

Tyrone, and changed his name from Erskine to Askin. He married Alice Rea and to them were born three sons (named John, William, and Robert) and two daughters (named Mary and Sarah). For some reason, possibly because of the death of his parents, John was reared by his grandfather, John Rea, who lived within a mile and a half of Dungannon. He died in 1758 and the grandson, now in his twentieth year, turned his back forever upon his native haunts and migrated to the New World. The Seven Years' War was then at its height, and he soon found employment by joining the army. He served at Ticonderoga, and probably in other campaigns against Canada, although of this we have no certain knowledge.

Before long (as early as 1761) the young immigrant was established as a merchant at Albany, engaged largely in the Indian trade. This business involved him in the affairs of the newly conquered western country and papers preserved in the Burton Historical Collection show that he visited Detroit as early as the spring of 1762. They also suggest the likelihood that he was here a full year earlier. In either event he was one of the first British traders to venture into the Northwest after the downfall of New France. At Albany he had as partners, in his various commercial enterprises, James Gordon, Abraham Steele, and Major Robert Rogers. It was a characteristic of the Indian trade that a man might be conducting at one time several different enterprises with distinct partners or groups of partners for each one, and such seems to have been the case with Askin during his business career at Albany. His partnership with Rogers ended disastrously, and not until 1771 did he succeed in freeing himself from the indebtedness incurred by it. Possibly this failure was the chief factor in his removal to a new theater of operations in the western country. The Pontiac uprising of 1763 set a temporary check upon all trading activities, and the precise date of Askin's removal to the Northwest is unknown. It has been stated that he came to Detroit with provisions for the relief of the garrison during the siege of 1763; we have been unable to verify this, but it is certain that in the following year Askin took up his