

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Detroit

Endorsed: Malden March 9^h 1798 Mr W^m Hutchings⁴³
to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 14th Answ^d y^e 15th.

TRADE CONDITIONS AT FORT MIAMIS

Fort Miamis 19th March 1798

Dear Sir Thear is an Ideay Struck Me Since Thease few Days which I am very Sorey did Not before You wrote for the Engages to Mountrell, that is that we did Not think of gating them to Com up in a boate with the Spirits. as You Know thear is always boats a Coming up in the Spring for Diffrent People & with paying the Cundocter a triffel He would heave Cundocted them up. For You Know that in Cuming up in the Veassels they Cost a grate Dale. the bote Is always worth More thin it Costs. If You think it is in any ways likley Word Couled gat Down before they are Sant off I think it would be a fine thing Fort [for] I wouled want Liquer Early in the Spring. You will please do as You please In that Busness. Trade is but verey poor Hear at preasent on Account of the Merchents at Fort Defiance who is Mr M^cDougell and Mr M^cDonall⁴⁴ they Sall to the Indins For Merley Nothing. that is they take three Raccoons for a Buck & give thear Goods in the Same Rate Mr M^cDougell Saes that Mr M^cDanall Shall Not under Sell Him on any Account for if the Latter gives his away for Nothing he will do the Same. The Indians talks all of going thear I tell Them they ar welcom to go whear they please For I will Not give My goods a way for Nothing. So I am verey Much afriad I will Heave but a poor trade this Spring. But I think thease Gentle Men Will Not hold out long, and then I will Come in for Som, for You Know it is Batter to Keep the goods on Hand then give them away for Noting. My Beast Respects to Mis^s Askin and all the Femelly, and belive Me to be You H^e Sv^t To Mr John Askin Detroit John Anderson

⁴³ William Hutchins was a carpenter and probably a boat builder. In 1799 he was employed on the King's work in Amherstburg, at which time Askin desired him to come to Detroit to repair a vessel belonging to him. Information from mss. in B. H. Coll.

⁴⁴ Probably George McDougall and Ronald McDonell, for whose careers see *B. H. R.*, I, 374, and 367.