

God bless you, and believe me to be with unalterable friendship.

Your obliged Humb Ser

A^t De Peyster

Addressed: Jn^o Askin Esq^r Detroit for^d M^r Clark

Endorsed: Forwarded from Queenston Feb^y 11^h 1803 by
Your most obed^t Serv^t T. Clark

AFFRAY OF JOHN R. WILLIAMS

Queenstown Oct 15 1802

My Dear Sir I was duly favord with your letter of the 8th instant p^r Mons^r Campeau respecting the unfortunate & very unhappy M^r John Williams.²⁶ It affords me pleasure that in this instance I had anticipated your intentions & from motives of Humanity independent of my respect for his connexions had Shewn him every attention & rendered him every service in my power. The moment I heard of the unfortunate accident which was the Morning afterwards, I went immediately to Fort Erie & accompanied him to Niagara Goal & believe I was instrumental in procuring him indulgencies & accommodations which he would not otherwise have obtained.

Notwithstanding there are very favorable prospects of

²⁶ John R. Williams was the son of Thomas Williams and Mary Cecilia Campau, for whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 169. The son was born in Detroit, May 4, 1782, and was baptized by Colonel De Peyster. Thomas Williams died, Nov. 30, 1785, and on May 1, 1790, his widow married Jacques Lauzon (Lauson) of Detroit. Three children were born of her marriage to Williams, and eight of her union with Lauzon.

In 1802 John R. Williams entered the employ of his uncle, Joseph Campau of Detroit, and on July 20, became his partner in the firm of Campau and Williams. Shortly thereafter he went to Montreal to purchase a stock of goods for the firm, and on the return journey, at Fort Erie, on the evening of October 1, engaged in a drinking bout with Jacques Lacelle, another young merchant of Detroit. A dispute ensued, which ended in the shooting of Lacelle by Williams. For this he languished in prison in Upper Canada somewhat more than a year, utilizing the time in mastering the English language, which had been a foreign tongue to him during his earlier years. Lacelle recovered from his wound and subsequently sued Williams for \$3000 damages, but the trial resulted in a verdict for Williams.

The further career of Williams belongs to the public history of Detroit and Michigan. He served as a trustee of the town in 1804-1805, and as justice of the peace in 1807. In 1817, he was adjutant general of the territorial militia, ultimately rising to the highest rank in the organization. In 1832, as major general, he led the militia to Chicago, which was believed to be in momentary danger of an Indian attack. He drew up the first city charter of Detroit, and became the first mayor in 1824, being subsequently reelected mayor