

SECTION II

THE MACKINAC LETTER BOOK: 1778

FROM JOHN ASKIN¹ TO JOHN HAY² AT DETROIT,
APRIL 27, 1778

Our Lake is just now clear so that we are in hopes of seeing Mr Bennett³ in a Battoe of [or] Vessell very soon, which puts me in mind that it is time to begin my Letters.

I was favoured with your two kind letters dated in Oct^r & Jan^y last which I had no oppertunity of answering since. I'm under many obligations to you for the news & more so as I'm sure you can have but very little spare time, we are now very impatient to hear from your quarter as we think something new must have happened. I wish it was a peace In all probability the Spring news will reach us before you, if so I shall make you acquainted with all I learn.

We have had a severe winter & of course plenty of Fish, we expect many Indians in, to go down the Country, Major De Peyster sends Provisions to meet them in a few days.

¹ This letter and the following ones to July 7 are from a letter book kept by Askin at Mackinac in 1778, the only one of the letter books, presumably kept by him, whose present existence is known.

² John (or Jehu) Hay, the last lieutenant-governor of Detroit, was a native of Chester, Pa., who in 1758 enlisted in the Sixtieth (Royal American) Regiment. In 1762 he was serving at Detroit as a lieutenant, and he continued here during the siege of 1763, and later was appointed commissary in the Indian Department. In 1776 he became deputy Indian agent and major of Detroit militia. He was on Hamilton's Vincennes expedition of 1778, and went with his chief to Williamsburg, Virginia, as prisoner of war. In October, 1780, he was paroled, and a year later was exchanged. In 1782 he was appointed lieutenant-governor of Detroit, but owing to the opposition of Colonel De Peyster, he did not assume the office until July, 1784. After a somewhat unhappy career as governor, he died August 2, 1785, and was buried with much ceremony in the governor's gardens. See Alexander Harrow, *Log Book of the Gage and Rebecca*, ms. copy in Burton Hist. Coll. In the summer of 1911 a coffin was unearthed by workmen excavating a sewer on Jefferson Avenue, which Mr. C. M. Burton became convinced, upon investigation, contained the mortal remains of Governor Hay. See Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, I, 132-33; Denissen, *op. cit.*

In 1764 Hay married Marie Julie Réaume of Detroit, daughter of Hyacinthe Réaume and Agatha Lacelle, born Jan. 22, 1748. Of their several children Pierre Henry, Agatha, and John grew to maturity.

³ Lieutenant Thomas Bennett of the Eighth Regiment, who served under Colonel De Peyster as second in command at Mackinac. He was active in the military operations of the British in the Northwest during the Revolution. Among other services he led a detachment to Grand Portage at the head of Lake Superior in 1778, and another to the Illinois country in 1779. In 1786 he commanded for a short time the post of Detroit. Information concerning these several activities is contained in the *Mich. Pio. Colls.* and the *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, *passim*.

I have changed my plann of settling at Detroit untill the war is over, indeed in the present Situation of affairs, it's hard to undertake anything.

I dont remember if I mentioned to you that I had a Daughter came up from Montreal last year, where she has been for several [years] past in the Nunnery. She was Married this Winter to Cap^t Robertson,⁴ a Match which pleases me well, as I never was acquainted with a more industrious, Sober, Honenst man, a fine prospect, perhaps to be a grand father next year.

There was no less than twenty-one pairs of Sheets, besides some bed & Bolster cases quite rotten of the quantity I received last fall. I noted it at the Bottom of my receipt to the Barrack Master Gen^l, since which I have had them Condemned We have passed our Winter as agreeably as the place would admit off a Dance every week, & now the Spring is come on some of us return to our work as usual M^{rs} Askin & my famely are well & join with me in best wishes for you M^{rs} Hay & Famelies prosperity

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO THOMAS McMURRY⁵ AT MONTREAL,
APRIL 28, 1778

I was favoured with your kind letter bearing Date the 7th Aug^t last by our Winters Express.

I return you & M^{rs} M^cMurry my sincere thanks for your care of my Son,⁶ he is not yet arrived here owing to the

⁴ The daughter here referred to was Catherine Askin, whose mother was Askin's Indian consort. Apparently she was fifteen years of age at this time (see letter of Askin to Commodore Grant, April 28, 1778, printed *post*, 77. Phyllis Barthe, there alluded to as though of the same age as Catherine Askin, was born Dec. 18, 1762); hence she was born about the close of 1762. After the death of Robertson she married (second) Robert Hamilton of Queenston. For her death, which occurred about the close of the year 1796, see *post*, 188.

⁵ Dr. Daniel Morison's manuscript journal of events at Mackinac, 1769-72, preserved in the Burton Hist. Coll., discloses that one Thomas McMurray was a member of the garrison there during this period. In the *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XX, 58-59 is printed a memorial to Governor Haldimand from the merchants of Montreal and Quebec which is signed by Thomas McMurray, among others. Presumably he is the man to whom Askin's letter was addressed.

⁶ John Askin Jr. was the eldest son of John Askin, his mother being, presumably, the Indian woman, Manette. He was born at L'Arbre Croche, probably about the year 1762. He was later sent down to Montreal to be educated, and seems to have remained there several years. He embarked on commercial ventures in the Maumee region,

Vessell being drove back by a hard gale of wind when in sight of this place, he is at Detroit at School. I have no news to acquaint you with from this quarter. Your friend M^r Lyons, M^r Burggy⁷ & M^r Ainse⁸ is the only remains of those which lived here in your time. You would be Surprized to see how this place grows, there is near one hundred houses in the Subarbs, & people are now building tolerable good ones.

which proved unsuccessful on the whole, and in which he incurred a debt to his father which he never succeeded in discharging. He engaged with the latter in certain land speculations, and in this connection went to Greenville in 1795 to dissuade the Indians from concluding a treaty with General Wayne without including in it certain restrictions vital to the success of the speculators. By General Wayne he was promptly arrested and secluded, however, until the negotiations were concluded. On reaching Detroit he rendered a report of his mission to Colonel England, which is now preserved in the Burton Hist. Coll. In 1801 Askin was appointed by Governor Hunter, collector of customs at Sandwich, which office he held until 1807 when he was appointed interpreter in the Indian Department and stationed at St. Joseph Island. At the opening of war in 1812 he led the Ottawa and Chippewa contingent of the British force which captured Mackinac, and here he continued to serve throughout the war, withdrawing with the garrison to Drummond Island in 1815. Here he was at least until 1816, when a letter to his parents expresses the hope of removal to Amherstburg. He died at Amherstburg about the beginning of 1820; the notice of his death (undated) appeared in the *Detroit Gazette* of Jan. 7, 1820.

Askin married at Detroit, Oct. 21, 1791, Mary Madelaine Peltier, member of an old Detroit family, who died at Amherstburg on June 17, 1878. Her father, Jacques Peltier, born, Jan. 16, 1747, in old age related his recollections of the Pontiac siege of 1763, and this narrative was utilized by Francis Parkman. Prior to Askin's marriage with Madelaine Peltier he became the father of a son by a woman living in the Indian country, who may have been a white captive, but whose identity is unrecorded. This son, Jean B. or "Johnny," was baptized at Detroit a few weeks after the father's marriage, and was reared to manhood largely by his grandfather, John Askin. He went with his father to St. Joseph, where in 1810 he engaged to go west in the fur trade, and spent one winter on the St. Croix River and a second in the Lac du Flambeau region of northern Wisconsin. In the summer of 1812 he led a band of Indians to take part in the campaign at Detroit, arriving, however, after Hull's surrender. He subsequently married a Miss Van Allen and became one of the early settlers of London, Ont., where he served as first clerk of the court (in the early thirties), and where he died, Nov. 15, 1869. Information adapted from the Askin Papers, *passim*, and other ms. data in the Burton Hist. Coll.; from the Askin Papers in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa; and from data supplied by Miss Amelia Harris of London, Ont.

⁷ Christian Berczy, a trader of Mackinac. A memorial of Captain Samuel Robertson to Governor Haldimand, published in the *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XI, 328-30, incidentally discloses that Berczy died between September, 1781, and December, 1782. Concerning his career we have learned little.

⁸ Joseph Louis Ainse, born May 1, 1744, whose parentage is noted *ante*, 50-51. He was one of the informers against Major Rogers in 1766, and thereafter served as interpreter at Mackinac for many years. In 1786, he undertook an extensive journey among the tribes of the upper Mississippi country, going as the agent of Sir John Johnson to restore peace between the warring tribes in the interest of the Indian trade. He was later accused of peculations in connection with the discharge of this mission, and a lengthy trial ensued, the record of which is printed in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XI, 491 ff.

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

I forgot I have news. Kitty is Married to a very worthy man, who has been master of my Vessell this several years past. M^{rs} Askin & her join in Compliments to M^{rs} M^cMurry. I am

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MR. EDGAR⁹ AT DETROIT,
APRIL 28, 1778

I was favoured with your letter of Oct^r last in February. You'll oblige me much if you can let me have the Iron, the Quantity I lost 4 C^t, but as you weighed what you found more than your own, the remainder must be lost some place else. I would in these troublesome times, compound for the two-thirds of all my things on the way up. I'm glad you are once more got to a part of the world where your friends can hear from you. I realy thought you lost, when I heard you went to S^t Vincent.¹⁰ M^{rs} Askin presents her kind Compliments to you & believe me with an Inclination to serve you.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JAMES STERLING AT DETROIT,
APRIL 28, 1778

This is the first oppertunity I have had of answering M^r

⁹ Apparently William Edgar of the Detroit firm of Macomb, Edgar, and Macomb. Edgar's grandfather, Thomas Edgar, was born in Edinburgh, Oct. 19, 1681. His family were adherents of the Stuart cause, and as a consequence of the rebellion of 1715 he migrated to America. On the vessel which brought him he became acquainted with Janet Knox, a widow, whom he married soon after arriving in America. They settled at Rahway, New Jersey, and had six children, the second being Alexander Edgar, born in 1718; he married Mary Smith and lived in the vicinity of Rahway. Their fourth son was William, the subject of our present sketch. He was born in 1745 and was engaged in trade at Detroit as early as 1768, in which year he was appointed by Capt. George Turnbull, the commandant, as one of a committee of ten residents to report upon the administration of justice then current. In April, 1774, he was one of the Detroit traders who were required to deposit their liquor in a "general rum store" and agree not to give more than one glass at a time to an Indian. In 1780 he signed a petition of the merchants of Detroit to Governor Haldimand complaining of the military control of shipping and the way private goods were handled by the representatives of the Crown. About this time he was a partner of the Macombs and several of the ledgers of the firm are preserved in the Burton Hist. Coll. At a subsequent date (undetermined) Edgar removed to the Illinois country, where the family was represented as late as 1861. Descendants of Thomas Edgar, the original immigrant, have long resided in Detroit. See *Mich. Pio. Colls., passim*; Farmer, *op. cit., passim*; and letter of C. G. Edgar of Detroit, May 16, 1912, preserved in the Burton Hist. Coll.

¹⁰ Vincennes, Indiana.

Parkes¹¹ two Letters, dated the 29th Oct^r & 8th of Dec^r last, as also your favours of the 9th of Dec^r & 3^d of Jan^y, M^r Parks mention that the thread charged for making of Bags was 17/4, it may be so in his books, but in the acc^t he sent me it is but 5/8 & that's the reason why I wrote him there was a small Error in that Article. I return him many thanks for his care of my Liquors & other things that arrive at Detroit for me. I beg you'll be so kind as to continue, as I have no other in your Quarter that I can so well require such a favour off, & as I know it must be attended with cost & loss of time I will pay both most willingly, I here inclose you a list of all the things I have on the way between Montreal & your Post & I beg on the arrival of each Vessell you will have some person of trust to attend the unloading & immediately take charge of mine, if such a person was to cost three Dollars a Day for that time, it would be better than have my effects embezeled.

Please send me two Doz. of good common Chairs by the first oppertunity, if the Sugar with you has not been sold for 2/ per lb as I wrote M^r Parke, it is worth that here at least, therefore I should be glad to have it. I hope you will at least be able to procure the greater part of the Corn & Flour I ordered & much of the former hulled, a Disapointment in these articles would in part knock up the North Trade & I assure you if less than three or four Vessells load of these things arrive this Season, some persons in that back country will perish & the trade be hurt, there is little or no dependance to be put on the grain that's to be got this way.

¹¹ William Park was for a long time a partner of George Meldrum in the firm of Meldrum and Park at Detroit. Subsequent to the American occupation Park crossed the river and made his home at Petite Côte (below modern Sandwich). He there continued in trade; the partnership with Meldrum seems to have been dissolved about the year 1803, but years passed before the accounts and debts of the firm were settled. Park was a man of local influence, as shown by the fact that he was a justice at Detroit and a captain of militia after his removal to the Canadian side. In 1789 he married Therese Gouin, daughter of Claude Jean Gouin and Mary Joseph Cuillerier *dit* Beaubien, who was born at Detroit, July 18, 1765. He was buried at Sandwich, from the home of Richard Pattinson, Oct. 4, 1811. Mrs. Park was buried there, August 19, 1814. Information compiled from mss. in the Burton Hist. Coll.

Major De Payster¹² could not pay M^r Langlades¹³ order on him, having no Authority to give him his Pay. I have therefore got another draft & a Certificate such as you required, both which I inclose you.

when I mention this oppertunity I mean the first that offers, for I know of none yet, but am in daily hopes to see a Vessell or boat from your Quarter, if I then should have more to say, I will add it or write another Letter, at present I will conclude by assuring you & M^{rs} Sterling of M^{rs} Askin & my most sincere wishes for your wellfare

May 10th 1778

Major De Peyster has wrote so pressingly to Governor Hamilton¹⁴ about my things geting forward that I dare say

¹² Arent Schuyler De Peyster was born in New York City, June 27, 1736. At the age of nineteen he entered the Eighth Regiment, and saw service abroad and in various parts of North America. His service in the Northwest during the Revolution was particularly notable. He was commandant of Mackinac from 1774 until after the capture of Governor Henry Hamilton by George Rogers Clark at Vincennes when (1779) De Peyster was promoted to the command at Detroit. He continued in command at Detroit until 1784. De Peyster and Askin were staunch friends, as many letters in the Askin Papers attest. De Peyster accompanied his regiment to England in 1785, and ten years later retired from the service and settled at Dumfries, Scotland, where he died, November 2, 1832, in his ninety-seventh year. He was a man of literary tastes, and a confirmed rhymster. A close friend and neighbor of De Peyster at Dumfries was Robert Burns, and what is said to have been the last poem ever composed by the latter was one addressed to De Peyster in reply to an inquiry after Burns's health. See Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, I, 130-33; and *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 344.

¹³ Charles Michel Langlade was born at Mackinac in 1729, his father being a French trader and his mother an Indian woman. Langlade became a notable partisan leader of the western tribesmen, first on the French side in the French and Indian War, and later on the British side in the Revolutionary War. As early as 1752 he led his tawny followers from Mackinac and Detroit in the raid upon Pickawillany, Ohio, which proved to be the opening blow of the Seven Years' War. Although the evidence is conflicting, there is some reason for attributing to Langlade's enterprise the destruction of General Braddock's army in 1755; while there is similar evidence to indicate that had Langlade been properly supported, he would have dealt Wolfe's army a fatal blow at Quebec in 1759. Speculation aside, the Langlades remained at Mackinac until the close of the French and Indian War (Charles Langlade figures prominently in Alexander Henry's narrative of the massacre of 1763) when they removed to Green Bay. Here our subject lived until an advanced age, dying some time subsequent to January, 1800. A Wisconsin county bears his name, and in the State Historical Library in Madison are numerous papers and personal relics pertaining to him. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 130-32, and Quaife, *Wisconsin: Its History and Its People*, *passim*, especially 190.

¹⁴ Henry Hamilton, a native of Ireland, came to America as a soldier in the French and Indian War. He served under Amherst at Louisburg and under Wolfe at Quebec. From 1761-63 he was in the West Indies, and some time later his regiment was returned to England. Prior to the Revolution the civil administration of all Canada had been entrusted to a governor, with headquarters at Quebec. Soon after the war

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

on your having application made for me I will not be refused if there is room

Send me a p^r of Common Cart Wheels

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. MCGILL,¹⁵ FROBISHER,¹⁶
PATTERSON,¹⁷ ETC. AT MONTREAL, APRIL 28, 1778

I take this opportunity to acquaint you that I'm taking every precaution & hope to prevent your meeting with any disappointment, in what I'm to furnish you. As I found that no part of the great quantity of Liquors which I had on the road, arrived I attempted to purchase some at Detroit, but

began, the Earl of Dartmouth created the new office of lieutenant-governor at Mackinac, Detroit, and Vincennes, and Hamilton received the appointment at Detroit. He reached Detroit, November 9, 1775, and his vigorous and frequently stormy administration was terminated by his departure on the Vincennes campaign in the autumn of 1778, from which he was never to return to Detroit. Consigned to imprisonment in Virginia, on securing his release, he went to England, whence he returned to Canada in 1782, bearing the appointment of lieutenant-governor. His administration was beset with difficulties, even as the earlier one at Detroit had been, and over a question of patronage he was summarily recalled in 1785. In 1790 he was governor of the Bermudas, and in 1796, while serving as governor of Dominica, died and was buried on the island. On his Detroit career see Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, II, 909 ff. A valuable article dealing with his later career as lieutenant-governor of Canada is by F. H. Soward, "The Struggle over the Laws of Canada, 1783-91" in *Canadian Historical Review*, V, 314-35.

¹⁵ James McGill, born in Glasgow, Scotland, Oct. 6, 1744, came to Canada and entered upon the Northwest trade soon after the close of the French and Indian War. He made several journeys into the Northwest, and became an intimate and lifelong friend of Askin. McGill was one of the original shareholders in the famous North West Company. Toward the close of the Revolution he settled down at Montreal, where, with Isaac Todd, he was extensively engaged in the capacity of middleman, outfitting the fur traders with needed supplies and disposing of their furs through the London market. McGill was highly successful in business, and at his death was reputed to be the wealthiest man in Canada. His business and other correspondence with Askin was extensive, and much of it will be presented on succeeding pages of this work. He married, Dec. 2, 1776, Marie Charlotte Guillemin, daughter of Guillaume Guillemin, a prominent official of Canada, and widow of Joseph Amable Trotier dit DesRivières. McGill died at Montreal, Dec. 19, 1813. He bequeathed a portion of his property for the founding of the university which now bears his name. See Pierre-Georges Roy, *Les Monuments Commémoratifs de la Province de Quebec* (Quebec, 1923), I, 211-12.

¹⁶ Benjamin Frobisher, one of three brothers who at an early date were active in the Northwest fur trade. Joseph and Thomas Frobisher founded the Montreal firm of Frobisher Brothers, in which Benjamin, the youngest of the three, replaced Thomas about the year 1778. The two partners (Benjamin and Joseph) were active in founding the North West Company, and served as its principal agent at Montreal. Benjamin Frobisher died at Montreal, April 14, 1787. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 235, and Gordon C. Davidson, *The North West Company* (Berkeley, Calif., 1918), *passim*.

¹⁷ Charles Patterson, another early British trader and a founder of the North West Company. In 1788 Patterson with his boat crew was drowned in Lake Michigan,

the Price being from 26/ to 30/ N. Y. Curr^{y18} the Gallon & little certainty of getting it here made me drop the Scheme. I'm to have 80 Kegs of W. I. rum of 8 G^s each from Mons^r Barth[e],¹⁹ at 150ⁿ the Keg, this with about 100 Bushells of hull'd Corn, shall go off very early for the Portage.²⁰ Corn in all probabillity will be as hard to be got as Rum. I'm informed from Detroit that it will cost 24/ the Bushell Unhulled & without Bags, but that's not the worst, how to get it here now the Vessells are Stopt, the Kings Vessell will come as usual perhaps, but besides Kings Stores, she has to carry for so many persons, that each can have very little on Board. I myself could [load] her twice, from all this you may judge, how difficult is it to fullfill Contracts, however dont be discouraged, if money or Industry will answer, you shall not be disapointed. Rum I expect for a Certainty by

about sixty miles west of Mackinac, at a point still designated on the map as Patter-son's Point.

¹⁸ The subject of the monetary systems employed in the Northwest trade in this period is full of perplexities. Values shifted from time to time, and from place to place at a given time. Even so experienced a trader as Askin required a set of rules for transforming calculations from one currency to another. The sterling shilling was the standard of value, of course; generally speaking, Halifax currency was worth less than sterling, and New York less than, Halifax. In one account of the year 1780 Askin figures Halifax at an advance of 75 to 80 per cent upon sterling, and New York currency at 60 per cent advance upon Halifax.

¹⁹ Jean Baptiste Barthe, born at Detroit in 1753, the brother of Askin's wife. He was located at this time at Sault Ste. Marie, where he was engaged in supplying the fur traders. He later lived at Mackinac and Detroit, and following the American occupation of the latter place, in 1796, he elected, like Askin, to remain a British subject and removed to the south side of the river. On December 28, 1778, he married at Detroit Geneviève Cuillerier *dû* Beaubien, having hurriedly returned from Mackinac when an attack by the Americans was believed to be impending. Barthe was buried at Sandwich, June 22, 1827. Geneviève Barthe was buried there July 14, 1847. See Denissen, *op. cit.*

²⁰ Grand Portage, at the western end of Lake Superior, where a nine-mile portage was made between the Lake and a point above the falls on Pigeon River. Practically from the beginning of the British régime in the fur trade until the opening years of the nineteenth century, Grand Portage was the great interior entrepôt of the fur trade conducted by the Montreal merchants in the far Northwest. About the year 1801, however, due to the discovery that Grand Portage was on the American side of the boundary line drawn by the treaty of 1783, the site was abandoned by the British traders in favor of a new location at the mouth of the Kaministiquia River, to which the name of Fort William (in honor of William McGillivray) was presently given.

the Grand River ²¹ & I shall send a Vessell to Millwakee²² in search of Corn. I have 150 Bushells already there & hope for more. I have about 200 here & I shall send a Batteaux to Detroit that will bring me at least 120 Bushells, this with my chance in the Vessell, I hope will answer my demands, my principle motive for giving you this information was, least the public Report of a Scanty [supply] might make you uneasy. I'm well provided with all the necessary Voytures²³ to pass your effects from hence to the Portage

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO COMMODORE GRANT²⁴ AT DETROIT,
APRIL 28, 1778

The Ice being all gone I think we may in a very few days expect a Vessell or Boat from your Post. I therefore think it time to begin & answer the Letters I received this Winter. I was favoured with two of yours bearing date the 9th of Dec^r & 2^d of January last, which among other things brought

²¹ There were two alternative routes by which goods might be transported between Montreal and Mackinac and the Lake Superior country: via Niagara, Detroit, and the lakes, and via the ancient French trade route of the Ottawa (or Grand) River to Lake Huron. The Ottawa River route was beset by numerous portages, and the vessels employed were, of course, canoes.

²² To a greater extent than is commonly realized, the traders depended upon the Indians for their supplies of corn, an essential article in the conduct of the fur trade. The Ottawa of L'Arbre Croche (near modern Harbor Springs, Michigan) were relied upon for corn from a very early date. Askin's letters show that the Indians at Milwaukee were another source of supply. In the autumn of 1779, Captain Samuel Robertson was sent from Mackinac on a voyage around Lake Michigan, chiefly to gather up as much corn as might be procured. His journal, published in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XI, 203-12, gives an interesting picture of conditions at Milwaukee at this date.

²³ A "voyture" might be any species of vehicle of transportation; here it necessarily refers to the boats under Askin's control.

²⁴ Alexander Grant, born May 20, 1734, commonly known as the "Commodore," was a younger son of Patrick Grant of Glenmoriston, Inverness-shire, Scotland. Alexander Grant was "bred to the sea," but in 1757 he secured his transfer to Montgomery's Highlanders (the Seventy-Seventh Regiment) which was then being organized for service in America. He served in Forbes's campaign against Fort Duquesne in 1758, being wounded in Major Grant's disastrous rout at Grant's Hill, and in 1759 was with the army of General Amherst in the Lake Champlain region. Here he was appointed by Amherst to command a sloop on Lake Champlain, and the following year was given command of all the vessels on the lake. Thus was his further career determined. From 1763 until the Revolution he had the direction of the British naval establishment on all the lakes; in 1778 his field of authority was confined to the upper lakes (Erie, Huron, and Michigan), and he continued in command of the naval establishment on these lakes until January, 1812. In 1774 the Commodore

me the agreeable news of your promotion. I'm sincerely glad of it, & I believe it must be allowed, that your long & faithfull service merited such a Reward. M^{rs} Askin & I are both sorry for You & M^{rs} Grants loss, however as the child was Young & M^{rs} Grant received no Injury it lessens the misfortune much.

