

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

As a true Ireishman 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.