

come down, we mean everything that is to be landed, to be to your address in hope therefore that if you leave home there will be some person of confidence to act in your absence we have only to add that with great regard We are Dear Sir

Your very obed^t Serv^{ts}

James & And. M^cGill & C^o

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Detroit

Endorsed: Montreal April the 21st 1801 James & And^w M^cGill & C^o to John Askin I dont know when rec^d

DEALINGS WITH MORAVIAN INDIANS⁵⁴

Fairfield May 6th 1801

Sir I received your favour of Apr. 27th by M^r Barthe & tried all in my power to settle fairly the Affair respecting what our Indians owe You. You will find how much is settled of the debts. I could not get more this year, which you can see by the remarks I wrote to the Account. Samuel was not home, but as much as I know he had nothing at present to pay with. It is a very hard thing to collect old Debts by the Indians, because they look upon old Debts, as if they were paid.

Therefore I will recomand to You, to give no Indian much upon Credit. Their intention is to pay, when they take the Goods, but they do not consider, if they ever will be able, to do it. If You wish to continue trading with them, the best would be, that You send early in the Spring a Boat with Goods here & give the Man, who sells the Goods strict Orders, to give nothing out upon trust & to fetch the corn directly down. Because it is very difficult to save up Corn here, during the summer on account of the vermin.

We know out of experience, that no Indian understands [how] to trade. In the Beginning they pay good, but at last both the Merchant & the Indian will loose thereby. It is the same now with Ludwig. He died 2 years ago & left many Debts, which are now demanded of his poor widow. The

⁵⁴ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.