

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 suing 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 Mr 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
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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.