded by M^r Bender³⁷ of the 41st Reg^t came over—we all that is the Gent[lemen] embarked in the Gun Boat and got under way our horses were sent on by land. when we got near the Point au Roche³⁸ it blew Rather hard and it was thought dangerous to go round the Point. we therefore put into River Huron but how long we staid here I do not know; for I believe I was a sleep when we left

Thursday Morn^g 20th Got early in the morn^g to Rocky River.³⁹ Rained a good deal this Morn^g & I believe it did last night but I was under cover du[r]ing the night and not exposed to it. We got into two houses that were deser[ted] we made fires in them, and got some breakfast. three other boats were with us here, all under Bender's command. Cap^t Elliott⁴⁰ and his Son Alexr joined us here the[y] came on horseback with a number of Indians we most all got horses and Rode to River Raizin where we arrived about 10 or Eleven O'clock A. M. We went towards the Blockhouse but finding that the Block house was open; and nothing in it we returned to M^r Lasselle's⁴¹ where we got Breakfasst

see *B. H. R.*, I, 15, 376. At the outbreak of the war, Alexander was a second lieutenant in the First Lincoln Artillery Company. On June 8, 1813, he was appointed lieutenant in the Indian Department, and on June 25, 1814, was promoted to a captaincy. See Irving, *op. cit.* The date of his birth has not been found, but since his parents were married in April, 1797, he must have been a very youthful officer.

³⁶ Apparently Jean Baptiste Barthe, who was born in Detroit on Oct. 18, 1779, eldest child of Jean Baptiste Barthe and Geneviève Cuillerier *dit* Beaubien, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 74. He was a first cousin of the diarist, his father being a brother of Mrs. John Askin. He was a lieutenant in the First Essex Militia, and according to Irving, *op. cit.*, died later in the year 1812.

³⁷ Lieutenant Benoit Bender of the Forty-first Regiment. In a report of Sept. 10, 1812, Colonel Procter states that the boats and engagés of the South West Company had been taken into the public service and Lieutenant Bender had been placed in charge. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XV, 146.

³⁸ Modern Stony Point in Frenchtown Township, Monroe County, about midway between the mouths of the Huron and Raisin rivers.

³⁹ Modern Stony Creek.

⁴⁰ Apparently the diarist intended to write Captain McKee.

⁴¹ Presumably Jacques Lacelle, for whom see *ante*, 34.

some Indians [arrived] while we were here. we were still at Breakfast when a message came to us from M^{rs} Anderson⁴² begging that we would go and prevent the Indians from plundering her house Major Chambers rode off immediately & I followed him as quick as I could we found the Indians had taken a number of things, and were taking every thing valuable they could get hold of. they paid no attention to us what[ever] when we tried to make them desist. The Hurons were the first to break in & plunder this house and some of them were M^r Anderson's friends. from this house they went to several other houses and plundered them old M^{rs} Knaggs⁴³ house was among others plundered, some Indians remained about Andersons most all day, taking and destroying things. They emptied some flour out in the yard, which they did not want, Col. Elliott⁴⁴ was with us at the time we first went to Andersons to prevent the Indians from plundering, but did not go with us thinking that he would have more influence than Major C-s or myself I went and requested him to go once or twice, I think

42. At least two (possibly three) John Andersons figure in the history of Detroit and vicinity in the opening years of the century. References to their activities are numerous in both manuscript and printed records in the B. H. Coll., but information sufficient clearly to elucidate their respective careers is wanting. One of them, owner of the home here alluded to, was one of Monroe's foremost citizens in the first quarter of the century. According to Ross, *Hist. of Knaggs Family*, 29-30, he was born near Glasgow, Scotland, Aug. 20, 1771, and came in childhood with his parents to Montreal. The opening of the century found him engaged in trade on the Maumee, where, apparently, he married Elizabeth Knaggs, daughter of George Knaggs and Rachel Schley, for whom see *ante*, 119-20, who was born, Jan. 4, 1772. Some years later, Anderson located at Raisin River (modern Monroe), where he held, in the succeeding years, a number of offices of public trust. In 1805 he was appointed by Governor Hull, colonel of the Second Regiment of Michigan Militia, and in 1811-12 he was U. S. Marshal of the Territory. When in 1812, General Hull was setting out from Urbana on his march to Detroit, he sent to Anderson for transmission to the Indians of the region adjoining Monroe warnings of the vengeance that he would inflict upon them if they should exhibit any hostility to the American cause. The prominence which Anderson acquired in this connection made him the object of their own vengeance upon the downfall of Hull, and he hastily fled to Ohio, finding refuge for some months in Dayton. Meanwhile, his family was left behind in Monroe, and an interesting story is preserved of the heroism of Mrs. Anderson during the massacre of Jan. 22, 1813. Not long after this event, apparently, she found asylum in the home (now vacant) of Solomon Sibley in Detroit, and here, some time prior to December, 1813, Anderson joined her and was appointed by General Cass Sheriff of the Western District of Upper Canada, then conquered territory. After the war, he returned to Monroe, where he resided until his death, July 3, 1840. Whether the Anderson whose career is here described was the same John Anderson who was engaged in the Maumee trade as a partner of John Askin, we have been unable to determine. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*; Burton, *Proc. of Land Board of Detroit*, 183-84; and mss. in B. H. Coll., *passim*.

