

you owed me 60,191 livres 13 sols. You can see what you have had since that date. If you have anything against me not yet entered let me know that I may make my account agree with yours.

There is no public news. Everything seems quiet according to the latest dispatches from Montreal. I do not think it matters to anyone about the Maypole⁴⁶ Mr. Cadotte set up provided it is not used as a flag-staff. Mr. Bennett sends some tools for the Grand Portage. Do not forget to put them on board the *De Peyster*.

Give my respects to Mrs. McDonald. There is no news so I am not writing to her. Address Mr. Howard's merchandise to Mr. Charles Boyez.⁴⁷ I am to furnish Mr. Henry⁴⁸ with 20 minots of hulled corn and 20 minots of lye hominy, and 2 cwt. of flour. If there is room in this vessel I shall put them on board, if not they will go another trip.

⁴⁶ The origin of the ceremony of the Maypole, whose practice at Mackinac is here alluded to, is lost in the mists of antiquity. The French settlers of Canada carried it with them from the Old World to the New, and wherever the French voyager went in following the widespread ramifications of the fur trade, there went, also, the custom associated with the Maypole. Thus, Alexander Ross, in *Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River* (Quaife, ed., Chicago, 1923), 85-86, states: "It is a habit among the grantees of the Indian trade to have May-poles with their names inscribed thereon in conspicuous places, not to dance round, but merely to denote that such a person passed there on such a day, or to commemorate some event. For this purpose the tallest tree on the highest ground is generally selected, and all the branches are stripped off except a small tuft at the top." For a valuable general discussion of the Maypole in Canada see "La Fête du Mai" by J. Edmond Roy, in *Le Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, XXX, 146-52.

⁴⁷ This may have been Charles Boyer (Boyez), who on Sept. 3, 1761, acted as godfather at the baptism at Mackinac of Charles Louis Cardin, on which occasion he is characterized as a voyager. Other Boyers, who may have been descendants of Charles, are noted in the Mackinac Register of Baptisms in this period. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 63 *et passim*. A Boyer family figures also at Detroit in the Revolutionary period—quite probably related to the Mackinac line. One Charles Boyer, who may have been identical with the person here noted, was trading on the Assiniboin River in 1780-81. In 1787 he built Fort Vermilion on Peace River. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, 238.

⁴⁸ Alexander Henry came to Mackinac immediately following the British conquest of Canada and thereafter, until 1776, was engaged in the trade of the Great Lakes and the far Northwest. Having attained a considerable degree of prosperity during these years, he established himself at Montreal, which remained his home until his death in 1824. For practically half a century he was one of the leading residents of that city. In 1809 he published an account of his activities during his years spent in the western fur trade, which is regarded as a standard, and in certain respects unique, authority on the period with which it deals. It has been twice reprinted: in 1901 under the editorship of James Bain; and in 1921 under the editorship of M. M. Quaife. Henry was an intimate friend of Askin throughout life, and many of his letters are preserved among the Askin Papers.