

FROM JOHN ASKIN¹ TO JOHN HAY² AT DETROIT,
APRIL 27, 1778

Our Lake is just now clear so that we are in hopes of seeing Mr Bennett³ in a Battoe of [or] Vessell very soon, which puts me in mind that it is time to begin my Letters.

I was favoured with your two kind letters dated in Oct^r & Jan^y last which I had no opportunity of answering since. I'm under many obligations to you for the news & more so as I'm sure you can have but very little spare time, we are now very impatient to hear from your quarter as we think something new must have happened. I wish it was a peace In all probability the Spring news will reach us before you, if so I shall make you acquainted with all I learn.

We have had a severe winter & of course plenty of Fish, we expect many Indians in, to go down the Country, Major De Peyster sends Provisions to meet them in a few days.

¹ This letter and the following ones to July 7 are from a letter book kept by Askin at Mackinac in 1778, the only one of the letter books, presumably kept by him, whose present existence is known.

² John (or Jehu) Hay, the last lieutenant-governor of Detroit, was a native of Chester, Pa., who in 1758 enlisted in the Sixtieth (Royal American) Regiment. In 1762 he was serving at Detroit as a lieutenant, and he continued here during the siege of 1763, and later was appointed commissary in the Indian Department. In 1776 he became deputy Indian agent and major of Detroit militia. He was on Hamilton's Vincennes expedition of 1778, and went with his chief to Williamsburg, Virginia, as prisoner of war. In October, 1780, he was paroled, and a year later was exchanged. In 1782 he was appointed lieutenant-governor of Detroit, but owing to the opposition of Colonel De Peyster, he did not assume the office until July, 1784. After a somewhat unhappy career as governor, he died August 2, 1785, and was buried with much ceremony in the governor's gardens. See Alexander Harrow, Log Book of the *Gage* and *Rebecca*, ms. copy in Burton Hist. Coll. In the summer of 1911 a coffin was unearthed by workmen excavating a sewer on Jefferson Avenue, which Mr. C. M. Burton became convinced, upon investigation, contained the mortal remains of Governor Hay. See Burton, *City of Detroit, 1701-1922*, I, 132-33; Denissen, *op. cit.*

In 1764 Hay married Marie Julie Réaume of Detroit, daughter of Hyacinthe Réaume and Agatha Lacelle, born Jan. 22, 1748. Of their several children Pierre Henry, Agatha, and John grew to maturity.

³ Lieutenant Thomas Bennett of the Eighth Regiment, who served under Colonel De Peyster as second in command at Mackinac. He was active in the military operations of the British in the Northwest during the Revolution. Among other services he led a detachment to Grand Portage at the head of Lake Superior in 1778, and another to the Illinois country in 1779. In 1786 he commanded for a short time the post of Detroit. Information concerning these several activities is contained in the *Mich. Pio. Colls.* and the *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, *passim*.