43 Rachel Schley Knaggs, widow of George Knaggs, for whom see *ante*, 119-20.

44 Colonel Matthew Elliot.

twice at last he went. it's true he was unwell; (but I think he might have gone at first as well as last). Yet for all the good he did he might as well have staid where he was. Major C. was much enraged at the behaviour of the Indians, & tried to prevent them from plundering as much as he could. Cap^t M^oKee when he joined us did the same. T^ecompsé the Indian General as he is called, behaved [I] must say remarkably well. he assisted us very much in trying to prevent the Indians from pillaging; but the Hurons could not be prevented from taking what they wanted some Saucks that had began to plun[der] were stopp^d by Maj. C. and they ev[en] retur^d some things they had taken. The Indians took a great number of horses on the River. horses they have taken everywhere, the day of the surrender and the day following I fancy they did not take less than 300 from the people on the Detroit side. Cap^t Elliot⁴⁵ who was sent here with a flag of truce on Sunday last was still here. he found Cap^t Brush here who commanded a company of Gentlemen from Ohio. and a number of others with him from some of the corps serving in Detroit. when he saw the letter which was from General Hull the contents of which I [do not] know⁴⁶ (but suppose it was an order for him to surrender) he said it was a forgery and Elliott was an imposter. he had Cap^t E. confined and threatened to hang him. some of the Gentlemen in his company interfered and told him they would shoot him if he did. whether he thought it a forgery or not he and all those with him excepting a few sick made off that night not in any order but as fast as they could get off six or seven of them together in this disorderly manner they left the place, many of them taking horses with them that they took from the Inhabitants, who complained very much of them. when we found this party were so far a head of us that it was no[t] probable we could ever overtake [them] and that even if we should they had nothing with them that was worth going after, it was thought advisable to send back the Indians from this place and not allow them to go to the Foot of the Rapids where we

45 William Elliott, for whom see *ante*, 503.

46 In surrendering Detroit, Hull had included these Ohio militia. Captain Elliott was sent by Brock to Monroe to acquaint them with the terms of the capitulation. See Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, II, 1017 ff.

dreaded they would behave in the same shameful manner they had done to day, at this place. some were in consequence of this sent back, and they would have all return^d had not a scoundrel of the name of Amable Bellair⁴⁷ (I think was his name,) come and said that he was from the foot of the Rapids and that when he left it there were 180 Americans there, that had gone from that place about a mile and returned. we hardly credited w[hat?] he said as a Doct^r Fairfield a very decent looking man had come from that place with a flag of truce, and said that there were none there but a few sick, as I interpreted I told Belair who was a french[man] that if he deceived us he would be hung the scoundrel still insisted on it. I believe it was then determined that what Indians remained should go there; I was not much with them then; and did not know well what was to be done, as Major Chambers had requested me to take charge of a boat that was loaded with arms and take it to Amherstburgh he wrote Col. Procter and I had the dispatches. that night I slept at M^r Jérôme's⁴⁸ where we most all staid, some Americans slept their also, who were much afraid that the Indians would murder them.

Friday 21st In the morn^g Major Chambers told me that Cap^t Elliott would take charge of the boat, and wished me to go with him with a flag of truce to Foot of the Rapids. Doct^r Fairfield, & a Cap^t Hull left the River Raizin with us. Cap^t Hull went in a boat with M^r Bender, and Fairfield remained with us, at the River aux Loutre. we took a Canadian as an Interpreter in case we wished to speak to the Indians a party of whom were a head of us with Alex^r

⁴⁷ Probably Amable Chulle *dit* Belair. His father Jean Pierre Chulle *dit* Belair, born in 1733 in Avignon, France, came to Canada as a soldier in the La Sarre Regiment, and on Jan. 8, 1759, married at Sault au Recollect, Mary Ann Menard. They subsequently came to Detroit, where Mary Ann Menard was drowned while crossing the river, and was buried in Sandwich, Jan. 1, 1785. Jean Pierre Belair was buried at Raisin River, Nov. 10, 1805.

Their eldest son, Amable, born in 1759, married at Raisin River, on Jan. 19, 1796, Mary Louisa La Pointe, who was born in Sandwich, Aug. 13, 1780. Amable Chulle *dit* Belair was buried in Detroit, Nov. 14, 1821.

Amable Belair had several brothers and sisters, and the family line was numerously represented in Detroit and vicinity. Data derived from Denissen, *op. cit.*

⁴⁸ Probably Jean Baptiste Jerome, born in 1762, who married Mary Deliennes *dit* Belanger. They lived at Raisin River, where she was buried on June 1, 1827, and he on June 7, 1832. A daughter, Mary Archange Jerome, was born in Detroit, Feb. 17, 1792. See *ante*, 267.

Elliot.⁴⁹ we got to Foot of the Rapids about one or two o'clock in the afternoon. the Indians had just began to plunder or began as soon as we got there, but did not take much here except horses. they took several of these. there were no Americans here but a few that were sick, which belonged to the Army, a party of Yankees had passed that place the day before with 200 head of Cattle, but it was thought they had got out of our reach. The Block house here Tecompsé had set fire to and was burning when we came here. the Inhabitants complained of Brush's company some of whom had stolen their horses and some other things. we found 77 bbls, pork, 18 of flour & eight or ten of whisky here, which had been left by the American army. found no arms I suppose they were hid and some other things also. The Scoundrel Bellair that had told such a falsehood respecting the American troops being at this place, we were going to take with us to Amherstburgh. I took his pistols from him and we considered him as a prisoner but had no one to Guard him. some Indians begged he might be liberated which was done, and the fellow got his pistols again without my knowledge & I could never see him after. In the afternoon M^r Bender arrived with the Gun Boat and two other boats we had before this collected all the water craft we could on the River. we had two boat's and some canoes which we began to load, but they were all so leaky except some canoes that we could not make use of them. the Canadians were sett to work and loaded the Gun Boat and two other boats they brought with them after geting all we could in these, we put what we still had to bring with us in five or six canoes. about 11 or 12 O'clock at night we left M^r Baugran's⁵⁰ and went down the River with an

⁴⁹ Alexander Elliot was a half-blood son of Colonel Matthew Elliot, his mother being an Indian woman concerning whom we have no definite information. Alexander was slain by Indians in December, 1812, and was buried in Sandwich on December 17. Data derived from ms. notes on Elliot genealogy supplied by Miss Julia Duff of Amherstburg, Nov. 9, 1927, and St. John's Church Register.