I return you many thanks for your Intelligence & advice to my Clerk. I have [had] a very considerable cargo on the way all last year & no part of it arrived here which is a severe Stroke to me. I must beg your assistance in ordering it to be forwarded in the Kings Vessells (as no others are permitted to Sail)²⁵ as I could not think of giving your Clerk so much trouble, I have wrote M^r Sterling to receive for me what may arrive at Detroit in the Vessells, & I should take it as a particular favour that you would order to be taken on Board the Vessells for this Post, what Liquors or Provisions M^r Sterling may have to send me. I would also represent to you that one Vessell is not capable of bringing to this place from your Post all the Provisions necessary to Support the trade of the Country, not even the *Dunmore*, what I mean by Provision is Corn & Flour, & should the Quantity fall Short, even one-third, some of the People in the Back Country in all probability will perish for want. I thought it necessary to give you this information that you

married Therese Barthe of Detroit, whose sister, Marie Archange, was the wife of John Askin. He subsequently developed a fine country home of some 240 acres, known as Grant Castle, in modern Grosse Pointe Farms, later known as P. C. 231. It is a somewhat curious fact that although he continued his naval command until his death, served as lieutenant of Essex County militia, as legislator, and, even for a time as acting-governor of Upper Canada, he continued to reside at Grant Castle on the American side. Here he died, May 8, 1813. His body was carried by canoe to Sandwich and there interred in the churchyard. A memorial tablet on the wall of the present church recites the principal facts of his career. Information adapted from George F. MacDonald's biographical sketch of Commodore Grant, in Ontario Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, XXIII, 167-81; P. J. Anderson, *Major Alpin's Ancestors and Descendants* (Aberdeen, 1904). On Grant's naval career see, also, *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet*, II, No. 5.

²⁵ In the French period, save for one or two isolated exceptions, there was no shipping on the upper lakes. With the transfer of Canada to British rule, a naval establishment was begun and maintained as an integral part of the military control of the western country. Prior to the Revolutionary War it was the policy of General Gage to permit the traders to maintain private vessels on the lakes; but early in that war, with a view to controlling more effectively the Indian trade and to maintaining a more effective defense against the Americans, the sailing of privately owned vessels was prohibited. This measure entailed, naturally, constant complaint on the part of the traders.

might acquaint the Governor with it, as it may not strike him in the same light. I certainly am or ought to be a judge of the Provisions necessary to carry on the trade of this place, & I know that when four Vessells arrived here in the Spring, loaded with Corn & Flour mostly, there was not too much, nor hardly ever any left, the trade is now increased, therefore at least the same Quantities of Provisions wanted to Support it. I want 1000 Bushels of Corn myself & 30 thousand of Flour, who only furnish a few of the Traders.

Young M^r Barth, LaVoine & Louisen²⁶ are all well. I have seen them this winter, the old Brother will do well, if he does not meet with some accident & I will do my best to serve the others however as yett they dont seem to have the same good inclinations, its true they are Young.

I'm Glad to hear M^r Barth is well, I expect he will soon be here, for I dont suppose he will go to the Miamis as he intended. I hope he has applied the money I gave him to the discharging of his Debts at Detroit, it realy hurts me to think of him indebted to any person, if he told me right he had more than sufficient from me to pay what he owed.

We are impatient for news I hope matters have taken a favourable turn since last fall.

We have endeavoured to make the Winter pass as agreeably as we could, by having a Dance every week. I had a Daughter came up from Montreal last Spring the age of Phyllis.²⁷ She is married to Cap^t Robertson this Winter, a match that pleases me well, this example will shew Phillis that she's not too Young & I realy think once past fifteen [one] cannot marry too soon, provided it is their Inclinations.

²⁶ "Young Mr. Barthe" was Jean Baptiste, for whom see *ante*, 34.

Lavoine Barthe (precise relationship uncertain) was at this time serving as clerk to Jean Baptiste at the Sault at an annual wage of 1000 livres. See Barthe ms. ledger in Burton Hist. Coll.

"Louisen" was Louis Theophile Barthe, a younger brother of Jean Baptiste, born at Detroit, March 31, 1760, and buried at Sandwich, May 16, 1825. Denissen, *op. cit.*

²⁷ The person here noted is, apparently, Phyllis Barthe, who later married Lieutenant Daniel Mercer of the Eighth Regiment. Mercer was stationed at Mackinac for a time where he managed, like almost everyone else, to incur the disfavor of Governor Sinclair, and in the summer of 1780 was placed under arrest. He later served at Detroit, where, presumably, he made the acquaintance of Phyllis Barthe. In Denissen, *op. cit.*, she is recorded as Mary Felicity Barthe, born on Ste. Anne Street, December 18, 1762. Lieutenant Mercer eventually returned to England, and numerous letters from him are preserved in the Askin Papers.

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M^{rs} Askin & I once thought before now to have had the pleasure of being Settled near you, but these troubles obliges us to determin not to leave this place untill there is a peace. I have even began to make a tolerable good House two Storry high, however if the warr ends soon, perhaps I may not finish it in the manner I intended. If I conveniently can I will make one Trip to Detroit this season to see you. M^{rs} Askin & the Children are well, she joins in most sincere wishes for you M^{rs} Grant & Famelies wellfare.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO SAMPSON FLEMING²⁸ AT DETROIT,
APRIL 28, 1778

I was favoured with your two Letters dated the 28th Oct^r last in February, also that dated in Dec^r, but your last dated the 2^d January I received in nineteen days after, this is fullfilling the Scripture, the 1st last & the last first. Respecting the Provisions wanting in Cap^t Ferrins²⁹ Cargo last fall, I only mentioned it to you that you might know the affair, not that I expect you can get any from him to replace it, nor do I require any from you. I realy believe the man is very honest, but perhaps not so Sharp that others may not cheat him, for the future I realy will send a man on Board to give a Receipt for each Boat load before they push off from the Vessell side.

I will follow Your advice & not have any Provisions Actually Condemned, untill I see when we can get others, however what is not fit for Serving I shall lay one side, our flour is realy very bad, if what you sent had reached us it

²⁸ Sampson Fleming had been Deputy Commissary of Stores and Provisions at Detroit since 1762 (for his appointment see *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XIX, 128-29). On June 17, 1768, he married at Detroit, Alice Haliburton, whose father had served as a chaplain in the British army, with which he came to America about the year 1758. Her mother, by a second marriage, became the mother of John Kinzie, of early Chicago fame; she subsequently married (third) William Forsyth of Detroit, for whom see *post*, 307. The Flemings removed to New York from Detroit. There Fleming died and his widow married Nicholas Low. Her descendants have long been prominent in New York City. Information adapted from Forsyth-Kinzie-Little genealogy by C. M. Burton (ms. in Burton Hist. Coll.) and other sources.

²⁹ Captain William Ferrin, who in a general return of the naval establishment on the upper lakes, January 1, 1779, is listed as commander of the sloop *Angelica*. Printed in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XI, 200.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

would have done much Service by mixing it with the other flour.

M^{rs} Askin & I return M^{rs} Fleming & you many thanks for the Stores you were so good as to send us, had they arrived they would have proved a seasonable relief, tho we are not quite destitute. M^{rs} Askin has still some Tea & loaf Sugar & at once a Day for herself will be able to hold out, the rest of us have Chocolate for Breakfast & Barly Substituted in the room of Coffe for the afternoon. Spirits & Spruce we have & can & must do without wine for the Present.

I sincerely wish you much joy of your Boy, perhaps he may one Day become my Son in law, I have Girls worth looking at. Cap^t Robertson was Married to my Daughter this Winter, so that I stand a fair chance of being a grand father in a Short time. I'm sure I have little the looks of it for I'm much Younger than when you saw me last, tho' in your opinion much crosser. I'm not altogether sure, but I have some intentions of paying you a Short Visitt in the month of May. I thought to have been an Inhabitant of Detroit before this, but untill the present troubles are at an end it's hardly possible. I little expected they would have continued so long

We have not any news in this Quarter worth your Notice. M^r Todd³⁰ mentions to me, that M^r Day³¹ says, he expects the Commissaries in the upper Country will soon be put in a better footing & have more pay allowed them, *comme il leur plaira*.

Many thanks for your Country Dance Book. I send it you by this oppertunity. (I mean the first that goes from this) We daily expect to see a Vessel or Boat from your Quarter as the Ice is now gone from here. M^{rs} Askin joins

³⁰ Isaac Todd of Montreal, an intimate friend of Askin, one of the founders of the North West Company, and long a foremost figure in the fur trade of the Northwest. The journal of Daniel Morison (ms. in Burton Hist. Coll.) shows him to have been at Mackinac as early as 1769, while expressions in letters of Alexander Henry to Askin imply that he was one of the earliest British traders in the Northwest. He maintained a life-long correspondence with Askin, and many of his letters are preserved in the Burton Hist. Coll.

³¹ Nathaniel Day was Commissary General of Provisions and Supplies, and hence Askin's immediate superior.

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

in best Compliments to M^{rs} Fleming & believe me most truly.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JAMES STERLING AT DETROIT,
MAY 8, 1778

Yours dated the 14th of April last I rec^d p^r M^r Bennett a few days ago, this will be delivered you by C^t Robertson as well as another letter from me dated the 28th April.

I'm sorry to hear by Mess^{rs} M^oBeth³² & Rankin³³ that in all probability no provisions for Trade will be suffered to come from your Post for this, this news has induced me to let Major De Peyster have 400 Bushels of the hulled Corn you purchased for me on the same terms I'm to pay you he writes you on the Subject, you'll therefore charge him & Credit me that Quantity, the remainder please apply to have put on board the Vessell for me. I'm in hopes if there is Room for it that you'll not be refused, as also the Flour, in reality the North Trade will be knocked up if Provisions cannot come.

I received the Wine & Tea by M^r Bennett which came very Seasonably. If you have not 400 Bushels of the Corn hulled to Send Major De Peyster, make up the Quantity with unhulled. I shall be very glad to see my Boy here, however I dont know if I shall send him back so soon. I will endeavour to purchase what you want of Blankets,

³² George McBeath was an active Mackinac trader in the Revolutionary period. In common with the other traders, in 1780-81, he followed the garrison from the mainland to the new post on Mackinac Island. In 1783 these traders (McBeath among them), disturbed by the fear that with the termination of the war and the surrender of Mackinac to the Americans they would suffer for lack of any formal title to their landed possessions on the island, petitioned the commandant to represent their case to Governor Haldimand (petition printed in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XI, 393-95). Earlier this same year, McBeath had been sent by Captain Robertson to Prairie du Chien, to announce to the tribes of that region the prospect of peace with the Americans and to urge them to refrain from further warlike activities. For documents concerning this enterprise see *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XI, 165-75. McBeath is said (*ibid.*, XIX, 237) to have left Canada in 1785.

³³ David Rankin, who would seem from Askin's reference to have been in partnership with McBeath at this time, was also a Mackinac trader who had family connections at Detroit. Rankin was at Mackinac as early as 1780 and as late as 1787. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*. In 1785 Rankin is described as a merchant of Montreal. See *post*, 285. In 1800 John Lawe of Green Bay married Therese Rankin, daughter of an Englishman and a Chippewa woman of Peshigo River. It seems a plausible surmise that the father was David Rankin, here noted.

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Martins, Mogisins &c M^{rs} Askin presents her Compliments to M^{rs} Sterling.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO NATHANIEL DAY AT MONTREAL,
MAY 8, 1778

The last oppertunity I had [of] writing you last fall was the 21st of Oct^r which accompanied two setts of Vouchers as well as the Returns for Issues & Expenditures to the 24th of that month. I now send you the like Vouchers & Returns from that time to the 24th of last month, there has not been any Provision Condemned here since the 24th of Dec^r last, owing to my Commanding Officers thinking it prudent even to keep the bad untill more comes up, or is on the way, this method I'm informed is also followed at Detroit. however to prevent your counting on bad Provisions, I think it necessary to inform you that there is about nine Barrells of Flour, Six of Pork & two Firkins of Butter put apart as unfitt to be Issued to the Troops.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JOHN HAY AT DETROIT,
MAY 8, 1778

I wrote you the 27th of last month which letter also goes by this oppertunity, the 2^d Instant I was favoured with your kind Letter by Lieut. Bennett & tho it dont bring me any Public news, it's not less wellcome, that of a friend & famelies wellfare is great & pleasing News. I have attentively looked over the acc^t of the manner in which you pass your time, & if it was not the hopes that it will soon end, I dare say no Reward could induce any person to undertake it. To serve a man's King & Country is a pleasing task, however Nature requires some rest & without which she will sink under her Burthen.

I will do my utmost endeavours to pay you a Visitt this Summer, tho' it will be a Short one. M^{rs} Robertson a Young Sailor goes with her husband this trip to see Detroit.

I'm sorry for the loss of your Seventh Son, tho' in all

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likelihood you will have a twelfth before you die.³⁴ M^{rs} Askin joins me in best Compliments to M^{rs} Hay.

P.S. I must beg your interest about getting what things of mine which may arrive at Detroit forwarded in the Kings Vessell for this place.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO NATHANIEL DAY AT MONTREAL,
MAY 8, 1778

The last time I had the honour of writing you was the 21st of Oct^r 1777 acknowledging the receipt of the Barrack Bedding, furniture & mold Candles you sent me, since which I have had no opportunity untill now of sending you the Barrack Accounts between June & Dec^r, they accompany this letter. You'll see in them a wastage of 34 lb^s of Candles on a Quantity I was obliged to have run over anew for the Guard, indeed they would not receive them as they were, worse I never have seen, & I imagine those you ordered to buy them were deceived, for I do assure you there was in some of the boxes a few good on the top & the remainder very bad.

You'll see by the acc^{ts} that there is a Ballance of £61..12..4 N.Y. Cur^y due me which I will draw on you for by some other opportunity.

The last acc^{ts} I have had from Mess^{rs} Todd & M^cGill still mention that they have not yet received payment for what was due me by Gen^l Robertson,³⁵ this is really a great hardship on me, to have advanced my own money here so long

³⁴ Hay's wife was Marie Julie Réaume, born at Detroit, January 22, 1748, and buried there, March 23, 1795. The exact date of the marriage has not been found but a son, Pierre, presumably the first son, was baptized, September 11, 1765. The child here referred to, William Hay, died, March 21, 1778, aged about one month. See Denissen, *op. cit.*, and Ste. Anne's Church Register (ms. copies in Burton Hist. Coll.).

³⁵ James Robertson, commissioned lieutenant colonel of the Sixteenth Regiment, Aug. 17, 1768; colonel, May 25, 1772; major general, Jan. 1, 1776 and Aug. 29, 1777. W. C. Ford, *British Officers Serving in the American Revolution, 1774-1783* (Brooklyn, 1897), 152.

ago & not yet repaid. I beg you'll be so kind as to make mention of it to his excellency Sir Guy Carleton.³⁶

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO THE NORTH WEST COMPANY AT
MONTREAL, MAY 8, 1778

I wrote you the latter end of last month, since which Lieu^t Bennett with Mess^{rs} McBeath & Rankin are arrived here in Boats, they say that we cannot expect any Vessell from Detroit before news gets from Montreal there, but what concerns you & me much more is, a report that perhaps neither Flour, Corn nor Rum will be Suffered to come from that Post to this, this Season (I mean for People in Trade) its certain that those who left Detroit this Spring were not Suffered to bring but a very small quantity nor could they get a positive answer whether or no these Articles would be Suffered to come at all or not.

I have applied to Major De Peyster who will make known to Governor Hamilton the bad consequences of laying an Imbargo on Provisions &c^a without which it's impossible that trade can be Supported. You may depend on every thing that's possible being done to prevent Disappointments, when the Vessell arrives I will be able to write you with more certainty, therefore this warning is only to yourselves.

I send off the first of your things for the Portage in three days Consisting of Rum, Corn & what's most necessary. I shall at same time write your Clerk to provide some place to receive L^t Bennett & the Troops with him, untill some of Your C^o Arrives.

Your Canoes are Ready.

³⁶ Sir Guy Carleton was born at Strabane, Ireland, in 1724. He joined the army at the age of eighteen, served under Wolfe at Quebec, and in 1766 was appointed lieutenant-governor and the following year governor-general of Quebec. He successfully defended Quebec against Arnold's force at the opening of the Revolution. In 1778 he was succeeded in the governorship by General Haldimand. He served in the army throughout the war, and in 1786 was again appointed governor of Canada. This time he held the office until 1796, although absent from Canada from 1791 to 1793. See sketch in Ontario Bureau of Archives, *Thirteenth Report*, 172.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. TODD AND MCGILL
AT MONTREAL, MAY 8, 1778

The inclosed letter to the Gentlemen of the N. W. C^o will Shew you how matters go on at Detroit. I could make you some remittance now, but think it best to wait for an oppertunity by the Grand River.

Major De Peyster has taken my Vessell into the Service, Robison [Robertson] I beleive will be ready to sail with her by the 10th he is now Riging. I do declare that as things now go on, I dont know what to order, of all I write for nothing Arrives. I must leave all to Yourselves, if Liquors could be got up, I mean Rum, by the way of the lakes without being embezeled to so great a degree, no matter how much you sent, however I think there should be a man to take care of each Boat load, or at most not to have charge of more than two.

M^{rs} Askin begs you'll be so kind as to deliver Madam Perinault the piece of Silk with the trimmings, that's coming or come from England for her, there's two pieces in the Memord^m, but one of them we Suppose will be left Montreal before this Reaches you. Madam Perinault will be so kind as to have the other made up for M^{rs} Askin.

I here inclose you a Bill of Sale or what may answer for such, of one L. Blanc who goes down the country Prisoner to take his trial he quarrelled with another of my men who died soon after. Please inform me about the Land & write me on the Subject.

I have no news about the Payment of my Rum that was Destroyed on Lake Erie by order of Col^o Caldwell,³⁷ it's very hard if that just demand will not be paid, perhaps you could obtain an order to receive the same Quantity out of the Kings Store at Niagara, which if the carrying place

³⁷ The allusion is to the wreck of the *Chippewa* in November, 1775, when Lieutenant Colonel Caldwell ordered the goods destroyed (after having been brought ashore) to prevent their falling into American hands. See documents in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, IX, 467 and XIX, 319. Lieutenant Colonel John Caldwell received his commission in the Eighth Regiment, Oct. 27, 1772. During the Revolution the regiment was stationed at Niagara, where in September, 1776, Caldwell presided over a council of the Iroquois and western tribes. He either retired or died soon after this. *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XX, 687.

[price] was paid I would gladly Accept. I know these applications must be attended with loss of time and expence, both which I'm willing to pay.

If you find a difficulty in getting forward the things I ordered out from England, You'll in that case only forward me for the present what you know to be most Sealable & necessary, of which you'r as good a judge as myself, the Sheet Lead may remain as well as the furniture of my House and such other things.

Lieu^{ts} Bennett & Clowes,³⁸ will pay me here what they owe you, which I shall remit you by the Grand River, the Latter does not know the price of the Coffe. Lieu^t Bennett desires you may send him a Barrell of your best Maderia & a Barrell of Common Rum, the Maderia to be marked for Lieu^t Clowes & the Rum for Doctor Mitchell.³⁹ Doctor Mitchell desires you may send a Barrell of Sugar, filled up with Barly, if you send me all these Acc^{ts} I will get payment for them here. I shall want a House Carpenter very much,

38 Lieutenant George Clowes, of the Eighth Regiment, who served in the western country from about 1774 to 1784. He probably came to Mackinac in 1774, and was there at least as late as the autumn of 1782. Upon De Peyster's removal to Detroit he was left in command of the garrison for a time. A number of his letters are printed in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, IX. He returned to England in 1784, where he retired or died in 1791. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 393.

39 David Mitchell was born in Edinburgh in 1750. He graduated in medicine there at the age of twenty-three, and the following year came to Canada as surgeon's mate in the Eighth Regiment. He was soon stationed at Mackinac, where he remained for many years. Here he married a Chippewa woman, and to them thirteen children were born. He built a large house, developed a farm on the island, engaged in the Indian trade, and was made justice of the peace for the district. On the American occupation of Mackinac in 1796, Dr. Mitchell withdrew to St. Joseph Island in Lake Huron, although his wife continued to reside at Mackinac. During the War of 1812 he served as surgeon's mate in the British Indian Department, and in this capacity shared in the conquest of Mackinac in 1812. Upon the British evacuation in 1815, Dr. Mitchell went to the new post on Drummond Island. Upon a later survey this was determined to be in American territory and was abandoned in 1828, the British force withdrawing to Penetanguishene. Here Dr. Mitchell died in 1830, and here he is buried in an unmarked grave. An interesting characterization of Madam Mitchell, his wife, who died at Drummond Island, Feb. 25, 1827, is given in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIV, 35-38; and his home at Mackinac is pictured in Mrs. Constance F. Woolson's story, "Anne," published in *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. LXII. Two of Dr. Mitchell's daughters married British army officers and his eldest son was a lieutenant in the British navy; another son studied medicine in England, and still another is reputed to have been an able mathematician. See Simcoe County Pioneer and Historical Society, *Pioneer Papers*, No. 5, p. 52 ff.; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*; and L. H. Irving (ed.), *Officers of the British Forces in Canada during the War of 1812-15*, 210-12.

I wish you could hire one for me at any Rate. Lieu^t Brooks⁴⁰ likewise wants a Tierce of Bristol Beer (not Porter) & a Cheshire Cheese, both which please direct for him & send forward. I write you as these Gentlemen Speak to me, & tho these orders are but trifling, yett as they may be an Introduction to more I make no doubt you'll not neglect sending them.

Inclosed is an acc^t of some things for Kitty with directions at Bottom, please send a Seperate Acc^t of them.

The Officers & Docter just now inform me that they have fallen on another method to get their things altogether, therefore desire I may desire You not to take any notice of what I wrote you in this Letter about sending them things.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO SAMPSON FLEMING AT DETROIT,
MAY 10, 1778

You will receive this and another I wrote some time ago both by Cap^t Robertson who Maj^r De Peyster sends to Detroit on the Kings account, this present letter is in answer to one you intended to have wrote me by M^r Bennett if you had not forgot. I'm glad to hear you have got so fine a boy & I beg you will not kill him with d-m-d Physick, you have no such right over him, it's sufficient you shorten your own Days if report may be depended on, he neither now, nor ever will in all probabillity want a Doctor. If I hear any more of your tampering with him & M^{rs} Fleming permits me, I will go down & take him from you.

I hear you have an oppertunity of making money & I should not be surprized you did not make use of it from a mistaken notion of people in the Service being obliged to live on their pay, dont Injure your famely so much. Your

⁴⁰ Lieutenant R. B. Brooke of the Eighth Regiment. He was at Mackinac in 1780 when Governor Sinclair assumed command of the garrison and engaged in a series of violent disputes with various individuals. One consequence of these disputes was the ordering of one company from Mackinac to Detroit; apparently Brooke went with it, for he was stationed there in 1782 and 1783. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*, especially documents in Vols. IX, X, and XI. In December, 1783, when the *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Angelica* were wrecked on Lake Erie, the efforts of Lieutenant Brooke to save the cargoes were commended by Colonel De Peyster. Brooke was still a lieutenant of the Eighth Regiment in 1790, after which his name disappears from the army list.

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pay & mine together is not able to keep either of our families. there is sometimes an opportunity of making money in the Service without either neglecting a mans duty, or taking one farthing from the Crown, this & this way only I mean, or would approve off for instance a merchant furnishes things for Government at a certain Rate, now if I'm in the Service & can furnish them at the same rate & make an advantage to myself is it not as just that I a Servant of the Crown reaps a Bennifitt by government as any merchant whatsoever, & I make no Doubt but your Commanding Officer would indulge you in anything reasonable that was for your advantage.

if I dont forget I will send back your Country Dance Book. I must beg your Interest if you have any to get what you can of my things that may be at Detroit put on Board each Vessell that sails for this.

M^{rs} Askin joins in best wishes for You M^{rs} Fleming & families Wellfare.

