

meant—was it in your *official* capacity of Justice of Peace you meant, or for your *counting house*?

Addressed: Per the Indian Trader Ship To John Askin, Esq^r Merchant, Detroit. Care of Mess^{rs} Todd, Mc Gill & C^o Montreal

Endorsed: London March 26^h 1792 M^r W^m Robertson to Jn^o Askin Rec^d the 7th July & Answ^d the 28th Aug^t

SALE OF JOSEPH COTTON

I do hereby Acknowledge to have received of M^r John Askin the Sum of Fifty Pounds New York [Currency] as a full Consideration for all my right title & Interest to a negro man Named Joseph Cotton¹⁵ now in Prison for Felony as also to a Note of hand due by Pierre Chene¹⁶ & his Brothers payable some years hence for the Sum of one hundred Pounds New York Cur. being all the remainder due me on the House farms &^{ca} he now Possesses, which Negro man

¹⁵ Cotton (Cuttan, Cutan) was tried at Sandwich, Sept. 7, 1792, convicted of burglary, and hung, this being the first legal execution in the province of Upper Canada. His offense consisted in the taking of certain articles from the shop of Joseph Campau in October, 1791. In sentencing him, Judge Powell said: "This crime [burglary] is so much more atrocious and alarming to society as it is committed by night when the world is at repose and that it cannot be guarded against without the same precautions which are used against the wild beasts of the forest, who, like you, go prowling about by night for their prey. A member so hurtful to the peace of society, no good laws will permit to continue in it." See William R. Riddell, *Michigan Under British Rule. Law and Law Courts, 1760-1796* (Lansing, 1926), 347 ff., for report of the trial.

¹⁶ The founder of the Chêne family in America was Pierre St. Onge *dit* Chêne, born in the city of Barbayeux, France, in 1654. He was a tailor, and migrating to Canada, he opened a shop at Longueuil. He married at Montreal, Nov. 29, 1676, Louisa Jane Bailly, a native of that city. She died prior to 1700 and he married (second) at Montreal, Oct. 9, 1700, Mary Moitie, widow of Jean Magnan. The offspring of the first union were Mary, Charles, and Pierre Chêne *dit* Labutte, all of whom became residents of Detroit. Charles, the elder brother, born at Montreal, March 11, 1694, married at Detroit on Jan. 18, 1722, Catherine Sauvage, daughter of Jacques Sauvage and Catherine Jean *dit* Vien. Charles Chêne obtained a grant of land on July 14, 1734, which is now known as Private Claim 16, lying between Field and Baldwin avenues. Here he lived until his death, some time prior to 1755. His widow was buried Oct. 21, 1778. Their eldest son, Pierre, was born at Detroit, Sept. 22, 1724. On May 7, 1747, he married Mary Clemence Chapoton, widow of Jacques Marsac and daughter of Jean Chapoton and Mary Magdelene Estève. She was buried at Detroit, Nov. 20, 1753; Pierre was buried at Sandwich, Sept. 27, 1804. All of his four children died in childhood, two of them being burned to death in their father's house in December, 1752. The brothers here alluded to were Charles Chêne *dit* Caoussa, born Nov. 5, 1732, and Isidore Chêne, born Jan. 6, 1737. Information adapted from Denissen, *op. cit.*