

I have seen, it has been found extraordinary good and rich.¹⁵ I likewise about 3 years ago saw an Estimate of the Expenses of taking up, & transporting &c. the most accessible of that Ore, of which I am well assured there are to all appearances entire Rocks; but this Estimate, which I have unluckily mislaid, was, to the best of my Recollection founded on the expectation that it wo^d. Continue to be obtained with very great ease, and that it could be transported, Refined &c. at rates which from the increased Value of Labour &c. in Canada since the reduction of that Country may now be much doubted, admitting that the Vein of Ore would continue equally rich and accessible. I have likewise understood that the Indians themselves would at a very trifling rate procure large Quantities of it, to which I may answer that the Indians are a Lazy people, & naturally Enemies to Labour, and therefore it is much to be doubted whether interesting them in it would be attended with advantage, altho' the Ind^s. of that Country can be satisfied on much more reasonable terms than those who are more accustomed to receive favors from Europeans, particularly the French. I have also heard that some persons in Canada did formerly bring away a good deal of Ore from thence, and that they lost by it, but whether this was owing to the Expense of bringing it down, or to bad management I can't say. The River Ottawa being obstructed by 42 Portages, small and great, would much retard & Enhance the transportation of so heavy an article, & give place to the carrying it by the Lakes as the most Elligible, notwithstanding the latter are at some seasons very uncertain & the navigation often tedious. The length and severity of the winter at Lake Superior will likewise require consideration both with regard to the provision to be made for those that

¹⁵ In 1770 Johnson joined a company for the working of these mines, the field partners of which were Alexander Henry, Alexander Baxter, and Henry Bostwick; in England, several prominent noblemen were also interested. Henry details their attempts at mining, and the failure of the scheme in 1773. See his *Journal*, pp. 217-229; and *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xii, pp. 37, 38.—Ed.