N. B. My Vessell & people being taken into the service I want to know what allowance they are to have of Provisions & Rum & who purchases & delivers out that rum & whether there is to be a Column for it with the Provisions & Returns made monthly of it or however make the matter clear to me.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE
AT SAULT STE. MARIE

a Mich. Le 18 de Mai 1778

Mon cher frere Mons^r Bennett Et Mons^r M^eBeath sont arrivés du detroit En Batteau Le 2 de Ce mois il nous Raporte que Le Gouverneur de detroit ne veut pas permettre de passer son poste ny Rom ni farine ny Blée p^r Les Commerçant jusque qu ils a Eu Réponse du general Carleton a qui il a Écrit a Ce sujets Et il garde La Barque jusque quil aye des nouvelles d'En Bas Celle Est En parties La Cause pour quoy je ne vous Est pas Envoyé Le Michilimakina plutot Comme j'aueroit Été flatté de vous avoir marqué p^r Certain si ont pouvoit se fier sur Le detroit ou non pour

des Boison Et provision, je nai pas jugé a propos non plus d'Envoyer Lavoine au detroit jusque jaye sue sil pouvoit Revenir chargé ou non Le Major Depeyster apris ma Barque pour Le service du Roy il y a Environ huit jour quel Est partie pour Le detroit par Elle il a fait de grande Representa-tion au Gouverneur hamilton de sorte que jesperre que tout le Rom farine Et Blée qui Est pour Le Commerce du nord aura permission de venir Mons^r sterling marque quil a tout mon Blée parée mais il Coute Bien chere Environ 18th Le minot sans sac Brulon Est partie ver Le Commancement du mois pour La Bay il yra a Milouaki chercher Le qui Est a Moy après son Retour je tache Rait quil aura permission daller au detroit sil y a permission pour de provision Et Rom de venir.

Le Blee que jay au saut avec Ceque vous me pretterez sera 250 minot de Cette quand tite vous aurez La Bonté de marquer 100 minot F O ce pour M^r oakes 100 minot N W ce pour La grande Compagnie Et Lautre 50 minots C.CH Cest pour M^r chaBoilliez Les 60 Baril d Rom sont pour La grande Compagnie ainsi vous Les marquerez N.W. je vous Envoye Le Compte de Ce qui est au Bord Le MichiLimaKina, Cela avec ceque vous avez au saut Le Butin de Mons^r houard, Et quelque sac de Bléd a Mons^r MacBeeth quil a au saut fera Les charge des deux Barque je trouve absolument nessaisaire que vous faite charger au Bord de la Depeyster La moitié du Butin de chaque un et que vous Le fassié faire partir ausitot quil Est possible Mons^r M^oDonnald, pomp, Et un homme que vous donneré yra dedans Lautre moitié du Butin de chaque un vous mettrez au Bord Le michili-makina si vous pouvez Le faire monté a present, si non vous navez qua Le Ranvoyer ici chercher un autre charge et ver Le tems quelle sera de Retour au saut il y aura assé demonde pour La faire monté. sauvage a Bien fait son devoir Et autre sa Langue il Est Bon homme. Mons^r M^odonneld Est un homme fidel un peu fier ce tout il faut avoir de la patience nous sommes dans un tems ou Les ou Les hommes sont Rares j'ai jugé a propos de donner a M^odonneld Et sauvage un demiard de Rom tous tout Les jours pendant Le tems

quil voyage Et a pomp La moitié de cette quantité Le tous ne fera pas une quantité et sa Les Excite a Bien faire Leur devoir Et pas toucher a Rien. jay donné pour tous Les trois de vivres, Et Rom jusquau 1st de juin je Les ai payéz Leur gage aussy jusque a ce tems La, apres ce jour vous Les nourrirez et Les payer lacher de Les contentes p^r Leur nourriture. je vous Envoye tous Ce que je puis avoir de Ceque vous me demandé, quand je pourré avoir Les autres articles je vous Les enverrés aussi je vous prie de ne pas arreté M^eDonnel pour assister a monter Lautre Barque non plus de changer sauvage dans Le depeyster comme jay promis Le Contraire, et il faut tenir parol avec tous Le monde je vous Envoye Le Compte de tous ce que je vous Est fourny depuis Le 22 octobre passé je vous avois Envoyez tout Le Compte jusqu'a Cette datte. jay porté a votre avoir Le 11 Card de poison a 60th Le Card mais Ceux du detroit je nait pas porte Encore Comme Mons^r Sterling a negligé de me marquer pour Combien ils seson vendue quand jay arrettez Mes Compte Le premier jour de Lannée vous me devié 60191th 13^s vous verrez Ce que vous avéz Eu depuis Cette datte. si vous avés quelque Compte avec moy qui ne pas Encore porté faites moi Le sçavoir que je puis Regler mes Compte pour quil fassent La meme somme Comme Les votre.

il ny a point de nouvelle puBlic tout paroît tranquille silon Les dernière avis de Montreal je ne crois pas que Le may que Mons^r Cadotte a planté Regarde personne de Bord que vous ne vous servés pas pour des pavillions, Mons^r Bennett Envoye quelque outils pour Le Grand portage vous noublierez pas de Les mettre au Bord Le Depeyster

faite mes compliment a Madame M^eDonnell Comme il ny a Rien de nouveau je ne luy est pas Écrit adressé Le Butin de Mons^r houard a Mons^r charles Boyéz je doit fournir pour Mons^r henrie 20 sac ou minots de gros Blée 20 minot de Blée Lissivés Et 2 Cents de farine je mettré Cest article dans La Barque sil y a de la place, si non ils yron Lautre voyage. Cependant si quelque un au nom de Mons^r henrie vous demande Cest article avant que je puis Les Envoyer ayez La bonté de donner autant de La votre.

il faut tacher de trouver un Homme pour aller dans la place de Pomp, apres la premiere Voyage. Je ne puis pas me passer de lui. Je n'ai personne a present de tout mes hommes un Autre il est maladife. Vous livrez Le Butin de Mons^r Henrie à Mons^r Cadott En prenant un recu. Vous trouverez peutetre quelque Article dans votre Compte porté haut. Je vous promis que tout est si rare et Chere que ce ne peut pas etre Autrement et Je Conte que les prix Vont Augmenter En lieu diminuer. le Bouf au Detroit est de 30^s a 40^s le livre et le Lard En proportion. comme la Quantité de sac de Chaque Marque sont pas Mentioné dans l'Etat de charge, seulement le Nombre de Minots, vous trouverez les sacs qui ont deux Minot Marque 2, ceux dun Minot et demi 1½ et les Autres selon leur Quantité. Vous trouverez quelque Chose porté à votre Compte pour Brulon et La Voine Lautom passé si vous n'avez pas rebatu ces Articles sur leur gages faites moi le scavoir et Je le ferrai, vous pouvez pas Je Compte le rebatre comme Je ne vous avois pas envoyé le Compte de cela

Translation

Michilimackinac, May 18, 1778

My dear Brother: Mr. Bennett and Mr. McBeath have come from Detroit with a boat the second of this month. They report that the governor of that post will not allow any rum, flour, or corn for the traders to pass there until he hears from Gen. Carleton, to whom he has written on the subject. He is detaining the vessel also until he hears from below. This is partly the reason why I have not sent you the *Mackinac* sooner, I wanted to be sure that rum and provisions could be depended upon from Detroit and I did not think it advisable to send Lavoine down until I knew whether or not he would be allowed to return loaded.

Major De Peyster has taken my vessel into the King's service and about eight days ago she sailed for Detroit. By her the Major stated our case so strongly to Governor Hamilton that I have hopes of all the rum, flour, and corn needed for the northern trade being allowed to come up.

Mr. Sterling says that he has all my corn ready but that it is very dear, about 18 livres a minot, without the bag. Brulon⁴¹ left for La Baye⁴² the first of the month and will go to Milwaukee to gather up what I have there. When he returns I shall try to get permission for him to go to Detroit, provided that rum and provisions are allowed to come.

The corn I have at the Sault, with what you can lend me, will make 250 minots. Of this kindly mark 100 minots F O for Mr. Oakes, 100 minots N W for the North West Company, and the remaining 50 minots CCH for Mr. Chaboillez.⁴³ The 60 barrels of rum are for the North West Company, therefore mark them N W also. I am sending the bill for what is on board the *Mackinac*. That, with what you have at the Sault, Mr. Howard's⁴⁴ merchandise, and some

⁴¹ Brulon appears in Barthe's ledger (ms. in Burton Hist. Coll.) as an engagé, at this time, of Barthe.

⁴² This was the French designation for modern Green Bay.

⁴³ The Chaboillez families of Detroit and Mackinac were descended from Charles Chaboillez, a native of Champagne, who at an advanced age married at Montreal, Oct. 8, 1704, Angélique Dandonneau du Sablé. He was buried, Aug. 20, 1708, leaving his widow and two children, Charles, baptized, Dec. 8, 1706, and Marie Anne, baptized, July 29, 1708. In February, 1710, the widow married Ignace Jean *dit* Vien. A few years later she removed with her family to Mackinac and still later to Detroit. She was buried at Detroit, Aug. 11, 1764.

Marie Anne Chaboillez married Pierre Parent, of Mackinac, who in 1764 was "acting-commandant" of the place. Soon after this the Parents returned to Montreal, where Pierre died in 1766 and his widow in October, 1790. Charles Chaboillez, brother of Marie Anne, married at Mackinac, Sept. 22, 1735, Marie Anne Chevalier, daughter of Jean Baptiste Chevalier and Frances Alavoine. He passed his life in the Northwest trade, and was buried at Mackinac, Nov. 19, 1757. His widow subsequently returned to Montreal to live and was buried there, July 14, 1788, aged eighty-two years.

Nine children were born to Charles Chaboillez and Marie Anne Chevalier. The first five were sons, namely, Charles, Jean Baptiste, Augustin, Louis Joseph, Paul Amable, and Pierre Louis. All engaged in the Northwest trade, and all were partisans of Great Britain in the Revolution. Charles, here mentioned, became one of the leading traders of the Northwest in his time. He early embarked on the trade of the far Northwest, and in 1804 Lewis and Clark encountered him on the upper Missouri. He was one of two French-Canadians to be admitted as partners in the North West Company.

He married at Montreal, Oct. 27, 1769, Marguerite Larchevêque *dit* La Promenade, whose father was a wealthy trader. She died, April 29, 1798; Charles Chaboillez died, Sept. 25, 1808. One of their daughters became the wife of Simon McTavish, and another the wife of Roderick McKenzie. Information adapted from history of the Chaboillez family by E. Z. Massicotte in *Le Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, XXVIII.

⁴⁴ Joseph Howard was an English trader who came to Mackinac as early as 1763. In 1779 he was arrested on order of General Haldimand for having violated orders in going to the upper lakes without a license. The year before this he had contributed to a fund raised by the "Merchants, Inhabitants, and Traders" of Mackinac for the support of a missionary at this place. In 1788 he was involved in the charges made

bags of corn that Mr. McBeath has at the Sault, will load the two vessels. It is absolutely necessary that you put on board the *De Peyster* one-half of each man's merchandise. See, too, that Mr. McDonald⁴⁵ gets off as soon as possible. Pomp, and another man whom you will engage, will go in her.

The other half of each man's merchandise you will load in the *Mackinac* if you can get her ready now. If not, send her back here for another cargo, and by the time she is to return to the Sault there will be plenty of people to load her.

The Indian has done well. He is a good man if one could only understand what he says. Mr. McDonald is trustworthy, somewhat overbearing, but we must be patient and remember that men are scarce just now. It seemed best to give McDonald and the Indian each a quarter of a pint of rum per day while on the voyage, and half that quantity to Pomp. The whole will not amount to much and will be an incentive to good work besides keeping them from helping themselves from the cargo. I have given all three their provisions, and rum, up to June 1, and have paid them their wages for the same time. After that you will take care of them, and pay them, allowing for their victuals from the cargo.

I am sending you all I can get of what you asked and when I have the other articles will send them too. I beg you not to detain McDonald to help load the other vessel, nor to change the Indian to the *De Peyster* as I have promised him he is not to be changed and one must keep one's word with everybody. Also you will have here the account of what I have sent you since October 22. Your account up to that date was sent before. I have credited you with 11 barrels of fish at 60 livres a barrel, but not with the Detroit shipment as Mr. Sterling has neglected to mention how they sold. When I balanced my accounts the first of the year

against Joseph Ainse on his mission of 1786 to restore peace on the Mississippi. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 238, and *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*.

⁴⁵ The Barthe ledger (ms. in Burton Hist. Coll.) records one McDonnell as engagé to John Askin in June, 1778. Information which would identify his career further has not been found.

you owed me 60,191 livres 13 sols. You can see what you have had since that date. If you have anything against me not yet entered let me know that I may make my account agree with yours.

There is no public news. Everything seems quiet according to the latest dispatches from Montreal. I do not think it matters to anyone about the Maypole⁴⁶ Mr. Cadotte set up provided it is not used as a flag-staff. Mr. Bennett sends some tools for the Grand Portage. Do not forget to put them on board the *De Peyster*.

Give my respects to Mrs. McDonald. There is no news so I am not writing to her. Address Mr. Howard's merchandise to Mr. Charles Boyez.⁴⁷ I am to furnish Mr. Henry⁴⁸ with 20 minots of hulled corn and 20 minots of lye hominy, and 2 cwt. of flour. If there is room in this vessel I shall put them on board, if not they will go another trip.

⁴⁶ The origin of the ceremony of the Maypole, whose practice at Mackinac is here alluded to, is lost in the mists of antiquity. The French settlers of Canada carried it with them from the Old World to the New, and wherever the French voyager went in following the widespread ramifications of the fur trade, there went, also, the custom associated with the Maypole. Thus, Alexander Ross, in *Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River* (Quaife, ed., Chicago, 1923), 85-86, states: "It is a habit among the grandes of the Indian trade to have May-poles with their names inscribed thereon in conspicuous places, not to dance round, but merely to denote that such a person passed there on such a day, or to commemorate some event. For this purpose the tallest tree on the highest ground is generally selected, and all the branches are stripped off except a small tuft at the top." For a valuable general discussion of the Maypole in Canada see "La Fête du Mai" by J. Edmond Roy, in *Le Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, XXX, 146-52.

⁴⁷ This may have been Charles Boyer (Boyez), who on Sept. 3, 1761, acted as godfather at the baptism at Mackinac of Charles Louis Cardin, on which occasion he is characterized as a voyager. Other Boyers, who may have been descendants of Charles, are noted in the Mackinac Register of Baptisms in this period. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 63 *et passim*. A Boyer family figures also at Detroit in the Revolutionary period—quite probably related to the Mackinac line. One Charles Boyer, who may have been identical with the person here noted, was trading on the Assiniboin River in 1780-81. In 1787 he built Fort Vermilion on Peace River. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 238.

⁴⁸ Alexander Henry came to Mackinac immediately following the British conquest of Canada and thereafter, until 1776, was engaged in the trade of the Great Lakes and the far Northwest. Having attained a considerable degree of prosperity during these years, he established himself at Montreal, which remained his home until his death in 1824. For practically half a century he was one of the leading residents of that city. In 1809 he published an account of his activities during his years spent in the western fur trade, which is regarded as a standard, and in certain respects unique, authority on the period with which it deals. It has been twice reprinted: in 1901 under the editorship of James Bain; and in 1921 under the editorship of M. M. Quaife. Henry was an intimate friend of Askin throughout life, and many of his letters are preserved among the Askin Papers.

However, if anyone asks you for the flour in Mr. Henry's name before I can send it, be good enough to supply it from yours.

We must find a man to go in Pomp's place after this first voyage. I cannot do without him. Of all my men I have no one now. Another is sick. Deliver Mr. Henry's merchandise to Mr. Cadotte and take a receipt. You may think some articles on your account are dear but it cannot be helped, everything is so scarce and so high-priced. I expect even higher prices instead of lower. Beef is from 30 to 40 sols a pound at Detroit, and pork in proportion. As the amount in each bag is not mentioned in the bill, only the number of minots, notice that the bags with two minots are marked 2, those with one-and-a-half are marked 1½, and the rest in the same way. Some things on your account were for Brulon and Lavoine last fall. If you have not deducted that amount from their wages let me know and I shall do it. But I see you cannot as I have not told you what things.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO CHARLES CHABOILLET

a Michilimakina Le 18 may 1778

Mons^r et ami: Comme je Croix Bien avoir un autre occasion de vous Écrire avant que vous serez arrivés au grand portage je direz moin pour Le present

Je vous Envoye Ci inclu Le Compte de Ce que jay En-Barqué pour vous dans deux petite Barque qui sont destiné pour Le portage mais Comme une Et En Bas Et Lautre En haut du saut je fais partage votre Butin Comme Ceux des autres ainsy selon les apparence vous Recevrez une moitié Beaucoup plutot que Lautre, mais jesperre que vous Recevrez tout Ce que je dois vous fournir Lontems avant que vous En aurez Besoin. La necessité mé oblige de vous Envoyer 20 Baril deau devie deBlée en Lieu de Rom Cependant j'esperre pouvoir Le Replacer en Rom et Reprendre Laudevie avant que vous aurez Besoin vous saurez par dautre quil Est impossible davoir de Rom et dautre Boison de Montreal a present et pour Le Blée et farine il y a pas arrivés du detroit Cette année 20 sac de Lun ny de Lautre

et ont nous assure que Le Gouverneur hamelton ne veut pas souffrire Boison ny provision de quitter son poste Cette année quand La Barque arrivera de La je pourrai vous Ecrire avec plus de sertificate, il Est Bien vrais que Le minot de gros Bleed se vend au détroit pour 18^{re} sens sac et La farine En proportion.

il me sera inutile de vous parler des nouvelle Comme Les Canots de Montreal sera arrivé avant vous Et il auront des nouvelle plus frais que moy vos deux frere Mess^{rs} auGustin et polite avec Leur dame sont arrivé de La grande Rivière hier. tout Ma famille se portent bien. Mon Epouse vous fait bien ses Complimens.

Je Suis
Mons^r &^{ca}

per M^r M^oDonnald

Translation

Michilimackinac, May 18, 1778

Sir and Friend: In all probability I shall have another opportunity of writing to you before you reach the Grand Portage so shall not say much now.

Inclosed is the account of what I have shipped for you on two small vessels bound for the Portage but as one is below, and the other above the Sault, I have had your merchandise, and that of the other traders also, divided. According to present indications you will receive one half much sooner than the other. I hope, however, that you will have the whole amount that I am to send you long before you will have need of it. I have been obliged to send you 20 barrels of whiskey instead of rum. I may have the rum before you need to use this and can replace it if you wish. You will see by my former letter that it has been impossible to get liquors up from Montreal, and as for corn and flour there have not been 20 bags of either reach Detroit this year, and we are told that Governor Hamilton will not allow either liquor or provisions to leave that post. When my vessel arrives I shall be able to write you with more certainty.

We do know, however, that a minot of hulled corn costs 18 livres at Detroit, without the bag, and flour in proportion.

It would be useless for me to give you any news. The canoes from Montreal will be at the Portage before you get there and with later dispatches than we have here. Your two brothers, Augustin⁴⁹ and Hypolyte,⁵⁰ and their wives, arrived yesterday by way of the Grand River. My family are all well. My wife presents her compliments.

I am

Sir, &ca.

Per Mr. McDonald

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MR. BEAUSOLEIL

a Michilimakina Le 18 may 1778

Mons^r Beausoleille

Mons^r Je fais partir di cy une Barque chargé des Effets pour Le grand portage il y a aussi Renduë au saut S^{te} marie La charge de Lautre Barque qui Est sur Le Lac Superieur je vous Envoye inclu Le Compte de Cequi ya appartenant ala grand compagnie EnBarqué dans tous les deux Barques, Cependant Comme Celle qui Est En haut Le saut pourra se Rendre Beaucoup plutot que celle qui Est a monté jay Écrit a Mons^r Barthe de partager Et gallement Entre Les deux Barque Les Butin que chaquun peut en avoir une pièce Etant Bien sure que Le tous sera Renduë longtems avant

⁴⁹ Augustin Chaboillez was baptized at Mackinac, July 26, 1739, and married at Detroit, Feb. 2, 1765, Marie Joseph Chapoton, whose father had come here as surgeon to the garrison in 1719, and died in 1760. She must have died soon after the marriage, for on Jan. 16, 1770, he married (second) at Montreal, Josephthe Nouchet, whose father had been a member of the Superior Council. Of this union nine children were born. Augustin Chaboillez was engaged in the western fur trade, and his wife seems to have accompanied him on some of his expeditions. Beginning in 1784 he seems to have resided for some years at Pointe Claire. He was still living in the spring of 1802, when his wife was buried at Montreal. See *Le Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, XXVIII, 241-42.

⁵⁰ Francis Hypolyte Chaboillez was born at Mackinac, Oct. 7, 1751. On Feb. 10, 1777, he married at Montreal, Marie Anne Gagnier. She accompanied her husband to the western country, where her two elder children were born, in Jan. 1779, and April, 1781. In 1783 she returned to Montreal to live, and only then were they baptized. Marie Anne Gagnier died at Montreal in April, 1787, aged thirty-one years. Her husband died prior to Dec., 1795, probably in the western country. See *Le Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, XXVIII, 311-12.

que Cest Messieurs En auront Besoin. ont parle que Les Boison Et des vivres qui doit venir du detroit sera arrettez, je ne vous Lassure pas Cependant il sera necessaire d'avoir grand soin de Ceque vous avez Lun et Lautre Est Bien cherre Le Bled venndroit ici de 30ⁿ a 40ⁿ Le minot il y a dans La Barque quelque chose avec une Lettre pour Mons^r chaBoilliez Lainée je vous prirai de Recevoir Lun et Lautre pour Luy et Le garder jusquil arrive Comme il na personne au grand portage pour Luy. vous aurez un officier Et quelque soldat pour passer L'Été au grand portage je vous prie de tacher davoir une maison pour Les Recevoir jusquil puisse se Loger il faut que L'Endroit aye une cheminée vous aurez La bonté de fairres faire par vos hommes 200 pieux de quatorze pieds de Long et Les faire mettre sur La grève Entre Le vieux Et votre fort Cela sera Le part que La grande compagnie aura a fournir pour faire un Endroit pour Lofficier Et Cest soldats ceque je prend La liberté de vous marquer a Ce sujets sera approuvés par La Compagnie je suis Bien sure.

J'aurai besoin de deux jolies Pannisses de 9 à 16 Ans. Ayez la Bonté d'en parler à ces Messieurs de m'en procurer deux

Je Suis &^{ca}

Per Mons^r M^oDonnald

Translation

Michilimackinac, May 18, 1778

Mr. Beausoleil⁵¹

Sir: I am sending off from here a vessel loaded with goods for the Grand Portage. There was also sent to the Sault the cargo of another vessel which is now on Lake Superior. Inclosed is the account of what belongs to the North West Company sent in both vessels; but as that which is above the Sault would reach you much sooner than the one now

⁵¹ This may have been Joseph Malboeuf dit Beausoleil, who was born at Chateau Richer in 1725 and who married at St. Pierre du Sud, Jan. 19, 1750, Regina Morin. Their son, Augustin, born at Rivière Quelle, Oct. 29, 1757, founded the Detroit branch of the family. Denissen, *op. cit.*

sailing, I wrote to Mr. Barthe to divide the merchandise equally between the two vessels in a manner so that each trader would receive some goods, in the certainty that all would arrive before the gentlemen would have need of it.

We are told that the liquor and provisions we were expecting from Detroit will be held back. I do not know for sure. In any case we must be very careful of what we have. Both are very dear. Corn should bring from 30 to 40 livres a minot at this place. There are a letter and some things in the vessel for Mr. Chabillez senior. Will you kindly receive and take charge of both until he arrives as there is no one at Grand Portage employed by him.

An officer and some soldiers are to pass the summer at Grand Portage.⁵² Please try to have a house ready for them which they can use until able to provide for themselves. It should have a chimney. Also be so good as to have your men prepare 200 pickets, 14 feet in length, and have them put on the beach between the old fort and yours. That will be the North West Company's share of preparation for the officer and his men; and what I have taken the liberty to say to you on the subject will have the approval of these gentlemen, I am sure.

I shall need two pretty panis⁵³ girls of from 9 to 16 years of age. Please speak to these gentlemen to get them for me.

I am &ca.

Per Mr. McDonald

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE AT
SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michilimakina Le 24 may 1778

Mon cher frere La Barque de Mons^r M^eBeeth est arrivez hier et elle part pour Le saut aussitot Le vent Bon, elle a quitté L'hangelique sur La Bature ainsy jene puis pas vous dire tous ceque jay au Bord Le Gouverneur permettra tout Le Bled Et Rom qui Est pour Le nord devenir mais

⁵² This alludes to the expedition of Lieutenant Thomas Bennett, referred to in several letters both preceding and following the present one.