⁵⁰ Presumably Jean Baptiste Beaugrand, whose claim to 640 acres of land near Fort Maimis, a short distance above modern Perrysburg, was recognized by the U. S. government. See William E. Peters, *Ohio Lands and Their Subdivision* (Athens, 1918), 194-95; *Am. State Paps., Pub. Lands*, I, 493. Jean Baptiste Beaugrand, presumably the same individual, was also awarded title to a tract of land on Rouge River (P. C. 454). According to Denissen, *op. cit.*, Francis Beaugrand resided in the diocese of Agen, province of Bordeaux, early in the eighteenth century. His son, Jean Baptiste, born in 1725, migrated to

Intention of going to the Lake I believe; but after going six or seven miles the men one after another fell asleep & I did the same, whether the boats went a shore or not I cannot say.

Saturday 22^d In the morning we were on our way down the River I think when we woke a Canadian came down running to us & crying; he and another had been left behind at the Foot of the Rapids, and we had not missed them, till this one joined us. in passing an Indian camp, his comrade was stopp'd and he supp[osed] him murdered by the Indians. a Mounsy Indian was taken from an Indian Camp, into one of the boats, th[at] had just been stabbed by some Indian of a diff^t nation. we put on shore at Presqu'il where we got a very good boat in which we put what was in the Canoes. we breakfasted here and then left this place this day and night we got beyond the River Raisin. nothing remarkable occurred to day—Sunday 23^d. In the Morn^g we got to Point au Roch. the boat I was in was a great way behind the other boats. I then advised Major Chambers to get in an other which we did. we left P^{te} au Roch & got to Amherstburgh about 11 OClock AM. breakfasted at Capt Elliotts, then went up to Town. found that Major Chambers mare had been stolen by the Indians during his absence and an Immense number of other horses were taken by them on this side the River. Dined at Doct^r Richardson's then rode up with Maj. C. he went over to Detroit and I went to my Father's. before he left Amherstburgh he had a very serious quarrel with Col. Elliott.

From the 23^d to this date the 15th of September I have kept no journal. after my return from the Foot of the Rapids, I found Colonel Procter was acting as Civil Governor at Detroit & Judge Woodward an American Judge acting as his Secretary. Many things have ocured during this short period which I have forgot; we had news that Chicago was taken by the Indians and no one saved but the Comman^g.

Canada. On Sept. 26, 1763, he married (second) in Ste. Foye, Mary Ann Alain, daughter of Pierre Alain and Margaret Leblanc. Their son, also named Jean Baptiste, was born in Montreal (date unnoted) and evidently came west to Detroit and the Maumee prior to 1796. On July 29, 1802, he married in Detroit, Margaret Chabert, daughter of Francis Chabert and Josette Chêne, for whom see *ante*, 448. They had eleven children, born chiefly in Detroit in the years 1803-20.

Officer and his Wife.⁵¹ The Detachment that came up when I did and to which I belong'd left Amherstburgh a few days ago, also some Grenadiers under L^t Bullock to return to Niagara. Major Chambers returned also, some some time since by Land. Col. Procter & M^r Nichol went out to the Foot of the Rapids & returned soon. they went probably to view the Country as they had no forces with them. Cap^t Muir⁵² has been commanding officer at Detroit for some time both my Brothers were doing duty with the Militia there. An auction has been [held] at Detroit where part of the Public property taken at the Surrender was sold. Some Waggons of which there was ab^t 60 sold very low. they were from 23 to Eighty Dollars many other things went very low also. Indians beseiging Fort Wayne have sent for assistance & for some days past preparations have been making to go to that place. Last night part of the Expedition Left Amherstburgh in a small Vess[el] and in Boats. they are all under the Command of Cap^t Muir a very Galant Officer. Indians have been going for some days past, & a party of Indians ab^t 200 in number who arrived here a few days ago from MacKina under the direction of Jn^o B. Askin, have gone this Morn^g with Cap^t M^oKee young Jn^o A. is also with them they went off in great style. had a salute from the Garrison which they returned. The Expedition consisted of ab^t 150 of the 41st Reg^t 200 of the Militia & a party of Artillery & ab^t eight hundred [Indians]. these it was supposed would be joined by a great number of Indians, allready on their way, and before the place. the whole expedition were off this Morng.⁵³ the Officers Gone are

Cap ^t Muir	} 41 st	Alex Askin	} Militia	
M ^r Bernard		W ^m Hands		
M ^r Hales ⁵⁴		Cap ^t Elliot		Com ^y
L ^t Troughton R. Ar ^y		Col Caldwell Do Q ^r M ^r		

⁵¹ Chicago was taken, Aug. 15, 1812. Of the 94 white persons in the garrison and community, approximately 53 were slain in the battle and subsequent massacre. Of the 40 survivors, a considerable number perished in captivity. See Quaife, *Chicago and Old Northwest*, 428 ff.

⁵² Captain Adam C. Muir, for whom see *ante*, 488.

⁵³ For an account of Major Muir's expedition against Fort Wayne, see Casselman, *op. cit.*, 93 ff.

⁵⁴ Lieutenant Harris Hailes.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

M^r Dickson R. Engineers

Cap^t Jacobs⁵⁵

W^m Sterling

Jⁿ° Pike

J^s. Little

Nich Little

Cap^t Caldwell⁵⁶

} Militia

Col. Elliot Indn Dep^t

Cap^t M^oKee Do.

Doct^r Richardson Sur^g

Jⁿ° Do. Volunteer

The *Salina* took part of the Expedition

DISASTER FORESHADOWED IN DETROIT⁵⁷

Detroit 11 Aug^t 1812

Dear Sir I am going to send my family to reside at M^r Meldrums. I know not what may be the destiny of this country. my family are dear to my heart. will you receive some money in Keeping for them, and if so, would you prefer to have it in bills on our Government, or Cincinnati Bank notes as to specie there is none here.

