

& at present we want Bread more than Cooks. I have put her at M^r 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.