

in best Compliments to M^{rs} Fleming & believe me most truly.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JAMES STERLING AT DETROIT,
MAY 8, 1778

Yours dated the 14th of April last I rec^d p^r M^r Bennett a few days ago, this will be delivered you by C^t Robertson as well as another letter from me dated the 28th April.

I'm sorry to hear by Mess^{rs} M^cBeth³² & Rankin³³ that in all probability no provisions for Trade will be suffered to come from your Post for this, this news has induced me to let Major De Peyster have 400 Bushels of the hulled Corn you purchased for me on the same terms I'm to pay you he writes you on the Subject, you'll therefore charge him & Credit me that Quantity, the remainder please apply to have put on board the Vessell for me. I'm in hopes if there is Room for it that you'll not be refused, as also the Flour, in reality the North Trade will be knocked up if Provisions cannot come.

I received the Wine & Tea by M^r Bennett which came very Seasonably. If you have not 400 Bushels of the Corn hulled to Send Major De Peyster, make up the Quantity with unhulled. I shall be very glad to see my Boy here, however I dont know if I shall send him back so soon. I will endeavour to purchase what you want of Blankets,

³² George McBeath was an active Mackinac trader in the Revolutionary period. In common with the other traders, in 1780-81, he followed the garrison from the mainland to the new post on Mackinac Island. In 1783 these traders (McBeath among them), disturbed by the fear that with the termination of the war and the surrender of Mackinac to the Americans they would suffer for lack of any formal title to their landed possessions on the island, petitioned the commandant to represent their case to Governor Haldimand (petition printed in *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XI, 393-95). Earlier this same year, McBeath had been sent by Captain Robertson to Prairie du Chien, to announce to the tribes of that region the prospect of peace with the Americans and to urge them to refrain from further warlike activities. For documents concerning this enterprise see *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XI, 165-75. McBeath is said (*ibid.*, XIX, 237) to have left Canada in 1785.

³³ David Rankin, who would seem from Askin's reference to have been in partnership with McBeath at this time, was also a Mackinac trader who had family connections at Detroit. Rankin was at Mackinac as early as 1780 and as late as 1787. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*. In 1785 Rankin is described as a merchant of Montreal. See *post*, 285. In 1800 John Lawe of Green Bay married Therese Rankin, daughter of an Englishman and a Chippewa woman of Peshigo River. It seems a plausible surmise that the father was David Rankin, here noted.