Adieu and may God bless you

E. Brush

a line by the bearer

John Askin Esqr

If at any time hereafter you think proper to send for Alice & the children, they will go over.

THIRST OF AMERICAN OFFICERS⁵⁸

Detroit 24 August 1812

Dear Sir Will it be possible for M^r Pattenson to spare Gen^l Taylor and Col^o Findlay⁵⁹ and my selfe a demijohn of five gallons of wine I think you mentioned he had some at your house.

⁵⁵ George Jacob.

⁵⁶ Captain William Caldwell, half-blood son of Colonel William Caldwell, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 243-44.

⁵⁷ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

⁵⁸ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

⁵⁹ James Findley, colonel of the Second Ohio Militia Regiment, was born in Mercersburg, Pa., about the year 1775 and spent his mature life (1793-1835) as a resident of Cincinnati. From 1825 to 1833 he served as U. S. Representative from Ohio. See *Appleton Cyclopaedia of Am. Biog.*

I shall be over to see you before I take my departure
Edmund may remain untill I send for him.

I am Dear Sir your h

E. Brush

John Askin Esquire

In my portable writing desk you will find some papers
addressed to you

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Straban

Endorsed: Detroit 24th Aug^t, 1812 E. Brush to John
Askin.

CHARGES AGAINST ELIJAH BRUSH⁶⁰

Detroit Sept^r 1812

Dear Sir I understand by Alice that you have the papers
that were sent to Pattenson by the return of his vessel.
M^r Pattenson on saturday last promised me the perusal of
them. I likewise understand that it is represented in them
that I (with some others) was in favour of the capitulation
than which there never was a greater falshood. as M^r
Pattensons vessel will shortly be returning with some more
of our Citizens I wish for an early perusal of the papers that
I may have an oppportunity of contradicting any representa-
tions derogatory to my character have therefore sent
Edmund over for them [and] will thank you to do them up
carefully and give them to him. he is charged to let no one
see them. in fact he does not know himselfe what he is
going after. they will be returned this evening to you or
M^r P if an oppportunity offers please give Edmund a dollar
as we have no change in the house wherewith to pay his
ferreage. if you have laid your hand on Henrys Note you
may indorse that.

Yours truly

E. Brush

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Present

Endorsed: Detroit Sepr 1812 E. Brush Esq^r to John
Askin.

⁶⁰ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

AFFAIRS AT MACKINAC⁶¹

Michilimackinac 16th Sept 1812

My Dear Father The situation of the Country has been such that our Correspondance has been interrupted for a length of time, but the Communication being once more open will enable us to resume again. The Changes of Affairs have been great w^h you thats to say the face of Affairs took a wonderful turn. After your having so large an Army as Gen^l Hull had & great part of them having partly ravaged your Country & only a handfull of men to engage them at one time a great number of our *Shenaille Ecarte* Canadians & some Indians humbling themselves to Hull and a party of our people were driven back from Mognuagon must have sickened many good & loyal subjects. What a happy Change has taken place & your pleasure must have been great to see so many of your Children in defence of their King & Country. I have heard a great deal of James & Alexander previous to Gen^l Brocks Arrival, they having been exposed several times at the different Skermishes that took place at the Canard, Petit Cote & Mognuagon Much praise is given them. It was reported to me that Charles carried a private Soldiers dress fearing that he would be garrisoned below if dressed as a Civilian & that he went back w^h Gen^l Brock. John has no doubt given you an Account of the reasons of my not being down in time to Cooperate w^h the Gen^l. the Order, if I may call it an Order was recvd at this post the 12^h Aug^t at a time that all the Indians were as drunk as Ten Thousand Devils & Detroit was taken on the 16^h therefore it was impossible for any force to be down in that time & coasting the Lakes. Indeed the Band of Indians which Johnney took down could not be got off sooner I am even surprised they did not turn back when they heard that Detroit was in our possession. When John left this we had every reason to believe that Hull still held his possition at Babys & John was to have landed at Pikes Creek with all his Indians & Crossed the township of Maidston to form a junction with Col^l Elliott & M^oKee or if the Night was propitious he was to have passed in the

⁶¹ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

Night under those Circumstances I thought it most prudent not to write. When Livingston⁶² went down w^h the Prisoners I wrote by him & your not Answering my Letters induces me to believe they were not delivered to you. My Dear Mother must now feel herself once more comfortable & happy having nothing to apprehend from any force that the Yanky's can bring forward. As the Indians have enterred heartily in the cause they will Keep them off & destroy every settlement as far as Grenville indeed far beyond that place.

I request that you'll have the goodness to send a little flour, for I'm really in greatest want of this Article & will be more so than ever, having no Garden whatever here & during my Absence from S^t Josephs all my potatoes have been destroyed by the Swine so that I must live entirely on Bread, Pork & Beef The oldest Oxen youll be pleased to get Kill'd, Salted & shipped by the last Vessel, The Hock & Shanks give to your Tenants & hope my Mother will help herself to a Choice piece of Beef. I send per this Vessel a Keg of English salt for to salt the Meat & will account to you for the Salt Petre you purchase & Barrels. Rum or Whiskey Barrels will not answer to salt Meat, please purchase good new Barrels for this purpose or Pork Barrels, Excuse my being so particular for I really have lost so much meat already [illegible] by being packed in bad Casks that I wish Every precaution may be taken. Have the goodness to Inform M^r Pattinson that a [man] named Alexis Reaume⁶³ has

⁶² Robert Ramsay Livingstone served four years as a midshipman on the *Argus*, and eight years as ensign in the 2nd Battalion, Royal Canadian Volunteers. He commanded a company of volunteers at the capture of Mackinac in July, 1812, was wounded and made prisoner at Brownstown, and was present at the capture of Detroit. He became a lieutenant in the Indian Department of Upper Canada, April 25, 1814, and captain on Oct. 25, 1814. He was wounded at Fort George, Aug. 17, 1813; assisted in the defense of the *Nancy* at Nottawasaga, Aug. 14, 1814, and was present at the capture of the *Tigress* and the *Scorpion*, the following month. It was he who brought to Mackinac the news of Brock's capture of Detroit. See Irving, *op. cit.*, 210, 213, and *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, *passim*, especially X, 94.

