

PETITION FOR CONFIRMATION OF GRANT TO CAPTAIN BIRD

Elijah Brush Attorney⁴⁸ for Cap^t Henry Bird maketh application to the Hon^{le} The Legislate Bord for the adjustment and confirmation of a certain Lot of Ground in the Old Town of Detroit which is perticularly described and set forth in his deed of the same given by the Kings Commanding Officer at Detroit the 20th May 1781, and Afterwards Confirmed by Gov^r Haldeman at Quebec the 15th Oct^r 1784. All which together with the evidence of his possession and improvement are herewith submitted

By the boards very Humble Serv^t

E Brush

Endorsed: The application of E Brush For Henry Bird⁴⁹

ARBITRATION OF FUR TRADE DISPUTE

We the Subscribers Chosen as Arbitrators⁵⁰ in a Dispute between Mess^{rs} Thomas Williams & Leithe⁵¹ & Shepherd⁵² on

⁴⁸ Elijah Brush, one of Detroit's earliest lawyers, was born in Bennington, Vt., in 1772. He came to Detroit shortly after the British evacuation and until his death, in 1814, exercised much influence in the affairs of the city and of Michigan. In 1803 he was elected a trustee of Detroit and for several years beginning in 1806 served as treasurer of Michigan Territory. He also held important military offices, being in command of the territorial militia when the War of 1812 opened. In February, 1802, he married Adelaide Askin. In October, 1806, he obtained from John Askin title to the farm originally conceded to Eustache Gamelin on May 1, 1747, which now for over a century has been known as the Brush farm. From it (or from him) Brush Street derives its name. Portions of the farm are still held by descendants of Brush, who have been made wealthy by the growth of the city. Elijah Brush died, April 1, 1814; his wife, Adelaide, died, July 20, 1859. By reason of his personal and business connections with Askin he figures frequently in the Askin Papers. Many documents relating to him are published in the *Mich. Pio. Colls.*

⁴⁹ Although this document is undated, it evidently originated in connection with the adjustment of land titles by the Board of Land Commissioners in 1806 and subsequent years. Captain Bird's claim to ownership of this tract was rejected by the Board. See *Am. State Papers, Public Lands*, I, 268, 276.

⁵⁰ Throughout almost the entire period of the British occupation of Detroit the legal facilities for administering justice were extremely meager. Hence developed the practice of arbitrating disputes, as set forth in this document. On the entire subject see C. M. Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, I, 160 ff.

⁵¹ George Leith was one of the prominent merchants of Detroit in this period. In 1788 he was represented to a governmental investigating committee at Quebec as a man "of liberal education and highly respected in [Detroit]." From 1789 to 1794 he was a member of the Land Board of the District of Hesse. In 1798 the firm of Leith, Sheperd, and Duff certified that it had maintained a trading house at Malden since the founding of that place. Some of his letters are printed in the *Indiana Magazine of History*, V, 138 ff.

⁵² Thomas Shepherd (Sheppard) was a Detroit merchant in the period subsequent