

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN JOHN ASKIN AND HAMILTON AND
CARTWRIGHT

THIS Indenture made & entered into by John Askin of Detroit on the one Part, and Hamilton²⁷ & Cartwright,²⁸ Merchants of Niagara, on the other, Witnesseth: that the said Parties have agreed to enter into a Partnership for the Purpose of carrying on Trade at Niagara, Detroit, and other of the upper Posts, on the Conditions following, namely:

That this Copartnership commence with the Transactions of John Askin at Detroit from the first Day of October, one thousand seven hundred and eighty; and of Hamilton & Cartwright at Niagara from the fifteenth of April one thousand seven hundred & eighty one; and continue till the first Day of May, one thousand seven hundred & eighty four.

²⁷ Robert Hamilton was the eldest son of Rev. John Hamilton, minister of Bolton in East Lothian, Scotland, and was born about the year 1749. In 1778 he entered upon a three-year engagement with one of the Ellices of Montreal, in consequence of which he came out to Canada. In 1779 he was located at Carleton Island, at the east end of Lake Ontario, and the next year, apparently, removed to Niagara. Some years later he established himself at the lower end of the Niagara portage and thus became the founder of Queenston. He was a man of much ability, who was long accounted one of the leading characters of Upper Canada. He prospered in trade and at the time of his death his fortune is said to have amounted to £200,000. He was a member of the Land Board of Upper Canada in 1791, and of the first Executive Council of the province a year later. He was also the first judge of the District of Nassau, one of the four districts into which western Canada was divided by Lord Dorchester. In 1785 he married Catherine Askin Robertson, widow of Captain Samuel Robertson; they had five sons, several of whom were destined to prominent rôles in the history of western Canada. Mrs. Hamilton died in 1796 and Hamilton married (second) Mary Herkimer, widow of Neil McLean, by whom he also had several children. He died at Queenston, March 23, 1809. Information adapted from sketch in Buffalo Hist. Soc. *Publ.*, VI, 73-95; data in Niagara Hist. Soc. *Papers*, No. 25 (Niagara, 1913); and mss. in Burton Hist. Coll. His will is printed in the Ontario Hist. Soc., *Papers and Records*, XXIII, 344-50.

²⁸ Richard Cartwright was born at Albany, Feb. 2, 1759. In the Revolution the family supported the loyalist cause, and in consequence removed from New York to Canada. Richard served for a time as secretary to Colonel Butler of ranger fame. In youth he had planned to enter the ministry, but on account of the difficulties suffered by the church in the confusion growing out of the Revolution he abandoned the idea and entered upon a mercantile career as partner of Robert Hamilton. He attained success in this, and for many years took an active part in the politics of Upper Canada, serving as member of the Executive Council of the province for twenty-three years, from its formation in 1792 until his death in 1815. He also served as justice of the Court of Common Pleas. See C. E. Cartwright (ed.), *Life and Letters of the Late Hon. Richard Cartwright* (Toronto, 1876).