⁶³ Alexis Réaume was born in Sandwich, July 23, 1786. He was a grandson of Pierre Réaume and Susanne Hubert dit Lacroix, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 61, and the son of Bonaventure Réaume and Jeanne Deshêtres, for whom see *ibid.*, 377. Alexis was evidently familiar with the Mackinac region, and seems to have been engaged in trade, as indicated by the present entry, among others. According to John Askin Jr., it was he who brought to Mackinac, May 1, 1815, news of the signing of the Treaty of Ghent. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XVI, 340, and letter of John Askin Jr., printed *post*, 779. Alexis Réaume had numerous connections at Detroit. One of his father's sisters married Pierre Charles Daneau

delivered me 3,000 & Odd Lbs of Maple sugar for him which will be Ship'd on Board the Kings Vessel as well as a quantity that a Michael Douseman⁶⁴ is to deliver me. The *Caledonia* cannot take a Moccock, being Chartered for the Mich^a & S. West Furr Comp^y to take down their packs. The Same Com^y, I'm told, have now on board the *Caledonia* from 12 to 15,000 lbs Sugar which will be deposited at M^r M^eIntosh's or M^r Crawford will dispose of it himself on his way down, indeed I believe the sugar belongs to M^r Crawford. what now goes & what is to be sent will lessen the price of this Commodity much. I wish I was ordered to send the quantum now in His Majesty store here & S^t Josephs which would soon reduce the price, but its to be consumed here. Two other Adventurers I'm told proposes to send down a few moccocks to Barter for Flour. Should you be able to send a few Bags of Oats without putting yourself to any inconvenience whatever they will be very Acceptable. Madelain joins as well [as] Theresse & Julia in fervent prayers for you & My Mothers' Health & our Love to My Sisters & Brothers

Your Dutiful son

Jn^o Askin J^r

Have the goodness to purchase or get purchased two Girths & a Sircingle & Crupper & forward the Acc^t w^h the same by first Vessel.

de Muy, son of the commandant of Detroit, and another married, Jacques Duperon Baby. A brother of his father was Claude Thomas Réaume of the British Indian Department, and a cousin was the wife of Jehu Hay, last British lieutenant-governor of Detroit. See *B. H. R.*, I, *passim*.

⁶⁴ Michael Dousman (Douseman) was a native of Pennsylvania who is said to have come to Detroit with Wayne's army in the summer of 1796. Friend Palmer, *Early Days in Detroit*. . . (Detroit, 1906), 469. Quite possibly this was not his first appearance in the Northwest, however; he was long prominent in trade at Mackinac, and in a formal protest to Governor Cass, Oct. 30, 1819, justifying his conduct at Mackinac in 1812, he states that he was then "claimed [by the British authorities] as a ci-devant British subject." One may reasonably infer from this that he was a resident of the Northwest prior to the American occupation in 1796. Prior to the War of 1812, Dousman was a partner in the firm of David Stone and Company. Although he regarded himself as an American citizen, the part he played in the capture of Mackinac in 1812, and his subsequent conduct during the war caused the American authorities to question his allegiance, a doubt which Dousman indignantly repelled. See *Wis. Hist. Soc., Proc.*, 1912, pp. 138-39 and *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXXVI, 416-19. In the thirties, Dousman was reported to be the wealthiest citizen of Mackinac. He was president of the village in 1824-25 and probate judge of Michilimackinac County from 1833 to 1840. He was the father of John Dousman, who both before and after the War of 1812 was a resident of Green Bay, and of Hercules L. Dousman, for many years a prominent trader and citizen of Prarie du Chien, Wis. See *ibid.*, *passim*, especially XXXVI, 416-19; *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, *passim*.

Madelaine requests that the Sewet of the Oxon may be melted & sent in a Bag or some other way in the *Nancy*, *Caledonia* or any other Vessell.

Endorsed: Received y^e 22^d Sep^t Answ^d y^e 30th.

WAR NEWS FROM MONTREAL

Montreal 8th October 1812

My dear Old Friend It is so long a time since I heard from you that my anxiety is increased so that I must risk writing, altho it may never reach you. where are you, or where was you when the Great Hull crossed the River. I have frequently inquired about you but could not get any intelgence of you untill a young man came down who used to live with you, I forgot his name, is now at Quebec, who reported that you escaped safe without damage, which gave me much pleasure. we are hour^{'ly} expecting Genr^l Dearboon with about Ten Thousand of his Troops to attack us. but we are not afeard of thim, as our Canadians are in high Spirits, we have one Regement of Voyageurs, and M^c-Gillavray is their Colo^l. the fall is come & expect cold weather will send the americans Home for the Winter. Their Head Quarters are at Platsburg. our old Friend Todd is here and intends staying for the Winter. we are all soldiers here. I expect preferment [before] the Battle being the oldest Captn in the British Militia. the Americans on the opposite side of the river are continually attacking our Boats going up to Kingston. I think it is their intention (if they can) to stop the communication, which they will find a difficult matter to perform. we have near ten thou[s]and men in arms here, and can with ease raise Twenty thousand more, in ten days in case they come over our lines, but we do not intend attacking them on their side. I hope the Cold weather will disperse them for the Winter, and before the Spring they may have a change in their Gove[rn]ment which will produce a peace. what has become of your son in Law my Lawyer. I never hear from him. times are geting very bad. Trade allmost at an end. what changes in the World since you an I first met. it is hard we cannot supose to

live to see the end of it. if that evil spirrit Bonepart was to take his departure to the other World before I go, [it] would be a great satisfaction. let me hear from you. I hope you will not be disturbed this winter, as Hulls business has deter'd them. but the Americans to raise the Spirits of their people have published in their Gazets that Gen[e]ral Brock is taken with Detroit, Niagara & all the Country to Kingston. there is a report this day of a British fleet being on the American coast, but I am fearful there is no foundation for it. the English are allways slow in their operations. my pen is so bad I am afeard you will not be able to read what I write. therefore I have only to say I and my family are well, and wish & pray that you and yours may be allway [illegible]

Your old friend

Alexander Henry

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Amherstburg Detroit.