⁵³ A pani (panise) was a slave of the Indian race. Such slaveholding was common in the Northwest throughout the French and British periods.

que 15 mill Livres de farine pour tous Le nord et Cette Endroit pour Le present. ainsy La farine sera tres Rare Cap^t Robson Étoit arrivé au détroit deux jour avant que Cette Barque est party, je Conte envoyer L'archange au détroit aussitot arrivé de milouaqui comme Le Gouverneur a permis a Celle de Mons^r M^eBeethe de venir par consequant il naretera L'archange sy Je Lanvoye je vous Renvoyerez votre Bathaut chargée de Bled Il fauts que vous En fesiez Lissivés absolument card je compte avoir que de gros Bled du detroit Le Rom est Bien Rare icy et il Le sera En apparence car Ceux qui En apporte sont obligé de faire sermant au détroit que Cela Comme Les farine Est seulement pour Le nord ainsi ils ne peuvent pas En disposer ici du tout je ne donnerai pas un Baril pour moins de 300th et Le pain vaudrait 6th pour La moindre chose je Contę que Capitaine Robson sera ici ver Le tems que sauvage avec Michilimakina sera de Retour ainsi jaurai une charge pour Luy sil vous manque La sandre pour Lissivés il faut me le dire il ny'a Rien Encore arrivé de Ceque vous mavez demander je nai pas Eu une seule Lettre du detroit ils sont dans Langelique archange toute La famille vous EnBrasse

Je suis &^{ca}per La Barque de Mons^r M^eBeathe*Translation*

Michilimackinac, May 24, 1778

My dear Brother: Mr. McBeath's vessel arrived yesterday and will leave for the Sault as soon as the wind is favorable. She left the *Angelica* on the bar, therefore I cannot tell you what I may have on board that vessel. The Governor has given permission for all the corn and rum needed for the northern trade to come up, but only 15,000 pounds of flour for both this place and the north. Flour, therefore, will be very scarce. Capt. Robertson reached Detroit two days before the vessel sailed. I am planning to send the *Archange* to Detroit as soon as she comes in from Milwaukee. As the Governor allowed Mr. McBeath's

vessel to leave he is not likely to detain the *Archange*. In that case I shall return your boat loaded with corn but you must have it made into lye hominy yourself for I expect only hulled corn from Detroit.

Rum is very scarce and likely to be. Those who brought some up were obliged to make oath at Detroit that both it and the flour were for the northern trade only. They cannot dispose of any here. I shall not sell a barrel for less than 300 livres, and bread will be worth 6 livres at least.

I expect Capt. Robertson will be here about the time the Indian returns with the *Mackinac* so that I shall have a load for her. If you need any ashes for the lye hominy you must tell me. Nothing has come yet of what you ordered, nor have I had a single letter from Detroit. They are in the *Angelica*. *Archange* and all the family embrace you.

I am &ca.

Per Mr. McBeath's vessel.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. TODD AND MCGILL
AT MONTREAL, MAY 28, 1778

The foregoing is the Copy of a Letter I wrote you by the way of the lakes the 8th Instant. I forgot to mention that there was inclosed in it a small memord^m for some things & affidavids about the Martins that were missing last year. I here inclose you the Copy of the Memord^m but not the Copies of the Affidavids, nor bill of sale of the Land. I hope the Originals will not miscarry, you have with this a Copy of my letter dated the 28th of April last which left this with my other Dated the 8th of may.

Your Acc^t Curr^t with me I here inclose which comprehends every acc^t I received of Yours before the 1st of January last, since which I have received one amounting to £1023.. 11..7¼ Halifax, which I have credited your new Acc^t with.

Cap^t Bannerman⁵⁴ arrived here a few days ago in their small Vessell from Detroit with some corn & Rum for the

⁵⁴ Probably this was the man whose fur-trade transactions at Detroit in 1774 are recorded in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXVIII, 561-63. Other than this, we have found no clue concerning him.

North Trade, he had permission to bring it forward on making Oath, that no part of it was for any other use. I think he says that the whole flour allowed for the North Trade & this Post is thirteen thousand W^t, not half what I want alone, so that I'm almost certain there will be a disappointment in this Article, but as to all the others I hope not provided you send me the three Canoe load of Rum. I have sent off two Vessell load for the Portage of what I thought most wanted, for those I have contracted with.

Cap^t Robertson got to Detroit in three days he was to return as soon as a Vessell arrived from Niagara, the Angelica was on the Bar on lake Sinclair on her way here, but not yet arrived, think of Maj^r DePeysters Situation with the Indians about him & not for one Shilling come for him this Year. I believe five Kegs of Rum is the whole Stock of this Post, private Stores even counted, & its reported there is none on board the Angelica.

Please inform the Gentlemen of the N. W. C^o what relates to them.

Mons^r H. Polite Chaboulliez proposes to leave this to morrow with the Indians, you'll receive this by him.

The things I ordered from London last fall I suppose will get to Montreal about the time this letter does & as some part of them cannot come by the way of the Grand River, they must be risked the other way. I here inclose you a Copy of that memord^m, the Articles that have no mark on the Margin, are to come by the grand River, those marked L by the way of the Lakes; there is others marked as per example 5 C^t of Powder 3 by L which means that 3 C^t of it is to come by the lakes & the remainder by the Grand River, other things in the same way, off [of] the Barrell & Pitch & Tarr, there must be three Kegs of the former & 1 of the latter sent by the Grand River, as also of the Cordage, there must also a Coil of Inch & another Coil of half Inch Roap be made up the weight of a Peice each of them & sent by the same way.

These things I can no longer do without. I dont know how Roap is measured in Canada, but those I mean are for Runing Riging such as Hallierds &c of small craft. In my

memord^m of the 8th Instant I made a mistake ordering 2 Doz. of womans Shoes & afterwards 12 pairs for M^{rs} Askin, omit the 2 Doz. the 12 pair is Sufficient.

I owe Kitty her wedding Gown, as there was nothing here fit for it. Please have one made for her the french fashion, of a light blue Sattin.

I will for certain this Season send a Vessell & perhaps establish a house at the French River to take things from thence here. I wish you could engage men to there only, provided the Vessell meet them, or so much more if obliged to come here, the agreement should be Conditional to prevent Accidents or disapointments.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE
AT SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michilimaquina Le 29 de Mai, 1778

Moncher fré depuis que je vous ai Ecrist par la barque de Monsieur Mabeat ni larchange ni langelique ne sont pas arrive desorte que je ne puis pas detérminer Sij Enverrai vos hommes au detroit ous les renvoyer a vous. Jai engagé Legrand Charlis pour aler guider Mon^s Bennett au grand portage, apres Cela ils Est obligé daller avec Mon^s Donald, dans le depasiter, jusqua Mon^s Bennett est pare de revenire, ver la fin daout. Cette un homme qui Connois bien Le lac Et servira tres bien, aupord. Si vous lui avance quelquecho, vous me le marquerez, je dois la payer vingt et une ponts, une Chemise, un pair demitas et un brayait pour ses gages, jusquo premier de septembre de cela je payerai 200ⁿ pour guider Mon^s Bennett au grand portage, Et revenir, le restan je mettrai a votre Compts pour le tems que Soyegnera Dans la barque. Ciauca que monsieur Bennett aura besoins de 4 a 5 Baril de rum vous lui preteré Cette quantite, que je vous rendrai dans quelquejours désCi. les Sauvage sont partit pour Montréalle aujourd'hui. je cont quils na pas quite trois bari[l]sde rum dans lendroit plusque aquejai quimes pas grand Chose. je suis determine detablr une Maisons a la riviere de franSlois Cette ané pour faciliter les transport de mes Effaits De Montréalle per la grands

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

riviere. archange et tous la famille seporte bien. jai seulle-
mant a ajoutés que

je suis
Votre frér tres affectionne

Translation

Michilimackinac, May 29, 1778

My dear Brother: Since I wrote you by Mr. McBeath's vessel neither the *Archange* nor the *Angelica* have come in, so that I cannot say whether I shall send your men to Detroit or back to you. I have engaged Big Charlie to go as guide with Mr. Bennett to the Grand Portage. After that he is to sail with Mr. McDonald in the *De Peyster* until Mr. Bennett is ready to return, about the end of August. He is a man who knows the lake, and a good sailor besides. If you let him have anything in advance, let me know. I am to pay him £21 wages up to Sept. 1, also a shirt, a pair of leggings, and a brayet.⁵⁵ Of that I shall pay him 200 livres for going with Mr. Bennett to the Grand Portage and back as guide. The rest I shall charge to your account for the time he is working on the vessel. If it happens that Mr. Bennett needs 4 or 5 barrels of rum let him have it and I shall return it to you from here.

The Indians set out for Montreal today. I do not suppose there are left three barrels of rum in the place, besides what I have, which is not much.

I have decided to open a place at French River this year. It will facilitate the transport of my goods from Montreal by the Grand River. Archange and all the family are well. I have only to add that I am

Your affectionate brother

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JAMES STERLING AT DETROIT,
JUNE 4, 1778

The welcome Arrived Yesterday at daylight & the An-

⁵⁵ *Brayait* (*brayet*) was a term in use among the French Canadians to designate an article of clothing used by the Indians to cover the body from the waist to the knee. The term comes from the old French *brague*, still used in Normandy for *culotte* or *pantalon*. Clapin, *Dictionnaire*.

gelica some hours after. M^r Holmes⁵⁶ & M^r Howard arrived at same time. The Indians⁵⁷ also that's going to war, choose not to come before, they are now dancing at my door, the Angelica preparing to Sail so you may judge the time I have to write. I shall not be now able to let you know by this oppertunity whither I receive all you sent me or not, the greatest confusion reigns here.

In two days I shall send the Archange for my flour, with such Vouchers as I hope will Satisfy Governor Hamilton of the Necessity of leting it come, purchase more for me 14 M is not half Sufficient.

M^r Bellesur has sent me 24 Bags hulled Corn & 33 of Unhulled, but each wants a Gallon of being a Bushell & a half. I will take a Certificate of this & send you.

M^r Holmes writes you. I'm well provided with Corn. Flour & my liquors I beg you'll forward by every Oppertunity.

P. S. Take notice how your Corn is measured in 4 Bags of 1½ Bushels, there is ½ a bushel deficient even of the unhulled Corn, the measure you had made for me Yourself.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO SAMPSON FLEMING AT DETROIT,
JUNE 4, 1778

At no time can you be busier than I am at present. Yesterday the two Vessells, the first Canoes from Montreal & the Indians Arrived, my things are now unloading & the Vessell preparing to Sail yet I find time to thank you for your kind present & to scold you for not leting me know the Sailors Allowance. You'r actually careless when I ask your information, but I have said enough.

M^{rs} Askin is very sensible of M^{rs} Flemings kind present for which She returns many thanks. I wish our poor Country could afford something that would be acceptable to

⁵⁶ William Holmes, an early British trader in the Northwest. He was with Alexander Henry on the plains of Saskatchewan in 1776. He was in partnership with James Grant for some years, and for a number of years partner in the North West Company.

⁵⁷ These northwestern Indians were being summoned to Montreal to assist the British in Burgoyne's campaign. See further allusions to them *post*, in letters to Sampson Fleming and Pollard, June 4, 1778.

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M^{rs} Fleming, we will try some Soused Trout by the time Robertson goes down.

I'm Actually in much distress about my Flour & have applied to Major De Peyster for liberty to send a small Vessell of mine for it, by her I shall send such Vouchers as I hope will convince the Governor of the necessity of it's coming. I do assure you added to what I'm to furnish for the North Trade, I have taken 2000 W^t that was left with me, & had bread made with it for the Officers & myself last winter, rather than Reduce them to eat the bad flour belonging to the Store, if no other can be done, you must after my Vessell Arrives, take it into the Store & I draw the same Quantity here by which means it will not leave the Settlement, yet that will be very hard on me to exchange, good for bad, besides the Bags which I cannot do without. I hope the good news now come from Canada with the appearance of a fine Crop will remove all Obstacles, my own famely consists of about 20 persons always, none of which I assure you is accustomed to live without bread nor ever Shall as far as in my power lies to prevent it, & I realy should think it very hard even to be put on the footing of the Inhabitants of Detroit, many of which seldom eat Bread. I should be glad you would mention a little of this Matter to Governor Hamilton.

Our news is that Gen^l Clintons Army defeated Gen^l Gates below Albany & killed him with 7000 of his people, which prevented any attempt against Canada last Winter.

I find we are again allowed a Cooper with Provisions for Ourselves & him According to M^r Days Letter to me Dated the 20th of January last. I want to know if you have received such orders & when you commence drawing for you & him.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO PHILIP DEJEAN⁵⁸ AT DETROIT,
JUNE 4, 1778

I was favoured with yours of the 24th of May last, the

⁵⁸ Philip Dejean was born in 1734 in the city of Toulouse, where his father was procureur general. He came to Canada and on Jan. 12, 1761, married at Montreal,

Mualtoe Woman shall be disposed off agreeable to your desire so soon as Mons^r Cerré⁵⁹ or Mons^r Degrosolier arrives; my famely is too numerous to keep her in my own house,

Mary Joseph Larchevêque, who was born there, June 6, 1740. He married (second) Louisa Auger, also a native of Montreal, who died about the year 1773. He married again, at Detroit, Nov. 25, 1776, Theotiste St. Cosme, daughter of Pierre Laurence St. Cosme and Catherine Lootman *dit* Barrois. Dejean came to Detroit probably in 1768, having fled, according to one statement, from bankruptcy in Montreal. However this may be, he enjoyed the favor of Captain George Turnbull, the commandant, and he soon began a career as notary and local judge at Detroit which was to bring him much notoriety. During Hamilton's régime as governor, Dejean proved a convenient tool and it would seem that Hamilton must bear a fair share of the responsibility for his conduct. Although he possessed no authority which was recognized by the government at Quebec, he exercised the functions of notary and local justice, and in this capacity committed acts which many of the townsmen deemed arbitrary and tyrannical. Probably the most notable of these acts was the sentencing of Jean Coutencineau and Ann Wiley to death, in 1776, for robbery. For this act, among others, Dejean and Hamilton were indicted by the grand jury at Montreal in September, 1778. Hamilton soon after left Detroit on his Vincennes campaign, before anything could be done about the indictment. In February, 1779, Dejean followed Hamilton to Vincennes, intent on obtaining from his chief written authorization for the acts for which he had been indicted. Thus it happened that both were captured by Clark that same month and conveyed to prison at Williamsburg, Va. After some months of harsh treatment here, Dejean was paroled through the influence of Thomas Bentley of Kaskaskia, and made his way back to Vincennes, from which place, July 28, 1780, he dispatched a letter to Governor Haldimand defending his conduct in accepting the parole, and another to Colonel De Peyster at Detroit, requesting that his wife and children be permitted to come to him, "seeing for myself the dire necessity of exile (after my sufferings) for the faults of another." Five months later Dejean was endeavoring to hire a messenger to carry some letters to Detroit for him. Apparently he returned to Detroit about this time, however, for entries in the Macomb ledgers show rather extensive transactions carried on with him from Nov., 1781, to Jan., 1782. A letter written from Normandy in 1786 by St. John de Crèvecoeur to Governor James Bowdoin of Massachusetts, discloses that Dejean had then been for some time in France, where he was "much esteemed" by Lafayette, and that he was then proposing to locate at Boston. On July 8, 1790, James May, his brother-in-law, and other interested citizens petitioned Judge Powell to appoint a curator over Dejean's estate, stating that he had left the district (of Hesse) in 1789 and had since remained outside His Majesty's dominions without giving any certain intelligence of his place of residence. In response to this petition May was appointed curator. On October 7 following, May and others again appeared before the judge to petition for the appointment of a guardian for the minor child of "the absent Dejean and his deceased wife." See Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, 167, 200, 910; *Ill. Hist. Colls.*, II, xcvi, 477; Dejean to Haldimand, July 28, 1780 (typed copy in Burton Hist. Coll.); Register of His Majesty's Prerogative Court for the District of Hesse, beginning July 2, 1789, photostatic copy in Burton Hist. Coll.

⁵⁹ Jean Gabriel Cerré of Kaskaskia. He was a native of Montreal, born, August 12, 1734. In early manhood he removed to the Illinois country, where he passed the remainder of his life, dying at St. Louis, April 4, 1805. Both at Kaskaskia and St. Louis (he removed to the latter place about 1780) Cerré was for more than a generation a leading merchant and citizen. He married Catherine Giard of Kaskaskia in 1764, and a daughter of this union became the wife of Auguste Chouteau, long prominent in the Missouri River fur trade. See biographical sketch of Cerré by Walter B. Douglas in *Illinois State Hist. Soc., Transactions* for the year 1903 (Springfield, 1904), 275-88.

& at present we want Bread more than Cooks. I have put her at Mr Mumforton's⁶⁰ at present.

You'll probably have heard before this reaches you that Gen^l Clinton has defeated Gen^l Gates near Albany & killed him with Seven thousand of his people.

M^{rs} Askin presents her Compliments.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO EDWARD POLLARD⁶¹ AT NIAGARA,
JUNE 4, 1778

I was favoured with your kind letter dated the 20th of february last. I return you many thanks for the news, to which I would now make a Return in kind, were I not well assured that you must have heard all the good news of Gen^l Clintons Victory before now & in a more circumstantial

⁶⁰ William Monforton, of French descent, was born about the year 1735. He was a man of education and considerable ability. Through the influence of François Baby of Quebec, Monforton some years prior to 1772 became the clerk of Gabriel Cerré of Kaskaskia, Illinois. Letters of François Baby, August 13 and September 17, 1772, in St. Sulpice Seminary, Montreal. In 1775 Monforton married Mary Louisa Soumande dit Delorme, who was born at Montreal, September 3, 1746. Denissen, *op. cit.* His home at this time must have been at Mackinac, for two of his children were born there, March 25, 1776 and October 4, 1777. *Ibid.* Both these children were baptized at Detroit, October 10, 1778. Shortly before this date Monforton had left Mackinac for Detroit, as shown by a letter written to Cerré, September 22, 1778, printed in *Ill. Hist. Colls.*, V, 53-59. The remainder of his life was passed at Detroit and (subsequently) Sandwich, and at the latter place he was buried in March, 1814. About the years 1805 to 1807 Monforton underwent two years' imprisonment for debt. Askin befriended him in his misfortune, and some piteous letters on the subject are in the Askin Papers.

Although Monforton never achieved fame he stamped his name indelibly on the history of Detroit. In 1784, by official order, the notarial records were removed to Quebec, where they remained until William Dummer Powell, first judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the District of Hesse, brought them back in 1790. From 1784 to 1792 the records of the place were kept by Monforton in his capacity of notary public. These are contained (the first two years are missing, having been stolen from his office) in the Monforton Register, so called, which remained in possession of his descendants in Sandwich. It eventually found its way into the government archives in Ottawa, where it now rests. A copy (ms.) was made some years since for the Burton Hist. Coll. Vols. A, B, and C of the notarial records of Detroit (kept by others than Monforton) remained in Sandwich until 1871, when in pursuance of an act passed by the Ontario provincial parliament, they were returned to Detroit and are now a part of the official archives of Wayne County.

⁶¹ Edward Pollard was one of the early British traders in the western country, having been one of the contributors to a fund for the repair of the fort at Detroit in 1768. See *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet*, III, 12. It does not appear, however, that Pollard was himself at Detroit at this time. He established himself at the Niagara carrying place (date uncertain) and by 1779 had become prosperous enough to retire and return to England. See Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Publications*, VI, 75-76.

manner than I have done, one Party of our Indians Warriors consisting of about 100 men are sett off for Montreal & a much larger now ageting ready.

I thank you sincerely for your care of my things. I have sent M^r Steadman⁶² a list of them. I must beg a continuation of friendship.

A Report prevails that you are to be our master for the back Posts. I wish you much joy if true, not that I have the least Reason to complain of M^r Day. I imagine it would be doing him much Service, as his burthen would then be less.

M^{rs} Askin joins in Compliments to your good family.
P. S. M^r Macomb⁶³ forgot the Iron

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JAMES STERLING AT DETROIT,
JUNE 5, 1778

I wrote you yesterday by the Angelica leting you know in how pressing a manner Major De Peyster wrote Governor Hamilton about my flour. I now send the Vessell for it and hope she may return without the loss of one hour think how distressing it is to have positive contracts for above 20 thousand, the people either now wanting it, or will in a very few days, to prevent all manner of difficulties that might

62. John Stedman (Steadman) was in Detroit in 1762 and the same year located at the Niagara portage, where he engaged in the forwarding business and remained until 1789. By reason of ill-health, he then withdrew to England, leaving his affairs at Niagara in the care of a nephew. He had an estate in Herefordshire (now Bosbury House) where he lived until his death in 1808 in his seventy-eighth year. Condensed from data supplied by Mrs. Shirley Beecher Ball of Dorset, Ontario; James Sterling letter book (ms. copy in Burton Hist. Coll.); Ontario Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, VI, 24; *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XIX, 424-25; and Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Publications*, VI, 39, 44.

63. A letter written by Askin this same date (not here reprinted) to Alexander and William Macomb of Detroit speaks of a shipment of 400 lbs. of iron which Pollard states they were to have sent him, and of which he is much in want. Alexander and William Macomb were leading merchants of Detroit in this period, sons of John Gordon Macomb who migrated from Ireland to Albany about the year 1755, and from Albany to Detroit ten years or so later. In 1776 the Macombs secured an Indian deed to Grosse Ile, and they obtained, at different times, other extensive property holdings. Alexander married Catherine Navarre, and a son, born to them at Detroit in 1782, was General Alexander Macomb, who for several years prior to his death in 1841 was commander-in-chief of the U. S. army. The elder Macomb left Detroit for New York a few years after the Revolution, where he speculated extensively in lands. His home was one of the finest in the city, and in 1790 it was rented to serve as the official residence of President Washington. See *Burton Hist. Coll. Leaflet*, III, 41.

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arrise, I here inclose you the different agreements & letters relative to the flour I'm to furnish, so that if Governor Hamilton requires more satisfaction about the matter, you will open the inclosed Packett & shew him the contents, if no occasion you will send it back Sealed to me as it now is, let the Quantity of flour be as much as possible without detaining the Vessell, you'll also let my Brother in law⁶⁴ have what Provisions he may want for them back. If the Master of the Vessell should want the value of 200^l, or some such thing let him have it & send me the Account.

I have promised Mr Howard that a small quantity of flour for him may come in my Vessell, the remainder to be filled with my Liquors if they are arrived, if not I have promised Mr David Rankin that he may put some things on board. I wrote you for a pair of Common Cart wheels & 2 Doz. of Chairs which please send by the Angelica. I want some Barrells of lime also if you can send them. I send some empty Barrells for sail.

Remember that none of my Liquors are to be left behind to take in things for any person except the 5 or 6 C^t of flour for Mr Howard. Pray borrow of some of the Naval department for me a small Anchor. I will be able to return it very soon as I have some on the way.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO BENJAMIN FROBISHER AT MONTREAL,
JUNE 6, 1778

I will attempt writing you by these Indians but cant say I will get through, having three Vessells to fit off now, your Canoes & my Public employment.

S^t Cir arrived last night. I have delivered him the Canoes, all your Corn, Sugar, Gum, Bark & Watap now remaining here shall be dilivered him to Day, all the rum comeing up in the Canoes he shall also have (I expect they will arrive to day) I have this Spring got about five Barrells of Spirits up which is now a Drawing off & shall be sent, this with 60 Kegs of W. I. Rum I borrowed of Mr Barth is all the Liquors I can possibly muster I dont keep two Barrells for

⁶⁴ Jean Baptiste Barthe.

myself. I have not had one pound of Flour this Season. L^t Governor Hamilton would not Suffer more than thirteen thousand W^t to leave Detroit & that only to such persons as were on the Spot, or had others to make oath that it was for the N. W. Trade. M^r Sterling has fourteen thousand W^t purchased for me, my Vessell is just now going to Sail in order to fetch it & what Rum I may have Arrived at Detroit, which without one moments loss of time shall be forwarded to the Portage. I'm in great hopes from what Major De Peyster has wrote L^t Governor Hamilton with the other precautions I have taken, that not only the 14 Thousand but even more may come for me if Ready. I dare say by this time the Spring News from Canada has got to Detroit (which was not the case when the last Vessell left it) So that Governor Hamilton will now see that there is now no necessity for Stopping the provisions in that Settlement.

Your Canoes shall be loaded with what's here & at S^t Mary's as nearly conformable to your orders as possible & I beleive it will make about their Loading. I have sent some flour forward & will now send about a thousand W^t more, so that I still hope there will not be the least disapointment. I wish Mess^{rs} Todd & M^cGill had sent me by the Grand River the 1700 Gallons they wrote me they would. I in many letters warned them not to depend on the Liquors comeing the other way, & that I had none. I know it was their great desire not to [incur] too much expences, prevented them but I asure you nothing hurts me so [much] as any persons being disapointed who depends on me, tho not my fault.

I have wrote you the most necessary [matters] & must refer the rest for another oppertunity. Your Brothers Letter from S^t Mary's which you [will receive] with this will inform you further.

As it's impossible for me to write any other at Montreal by this oppertunity, please make my excuse to Madam Chaboul-liez. I will do myself the Honour to write her in a few Days, for the present please let her know, I will execute her orders for the Additional Quantity of Corn she has ordered, the Rum I cannot promise untill I have fullfilled my engagements, let her know also that her Canoes was the first men

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here this Spring & took (with what was sent before) every thing that Mons^r Chaboulliez was to get, except 10 Kegs of Rum & 5 bags of Flour, which shall go with the rum & Flour I'm now sending to Detroit for. I know no person so well of[f] in the North Trade as he is.

