

sailing, I wrote to Mr. Barthe to divide the merchandise equally between the two vessels in a manner so that each trader would receive some goods, in the certainty that all would arrive before the gentlemen would have need of it.

We are told that the liquor and provisions we were expecting from Detroit will be held back. I do not know for sure. In any case we must be very careful of what we have. Both are very dear. Corn should bring from 30 to 40 livres a minot at this place. There are a letter and some things in the vessel for Mr. Chaboillez senior. Will you kindly receive and take charge of both until he arrives as there is no one at Grand Portage employed by him.

An officer and some soldiers are to pass the summer at Grand Portage.⁵² Please try to have a house ready for them which they can use until able to provide for themselves. It should have a chimney. Also be so good as to have your men prepare 200 pickets, 14 feet in length, and have them put on the beach between the old fort and yours. That will be the North West Company's share of preparation for the officer and his men; and what I have taken the liberty to say to you on the subject will have the approval of these gentlemen, I am sure.

I shall need two pretty panis⁵³ girls of from 9 to 16 years of age. Please speak to these gentlemen to get them for me.

I am &ca.

Per Mr. McDonald

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO JEAN BAPTISTE BARTHE AT
SAULT STE. MARIE

a Michilimakina Le 24 may 1778

Mon cher frere La Barque de Mons^r M^eBeeth est arrivez hier et elle part pour Le saut aussitot Le vent Bon, elle a quitté L'hangelique sur La Bature ainsy jene puis pas vous dire tous ceque jay au Bord Le Gouverneur permettra tout Le Bled Et Rom qui Est pour Le nord devenir mais

⁵² This alludes to the expedition of Lieutenant Thomas Bennett, referred to in several letters both preceding and following the present one.

⁵³ A pani (panise) was a slave of the Indian race. Such slaveholding was common in the Northwest throughout the French and British periods.