Endorsed: Montreal Oct 8^h 1812 Alex^r Henry Esq^r to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 3^d Dec^r Answ^d y^e 14^h

OPERATIONS AT NIAGARA

Mountain Near Queenston Dec^r 11th 1812

Dear Father Your affectionate favour of the 26th Ult^o came to hand the night before last. I am surprised to find by it that very few of the letters I have wrote you since I have been down here, have reached you. the one giving an account of the Battle of Queenston⁶⁵ went up in the *Lady Prevost* with some others and some newspapers, and I fancy you must have got them before this. John & William Robertson were both in the Battle and distinguished themselves, William particularly who behaved as galantly as any one engaged that day. Rob^t Hamilton & Alex^r were in it also but only in the afternoon, and Alex could not take an active part in it, for he could not ride nor hardly walk on account of boils therefore remained or went with Cap^t Holcroft who was cannonading the enemy when crossing the River. I had been laying confined to my bed

⁶⁵ Fought, Oct. 13, 1812.

three days before the Action with boils and so ill with them that part of the time I could not even sit up in bed to eat my victuals. I was at George Hamilton's when the attack was made and had to get off as well as I could. I remained a short time in Queenston, but finding the enemy were getting the better of us I went to avoid being taken prisoner; an account of the battle is in one of the newspapers I sent you, therefore shall defer saying any thing more about it at present. Soon after it, an armistice was concluded which did not terminate until the 19th ult^o. Our batteries at Fort George the day after it's termination opened on Fort Niagara and a cannonade was kept up all day. some houses were burnt on the other side & about as many at Navy Hall. we lost two men Cap^t Fry a half pay Officer, and a Soldier of the 49th Reg^t and I believe the enemy lost but few. Some shots were fired from Queenston over to Lewiston but not returned. from that day we were quiet enough, except now and then a false alarm, until the 28th Ult^o, when 500 of the Enemy came over from Black Rock and landed near the Ferry below Fort Erie about 1 O'clock in the morning most of them unobserved. They fired on our men at the Batteries who had only time to spike the Cannon and make their escape after defending themselves sometime but resistance was useless against such a force. some of the Royal Artillery were killed and some wounded. L^t King was severely wounded and taken prisoner and is since dead. about 40 of the 49th Reg^t and some militia attacked the Enemy and drove them once or twice; but at last met with a party from Fort Erie who were coming to our Support but not knowing in the dark friends from foes they fired on each other. M^r Langout of the 49th Reg^t was badly wounded with three balls he commanded a small party of his Reg^t but the Americans were among them and were supposed to be Indians for they all wore blanket coats, and looked so much like them in the day time that I am not surprised our men were deceived by them at night. The light company of the 41st Reg^t who were stationed on the River below the place of attack, met the enemy when marching up to aid the 49th Reg^t. They did not know they were the Americans until the word of command was given make ready, take aim. the Officer com-

manding the 41st then attacked them (they were the advanced guard of the Enemy) and he drove them back on their main body. The 41st then Retired until day light, for it was allmost impossible to know your Friends from your foes. At day break the Enemy had all retreated and crossed the River, except Cap^t King Aid e camp to General Smith⁶⁶ & 35 men who were taken prisoners. A party of Sailors composed part of the force, who came over. These Scoundrels set fire to some houses of M^r Douglass's & M^r Hardison's which were burnt to the Ground. these fellows had to make a precipitate retreat. some were killed and others taken prisoners. we lost nearly eighty men in killed wounded & those taken prisoners. the prisoners have since been exchanged. the 49th & the long Point Militia suffered most. After day light the Enemy made an attempt with seventeen boats to come over. we had then about eight hundred men ready to receive them, and when the boats came within musket shot, we pored in such a brisk fire among them that the foremost boats cried out for quarter; but as it was impossible to stop the militia from firing on them, they all turned back. a three pounder was playing on them all the time and giving them plenty Grape or Canister shot. what number the Americans lost in this attempt to cross is not known; but the boats were full when they were coming to this side, and only five, six, or seven were seen to get out of most of them, when they reached the other shore in this and the Affair during the night, the Enemy may have lost about two hundred men. after this failure, a large force was seen to collect and upwards of fifty boats scows &^{oa} were filled with men, horses and artillery, all ready to come over. (the enemy it has since been ascertained were then 7000 strong) General Smith then summonsed the Garrison at Fort Erie to surrender; but an answer was sent him to say that we could not think of surrendering the place as we could repel any force he could bring against it and we only had then about fifteen hundred men at the place and hardly Cannon to fire at them which the Enemy knew, and they had at least 16 field pieces and those very fine ones. immediately after

⁶⁶ General Alexander Smyth.

he got this Answer instead of coming over, he disembarked all his troops. it's said that part of his Army were so disgusted with him that they endeavoured to kill him and three shots were fired at him. one thing seems certain that he had to fly from his Army. this we have from our prisoners who have returned, from an Inhabitant of the Head of the Lake who made his escape [torn] that side and from Cap^t Fitzgerald who was over with a flag of truce. two thousand of his Army [illegible] him and hundreds were returning home, all the militia Volunteers are gone and the Army of the Centre as General Smith is pleased to call it, was reduced by desertion & deaths from seven thousand to three thous^d. I Saw one of this cowardly General's Proclamations lately. he has the Impudence to call Upper Canada part of the United States. it's a good deal like Hull's; but not quite so barbarous this General Smith was to do so much when he came that he had almost alarmed us; but he proves to be even worse than Hull. We have been quite on the alert since this business at Fort Erie and as the desertions and sickness has been very common of late among the militia, our force is much reduced and the duty is become very hard both on the officers and men who remain we have lost a number of militia men by the Pleurisy. they are taken very suddenly and very violently ill, and often die in eight or nine days. numbers of women in the Country have died also lately and what is strange you hardly hear of a Regular Soldier being sick. but they are used to fatigue and are well clad which is not the case with all the militia, but clothing is now given to the flank Companies, some articles for nothing & some at a very low rate. We have a most Galant young Officer here Col Bishopp⁶⁷ who commanded at Fort Erie the day General Smith pretended to come over. he does every thing he can