Please excuse my not writing M^r M^cGill also by this opportunity. I mean make my excuse to him.

M^{rs} Askin & M^{rs} Robertson presents their best Compliments & beleive me most truely

P S S^t Cir goes off to morrow with the small Canoes & what's here & leaves two larger Canoes to take my rum that's coming by the Grand river

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JOSEPH FROBISHER⁶⁵
AT GRAND PORTAGE, JUNE 6, 1778

I was Yesterday favoured with your two letters dated the 28th of May last. Your guide⁶⁶ S^t Cir came here last night & proposes setting off to morrow with all the small Canoes he leaves two large ones to take on Board the Rum that's coming up in my Canoes.

I'm sorry to inform you that my conjectures about Provisions being Stopt at Detroit is too true, for my Corrispondant there could not get liberty to Ship an ounce for me except he made Oath that it was for the North Trade & no other, & then he would have had permission to forward my proportion of thirteen thousand, which is the whole of the exports to be allowed, or rather would be allowed at

⁶⁵ Joseph Frobisher was one of the most noted of the early British traders and explorers in the Northwest. He early penetrated beyond Lake Superior, and in 1774 reached Churchill River. He was one of the founders of the North West Company in 1783, and as here indicated bore a leading part in its administration. Unlike the majority of the partners, who wintered in the interior, Frobisher and Simon McTavish (another partner) acted as agents of the company at Montreal. In 1798 Frobisher retired from active business. See sketch in Ontario Bureau of Archives, *Thirteenth Report*, 182-83.

⁶⁶ The hierarchy of the North West Company, which was being evolved in this period, comprised the following gradations from above downward: partners, clerks, guides, and canoemen (or voyagers). Davidson characterizes the guides as "a useful and intelligent set of men who also acted in the capacity of interpreters. They had a stated quantity of goods supplied to them, and received from one thousand to three thousand livres in wages." See *The North West Company*, 229. Concerning this particular guide (St. Cir) no information has been found.

that time, however as I beleive this was no more than taking precautions for supplying the place untill news was heard from Canada of Provisions being on their way up, and as I have reason to think that news must now be Arrived at Detroit, I make no doubt there will be no farther hindrance. I therefore have this Day sent a Vessell for my flour which is ready purchased, & as Major De Peyster has wrote the Governor very pressingly about it & I have taken the other necessary precautions, I hope that it & the remainder of what I'm to Supply you with, will still arrive here in good time, & the utmost dispatch shall be made to send it to the Portage. Please acquaint Mons^r Charls Chaboulliez that the remainder of his Rum & Flour shall also go at same time.

I this Day have wrote to M^r Benjⁿ Forbisher fully about what I have done, at same time I sent him your letter. I could have wished that Mess^{rs} Todd & M^cGill had sent me the quantity of Rum I wrote for in Canoes. I warned them in several letters not to depend on what was comeing by the way of the lakes. I'm well persuaded that it was their fear of throwing me into too much expence, prevented them, at same time their being asured the other Rum would reach me in good time, which I still hope it may, however I would much rather be at any Charge than disapoint any person who confides in me—there is no such thing as getting the grease you want yett, but in a few days I hope there will be some in, I expect some in my Canoes. Your own Canoes will be able to take what you have here & what of yours remains at S^t Mary's otherwise of cource the Vessell should, the Additional quantity of Corn & rum you order shall be sent if in my power, of the former I have Sufficient if it was hulled. I will set people to work about it. I'm much hurried at present I will take some other oppertunity to write you more

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE
AT SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michilimakina Le 6 juin 1778

Mon cher frere jay Reque toutes vos Lettre a quoi je
ferait Reponse par sauvages votre Buthan partira aussy au

même tems si je puis trouver des hommes Et je tacheréz devous Envoyer tout Ceque vous mavez demandé. tout Ceque vous avez Livrés a Mons^r frobisher a s^t Cire et mi au Bord La Barque pour La grande société; mois de 150 minot de Bled; vous aurez La Bonté de Remettre a s^t Cire En passant Le saut aussy Bien que tout Le Butin qui appartient a Cette Compagnie Commes ils auront places dans Leurs Canots pour Le mettre tout Et vous aurez assé dautres Chose a faires transportér vous metterez Le port dans vos Barques Commes Les frais de Garder Du Butin et Les faires passer dans Le portage au Compte de Ceux a qui ils appartient. M^r M^cDonnel gagne 1170^l par année Et sauvage 900^l je Leurs Donne autant de vivres Comme je Crois quils pourront manger Raisonnablement avec un demiard de Rom par jour Les autres hommes La moitié de Cette quantité de Rom Et de vivres que je Compte Raisonnable.

Lavoine Est parti Cette matin dans L'harchange pour Le detroit, pour chercher La farine je nait pas Reçuë un Livres Encore, mais jespere avoir a present aussy Bien que Le Rom Le general Carleton a donné ordre que La miennent passent La premiere Lorty Mon Commis avec Cinq Bateau Est partie de Lachine dans Le mois de avril passé jay Beaucoup de Bled mais je ne puis pas vous Envoyer plus de 80 minots de Lissivés Et autant que La Barque puorra de Lautres avec Les sandres 1 chodiére et tout Cela Cp^t Robinson Est arrivez avant L'hangelique mais Le même jour il part demain pour aller examiner Du Coté de La Rivière des francais comme je suis determiné d'y faire Batir une maison La Barque ne pourra pas prendre vos deux Canots marquez Moy si vous voulez Les vendre je naurez pas Besoin de sucre ni Gomme mais je pourrai vandre tout Les deux ici pour 20^s La livre Ceque vous avez demandé L'automne dernière est dans mes deux Canot qui montent prenés des Reçuë de tous Ceux que vous Livrére quelque Butin.

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 6, 1778

My dear Brother: I have received all your letters and am sending my reply by the Indian. Your merchandise will go at the same time if I can get men, and I shall try to send everything that you have ordered. All that you have delivered for Mr. Frobisher by St. Cir is put on board the North West Company's vessel except 150 minots of corn; kindly give that to St. Cir as he passes the Sault, also all the merchandise belonging to the North West Company. They will have room for it in their canoes and you will have plenty of other things to send. Charge shipping expenses of the merchandise to the account of each individual owner, that is, the cost of carriage in your boats, its care at the Sault, and carriage at the portage.

Mr. McDonald's wages are 1170 livres a year. The Indian gets 900 livres. I have given them provisions, as much as I thought they could eat in all reason, with a quarter of a pint of rum per day. The other men have half that much rum and what I judged would be plenty of provisions.

Lavoine set out this morning in the *Archange* for Detroit to get my flour. I have not had a pound yet but hope for some now, also plenty of rum. General Carleton gave orders that mine is to come through the first. My clerk, Lorty, left Lachine in April last with five boats. I have plenty of corn but cannot send you more than 80 minots of lye hominy, and shall fill the boat with other things—ashes, a kettle, and such like.

Capt. Robertson arrived before the *Angelica* but left the same day to examine the coast along the French River. I have decided to build a house there.

The vessel could not take your canoes. Tell me if you want to sell them. I shall not need either sugar or gum [for myself] but could sell both here at 20 sols a pound. Your order of last fall is now off in my two canoes. Take receipts for all the merchandise you send out.

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FROM JOHN ASKIN TO CHARLES CHABOILLEZ
AT GRAND PORTAGE

a MichiLimacKina Le 6 juin 1778

Mons^r chaBoilliez

Mons^r jay Eu L'honneur de Recevoir une Lettre de Madame votre Épouse par Laquelle elle me pris de vous Envoyer douze sac de Bled Et douze Barils de Rom plus que La memoire que vous mavez quitté Lanné passé Le Bled je pourrai promettre quelque tems dici mais je ne suis pas sure pour Le Rom je tacherai de Le faire quand je vous Envoyerez Le Restant de votre farine Et Rom La graise vous aurez En quelque jours je chercherait si Le pris tombera pour votre profit.

Mons^r Barthe me marque qui manque un de vos quarante Barils de Rom je manvais Le Remplacer
je suis avec extreme Mons^r votre tres humble serviteur

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 6, 1778

Mr. Chaboillez,

Sir: I was honored by the receipt of a letter from Madam, your wife, in which she asked me to send you 12 bags of corn and 12 barrels of rum in addition to your order of last year. I can promise the corn any time from here but am not so sure about the rum. I shall try to send it with the rest of your flour and rum. You shall have the grease soon and I shall find out for your profit if the price is likely to fall.

Mr. Barthe reports one of your barrels of rum lacking. I shall send another.

I remain, Sir, with respect,

Your most humble servant

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE
AT SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michilimakina Le 8 de juin 1778

Mon cher frere Je tacherait de faire partir sauvage avec La Barque demain matin, je vous Envoye son Reçuë pour

tout Cequi Est au Bord avec Leur marque je vous prie de Luy donner Le tems darranger toute a terre avant que de Le Recevoir Et signé un Reçuë pour La charge, Car sil manque quelque chose il Le payera pour sure jay Envoyéz Le dernier Voyage 40 Barils de Rom pour Certain pour Mons^r chaBoilliez, faite Examinér sil nest pas parmis Les votres par hazard Et si vous ne pouvés pas Le trouver Remplacéz Le Et je vous En Randerez un autre a sa place par Léstat de charge vous verrez pour quelle Endroit chaque choses sonts jay prettez un ancre et Cable a sauvage pour faire monté La Barque je vous prie de me Le Renvoyer par La première occasion Comme ils appartient a la grand Batheau et je ne puis pas me servir De Luy sans Les avoirs sils ne Reste pas a present au saut avec Ceque je vous Envoye presentement proche La charge des deux Barques, je trouverai plus a propos que vous ne fassié pas faire monter Celcy mais vous devez Le tenir parré En Bas En tous Cas quil arrive quel que accident a Lautre ou bien quelle ne Reviennent pas assetot Car il ne faut pas tromper Le monde au sujet de transport de Leur Effets Le Major Depeyster Renvoye six Barils de Rom En Lieu de Ceux que vous avez prettez a Mons^r Bennett Et je porte a votre avoir Les petits Barils quil a Eu je vous Envoye 1 Card de Bon vin de porte avec deux Barils d'Esprits dont vous aurez besoin pour votre table ayéz La Bonté davertir Mons^r Machard piquette & C^e que jai Leur Billiette de huit mille francs quil ont Consanti a Mons^r Sanguinette ainsi de faire provision pour Le payment je tacherai de faire partir votre grand Bateau demain avec La juman- arnois, grande chodièrre, Cendre, prelats, Roües, et Bleds je crois vous avoir dits que Le prix de chaque pièce dici au grand portage dans Les Barques Est une pistoles et qu un minot et un quart et une pièce 1 Baril une pièce 100ⁿ de farine une pièce ont paye outre Cela pour La garde au saut et Le port dans votre portage Et je trouve pour Les pièces d'ici au saut 4ⁿ Est un pris Raisonnable jay examiné nos Comptes et trouves que La difference n'est que 283ⁿ 4^{sois} j'avois omis de porter a votre avoir Lautonne dernière Le

port de pièces et quelque vivres pour pompe Et chalou qui fait Ensemble 211ⁿ 62ⁿ que Mons^r francois campau me doit que jay pris La liberté de porter a votre Compte avec 20ⁿ que vous avés oubliés pour un prelat dans La dernière compte fait La somme et une pistol de trop ainsi tous Est arrangé a present si Mons^r Campeau vous paye pas je Rabaterez autant a votre Compte je suis Bien flatté que vous Été si Exacte Rien me fait tant de plaisir Cest Le seul moyent aussy de Réucir dans Les affaires jay Reçuë Les petits Barils que vous mavez Envoyez un Recue de Mons^r Cadotte pour Les 20 minots de gros Bled qui est dans La Barque pour Mons^r henry je ne puis pas avoir de gresse Encore ny pour vous ny pour Mons^r frobicher Les deux paires de souliés que jenvoye pour Madame M^oDonnell me paraise grand mais il sont selont La mesure que vous mavés Envoyez sauvage a passé Cap^t Robison a Courir La Bordé je nait jamais vu une petite Barque Barque aller si proche auvant jay vendue votre panis a lavoine pour 750ⁿ il est trop fou pour faire un matlot ou même quelque chose de Bon vous navez qua porté a mon compte Les 144½ minots de Bled Lissivés que vous mavés prettés a 23ⁿ Le minots et Les 60 Baril de Rom 150ⁿ Le Baril je vous Rendrés tous Les Deux aLors je Les metterez au même prix vous savez que j'avois 105½ minots de Bled chez vous toute L'hyver Cela avec Le 144½ faisoit Le 250 que vous deviez avoir pris au saut pour En Envoyez jay porté a Compt autrement on ne peut pas Les Reglér je trouve que vous avez Bien faites avec Les sauvages Et je suis Bien Certain que tout ira Bien archange et toute La famille vous En-brasse bien. faites Mes Compliment a Madame McDonnell. Il y a un Poiche de Bisquit plus que Les Provisions des hommes, ce pour Sauvage sur le Lac Superior. Nos Comptes sont reglé reste à 57897ⁿ 9^s que vous me devoit. J'ai Engagé un Homme pour aller avec Sauvage a La place de Jupiter que Je vous Enverrai dans le Bateau &^{ca}

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 8, 1778

My dear Brother: I shall try to have the Indian set out with the vessel tomorrow morning. I am sending you his receipt for everything on board, with the mark of each piece, and advise you to give him time to arrange it all on the beach before you check up and sign any receipt for the cargo. If anything is missing he must pay for it. I am certain I sent 40 barrels of rum for Mr. Chaboillez on the last voyage. Have a search made if by any chance it [the missing barrel] is among yours. If you cannot find it replace it from yours and I shall make it up to you. By the bill of lading you will see the destination of each piece.

I loaned the Indian an anchor and a cable for the vessel going up. Please return them the first opportunity. They belong to the big boat and I cannot use it without them.

If, with what you have at the Sault and what I am now sending, you still have not nearly enough to load the two vessels, I think it would be better not to send this one up now but to keep it in readiness below the Sault in case any accident should happen to the other or that it should not return soon enough. We must never disappoint people in the matter of shipping goods. Major De Peyster returns the six barrels of rum you loaned Mr. Bennett and I am crediting your account with the kegs he got. I am sending you one barrel of good port wine and two barrels of whiskey for your own table use.

Kindly advise Messrs. Machard, Piquette & Co. that I hold their acceptance for eight thousand francs drawn by Mr. Sanguinet⁶⁷ that they may make provision for the payment.

⁶⁷ Both Charles and Joseph Sanguinet were engaged in trade in the Northwest during this period. Charles was a native of Quebec, born in 1740, who on coming west first settled at Detroit. Apparently he was at Mackinac by 1770, for a daughter of his was born there in September of that year. A few years later he removed to the Illinois country, and for many years made his home at St. Louis, where he died in 1818. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 75 and 304, and *Ill. Hist. Colls.*, II, 54 *et passim*.

Joseph Sanguinet in 1780 became one of the founders of the general store at Mackinac, at which time he is recorded as having his headquarters at Montreal. In 1786 he was a vestryman of the church of Ste. Anne at Mackinac. *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 493.

I shall try to have your big boat sent off tomorrow with the mare's harness, the large kettle, ashes, tarpaulin, cart wheels and corn. I think you told me that the freight from this place to the Grand Portage on goods shipped in the vessels is \$2 per piece, and that $1\frac{1}{4}$ minots is one piece, a barrel is one piece, and a hundred weight of flour is one piece. Besides the freight there is the charge for taking care of them at the Sault and for carrying at your portage. The freight from here to the Sault at 75 cents per piece is reasonable. I have gone over our accounts and find a difference of only 283 livres 4 sols. I had omitted to credit you with the freight last fall and with some provisions for Pomp and Chalou, both amounting to 211 livres. Then I have taken the liberty of charging your account with 62 livres Mr. Francis Campau⁶⁸ owes me, and you had forgotten the tarpaulin in your last account at 20 livres. These all amount to that sum and a pistole over, so that our accounts are straight now. If Mr. Campau does not pay you I shall deduct as much from your account. I am indeed glad to find you so exact. Nothing gives me more pleasure, and it is also the only way to succeed in business.

I have received the kegs you sent. [Take] a receipt from Mr. Cadotte for the 20 minots of hulled corn which is in the vessel for Mr. Henry. I have not been able to get any grease yet, neither for you nor for Mr. Frobisher. The two pairs of shoes I am sending for Mrs. McDonald look to me pretty big but they are the size you ordered. The Indian passed Capt. Robertson by tacking. I never saw a small vessel sail so close to the wind. I sold your panis to Lavoine for 750 livres. He is too stupid to make a sailor or to be any good whatever. You have charged me only 23 livres a minot for the $144\frac{1}{2}$ minots of lye hominy you loaned me, and the 60 barrels of rum are entered at only 150 livres a barrel. I shall return both and shall put them in at the same price. You know I had $105\frac{1}{2}$ minots of corn at your place all winter. That, with the $144\frac{1}{2}$ makes the 250 that

⁶⁸ On the Campau family see *ante*, 33. The individual here mentioned may have been Francis Campau, son of Jean Louis Campau and Mary Louisa Robert, who was born at Detroit, April 19, 1734.

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

you should have credited as taken to the Sault to send on and which I have charged up. Otherwise one could never keep things straight.

You have done well with the Indians I notice, and I feel certain that business will be good. Archange and all the family embrace you tenderly. Present my compliments to Mrs. McDonald. There is a bag of biscuit in addition to the men's provisions which is for the Indian on Lake Superior. Our accounts are now straight and there is a balance of 57897 livres 9 sols that you owe me. I have engaged a man to go with the Indian in place of Jupiter whom I shall send to you in the canoe.

&ca.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO NATHANIEL DAY AT MONTREAL,
JUNE 9, 1778

I was Honoured with your two Letters bearing date the 6th of October & the 20th of Jan^y last the 3^d Ins^t; the returns I transmited to you the 8th of last Month will shew plainly the Quantity of Provisions then in Store, Except I may be a little rong in respect to the W^t of what was laid aside as bad, but the difirence is so trifling that it cannot cause Any Mistake in Estimating what may be wanted for this Garrison. I shall in future [a]greable to your Orders send in the fall of Each year the return & demand of what Provisions may be wanted for this Post.

The great distance of this Place renders it Imposible for me to Comply with your Orders so Speedily as I could wish. the returns for the 24th of May was made up before I recev^d your Orders for changing the form & as the 24th Inst. is so near, & it being a time for making the General Settlem^t I thought it would be best & most Agreeable to you to continue the Old form untill that time. In particular as I cannot well see how the change can be made Except after a General Settlement without deviating too much from the rules you have been pleased to lay down. I do suppose that when you sent off Your Orders & the New returns, you Expected they would have reached me Early in february & as at that

time I could not have sent off Any Vouchers nor Accounts since the 24th of Dec^r 1777 it would have been Easy for me to have given up the old Vouchers & taken Others with Dif^t N^{os} According to the New form, as also to have had Others Signed Monthly for the Condemned Deficient, & lost (which formerly was done only every six Months,) but your Orders Arriving so late has made the task more difficult, however if you Judge proper still to have the Alteration made, I shall do Everything in my power & commence it when you think proper. The New form of Monthly return has in my Oppinion many Advantages Over any we yett have had, as it at one View shews the true State of the Provisions Store & strength of the Garrison.

With the last Months Accounts I send you a return of the Number of Persons which in all probability will have to be Victuled here from July 1778 to July 1779 Indians Excepted of whoes Numbers no person can well jud[g]e being some days above three hundred & Others not more than ten besides their receiving Chiefly flour & Pork a Calculation in all Species would not Answer for them. I have therefore in the return only said what Quantity I think may serve them without any mention of their Numbers.

There is a Vessell taken Into the Crowns Service at this Post, on the same Conditions as those at Detroit, therefore the Seamen are allowed a ration & a half per day & half a pint of rum & as there was none of the latter In Store I have been Necessiated to purchase a Barrell here at a high rate.

I have now to return you my Thanks for your Allowance of a Cooper & I hope it will not be displeasing to you that I Insert in the General Settlem^t for the last 6 Months two setts of receipts for his & my Rations commencing the 25th of December last. Your having Mentioned in Your Letter that the receipts for the Commissary & Coopers rations are to be transmited to you Every Six Months gives me reason to think I might draw them; if I should be rong in my Conjectures, I will make the Alteration on the first Notice, however Suffer me to Asure you that Even a Ration per

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

day in this distant Quarter where every thing is so dear is
of much help to a famaly

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE AT
SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michili Maquina Le 13 de juin 1778

Mon cher frere depuis que Sauvage Est parti et même
devant M. Cherle votre jumain tout les jours Sans pouvoir
le trouver j'ai eu mil paine aussi de trouver du monde pour
ramener votre Butin je garde Caliez et j'Envoye robideau au
nord. il faut me marquer Combien il vous doit pour quelle
pour quelle tems il Est Engagé et Combien vous le payé
per ané. au sujet de bled lecévé que vous avez promis de me
fournir cette printems qui doit faire deuse Cens Cinquante
Minots avec Ceque j'avois au Saut tout l'hiver, je vous prie
de trouver toujours Cette quantité pour ceux à qui je vous
ai dit que cestoit autrement ils Sont trompé ceque je ne
vous drois pas pour Senjt fois La Sommes il y avoit 100
minots pour la grand Sociéte 100 minots pour Mon^s cha-
boillié. si les Canots de quelqu'un de ces Mon^{srs} passant le
saut peuvent prendre le restant de ceque vous devé fournir
pour moi vous auré la bonté delelivrer Sinon vous le mettez
au bord de la barque jes que personne n'auront Sujet de se
plaindre de vous ou moi je crois que mes canost ont ordre
daller au Saut vous remmetre a qui est pour vous. avez
tout le rum qui est pour les messieurs du nord, avant que
devenir ici en livrant au Canots quil ils ront le prendre mon
rum je vous prie d'enprendre un recu et de me l'Envoyer il
mest pas possible de vous marquer pour cette année Ce
qui est pour passer dans la barque quand chaqu'unt oront
prit Cequil pourront dans leur canots le reste est pour le
barque per Con Siquent un autre anez je tacherai daranger
tout cela mieux.

ils Est vrai que j'engagé Mon^s Nodisne pour trois anné
ausci bien qu'un autre Commis autre cela jatand Mon^s
lortie de Bon heur la graisce Coutre 3th la livre et bien rare
mesme. je trouve plus apropos que vous mettiez Battis
avec Mon^s magdonnelle que avec Mon^s brulon et vous me

renvoirez pomp. jene juge plus apropo de envoyer louison avec brulon ils a eu lodasce de le fraper. Chalou Se bien Comporte dans Sons dernier voyage et La voine est aut Bord a present Mais que l'archange revien du detroit je vous lenvoirez charge de farine Et de boison je tacherai de tirer quelque Chose pour ceque Mon^s Campau doit ausitot que vos barque soit arivez tachez de me les Envoyer per la premiere bonne ocasions de sort que je puis les faire rendre dans mes Canots. archange demande ses livres et vous en brasce bien jemais autre chose si ajouté si non que je suis.
Le montant de cette Compte 3696^t 18^s

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 13, 1778

My dear Brother: Since the Indian left and even before, Charlie [has been hunting] your mare every day but has not found her. I have had a thousand difficulties too in finding somebody to get your merchandise ready. I am keeping Caliez and sending Robideau⁶⁹ north. You must tell me how much he owes you, for how long he is engaged, and how much you pay him a year. With respect to the lye hominy, you promised me this spring enough, with what I had all winter at the Sault, to make up 250 minots. I beg you to have that quantity ready in time for those who have ordered it as I told you. Otherwise they will be disappointed and I would not have that happen for a hundred times the amount. There were to be 100 minots for the North West Company and 100 minots for Mr. Chaboillez. If the canoes of any of these gentlemen are passing the Sault and can take what is left of what you agreed to furnish me, kindly deliver it to them; if not, put it on the vessel. Then there will be no cause for complaint against either you or me.

I believe my canoes had orders to go to the Sault to deliver

⁶⁹ Robideau appears in Barthe's ledger (ms. in Burton Hist. Coll.) as an engagé. September 6, 1777, he contracted to serve for one year at a wage of 500 livres. Soon after this the engagement was extended to cover the two succeeding years.

what is for you. Take off all my rum that is for the gentlemen at the north and put it on their canoes as they go through, without sending it on here. Be sure to take a receipt and send it to me.

It is not possible for me to tell you for this year what is to be shipped on the vessel as each trader will take what he can in his canoes and the remainder will go on the vessel. Another year I shall try to have all that arranged better.

It is true that I have engaged Mr. Nodisne for three years, also another clerk, and besides them I expect Mr. Lorty in soon. Grease costs 3 livres a pound and very scarce at that.

