

case during the troublous years of the Revolution. With most of the commandants with whom he was thrown, Askin lived in harmony. With Colonel Arent Schuyler De Peyster, a notable figure in the western country during the Revolutionary period, who assumed the command at Mackinac in 1774, his relations were particularly cordial. In 1779 De Peyster was transferred to Detroit and the place he left vacant at Mackinac was filled by Patrick Sinclair. Although Sinclair was a man of some real ability, who ultimately attained the rank of lieutenant general, at Mackinac he succeeded in embroiling himself with almost everyone with whom he came in contact. We have no knowledge what the real ground of the enmity he soon conceived for Askin may have been; quite possibly the latter's friendship with De Peyster, of whom Sinclair was almost morbidly jealous, may have been a predisposing factor. At any rate the two men soon quarreled. Askin was deprived of his office as commissary, and in the summer of 1780 was even accused of acts of disloyalty. It is difficult to conceive of a man more ardently attached to his sovereign and government than Askin's conduct and expressions throughout his entire life prove him to have been, and in view of this unwavering record the accusation of Sinclair may unhesitatingly be designated as preposterous. Yet the commandant's hostility made it impossible for him to remain longer at Mackinac. Political considerations aside, there were substantial factors pertaining to matters of trade which suggested a removal to Detroit. In the summer of 1780, therefore, Askin terminated a fourteen-year residence at Mackinac by transferring his family and business to Detroit, where he continued to live until the spring of 1802.

During the Revolutionary struggle the importance of Detroit was materially enhanced. The French residents were largely indifferent to the issues of the war between the colonists and the mother country, but they were at any rate not actively disloyal to the British government. There was no local colonial faction to engineer a revolt, and between Detroit and even the most western of the rebelling settlements lay 300 miles of wilderness. From Detroit emanated