⁶⁷ Cecil Bisshopp, eldest son of Sir Cecil Bisshopp, Bart. Born in 1783, he became lieutenant and captain in the First Foot Guards Regiment, Sept. 3, 1803, and subsequently major in the Ninety-eighth Regiment. On May 30, 1811, he was commissioned lieutenant colonel. He possessed a peculiarly engaging personality, a fact attested alike by friend and foe. On July 11, 1813, he commanded a force which raided Black Rock, was wounded, and died of his wounds on July 16. By his brothers officers, his body was conveyed to the little cemetery at Lundy's Lane for burial, and over his resting place a few months later was waged the desperate battle of Lundy's Lane. In 1846 the present tomb was erected by his sisters. Data derived from British army lists; Irving, *op. cit.*, 29; Niagara Hist. Soc. pubs., No. 22, pp. 4-6; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XV, 701.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

to make the militia comfortable, and does not mind a little expense. he has already ingratiated himself in their favour and he is as much liked by them I believe as General Brock was. We are in great hopes of soon having a peace every thing seems nearly settled between Sir John B. Warren⁶⁸ & M^r Monroe. I think the Oxen had better be sold to M^r Brush at the price you mention, for I should not know what to do with them here. Please give my love to my Dear Mother my Brothers & Sisters. I am

Your dutiful & Affectionate Son
Charles Askin

John Askin Esq^r near Sandwich

P.S. I am [may] say have been stationed with my Company at & near Chippawaw, I am now on leave of absence for a few days & am spending [torn] here with John Robertson & tomorrow I must return to my duty.

Your affectionate Son
Ch^s Askin

Please thank Alex for me for the sword he was so kind as to send me. I sent up a few things this fall which I hope you will receive by the *Lady Prevost*.

Your affectionate Son
Ch^s Askin

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston Dec^r 11^h 1812 Charles to Jn^o
Askin recv^d y^e 24^h Answ^d y^e 28th

OPERATIONS AT NIAGARA

Near Queenston December 14th 1812

Dear Father Your affectionate favour of the 26th Ult^o I had the pleasure of receiving a few days ago, and partly answered, but could not go to Niagara therefore missed the opportunity of sending you an answer by the return of the mail. I luckily met with one of Lord Selkirk's men from Beldown [Baldoon] who is kind enough to take charge of

⁶⁸ Sir John B. Warren (1753-1822) devoted his life to the British navy, rising to the rank of admiral. Early in 1813 he was given command of the fleet on the North American station, resigning the command the following year. See *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

this and says he will leave it at Dolson's for you, as also of another letter I gave him to day which I wrote you two days ago, in which I have given you an account of an Affair which took place on the 28th Ult^o at Fort Erie in which we suffered severely: but our Enemy much more, and the business terminated much to our honour, and in such a manner as to convince the American Nation that Canada is not to be conquered in such an easy manner as they imagined. General Smith sent a Summons to the Com^o officer at Fort Erie on that day to surrender that Garrison and it's Dependencies. he then had seven thousand men under his Command at Black Rock and Buffaloe, and we had but fifteen hundred at Fort Erie to oppose him, part of them Indians and part militia but an answer was sent him by Col. Bishopp (a very Galant young Officer just from Spain) that he could not think of doing it as he had sufficient force to repel any force he could bring over. Gen. Smith then had part of his Army embarked in sixty boats, scows &^{ca} ready to come over, and we were ill prepared to receive him, which he knew very well for most of our Cannon had been spiked by a party of his men or our own that morning, when the party from the other side came and surprised our men, in the Batteries, but Gen. Smith had not courage enough notwithstanding all these advantages to attempt to come over, and immediately on receiving the Answer to his Summons disembarked his troops some of his men yanky like wanted to know from him what he meant by this manœuvre, but he would not condescend to tell them & this gave them such offence that three or four shot it's said were fired at him, and he made his escape. one thing is certain that he is gone, but as great a Coward as I think him I hardly think he has left his Army in the shameful manner he is said to have done. he is one of the most violent General's I think that has been op[p]osed to us this War. if poor Hull is hung for Cowardice I think there is not many of their Generals but should share the same fate. General Van Ranselair I think was a good Officer but he was too liberal and too much of a Gentleman to please his Country. he was obliged to give up the Command and General Smith superseded him. I am Sorry to say the

Naval Department on Lake Ontario have done nothing to boast of this War, and the Americans, unless other Officers & Crews are got for our Vessels will make themselves masters of that Lake next Spring. some merchant Vessels have been taken in Sight of the *Royal George* by small armed American Vessels and no exertion made to save them or rescue them. a Lieu^t of the British Navy arrived yesterday at Niagara who I believe will have the Command of One, and some others I believe, with a Crew from Halifax are coming, and four Vessels are ordered to be built at Kingston and two at York. There is no doubt but the Enemy will try every means in their power to make themselves masters of both Lakes Ontario & Erie.