I find it will be better to put Baptiste with Mr. McDonald instead of with Mr. Brulon, and I shall send Pomp back to you. I have not thought it well to send Louison out with Brulon as he had the impudence to strike him. Chalou behaved himself on the last voyage. Lavoine is out at present but as the *Archange* is on her way up from Detroit I shall send her to you with a load of flour and rum. I shall try to collect something of what Mr. Campau owes. As soon as your vessel gets in try to send them [the peltries] to me by the first good opportunity so that I can have them loaded in my canoes.

Archange asks you for her books and embraces you tenderly. There may be something more to add, if not, I remain.

This merchandise amounts to 3696 livres 18 sols.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JOSEPH FROBISHER AND JOHN MCGILL,
JUNE 13, 1778

As I'm informed that you two have to transact the business of the N. W. C^o this Season, I take this opportunity of M^r M^oBeth to inform you that by letter I Received from Montreal to day, I'm assured that there is on the way for me about 150 Kegs of Rum & Spirits all which quantity or more if it arrives you shall have by the two Canoes S^t Cir left for the purpose, or what part of it they may not be able to take with them shall go by the first Vessell, the Grease your M^r Jo^a Forbisher ordered shall also go by the Canoes

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

& if in my power I will furnish the additional quantity of Rum he wrote me about, however it will first be necessary to send what I have already engaged to find you. I hope the return of my Vessell from Detroit will put it in my power to send you the remainder of your Rum & Flour. My Liquors that's coming up this [spring] I'm informed was to leave Deer Island the 10th of last Month in a Vessell that was ready to take them on Board. I imagine that you got by the first trip of the Vessell all that was forwarded to you, except what your own Canoes took, for tho' I mean to serve others, yet my intention is by all means that you have the Preference, indeed I mean to allot one of the two small Vessells purely for your Service, only when you cannot load her of course others may put on board, the other I mean for the use of such other Gentlemen as may choose to Ship in her, when I have the Pleasure of seeing you here we will settle all them matters.

I have not as yet heard from Your M^r John M^cGill⁷⁰ who I'm told is gone to the Saut S^t Mary's some time ago, you have only 50 Bushells of Corn more to receive of me, which I was ordered to leave at the Saut for the Canoes that go down, except the 40 lately ordered
per M^r M^cBeath

I am &^{ca}

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. TODD AND MCGILL AT
MONTREAL, JUNE 14, 1778

I hear M^r Howard intends sending a Canoe for Montreal to morrow, I will therefore write you as much as time will permit for the present & the remainder by some other opportunity.

I have Received five letters from you this Season, dated the 21st & 28th April, the 9th, 11th & 16th May, the two first I received the 5th & the three latter the 13th Instant, I

⁷⁰ John McGill was a brother of James McGill, and, like him, engaged in the fur trade. He died at Montreal, December 1, 1797, aged fifty-one years. See *Can. Archives Rep.*, 1889, xvii.

believe there is some others from you for me, but M^r John M^oGill having taken them to S^t Mary's with him, prevents their coming by several days so soon as they otherwise would.

I'm very sorry you should make yourselves so unhappy about the return of my rum last fall, I'm sure I never blemt you for it, on the contrary I'm well persuaded when anything under your directions miscarry, the same would happen were I there in person. I do assure you I'm under many obligations to you for the pains you have taken about my things. I now have great hopes of seeing them soon & tho' I may reap a great benefit by it in the sale of some of them, what pleases me most is the having it in my power to furnish the Gentlemen of the N. W. C^o the remainder of their Liquors after what I sent them & what is in my Canoes, which is not yett arrived.

The very clear account you have sent me of the furr's shipt on my Account as well as my Liquors &c^a in their different Situations deserves my thanks, as I see you have not spared pains to make every thing very clear to me. I have already sent you all the proofs I can give about the Martins that are missing, if they do not answer, they must of course be lost. I approve of your plann of sending me Rum whither ordered or not, if it can get up, I can never Suffer by having a quantity, besides I can then contract with much more Safety to myself & others. I shall not for some time yet be able to examine our Accounts.

I have wrote M^r Steadman to send me Rum in lieu of what he took of mine, this will be more advantagious to me by much. You forgot inclosing the Gentlemen of the Garrison's Accounts as you mention, you have only noted the Sum, however I believe this will answer for me to get Payment from them. Lieut. Bennett had already desired me to charge him his, he knew & told me the amount, when I see my Canoes & hear from S^t Mary's, I will let you know exactly what Rum & Spirits is come for me in my own & the N. W. Canoes. I wish you had been more plain in letting me know whither they were to go to S^t Mary's, or come here

first, as I have kept two large Canoes of the C^{os} here in order to take the rum that is in mine.

Old François is not yet arrived, but I expect him daily. I shall pay due attention to what you say respecting his going into the North. I'm sure he shall not with my consent & I dare say he will not without. I assure you that tho' I now supply several others, besides the great C^o, I have a certain inclination to forward their interest preferable to any other, & tho' I would not take any unfair means to prevent Gentlemen in that concern doing well, yet no profit should induce me to undertake any thing that could in the least hurt a concern where so many of my friends are interested. I'm determined never to undertake Canoes for any but them, & one Vessell shall be solely at their disposal, so far as they can make use of her. As to the Supplying of others with Rum, Corn &c^a after I have made sure of what will be wanted for the great C^o⁷¹ (as we now must term them for distinction sake) it can be a matter of no consequence to that concern, for if I did not do so others would. I'm therefore sure it would be rather pleasing than otherwise to my friends to hear I made money. I Received 240ⁿ from Major De Peyster for the Rum & Bisket taken by M^r Ainse from Roi, & the N.W.C^o has credit for it in their last years accounts the 28th of June. I Received from Amable Roi⁷² & La fevre £9ⁿ6ⁿ8 N.Y.C^y last Year which I omitted advising you off, charge me with that sum, it's all I have been able to collect on acc^t of you & your Brother John. Before Lieu^t Bennett left this I did what I thought necessary in order that your C^o at the Portage should still pass for what it actually is, the most respectable both as to proprietors & amount.

⁷¹ The first organization of the North West Company has heretofore been ascribed to the year 1779. See Gordon, *The North West Company*, 9 ff. This letter establishes that it had been founded at least a year earlier, and by implication indicates that it was formed two years prior to 1779.

⁷² Amable Roi (Roy) was a native of Montreal who engaged in the Northwest trade, married a daughter of Augustin Langlade, and settled at Green Bay, where he died about the beginning of the nineteenth century. Having no children of their own, the Rois adopted Louis Grignon, member of a well-known early Green Bay family, and left their property to him. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 248.

* *Nous sommes fort sur Le Dernier Gout de Londres,*⁷³
 you may judge of M^{rs} Askin & M^{rs} Robertson by other
 Lady's, for in certain matters women are almost all alike.
 I beleive Cap^t Robertsons Marriage will make him consent
 to pass some years in this Country. I have not yet talked to
 him on the Subject, however had there been any thing
 entred into on his account, you should not have been dis-
 appointed, he has too much sentiment to suffer it, we have
 time to see more into these matters he could have the
 Command of a Kings Vessell on these leakes, but it realy is
 not worth his acceptance, nor will he take it.

I hope to hear much news from You after M^r Todds
 Arrival from England, dont be plagueing me at this busy
 time with an account of my having drawn the £20000, it
 would be very unseasonable & perhaps take my mind off[f]
 my other business. I shall not make you any remittances
 untill my own Canoes go down.

I beleive I mentioned to you in my last that Robison is
 looking out for the best harbour that can be found nearest
 the french River & that I intend to build a Store there

Please pay M^r Benjⁿ Frobisher one hundred Livres for me.

M^{rs} Askin presents her Compliments to M^{rs} M^cGill

M^r Howards Canoe has Slipt off. I wait another Oppor-
 tunity.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MADAM CHARLES CHABOILLEZ

a Michilimakina Le 15 juin, 1778

Madame chaBoilliez

Madame Jaurai été flatés de faire Reponse plutot aux
 Lettres que vous mavez faits Lhonneur de mécrire Le 20
 et 28 du passé

Mons^r augustin a livrés avotre Commis tous Cequi
 devoit fournir a Mons^r votre Mari le 2 de Ce mois de sorte
 que tous vos Effets a la Reserve de dix Barils de Rom et
 quel que Cents de farine quil aura Longtems avants quil
 En aye Besoin son parti dici même avant que un seule Canot
 fut arrivé de Montreal. votre Commis a pris les Canots

⁷³ We are well up on the latest London styles.

ici, il n'est pas possible de les Envoyer au saut si bon heur
Comme Les messieurs du nord En ont Besoin, pour Rendre
justice a Mons^r tousain Le sieur Cest un homme d'expedi-
tion Car ils Est parti trois heurs apres quils quil a Été
arrivés sans Rien Laisser de Cequil devoit prendre

je me ferais un sensible plésir de vous servir a tous tems
quand Les occations se presenteront Et vous pouvés vous
assurer que j'aurai oeil a vos interets.

au sujet du Romme et Bled que vous avez ordonné jene
puis pas promettre pour Le premier jus que a LaRivé
d'une Barque que j'ay Envoyé au detroit et que j'attend
tous Les jours. mais Le Bled j'envoyerez seLon vos ordres

je vous Remerci de vos intentions de Continuer detre
fournis pour moy, je ferai mon possible de vous servir bien

Madame Askin me prie de vous assurrer de ces Respects
j'ay l'honneur detre Madame votre tres humble Et tres
obeissant serviteur

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 15, 1778

Madam Chaboillez,

Madam: I should have been pleased to answer sooner
the letters which you did me the honor to write me on the
20th and 28th ult.

On the 2d inst. Mr. Augustin delivered to your clerk
what goods we were to furnish your husband, so that, with
the exception of ten barrels of rum and some hundred weight
or so of flour which he will also get long before he needs
them, all your goods left here before even a single canoe
arrived from Montreal. Your clerk took the canoes from
here. It would not be possible to send them to the Sault
as early as the northern traders would need them, and to
do Mr. Toussaint justice, that gentleman is a man of
great dispatch, for he set out again within three hours of his
arrival without having left a single article of what he was
to take.

It will be my pleasure to serve you at all times as occasion
may present, and you may be assured that I shall always
keep an eye on your interests.

With respect to the rum and corn that you ordered, I cannot promise the first until the vessel that I have sent to Detroit returns, and I am expecting her any day, but the corn I shall send according to your instructions.

I thank you for your intention of continuing to be supplied by me and I shall do my best to give you good service.

Mrs. Askin begs me to assure you of her regard.

I have the honor to remain, Madam,

Your very humble and very obedient servant

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO RICHARD DOBIE⁷⁴ AT MONTREAL

a Michilimaquina Le 15 de juin 1778

Mon ami je profite d'un mant de loisir pour vous marquer quelque mots Enreponse a votre lettre du 25 passé je vous remveré bien des offer graninsi de vous Et madame votre epouse au sujet de ma petite fille qui est ici Mais^s Mon^s gill se trompois Car notre entretien na ja Mais été de Lenvoyer En bas. a Moins que nous nallion nous mesme. Madame askin ne pouvoit pas Surporter L'abonce de Ses anfans nous vous sommes bien obligé de vo bonne intentions les nouvelles dans votre quartier ne peut pas etre grand chose jusqu a Lariviere des batimes de londres a nous afait grand plaisir quand les premiers Canots de ont arive de Montrealle un peut pour nos ami apres laffair de generale Bougoin j'ai Esecuté voordre au Sujet de changer les Compts de Mon^s Machard et C'ome j'ai ecrit à Mon^s Barthe au saut au sujet de cette dette a present j'attend leur arivés pour le reste qui les regards pour le Billiet de Mon^s polet chaboilliez j'ene puis pas vous promettre que je pourrai le faire payer Entre autre il est Enbas et le Mojour apris possessions de ces paquets vous Scavoit pourquoi cependant je ne croi pas

⁷⁴ Richard Dobie was a prominent Montreal merchant of this period, whose name recurs frequently in the volumes of the *Mich. Pio. Colls.* In 1786 he appears as a partner of McGill, and in 1790 of one Badgley. In September, 1778, Dobie was a member of the grand jury at Montreal which indicted Governor Hamilton and Philip Dejean of Detroit for illegal and tyrannical conduct. Information adapted from *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*.

que lon les gards je mimagine quils seront rendu a lui en bas malgre tout cela j'en espere pouvoire tirer quelque choche ici Ces pourquoits jene vous renvoirez pas sont Billiet par cette occasion

Madame askin vous prit de lui faire faire un dé d'or La meme grandeur que celle que vous avez Eu labonté de lui envoyer mais beaucoup plus forts au bor L'autre Etant prisez des ja En plus sieurs Endroit Madame asken et reberton vous prie e[t] aici bien que moi de presenter nos respects a Madame votre epouse

ecroyer moi vraiment

Depuis que je vous ait Écrit je trouve moyent de Retirrer de La canotté de Mons^r hypolite chaBoilliez La valeur de deux Cents Livres de castor et vingt Loutre Bon Et mauvais non pas En payement, mais Comme un assurance je suis meme obligée de donner une obligation Comme quoi ont Luy Rendra Cest peltries En Bas quils aura payez La valeur de Leur Billiette draulle darrangement mais ont Est Obligé de faire toutes sortes pour tirer quelque payement Le reste des peltries de cest Messieurs de cende a present ainsi taché d'avoir Ceque vous Croyez il vous Reviendra sur Le Billette apres Ceque je vous marque seront deduit

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 15, 1778

My Friend: I shall improve a moment of leisure by writing you briefly in reply to your letter of the 25th ultimo, though I must decline your generous offer, and that of Madam your wife, on the subject of my little daughter who is here. Indeed, Mr. McGill was mistaken, for we never entertained the thought of sending her down except we went ourselves. Mrs. Askin could not bear the absence of her children, though we are exceedingly obliged to you for your kind intentions.

News in your quarter is necessarily limited until the arrival of the London vessels. There are great rejoicings here when the first canoes come in from Montreal. The affair of General Burgoyne makes us anxious for our friends.

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

I have attended to your order in the matter of changing the accounts of Machard & Co., and wrote Mr. Barthe at the Sault on the subject of that debt. Now I am waiting until they come here to arrange what is still unsettled of their affairs.

Referring to the note of Hypolyte Chaboillez, I cannot promise you that I shall be able to get payment from him. For one thing, he is below and the Major has taken possession of his packs. You know why. However, I do not think they will be held up. I fancy they will be returned to him below, though I still hope to be allowed to take some out here and therefore am not returning you his note with this.

Mrs. Askin begs you to have a gold thimble made for her the same size as that you so kindly sent her before, but much stronger on the edge, the other being broken already in several places. Both Mrs. Askin and Mrs. Robertson, and myself, of course, beg you to present our respects to your wife.

Believe me sincerely

Since writing the above it has been possible for me to take from the canoes of Hypolyte Chaboillez the value of 200 livres in beaver and 20 otters good and bad, not in payment but as security. I was even obliged to sign a statement to the effect that these peltries will be returned to him below, when he has paid the amount of the note. Foolish arrangement, but one must do all sorts of things to extract payment. The rest of this gentleman's peltries are going down now, so try to get what you think he should return to you on the note after what I tell you should be deducted.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO RICHARD DOBIE
AT MONTREAL, JUNE 15, 1778

I was favoured with your letter by Mr W^m Grant⁷⁵ the

⁷⁵ William Grant was one of the early British traders in the Northwest. He seems to have operated in Wisconsin and the upper Mississippi region quite extensively, and it is possible that Grant River in southwestern Wisconsin (from which Grant

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

10th Instant. I shall always esteem myself happy to have it in my power to serve any person you recommend.

M^{rs} Askin, M^{rs} Robertson & the rest of my famely are in good health, they beg I may asure you & M^{rs} Dobie of their esteem.

Little news of consiquence can be expected untill the Vessells arrive from Europe, & that news have reached you before now I'm Sure.

An affair has happened which I fear will render the Securing of the payment of the thirty otters due you on Mons^r Chaboulliez's first note very difficult. Major De Peyster has taken his Packs into the Kings Store in consequence of some complaints lodged against him respecting Merchandize belonging to Government his packs are to be sent down in his own Canoes, but not delivered him untill the Commanding Officer at Montreal consents to it. I think you had better try in case I should fail here to insure your payment below, as to the last note you sent me, I have thought it most advisable to inclose it to you, as I have not any hopes of it's being discharged here, nor the interest of the former, if Mons^r Chaboulliez was on the spot perhaps I could do more

I remain with esteem

P.S. Since I wrote the foregoing I have been trying & find I shall be able to get from 20 to 30 otters good & bad lodged with me as part Security for the 30 due you, however, I will be obliged to give an obligation that you return them otters below on getting their full Value paid you. You'll think this a very extraordinary way of doing of business, yet when there is no law to force people to pay their debts, it becomes even necessary to make agreements such as

County takes its name) was named for him. In 1759, when Canada was tottering to its fall, the entire Green Bay settlement together with an extensive area adjoining, is said to have been granted to François Rigaud and wife, and from them the grant was purchased by William Grant. Since it purported to convey an "exclusive right of trade," other Canadian traders complained to Sir William Johnson. The latter regarded the claim as invalid, "a piece of artifice huddled up about the time of the surrender of Canada," and it was never enforced. See letters in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 274, 287. A letter of Abraham Cuyler to Askin, June 28, 1799, indicates that Grant was still living in Montreal at that time.

fools in business dictates, rather than not get any payment at all. The other Packs of Mons^r Chaboulliez now go down, therefore try to secure yourself.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO BENJAMIN FROBISHER
AT MONTREAL, JUNE 15, 1778

In my last dated the 6th Instant I wrote you pretty fully about every thing relative to your North Concern, for the present I have only to add on that head, that I every day expect my Vessell every day with the Rum & Flour to compleat your C^{os} quantity which shall be forwarded with the greatest expedition, my Canoes from Montreal are not yer [yet] arrived but I expect them to morrow, as Cap^t Robertson on his way from taking a view of the french River, saw three which must be them.

M^r John M^cGill has got to S^t Mary's several days ago if I may judge from where M^r Morrison left him, for I have not as yet received the letters &c^a he brought up for me.

In all your new undertakings I wish you Equal success to that you have had in the North, & the continuance of that also. I think it very just that the young sett should now take the same pains the old have done, it's true equal success can hardly be expected from such a change, added to the number of adventurers being Augmented, if anything I can do here exclusive of what I'm obliged to do, can be of Service to the concern, it never shall be wanting.

This place affords no news which I can send you in return to your's, which I thank you for.

I received the hundred Livers Galliard owned you & I have wrote Mess^{rs} Todd & M^cGill to pay you that sum, as we have no other account open with each other to my knowledge.

I return you thanks for the Printed engagements you were so kind as to send me, they will be very servicable & prevent some trouble.

I have this day promoted a very necessary Ordinance which is, that no person can hire an Engagé without seeing

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

a proper discharge from his former Master, or a Certificate from the Commanding Officer why he has none, & what strengthens this is all the Merchants having Signed it & invested the Commanding Officer with Authority to make such agressor pay 1000^l without the power of afterwards sueing for it, there is something more to prevent carrying from any place persons in Debt who are not hired,⁷⁶ the like is to take place at the Portage, so that I hope things will soon be on a better footing

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO CHARLES PATTERSON AT
MONTREAL, JUNE 17, 1778

As I expect you will be returned to Montreal by the time this gets down, I take this occasion of writing you. I refer you to M^r Frobisher for a full account of every thing relative to your North concern to whom I wrote several letters on the Subject, knowing for certain that he was at Montreal.

Your friends in this quarter have thought themselves very happy to have a dance once a week & entertain their Company with a dish of Tea & humble Grogg during the last winter, whilst you at London could have all your wants & wishes Supplied, as well as your wanton wishes.

A propos now we are on the Subject, there is a Boy here who was sold to the Ottawas, that every body but yourself says is yours, he suffered much poor child with them. I have at length been able to get him from them on promise of giving an Indian Woman Slave in his Stead—he's at your service if you want him, if not I shall take good care of him untill he is able to earn his Bread without Assistance.

We can have no hopes of seeing you in this part of the country. M^{rs} Askin presents her compliments & beleive me
&c

⁷⁶ A study of the contemporary records renders it fairly clear that the administration of the law in the regions where the fur trade was carried on was practically wholly in the hands of the employers. Askin's statements afford interesting evidence confirmatory of the general conclusion here stated. For further light on this point see Quaife, *Wisconsin: Its History and Its People*, I, 397-98.

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JOHN HAY AT DETROIT,
JUNE 17, 1778

As a true Irishman I want to tell you that at this present time I have nothing to say, or rather that is worth your hearing all the Spring news from Montreal you must have had, & our last canoes from Montreal left that the 16th of May, at which time there was not any Vessell Arrived from London, or any part of Europe at Quebec.

Mess^{rs} Langlade & Gotiez⁷⁷ are on their way from La Bay here with above two hundred Warriors who are going down the Country.

M^r Charles Morrison is with us & gives a much better Account of the Rebbels behaviour respecting what they call justice than any I have heard, as to public matters he was kept in the dark as much as if he had not been in the Country, he got twenty-eight of their paper Dollars for a half Joe⁷⁸ before he came away, judge the repute of their Currency is in

⁷⁷ For Charles Michel Langlade see *ante*, 72. "Gotiez" was Charles Gautier de Ver-ville, Langlade's nephew (his mother being Langlade's half-sister). He was baptized at Mackinac, February 3, 1738. His grandmother was a full-blood Ottawa, and he, therefore, was a quarter-blood. He was with his uncle, Langlade, at Braddock's defeat in 1755, and at the defense of Quebec against Wolfe in 1759. He later accepted British allegiance, and during the Revolution was especially active in rallying the savages west of Lake Michigan to the British standard. For this service he was given a commission as captain. After the war he settled at Mackinac, but in 1798 he removed to Prairie du Chien, where his daughter was living as the wife of Michael Brisbois, a prominent Prairie du Chien trader. He died at Prairie du Chien about the year 1803. Gautier had been engaged the winter preceding the writing of Askin's letter in raising warriors west of Lake Michigan to go to Canada and there join in the military operations against the Americans. Although the Wisconsin tribesmen were divided in sentiment as between the British and the colonists, Gautier and Langlade were finally able (June 2) to leave Green Bay for Mackinac with 210 warriors. At Mackinac this number was swelled to 550, who set out for Montreal toward the end of June. On this enterprise see Quaife, *Wisconsin: Its History and Its People*, I, 284-87; and *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XI, 100-111.

⁷⁸ The johannes was a Portuguese gold coin of the value of 36 shillings 2½ pence sterling. Apparently the "half joe"—short for "johannes"—which was a monetary unit widely employed in America during the eighteenth century, originated in the colonial custom of reckoning in terms of York currency. The York shilling was valued at 12½ cents, approximately half as much as the sterling shilling; hence the johannes, or joe, in terms of York currency was worth half as much, approximately, as the gold johannes, and was called, therefore, a half joe. Notwithstanding, the half joe varied in value, even at a given moment, possibly because the coins had been clipped or improperly made. In an account among the Askin Papers for the year 1811, eleven half-joes are listed as having been received, and the varying equivalent of each in terms of sterling is set down.

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This is my buisy time, I shall therefore conclude by presenting M^{rs} Hay and famely with M^{rs} Askin & my Compliments I am &c.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JAMES STERLING AT DETROIT,
JUNE 17, 1778

I hope by the time this reaches you that a great part of my things will be arrived from Montreal, & as C^t Robertson says I have empty Kegs at Detroit, I wish as much as time would permit that the Spirits in Barrells all except a few, was drawn into the Kegs & sent forward the first [opportunity], provided the whole cannot come at once, I hope you'll do your utmost to get as much as possible on board each Vessell untill the whole arrives, the Liquors are more wanted than any thing else, except my flour, which I hope is on the way in the Archange. I shall want of that Article what I first ordered, thirty thousand W^t, & as I'm well asured that very large quantities are comeing up I imagine the price must soon if not already fall.

I shall want twelve Barrells of good lime, so soon as they can be sent without taking the room of them up, from something more necessary.

I shall want a good Ox for my own use between this and the fall, the sooner you can have him sent the better.

M^{rs} Askin joins in Compliments to M^{rs} Sterling. I am &c

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. MCGILL AND FROBISHER AT
GRAND PORTAGE, JUNE 18, 1778

I have this day received the exact Acc^t of what Liquors belonging to me came up in your or my Canoes. I find that in the former there was belonging to me, five Kegs of Rum & fourteen of Spirits & in the latter Ninety three Kegs of Rum & nine of Spirits, all which I have charged to your Acc^t, as I have given orders to your two Canoes to receive them at S^t Mary's & take the whole, or what they can off them along with the ten Kegs of grease you ordered, least you might want to settle with your men I thought it advisable to send you an Account of what they had for themselves

here since S^t Cir went away what was before he took an acc^t off. I did not know before to day that my Canoes was to have went to S^t Mary's before they came here, or I should have sent off yours sooner.

Cap^t. Grant who was at Montreal when Mess^{rs} Todd & McGill wrote me last, seen the Vessell with my Liquors near Niagara the 16th Ult^o, so that I now daily expect them here. I hope to see you here as it will be out of my power to go to S^t Mary's this Season. I suppose it's needless to send you your Acc^t, a note of the things forwarded will be Sufficient I dare say untill we meet.

I have not yet received any Letter from Your M^r John M^oGill.

I am &c^a

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE
AT SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michlimakina Le 18 juin 1778

Mon cher frere je vient d'apprendre par Monsr Solomon que mes Canot sont allé chez vous Cest sans doupte pour vous Remettre vos Ballots et tous Le Rom qui Est a moi. ont memarque que jay dans les Canot 93 Barils de Rom Et 9 Barils de sprits vous aurés La Bonté de Remettre Cela au porteur de Cette Lettre et Enprendre son Reçuë il Restera alors pour moy 4 Barils de Beuf 2 valice quel que Ballot et autres chose que vous Menvoyerez vous pouvez garder un Barils de Beuf si vous jugé a propos ayez La Bonté de menvoyer toute Les peltries que vous avés par Ces canots et Les compter Bien devant Le guide Les Messieurs de La grande société ont pris a Montreal En quelquuns de Leurs Canot a port 5 Barils de Rom et 24 Barils de sprits marquez Moy sils ont quitté chez vous sils y sont vous pouvez Les Livrer au porteur aussi ou quel quautre chose chez vous qui sont pour Cest Messieurs pourvue quil peut Le prendre sinon vous Envoyerez Ce qui Reste dans La première Barque jesperre que Le Michilimakina a monté Car aussitot que Larchange arrivera je L'envoyerez avec sa charge a vous et je voudrois quil Eut une Barque En haut Le saut tout

parrez pour Le Recevoir comme il y aura pas un moment
aperdre sans faire grand tort a ceux a qui je doit fournir
adieu mon cher frere

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 18, 1778

My dear Brother: I have just learned from Mr. Solomon⁷⁹ that my canoes have gone to your place, probably to deliver your bales and all my rum. I am told that I have 93 barrels of rum in the canoes and 9 barrels of spirits. Please deliver that to the bearer of this letter and take his receipt. There will still be 4 barrels of beef of mine, 2 trunks, some bales, and other things which you will send to me. You may keep one barrel of beef if you think best. You will do well to send me by these canoes all the peltries you have on hand, and be sure to count them in the presence of the guide.

The gentlemen of the North West Company brought up from Montreal in some of their canoes 5 barrels of rum and 24 barrels of spirits. Tell me if these were left with you. If they are there you may give them also to the bearer and anything else you may have for these gentlemen, provided that he can take it, if not, send what is left by the first vessel.

I hope that the *Mackinac* has got up, for as soon as the *Archange* arrives I shall send her with her load to you and I want a vessel all ready above the Sault to receive it as we cannot lose a minute without great wrong to the gentlemen whom I have agreed to supply. Goodby, my dear brother.

⁷⁹ Ezekiel Solomon was one of the earliest British traders in the Northwest, coming out to Mackinac from Montreal in 1761. He was here at the time of the massacre of the garrison in 1763, when he was taken prisoner, but was ransomed and returned to Montreal. In July, 1778, he signed the subscription made by Mackinac residents for a missionary at that place, and in 1779 he was one of the founders of the general store in which the Mackinac traders pooled their goods and activities. In 1784 he joined in creating a committee to regulate the trade of Mackinac and "dependencies." No certain information concerning his later career has been found, but from certain papers in the *Mich. Pio. Colls.* it seems likely he located at St. Joseph Island in Lake Huron upon the British evacuation of Mackinac in 1796. Information adapted from *Mich. Pio. Colls., passim.*

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE
AT SAULT STE. MARIE

A Michili Maquina Le 21 de Juin 1778

Mon Cher frere j'ai recu La letre hier par les canots
j'ai seulement pour le present à vous marquer qui faudra
renvoyer le depaster Aussitot q'uil Sera possible Sans
attendre La farine Ni autre Chose puis quel a sa Charge et
q'uil nes pas un moment a perdre Sans faire tort aux
Messieurs dans La commerce du nord. je suis Estraint
mortifié que vous mavez pas Envoyé la proportion de ce
qui est toit a Mon^{sr} oakes Comme les autre il faut jamais
offencér personne dans le Commerce au contraire cestras
J'enten plaire atout le monde je vous prie dont aussitot
quele depayster Sera arrivé de metre tout Ce qui restera
alors a Monsieur oakes chez vous En bord Le premiere
Ces Canots En passent prendront quelque Chose peutetre
avant que le depaster arrivra il y avoit Cens minots de bled
Lescivé pour Mon^{sr} oakes Selont le Compte que je vous
a'i envoyez Le premier soijuge. j'espere que vous trouverez
Cette quantité pour lui j'ena vous d'rais pas pour des mils
frang q'uil fut trompé. j'attend du detroit tous les jours
per l'angelique 200 minots que je vous Enverrai ainssi vous
pouvez donner les 100 minots pour Mon^{sr} oakes, quand
même que vous prendrez le bled de quelqueun si au cas
que vous n'ayes pas asé vous je renverrai le michili maquina
Et larchange. tous les deux au Saut Comme Brulon pourai
Assiter affaire monter le machili maquause car il faut ab-
solutement quel monte il sera trop tard attendre le troisieme
voyage du depassister pour Envoyer la farine Et le restant
du rum de ces messieurs Robidau est deserté cependent je
Croit bien qu'ils est cachez ils Crains Daller dans le nord
Messieurs holmes et grant ma promet de vous remettre pour
moi uns Bon Charpentier pourvue que vous pouvez les
donner un homme a sa plasce pour aller dans le nord. si vous
pouvez En avoir. je lui donneré mil frans il y a un mastot aussi
que messieurs vous remettront si vous pouvez trouver u
homme A sa plasce Et raubidau que j'avoit Changez pour lui.
Per Mons^r Holmes

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 21, 1778

My dear Brother: I received your letter by the canoes.

I have only time now to say that it will be necessary to send back the *De Peyster* as soon as possible without waiting for the flour or anything else as she has her load and there is not a moment to lose without loss to the northern traders.

I am much mortified that you did not send Mr. Oakes's share of merchandise with that of the other gentlemen. One should never give offence in trade. To go to the other extreme, I mean to please everybody.

Now, as soon as the *De Peyster* arrives I beg you to put on board first all that then remains for Mr. Oakes at your place. It may be that these canoes in passing will take something before the *De Peyster* gets there. There should be 100 minots of lye hominy for Mr. Oakes according to the first account that I sent you, so I hope that you have that much. Not for a thousand francs would I have him disappointed.

I am expecting any day from Detroit by the *Angelique* 200 minots that I shall send you. You may therefore give out the 100 minots for Mr. Oakes even though you take it from the supply for some one else in case you have not enough. I shall send both the *Mackinac* and the *Archange* to the Sault so that Brulon can help to get the *Mackinac* up also, for it is absolutely necessary that she goes on. It will be too late to wait for the third trip of the *De Peyster* to send the flour and the rest of the rum for these gentlemen.

Robideau has deserted though I am quite sure he is in hiding somewhere. He is afraid of having to go north. Messrs. Holmes & Grant promised to send you a good carpenter for me provided you could let them have a man in his place for the north. If you have one I will give him a thousand francs. There is a sailor too that these gentlemen would send you if you could find a man in his place, and Robideau, I might have exchanged for him

Per Mr. Holmes

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. TODD AND MCGILL AT
MONTREAL, JUNE 22, 1778

My Canoes are now arrived & have brought every thing in good order & agreeable to the invoice, except in Bale N^o 7 a small white Shirt in lieu of a large one Ruffled, Bale N^o 3 wants a Shirt of Russia Sheeting, a pair of Russia Trousars & a pair of oxhide Shoes, N^o 4 also wants a Shirt of Russia Sheeting.

The things from England are really well choose & please me much, however a fiddle which I had mentioned in that memord^m is left out, & tho' such an omission can be of no consiquence to persons who can supply the want at the next Shop, it is so different here, that I would not for ten Guineas it had not come, please purchase one for me at Montreal without fail, let the price be about £6 Halifax. I sent you a memord^m this Spring in which a fiddle was mentioned, that one is also to come, its for an other person, please not to forget a quantity of strings with the fiddles.

I approve much of your plan of forwarding rum as soon as you receive it, no matter what Quantity if it gets on, for except I have it here beforehand, I will not make any more positive contracts, the freight of what came in my Canoes will I dare say cost as much as I get for the whole Rum, but this is not what gives me the greatest uneasyness it's the fear of the NW. C^o not receiving the whole of their Quantity in time, during these troubles I know of no other way of contracting with them, but fixing a price on what of the rum comes by the Lakes & letting them have that by the Grand River at first cost & Expences (I want no profit on it) they must allow me Commissions for purchasing their Corn, flour &c^a for the Bushell of Corn this Year costs me 32/ & I furnished it for 24/ I received my Shirts by M^r Solomon who arrived here in eighteen Days

I have no time at present to examine the Accounts, but shall so soon as [I am] more at leisure. I intend sending off my Canoes in about ten days time, I cannot [write more?], there is above three hundred Warriors going down.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

Robertson has been detained with my Vessell untill they go off

M^{rs} Askin presents her Compliments to M^{rs} M^cGill in which I join with all my heart

I am &c.

per Campau

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. TODD AND MCGILL AT
MONTREAL, JUNE 23, 1778

Looking over the letters yet unanswer'd I find yours of the 25th Ult^o to which I made no reply in my Yesterdays letter.

I'm very glad that there is so great a likelihood of my rum arriving so soon, I daily expect the Angelica & the Vessell I sent for the flour here, perhaps my rum may be on board, the Tarr & Kettles are not pressing articles, I can do without them some time, provided the pitch gets safe here, & as to the cheese please repleace it with another Hamper this Year. The Canadian Pork & loaf Sugar which you mention being Short of my order of the 18th Sep^r 1777, I can well do without, but the covering Nails & common Wine are both very Saleable articles, however as there is a large Quantity of the former of these articles comeing or come out for me, it will be needless to purchase others at Montreal.

Old François goes for Detroit he intends living there. I shall send a Young Brother-in-law⁸⁰ of mine to take his place at Millwakee as much on acc^t of the Corn to be got there as the Peltry.

I am under many obligations to you for the Uncommon pains you have been at in order to insure the speedy passage of my things by the Lakes. I will be attentive to what you mention respecting the time of payment of such drafts as I shall draw on You.

I am in such want of Waistcoats & Breeches that I beg you will have immediately purchased for me six or eight

⁸⁰ The "Young brother-in-law" was evidently either Lavoine or Louison Barthe. No record of his actual residence at Milwaukee has been found.

Yards of fine white Cloth, which with Sutable trimmings please send me by the very first oppertunity, hardly any person will refuse to embark so small a Bundle on being paid for so doing, the kind of Buttons I would choose is plain double gilt with Eyes if to be had, if not with Ivory bottoms, but eyes answers best as they can be taken off when washing The want of Breeches makes me dwell so long on the Subject, in order to insure their comeing

I am &c^a

per Campau

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. PORTEOUS⁸¹ AND
SUTHERLAND AT MONTREAL, JUNE 23, 1778

I was favoured with your letter bearing date the 1st of May by M^r Holmes, the Provisions you mention I received & delivered agreeable to your desire, what little service I am capable of I have at [and] will at all times rendre Mess^{rs} Holmes & Grant, who from my small acquaintance with them are very deserving young men & I dare say will succeed in the business they have undertaken, their letter to you which I send with this will more fully inform you of what they have done.

I am with esteem &c^a

per Campau

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ALEXANDER HENRY AT
MONTREAL, JUNE 23, 1778

I suppose by this time you are returned from England⁸²

⁸¹ John Porteous was a prominent merchant of Montreal in the Revolutionary period. He was a signer, Jan. 10, 1774, of the petition to the Crown for the establishment of a representative assembly in Quebec Province, and in this connection has been characterized as one of the "most loyal, sterling, and moderate persons in the community." See *Canada and Its Provinces* (Toronto, 1914), XV, 142. On Oct. 4, 1771, he married Josephite Drouet de Carqueville and to them several children were born. He died, June 13, 1782, and in 1785, James McGill became guardian of his children. See *Canadian Archives Report* for 1885, lxxxv ff.; *ibid* for 1889, xvi.

⁸² In the summer of 1776, Henry had returned to Montreal from his fifteen-year sojourn in the wilderness, and that place remained his home thenceforth until his death in 1824. In the latter part of the year 1776 he had gone to England; apparently this was Askin's first letter to him after his return to Canada.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

& of course expect to hear from your old Acquaintance.

I sent your Corn & flour to S^t Mary's agreeable to your letter to me on that Subject. I did not go to Detroit last fall as I intended when I seen you last, these troublesome times causes many disputes in which a man often gets involved, notwithstanding his great desire to the contrary I therefore thought it most prudent to stay where I'm sure to live in peace.

Im building a new house out of the Fort & intend to make use of it untill the present warr is at an end & then shall change my Quarters, but where to I know not as yet.

Lyons wintered with us here & Bostwick went to the Illinois, he is returned with a large Bag of Diamonds & other precious Stones.

Kitty is Married to Cap^t Robertson & joins with M^{rs} Askin in compliments to you

I am as Usual

per Campau

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE AT
SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michilimakina Le 26 juin 1778

Mon cher frere Le Michilimakina Est arrivé et je sait a present que Mons^r oakes na pas eu de Bled au saut, aussi Bien quil marque a la quantité que je devoit fournir a Mons^r charle chaBoilliez 45 minots de Bled Cela me fait BeauCoup de peine ayant assuré tous Les deux que Leurs quantité etoient Complets. je ne veut pas faire de Reproche mais un pareille affaire ne marivera jamais Car je me firait que sur Ceque jai moi même je vous Envoye Le Compte du Bled que jai Envoyé au saut par la Barque Cette année et Lautonne dernière tout Ce la Rabatu sur Ceque vous avez Livrez il ne Reste que 24 minots votre memoire a moi pour Cette année etoit pour 200 minot de Bled vous voyrez par le Compte que je vous ai fourni 216 gros Et Lissivés jai fait quelque petite Remarque pour Les erreurs qui Cest trouvés dans les dernière État de charge

M^r Jouber signe quil marque 28 piéces il signe aussi quil y a 28 dun autre marque de trop Cela faut de ce qui L'ort mis au Bort il se trouve dont 2 sac marqué E S de trop car il y a 312 piéce et je croyois quil ny avoit que 310

je Renvoye La Barque demain matin avec tout Le Bled que je pourrai Ramasser pour tacher d'Enpecher Remplir Mon obligation En parti du moin du moins avec Mons^r ockes et Mons^r chaBoilliez faite La monter Le saut aussitot quelle purra pour ammener Le Butin de Cest deux Messieurs et Les autres article qui sont au bord si L'harchange arrive de sorte quelle puisse se Rendre au saut avant que La makina Est parré de partir pour Le portage a la Bonne heure si non il ne faut pas quel attendre du tout

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 26, 1778

My dear Brother: The *Mackinac* has come in and now I know that Mr. Oakes has not had any corn at the Sault. More than that, he notes that I still owe 45 minots to Mr. Charles Chaboillez. I am exceedingly worried for I had assured both these gentlemen that their supply was on hand. I am not reproaching you but such a thing would never have happened to me for I should have relied only on what I had myself. I now send you the account for the corn I have sent to the Sault by the vessel this year and last fall. Deduct from all that what you have given out and there remains only 24 minots. Your statement to me for this year said 200 minots of corn. You will see by the account that I have furnished 216, in both hulled and lye hominy. I have made some brief notes about the mistakes which occurred in the last bill of lading.

Mr. Jouber notes that he marked 28 pieces. He also notes that there are 28 of another mark too many. That must be from what Lorty⁸³ put on board, of which there are two bags marked E S too many, for there are 312 pieces and I thought there should be only 310.

⁸³ Possibly Jean Baptiste Lorty (Lortie) who was on the payroll of the Indian Department at Detroit prior to Oct. 24, 1782. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XI, 344.

Tomorrow morning I shall send the vessel with all the corn that I can gather up, to try to prevent, in part at least, that my contract with Mr. Oakes and Mr. Chaboillez may not be filled. Have her pass up the Sault as soon as possible that the goods of these two gentlemen may be delivered, and the other articles which are on board, if the *Archange* arrives so that she can be at the Sault in plenty of time before the *Mackinac* is prepared to leave for the Portage, if not there is no need for her to wait.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE AT
SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michilimakina Le 26 juin 1778

Mon cher frere jay de devan moy vos quatre Lettre deux datte Le 17 et Les autre Le 18 du present jay Recuë Les Livres que vous avez Envoyez par La mouche, vous avez bien fait de Lanpecher de traïter puis quil navoit point de permis je ai avertis Le Major de Cela Comme les deux Barque Comme Les deux Barque auront a faire une voyage au grand portage et quil ne seront pas chargée Le ports de Cequi vous manque pour Mons^r nadin sera pas une grande perte. je ne veux plus que Lon traite avec personne jusque cest troubles soit fini ont Court trop de risque outre que lon est Blamé je veux seulement Entreprenre dacheter des provision pour Ceux qui vont menployer et faire mon possible quil ne soit pas trompé pour vu quils me paye tant par cent Commission Les Marchandise ne sont pas si cher ny Rare Comme ont vous la dit Le Major En avoit besoin pour Les sauvage mais tout Cela est fini presentement ni le Michilimakina, ni L'harchange ne sont pas encore arrivé. jespai voir Lun ou Lautre aujourdhy puis que Le vent Est Bon.

j'a cheterez Les Ecorse que vous me demandé et Le faire de pequante pour Mons^r McGill vous avez bien faites de Garder Le 99 Baril de Boison Ce cela que je voutoit dire vous Les avez Livrez san doute aux deux Canot je nait pas Le tems Encore de voir Combien Le port de vos piéce Coutron mais jose dire que ce aprochera de 80th chaque

selon Ce qu'on dit qui a Calculé Cela Cependant Comme mes Canot Retour neront chargé sa dominera les frais je vous ai Ecri assez au sujet du Bled de Mons^r ockes dans ma Lettre du 21 du present aquoi jespere que vous ferez bien attention. jay marqué Ceque vous mecite pour Roubidou et Les vivres que vous avés fourni pour Le guide parisien Le Michilimakina paroît a present depuis que jai Commencez a Écrire je men vait La Renvoyer tout de suite avec tout Le Bled Lessives que je puis Enprunter aussitot quelle arrive chez vous faite La preparer a monter Car je ferai partir Lharchange avec sa charge aussitot arrives dite a Mons^r Machard & C^o que je Les attend ici avant quil se defasse de Leurs peltrie ou payent quelque Billiette comme ils desirent Commencer par La dernière Equiper selon La Coutume du payis

jay Reçuë Le Billiette que merci vous a faites Ces nest pas Encore payez je vous Renvoye La declaration de mercy il paroît pour Cela quil y a Eu une societé Entre Le sieur Gaudin et La Belle, Cependant sans attendre Les deux parties ils nest pas possible de former une opinion juste de Laffaire sy Mes^r jober et Godin ne peuvent pas saccorder Entres Eux Le plus cours sera devenir ici ou ils auron une chambre pour determiner Laffaire Le 27 je suis apres faire charier Le Butin pour charger La Barque dans Lance Comme Le van et Bien Bon Bon Elle pourra etre au detour Ce soir Ceque Le Bled que je suis apres mettre au Bord manque 145 minots je vous pries de tacher de trouver; Comme il faut cette quantité pour Mons^r ockes et Mons^r chaBoilliez, a moins que vous navez Envoyé quelque Bled pour Eux autre ceque vous mavés marqués par le Compte que vous mavez Envoyé dans cette cas La Cette autant demois que vous aurez a Envoyer presentement

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 26, 1778

My dear Brother: I have before me your four letters—two dated the 17th, and two the 18th inst. and have received

the books you sent by Lamouche. You did right to stop him from trading when he had no license. I have warned the Major about him. As both boats must make the trip to the Grand Portage and as they will not be loaded, the freight you miss on Mr. Nadin's goods will not be a great loss. I would rather not make any more contracts with the traders until these troubles are over. There is too much risk, besides the blame one incurs. I might engage to supply provisions on commission to those who care to employ me in that way, with the assurance that I would do my best not to disappoint them. Merchandise is neither dear nor scarce as you have been told. The Major needed it for the Indians but that is all over now. Neither the *Mackinac* nor the *Archange* has come in yet. I am hoping to see one or the other today, now that the wind is fair.

I bought the bark you ordered, and had it stripped for Mr. McGill. You did right to keep the 99 barrels of rum. That is just what I would have told you to do. You have delivered them, no doubt, to the two canoes. I have not time now to make out the freight on your goods, but I dare say it will cost about 80 livres each piece, according to what I am told by one who has made some estimate on it. However, as my canoes will come back loaded that will fix the rate.

I have written you enough on the subject of Mr Oakes's corn in my letter of the 21st inst., and hope you gave it due attention. I notice what you write for Robideau and the provisions that you furnished for the guide Parisien.

The *Mackinac* is in sight now since I began to write. I shall send her back immediately with all the lye hominy I can gather up. As soon as she reaches you get her ready to go on up for I shall have the *Archange* set out again as soon as she comes in. Tell Messrs. Machard & Co. that I expect them here before they dispose of their peltries or pay any notes, since they wish to begin by the last equipment, according to the custom of the country.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ The custom referred to was that a trader should begin payment of his debts with the merchant who had supplied his last outfit of goods; whatever remained

I have received the note Merci drew up for you. It is not yet paid. I am sending you his written statement, and it would seem by it that there has been a partnership between Gaudin and La Belle. However, without waiting to see both parties, it is impossible to form a correct opinion in the matter. If Joubert and Gaudin cannot agree between themselves, the quickest way will be for them to come here where they will have a private room to arrange for a settlement.

27th I am having the merchandise carted over to load the vessel in the bay as there is a fine fair wind. She should be at the detour this evening. The corn I am loading lacks 145 minots. Do try to find that much as we must have it for Mr. Oakes and Mr. Chaboillez, unless you have sent them some that you have not mentioned in the account you sent me. In that case it would be that much less you would need to send now.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO CHARLES CHABOILLEZ AT
GRAND PORTAGE

a Mich. Le 27 de juin 1778

Mons^r charle chaBoillie

Mon ami vous me Blamerez peutetre, Cependant Cest sans Raison Car je vous assure je nait jamais seu que hier que vous navez pas Reçuë tout Le Bled que je devois vous fournir soit par La première voyage de La Barque ou biens vos Canot, jespere dont que Les 45 minots qui vous manque seront dans Le second voyage de La Depeyster sinon ils seront dans Le Michilimakina que jay fait partir Ce matin et qui ira Endroiture au grand portage. La Barque qui etoit aller au detroit pour Le Restant de Rom et farine pour La grande société & vous nai pas Encore arrivé Cependant il y a plus de trois semaine quelle est parti. Je nose pas vous envoyer La farine du Roy etant si mauvaise jai Risqué Cependant d'en Envoyer un peu a la grande société comme

after discharging this primary obligation was to be shared among his remaining creditors on a common footing. In other words, the latest outfitter had a preferred claim upon the proceeds of the trade which his supply of goods had rendered possible.

ils doivent etre dans un terrible EnBarra pour La farine je fini En vous assurant que je fait tout mon possible mais dans un tems de troubles Generals personne est sure

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 27, 1778

Mr. Charles Chaboillez,

My Friend: You are blaming me perhaps, but not justly, for I assure you that only today did I learn that you had not received all the corn I contracted to supply, either by the first voyage of the vessel or for sure by your own canoes. Now I can only hope that the 45 minots still lacking will go up by the *De Peyster* on her second trip, but if not, they will be in the *Mackinac* which I sent off this morning and which will go straight through to the Grand Portage. The vessel that was to go to Detroit for the rest of the rum and flour for the North West Company and for you has not come in yet, though it is more than three weeks since she left. I dare not send you any of the King's flour, it is so bad. However, I have risked sending a little to the North West Company, as they must be in great distress for flour.

I close by assuring you that I am doing everything possible, but in a time of universal trouble, no one is sure.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. TODD AND MCGILL AT
MONTREAL, JUNE 29, 1778

I have answered the last of your letters in two I wrote you by M^r Campau, the 22^d & 23^d Instant, their Copies you shall have by this oppertunity if time will permit.