No troops I believe are yet on their way here, though it has frequently [been] reported there were, except twenty of the Royal Artillery and an Officer who I believe are now on the road between Kingston & this. they are much wanted here, for though we have 2 Companies of militia Artillery on the lines, it's not enough and men from the 41st & 49th have sometimes to Assist in manning the Guns. Some troops, I saw in a Montreal paper today are on their march from Halifax to Quebec under the command of L^t Col. Hamilton of the 100th Reg^t, what number it is not said. I saw English papers as late as 25th Aug^t there is hardly any thing said about the War with the Americans, and I only see an account of one Reg^t going to Halifax I think its the 97th, though there are lists of the reinforcements going to Portugal & Spain. the papers are nearly filled with accounts of Lord Wellington's great victories in Spain and Portugal. a prayer has been ordered to be used throughout the United Kingdom of Eng & Ireland thanking the Almighty for our Successes in Spain particularly for the Victory over the French at the Battle of Salamanca. No more titles can be given Lord Wellington than he allready has; for he has Spanish & Portuguese ones enough to fill half a Sheet of paper near. I believe they are now at a loss to know what rewards to make him for his splendid achievements. S^t Regis a small Town in Lower Canada which was taken some time ago by the Americans, has lately been retaken by us, & a company of Americans were lately taken at a place called River Sable by a party of Militia. General

Dearborn⁶⁹ the Commander in Chief of the American Army, it's said is going against Montreal with 10,000 men. they have not many troops in Lower Canada yet I fancy General Dearborn will meet with a warm reception if he goes there. there are two Reg^{ts} raised in Lower Canada since the War one called the Voltageurs & the other the Voyageurs they are fine active Canadians in each. We are flattered notwithstanding the preparations which we are making for War, with hopes of a speedy and honorable peace. Sir John B. Warren is said to [be] at Washington and all differences between the two Country's is settled, except the naturalization of British born subjects who come to America. respecting this our Ambassador and M^r Monroe cannot agree. * * * *⁷⁰

Elizabeth Meredith's⁷¹ miniature picture I have got, but do not like to send it now.

Please give my love to my Dear Mother my Brothers & Sisters,

Your Dutiful & Affectionate Son

Charles Askin.

P. I wish it was possible to get the pistol you lent M^r Pattinson

Your Affectionate Son

John Askin Esq^r Sandwich

Charles Askin

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Care of Mathew Dolson Esq^r River Thames Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston Dec^r 14^h 1812 Charles to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 24^h Asnw^d y^e 28th

NEWS FROM AMHERSTBURG

Amherstburgh Dec^r 26th 1812

My Dear Father I have heard of a Letter from you some days but as yet have not recieved it. I have again sent to the shoemaker for the shoes, and have not been able

⁶⁹ For the career of Henry Dearborn, see *Appleton's Cyclopaedia Am. Biog.*

⁷⁰ The portion of the letter here omitted deals with various private concerns of the writer.

⁷¹ Daughter of David Meredith and Archange Askin, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 15.

to get a Tea Pot. We last Evg heard a great deal of News which it was said was conveyed through Charles to you & Mr Woods. I feel quite anxious to hear of him. I hope you recieved the Letters I returned I lost no time in Enclosing & sending them by Mr Smith. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than when I can hear from him. from you saying that he did not like that any body but yourself should read his Letters, I did not even allow Captain M^eKee to do so. We are still much distressed respecting the poor people who are missing, who left this for the vessel there are three from this House, James Blue Jacket Joseph Park & Billy Peck. poor L'esperance is also one of the unfortunate men. we have not heard a word today last Evg Doctor Richardson told me that Robert was gone toward Point au Ple with some other person. until he returns I will have some hopes. how many poor souls sent out of the world without answering any good end & their friends left in the greatest distress. Captain M^eKee suffers dreadfully with the Rheumatism in the Head, but otherwise much better.

It will afford you the great[e]st pleasure I am sure to hear that your Grandson takes the greatest delight in the Instructions that are given him. Doctor Simms is anxious to have a case of Mathematical Instruments for him. he will himself take proper care of them if you can lend them. he says that the globe being a little out of order is of no consequence. My Dear Father I wish you would do me a favor, which is If you should meet with a favorable opportunity of sending these things, with the Books you mentioned to have the goodness to do so. our Horses are not shod. the Harness was lent to James Blue Jacket as also our Sleigh & we have not acariole, and if you could lend me a [illegible] Bunk that is if you should have one not in use, I should be very thankful. out of Nine or ten Bedsteads I cannot get one up they have been so shattered from moving during the war. Doctor Simms was quite pleased when Cap^t M^eKee told him last evg, that you was a famous hand at Algebra. this is the first Christmass for some years that has past without our seeing each other. I believe my Brothers are determined I shall not see them this year. I hope Brush is getting better. I pity poor Alice with my whole heart. I hope the children are well. Nelly promises

to come & see me after christmass. there is not a day passes that I do not think of the Miniature picture that Archange has sent, perhaps my mother has it. There is a Report this morning that a number of Indians are on their way down with scalps, how true, I do not know. I have a cotton shirt, or at least the making of one for my Uncle whenever I can send it up. If my Mother will be good enough to send Captain M^oKee' old stockings I will endeavor to get feet into them for I cannot get a pair. Please to offer my dutifull good wishes to my D^r Mother, Brother Uncle Aunt & [illegible] Barthe.

Your D^r Affectionate Daughter

T M^oKee

Endorsed: Amherstburgh Dec^r 26^h 1812 M^{rs} M^oKee
to Jn^o Askin Answ^d 4^h Jan^y 1813

DEATH OF JAMES HENRY

[December 31, 1812]

James Henry has at length fallen a victim to the bottle. he has been in a constant drunken fit for this some time past. he the day before yesterday took a little breckfast in his bed and about 12 oclock (noon) was found d[ead] there. I do not think there is [any] place on the continent of America of the size of Detroit and number of its inhabitants that has produced so many drunkards, I shall try to hurry my children out of it before They ever learn the use of this poisonous liquid.

E. B.

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Strabane

Endorsed: Detroit Dec^r 31th 1812 E. Brush to Jn^o
Askin Answ^d y^y 4^h Jan^y 1813.