Your Clerks or some other have made a very great mistake in the Tea they sent me, it is not only the most common sorts of green Tea, but so bad besides that I would prefer the Bohea to it ten to one, besides its coming in Paper in a bale has still done it some damage by bruising it into powder. I shall send you a Sample of it which will be the best proof of its quality. Please Credit me the difference of price, it's charged 15/ Halifax.

My Canoes goes to morrow, not all loaded with my own Packs, as I have not yett had any from S^t Mary's. I will take some for M^r Lyons & he will take as many for me.

The Strouds⁸⁵ you now send are the worst I ever have seen, those to M^r Lyons last year excepted, it hurts his trade I know & as he would be perhaps delicate about complaining, I thought proper to mention it to you You will Doubtless send me some Canoes with the part of my things that comes from England, which I mentioned was to come by the Grand River. You may hire them for certain to come to the entrance of the lake only, as I will send People in a few days to Build there As I would choose however that all was examined it will be necessary to send an account of the contents of each Package, directed to the person acting for me there & if you could without too much trouble send the account of the Packages both in french & english, so much the Better, however I mean to send an Englishman.

I here inclose you a list of what goods I shall want for that place for the Winter of which please send me a Seperate Invoice as they are for M^r Lyons & me, half the amount of which to be charged to each of our accounts seperately. In about eight days I will be able to send you some remittances in Bills &c^a

No Vessell yett from Detroit, you'll be surprized when I tell you that we have not heard from Niagara this Year, so of course got no letters that are come by the way of the lakes. we have no news worth communicateing. Pray dont forget the white cloth for my Breeches & the trimmings. M^{rs} Askin Joins in Compliments to M^{rs} M^cGill

I am & c^a

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO CHARLES CHABOILLET
AT GRAND PORTAGE

A Michili Maquina Le 30 juin 1778

Mons^r et ami Le tems ma permis seullemant De vous dire que ma Barque est arivé du detroit Cette matin et

⁸⁵ Strouding was a coarse, heavy cloth, supplied as a staple for the Indian trade.

q'uelle par pour le saut je vous Envoye dise Barils de rum
Et 500th de farine Ca fait tout ceque je vous devois vous
fournir S'il restois un parti de votre Bled au Saut vous le
receverai par cett aucasions je ne puis pas promettre ni
le Bled ni le rum que Madame votre Epouse a ordonné
desur plus quand une autre Barque arivera de detroit je
Scaurai Et je vous assure que personne sera plus disposé a
vous servir que moi même—vottres h'umblé serviteur

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 30, 1778

Sir and Friend: Time allows me to say only that my vessel from Detroit arrived this morning and that she is leaving for the Sault. I am sending you ten barrels of rum and five hundred weight of flour, and this makes up the amount I agreed to furnish you. If any of your corn is still at the Sault you will receive it by this occasion. I cannot promise for sure either the rum or the corn your wife ordered. I shall know better when another vessel comes up from Detroit, and I can assure you no one is more disposed to serve you than myself.

Your humble servant

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO CHARLES CHABOILLEZ
AT GRAND PORTAGE

a Michili Maquina le 30 juin 1778

Monsieur j'ai Eu le plesir de recevoir votre Lettre hier
Datte le 21 de du present La representtations que vous
fait des afair Entre Godin [et] LaBelle paroît assez Claire
Cependant Comme La dessitions des affair sont pas Entre
mes mains mon oppinion Est Comme celle un autre Le
Commandant même fait desterminer tout les disenteis qui
ariveverea Cei per unne Chanbre des CommerCants ainssi
votre plus Court est de venir Cai avec mon^{sr} Godin hier
au soir j'ai resu unne lettre De Madam votre Epouse dans
linstant je voyrai par ladrese quel Et toit pour moi Et je
me suis mis a la decasté mais Dans un instant je me Suis

appersu de mon Erreur et je le recasté Sans avoir lut un Seul mot je vous assure [Madame] akin vous fait Bien des Compliment je suis Monsieur votre tres h'eumble Et tres oBeissante Servirteur

Et soyez asurez Mons^r que j'ai linclinations de vous servir ils est vrais que je ne persuivray personne En justis j'ai paire plus pour moi même mais ceux qui ont dequoi je ferai payez sans Cela

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 30, 1778

Sir: I had yesterday the pleasure of receiving your letter dated the 21st inst. Your representation of the affair between Gaudin and La Belle seems clear enough, but as the decision does not rest with me, my opinion has no more weight than any other. The Commandant himself, by a council of the traders, decides in all matters of dispute that may arise here.⁸⁶ Therefore, your quickest plan will be to come here with Mr. Gaudin. Yesterday evening I received a letter from Madam, your wife. At first, seeing it addressed to me, I was breaking open the seal, but at the same moment I noticed my error and resealed it without, I assure you, having read a single word. [Mrs.] Askin presents her compliments. I am, Sir,

Your very humble and very obedient servant.

And be assured, Sir, that I have every inclination to serve you. It is true, I do not prosecute people. I might have more paid for myself, but with those who have the means, I manage without that.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. MCGILL AND FROBISHER AT
GRAND PORTAGE, JUNE 30, 1778

My Vessell from Detroit is arrived this morning, but

⁸⁶ This refers to the agreement for the operation of the general store which was established at the instigation of Major De Peyster. Article 7 of the agreement provided that disputes which might arise between traders should be determined by the commandant and six other persons named by majority vote of the subscribers. For the agreement see *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, X, 305-307.

instead of being loaded for me Solely, She was obliged to bring the Kings Stores & even other things, so that I only got in her some Rum & flour, all which I send for the Portage. You will receive 25 Bags of 100 W^t each & 38 Kegs of W. I. Rum filled up at Detroit, all my attempts are vain to keep my Engagements with those I have contracted with, my own Vessell is treated in the same manner as if she was paid by the Crown, if this continues rather than have the anxety I have had this Summer I will not contract with any person, besides many casks which I foresee will be altogether wanting, it takes two to fill seven at Detroit, we expect another Vessell in a very few Days, in her I hope to have more flour & Rum which I will forward to you without loss of time. Corn begins to be a Scarce Article, however I must send 50 Bushels for your Canoes to S^t Mary's & then you will have received more than our agreement I'm so hurried I hardly know what I write. M^{rs} Askin presents her Compliments & beleive me most truely &c.

JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE AT SAULT STE. MARIE
a Michilimakina Le 30 juin 1778

Mon cher frere je vous Énvoye Le Compte de tous Cequi Est au Bord de Larchange je nait Rien outée jattend beauCoup davantage par Langelique et La Bien venuë. je nai Rien marqué je vous prirai de faire Cela de La fason suivante scavoir de marquer 38 Barils de Rom N W pour La grande société Et Les autres 10 C CH pr Mons^r charles chaBoilliez Cela font Les 48 Barils qui sont au Bord vous marquerez 5 sacs de farine C CH pour Mons^r charles chaBoilliez 10 sacs de farine F O pour Mons^r ockes et 25 sac de farine N W pour La grande société font Les 40 sac qui sont au Bord tout Cela vous Envoyerez au grand portage a Cests Messieurs par La première occation que je Croix sera sauvage Et autre Cela 62 $\frac{3}{4}$ minots de Bleds Lissivés au Bord Cela avec 109 minots que je vous Ést Envoyéz par sauvage font 171 $\frac{3}{4}$ minots je devois alors de quantité que je devois fournir a Mons^r ockes 100 minots et a Mons^r ChaBoilliez 45 et a vous même selont Le Compte que je

vous ai Envoyez que $24\frac{1}{2}$ minot par apres que vous aurez Envoyez a Mons^r ockes 100 minots Et a Mons^r chaBoilliez 45 il Restera 26 minots $\frac{3}{4}$ qui font $2\frac{1}{2}$ minot plus que je vous doit et que jay porté a votre Compte aujourd'hui Et tout sera arrangé pour Le Bled avant que Lharchange pourra Etre de Retour icy jaurai un autant de charge pour Elle pour vous Envoyer jay Recuë votre Lettre En datte Le 24 et 25 je suis persuade que vous faite tout pour Le mieux je ne suis [sais?] pas meme Comme vous pourez suffire a tout vos occupation je vous Envoye un Commis si vous Le trouvez de votre gout il vous soulagera un peu je Croix que vous ferez mieux de ne pas faire des Envoye davantage ce Recursie [raccourci?] État de La charge de Larchange Mons^r Brulon maitre a Michilimakina

Le 30 juin 1778 scavoir—

48 Barils de Rom de seize pots chaque
 40 sacs de farine de 100^{lb} chaque
 1 sac de Bled Lissivés point de marque
 27 idem " " "

Translation

Michilimackinac, June 30, 1778

My dear Brother: I am sending you the bill of lading for the *Archange*, with nothing removed, and expect much more by the *Angelica* and the *Welcome*. I have not marked the goods but ask you to do that as follows: Mark 38 barrels of rum N W for the North West Company, and the remaining 10 barrels mark C CH for Mr. Charles Chaboillez. That makes the 48 barrels on board. Mark 5 bags of flour C CH for Mr. Charles Chaboillez, 10 bags of flour F O for Mr. Oakes, and 25 bags of flour N W for the North West Company. That makes the 40 bags on board. Send all that to the Grand Portage for these gentlemen by the first opportunity, which I think will be by the Indian. Then there are $62\frac{3}{4}$ minots of lye hominy on board, which, with the 109 minots I sent you by the Indian, makes $171\frac{3}{4}$. I still

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

owe 100 minots of the amount I agreed to supply Mr. Oakes, and 45 to Mr. Chaboillez, and to you also, according to the account I sent you by [blank] I owe $24\frac{1}{2}$ minots. After you have sent Mr. Oakes 100 minots, and Mr. Chaboillez 45, there will still be $26\frac{3}{4}$ minots, which is $2\frac{1}{2}$ more than I owe you—and which I have today charged to your account—and all the corn debt is settled. Before the *Archange* can get back here I shall have as much more to load her and send you.

I received your letter dated the 24th and the 25th, and am really satisfied that you do everything as well as possible. Indeed, I do not see how you could accomplish all you have to do. I am sending you a clerk. If you find he suits you, he will relieve you a little. I think it would be better for you not to have anything more sent this shorter route.

Bill of lading of the *Archange*, at Michilimackinac.

Mr. Brulon, master.

June 30, 1778, viz.:

48 barrels of rum, 8 gallons each

40 bags of flour, 100 lbs. each

1 bag of lye hominy, not marked

27 do. " " " " "

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MR. BOURASSA

A Michili maquina le 2 de julliete 1778

Monsieur Bourrisa Monsieur je suis tous mortifiez de vous rendre un Compte si mauvai de vos debiteur dans Cette Endroit Mons^r SansChagrin menren un autre ils étoit partit avant que votre letre est arrivé le défunt j. B. Couchoit mas pas lessé la moindre chose selons tout Ceque jai entendue Mons^r duguay ne vant plus ici desorte quil il y a que Mons^r roch qui paroît avoir la volonté de vous payer un sols pour cette année je garderai cependant vottre papié

Translation

Michilimackinac, July 2, 1778

Mr. Bourassa⁸⁷

Sir: I am extremely mortified to be obliged to send you such a bad account of your debtors in this place, and now Mr. Sanschagrín makes still another. He had gone before your letter arrived. The late Mr. J. B. Cauchois⁸⁸ did not leave anything according to all I have heard. Mr. Duguay⁸⁹ does not come to this place any more; so that there is only Mr. Roche who seems to have the inclination to pay you a sol this year. But I shall keep your bills.

⁸⁷ Probably this was René Bourassa of Detroit. The Bourassa family was long active in the fur trade. Its founder was Francis Bourassa, a native of the diocese of Lucon, France, born in 1659, who came to Canada and married at Contrecoeur, July 4, 1684, Mary Le Ber, a native of Montreal. Their son, René, born at Laprairie, December 21, 1688, married there, October 23, 1710, Agnes Gagnier, daughter of Pierre Gagnier and Catherine Daubigeon. They had one son, René, who was born at Laprairie, June 1, 1718, and was buried at Detroit, November 24, 1792. The father married (second) Marie Catherine Leriger, and engaging in the fur trade, located at Mackinac. A younger daughter of this union, Charlotte Ambrosine, born June 14, 1735, became the wife, August 12, 1754, of Charles Michel Langlade of Mackinac and Green Bay, for whom see *ante*, 72.

René Bourassa, the younger, married at Mackinac, August 3, 1744, Ann Charlotte Veronica Chevalier, who was born at Mackinac, March 1, 1726, the daughter of Jean Baptiste Chevalier and Frances Alavoine. They had numerous children (one son was born before the marriage rite was solemnized), all born at Mackinac. Not long after 1763, however, the family removed to Detroit, where in due time the children were married, and where the father died, as already noted, in 1792. Denissen traces his descendants to about the year 1880; undoubtedly they are still numerous in Detroit and vicinity. See Denissen, *op. cit.*, and *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII and XIX, *passim*.

⁸⁸ Jean Baptiste Cauchois was born at Montreal in 1732. The date of his removal to Mackinac is unknown, but he was there at the time of the massacre in 1763 and is credited by Alexander Henry with an act of humanity which saved the life of the latter. On May 4, 1764, he married at Mackinac Mary Angelica Sejournée, daughter of Alexis Sejournée and Mary Angelica Tareau. To them were born several children, the last, Alexis, born at Mackinac in June, 1777, and baptized at Detroit, September 7 of the same year. It seems probable that these dates indicate approximately the time of Cauchois' death and the removal of his widow and children to Detroit. Until recent years numerous descendants of the family were living in Detroit or Sandwich and vicinity. Denissen, *op. cit.*

⁸⁹ Probably the same person as one Dugay whose presence at Mackinac in 1780 is recorded in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, X, 400, 435-36. In Denissen, *op. cit.*, is recorded the baptism at Detroit, July 5, 1790, of Pierre Duguay, aged about fourteen years, the son of a Chippewa woman.

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FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. TODD AND MCGILL
AT MONTREAL, JULY 2, 1778

Mons^r Thercy⁹⁰ goes off to day in a light Canoe well maned, which makes me think his passage will be short & you will receive this before several others I wrote you some time ago. I received Yours of the 7th Ult^o & am sorry to hear Beaver is fallen, did I know any certain price I could give for furr, I could have purchased some parcells.

Tho the Vessells from Europe are long acoming, yet I dare say nothing has happened them, it's necessary they now take more precaution than formerly.

M^r Lyons Suffers much by his goods not coming, he is obliged to keep men whose provisions are now very dear, corn will not be had for 30^h in a few days, added to all this had they come up in the Spring he could have Sold them to government, with this I send you the Copy of a Letter I wrote you the 29th Ult^o as also a memord^m for some goods for M^r Lyons & me for the trade at the entrance of the french River, & as there is several things in this Memord^m to be made up at Montreal, it cannot get to you too soon. Three Canoes for me loaded with furr, will set off this evening, or to morrow morning.

I write the N W C^o by this oppertunity. I'm so hurried that I can only add that I am &c.

no news of Lorty yett

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO THE NORTH WEST COMPANY
AT MONTREAL, JULY 2, 1778

I wrote you formerly that I had sent a Vessell of mine to Detroit for flour & Rum for you, at her arrival Governor Hamilton did not think proper to suffer any provisions, I mean flour, to leave the Settlement, however a Vessell arriving from Niagara with some provisions & bringing

⁹⁰ Pierre Thierry, born at Montreal in 1750, is characterized in a communication of Governor Sinclair of Mackinac, October 22, 1781, as "Conductor of the King's Canoes." Sinclair speaks of his conduct in terms of commendation. The Mackinac Register of Baptisms (printed in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIV) indicates the presence of Thierry at that place at various times down as late as 1804.

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

an acc^t that there was great quantities on the way, there was an order published that every person with permission might send what Quantity they thought proper, but this served no great purpose as my Vessell was ordered along side of the Kings & what clothing, Liquors &c. for this Garrison were put on board her, & not only that, but Merchants had permission to put things on board as well as myself. I asked the Master of the Vessell if he represented to the Governor that the Vessell was not in the Service & therefore not subject to carry for every person, he says he did & even mentioned that after he had taken the Kings things on board, he desired that he might make up the rest of the loading with mine, & that the Governor told him I could not have any preference over others. If what he says be true, I really think it a hardship. I imagine Major De Peysters letter to Governor Hamilton explained fully his reasons for letting my Vessell go to Detroit. I dont want there should be any complaints about these matters. I only mean to shew you that I nor no other person in these troublesome times can assure you about Provisions, or anything Else, all I received was four thousand of flour & 48 Kegs of Rum which I dispatched immediately for the Portage. I expect more in a few days, as it comes here I will forward it till I at last get your quantity or more

I am &c.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MR. PERINAULT⁹¹

a Makina Le 2 juilliette 1778

Mon amy vos Deux Lettre En datte Le 1 et 10 du passe sont arrivez il y a deux jours je vous Remercy des peine que vous prenés de Minformer des nouvelle jespaiere que votre voute sera bien bon Bien pleine de Bonne Marchandise a Bonne Compositions et apres Cela changé

⁹¹ This letter was written to Perinault (see letter to Messrs. Todd and McGill immediately following). Probably he is the same man as "Joseph Perinault merchant" who acted as godfather at certain baptisms at Mackinac in 1775. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 75-76. In a list of traders to Lake Superior, undated but supposed to belong to the year 1786, Perinault's name is included. *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XX, 280. No further information has been found concerning him.

pour des Bon paquets Le Retardement des vesseaux je
Regarde Comme Rien il est vrais que je ne suis pas Le
plus grand politique sur terre

jay Reçuë ici En parti payement de Billiette que Mons^r
hypolite chaBoilliez vous devoit deux Cents Cinquante six
Livres de Castor pois Anglais et seize Loutre mauvaise
Cest tout ceque je pouvois attraper ici je vous Ést Renvoyez
son Billiette quelque jours passé vous tacherez Luy faire
payer Le Reste Mes^{rs} Machard & C^o sont arrivés hier je
Leurs Ést parlé aujourdhuy au sujets de votre Billiette Et
Les autre depte il Massure que aussitot quils sarangeront
pour Leurs paquets quils me feront payé pas [par] ceux
qui auront Leurs paquets Ceque jay Reçuë de Mes^{rs} hy-
polite chaBoilliez et Compagnie je vous Envoye dans Mes
Canot demain matin Ce forme trois paquets marquez P R
Et nombres 1, 2 Et 3—il y a tant de Bruit dans La maison
que je ne scais pas Ce que je vous Écrit Madame Askin
fait Bien Cest Compliment a vous et Madame perinault
Kitty est au detroit avec son mari

depuis que je vous Ést Ecrit sans me dire mot Machard
& C^o ont vandue Leur peltrie a Mons^r joseph sanguinette
ainsi je serait obligé de prendre son Billiette pour payement
je Compte ce vaudrait mieux de garder Celle que jay
Étant indresé [endossé?] par Luy Et signé pour Machard
& C^o pour Le Reste quil vous doit je prendrait un autre
Billiette

Translation

Michilimackinac, July 2, 1778

My Friend: Your two letters dated the 1st and 10th ult.
were received two days ago, and I thank you for the trouble
you have taken to give me the news. I hope that your
undertaking will turn out well, very well, filled with good
merchandise, well assorted, and afterwards exchanged for
good peltries. The delay of the vessels does not seem to me
anything serious. Of course, I am not the greatest politician
on earth.

I have taken in here, as part payment on the note Hypolyte Chaboillez owes you, two hundred and fifty-six pounds of beaver, English weight, and sixteen bad otters. That is all I could get out of him here. I sent you his note several days ago. You must try to have him pay the rest. Messrs. Machard & Co. arrived yesterday. I spoke to them today on the subject of your note and the other debts and they assured me that as soon as they had arranged for their peltries they would have me paid by the people who got the skins. What I received from Messrs. Hypolyte Chaboillez & Co. I am sending in my canoes tomorrow morning, made up in three packs marked P R and numbered 1, 2, and 3. There is so much noise in the house I do not know what I am writing to you. Mrs. Askin presents her best compliments to you and to Mrs. Perinault. Kitty is at Detroit with her husband.

Since I wrote the above and without saying a word to me Messrs. Machard & Co. have sold their peltries to Mr. Joseph Sanguinet. That means that I should be obliged to take his note in payment and I consider it would be better to keep the one I have, seeing that it is endorsed by him and signed for Machard & Co. For the remainder of what he owes you I shall take another note.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO MESSRS. TODD AND MCGILL
AT MONTREAL, JULY 3, 1778

I here inclose you an Acc^t of 42 Packs the contents of each pack seperately, the amount of the whole in their supposed value amounting to 10303 Livers or ancient Shillings⁹² the guides were present when each pack was made up & seen their contents. There is three packs also belonging to M^r Dobie & 3 of M^r Perinaults, the Acc^t of which I send them, the Guides also were present when they were made up, as to Six for M^r Alex^r Ellis⁹³ & 54 which

⁹² The nominal value of the livre was twenty sous. The phrase "ancient shillings" signifies that for the purpose of the present contract there is to be no diminution of this valuation.

⁹³ Alexander Ellice, born at Knockleith, Scotland, in 1743, came to America about

M^r Lyons sends, their contents are unknown to the Guides. You have likewise inclosed the men's Acc^{ts} in so plain a manner as will not admit of any dispute, by it you'll see there is a ballance due them of 5116^{li}. 4^s for remainder of Wages, Equipments &c. which You'll please charge me with. There is one man named Couroy in your list to whom you advanced 74^{li}. I can hear of no such person, nor any other in his stead. You'll please receive 90^{li} from M^r Dobie & as much from M^r Perinault, for freight of their Packs. M^r Lyons & M^{re} Beath, I settle with here for freight of theirs. Since Settlement I sold the guide for 110^{li} which please deduct from what is due him.

I dont know if I before mentioned to you to charge the Gentlemens Acc^{ts} of this Garrison to me, I mean Lieutenants Bennett, Clowes & Doctor Mitchell

I am Dear friends &c

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE
AT SAULT STE. MARIE

aMichilimaquina Le 7 de juliette 1778

Mon cher frere point de Barque arrivez du detroit depuis Mons^r Brulon le rum veaut 240^{li} Le baril La farine 100^{li} C^t le bled 30^{li} le sac Huron lissivé La graise 8^{li} la livre.

je vous prie de me renvoyer L'ancre que j'ai preté au sauvage per la premier au Casions je ne puis pas me servir du Grand Bateau Sans Cela j'ai Besoin ausie d'un palan double que j'ai peté a sauvage j'ai acheté tout les voilles et agre de la Barque de Mon^{sr} Bastevick pour environ 1500^{li} Si vous En avez Besoin vous les auré au même prie Mon^{sr} robertions me dit quil le vaut Bien un des deu Billiets

the close of the French and Indian War and soon thereafter was established in business as a member of the firm of Phyn and Ellice of Schenectady. The firm carried on an importing business, and engaged extensively in supplying the Detroit and Mackinac traders. Three of its letter books, covering the years 1767-76, are in the library of the Buffalo Historical Society. In the Revolution, Ellice remained loyal to the Crown, and going to Montreal, founded the firm of Ingliis, Ellice & Co. About the year 1780 he returned to England as head of the London house, while his brother Robert remained in charge at Montreal. Information adapted from ms. notes in Burton Hist. Coll. and data in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 259 and Buffalo Hist. Soc., *Publications*, VI, 84.

que vous mavez Envoyez appartenant a Mon^{sr} Salomon
 j'ai, Engez Nodisne mais ils n'est pas obligé a hyverner
 au saut

je vous ai deja Écrit au sujet Des Marchandize aussitot
 une Barque arrive du detroit je vous Envoirai des provisions
 et Boison faits Bien de focir il faut Envoyer chercher vos
 Chearreause je ne puis pas les Garder Cette hiver jai eu
 un lettre de mon pere de miamis ils se porte bien archange
 et tout la famille vous EnBrasse

jesuis

Translation

Michilimackinac, July 7, 1778

My dear Brother: There has not been a vessel from Detroit since Mr. Brulon came up. Rum is worth 240 livres a barrel, flour 100 livres a hundredweight, corn 30 livres a bag (Huron hominy), and grease 8 livres a pound.

You will please send me back the anchor I loaned the Indian by the first opportunity. I cannot use the big boat without it. I need also the double tackle I loaned him. I bought all the sails and rigging of Mr. Bostwick's vessel for about 1500 livres. If you need any, you may have them at the same price. Mr. Robertson tells me they are well worth it. One of the two notes you sent me belongs to Mr. Solomon.

I have engaged Nadin but he is not obliged to winter at the Sault.

I wrote you already on the subject of the merchandise. As soon as a vessel arrives from Detroit I shall send you provisions and rum. Be sure to eat good and plenty. You must send for your cart horses. I cannot keep them this winter. I have had a letter from my father⁹⁴ at the Miamis. He is very well. Archange and all the family embrace you.

I am

⁹⁴ Charles Andrew Barthe, father of Mrs. Askin.