

opinion, that he had been in a great measure accessory to his own Death; he attempted Twice it seems, to kill an Engage; but his Piece missing Fire & the other presented fire and killed him at once. Two of Mr. Todds men wintering between the falls of St. Mary & Grand Portage are missing.³⁶ By their Books it appears they were alive in Feb'y last, that they about that time gave credit to a Squaw known in those parts for a vile wretch, but as the Packs, made by them have been found & received by the owner, tis hard yet to say whether they were killed by the aforesaid woman, or perished for want of sustenance. Mr. Ducharme's affair,³⁷ I imagine, has been mentioned to Your Excellency by the commanding officer, nearest that Post, so imagine it unnecessary to trouble you with any Repitition. I have received a Batteaux agreeable to your orders, from Detroit and expect the second by first opportunity; Of the four left me here by Capt Turnbull, one only remains in some measure fit for service, I have repaired the others so often & to so little purpose that, I begin to consider it, as money thrown away, unless you pleased to order Commodore Grant, to send me a man to inspect into & repair them. I must now acquaint your Excellency that there are four Saak Chiefs, come this Spring to the Fort, but did not bring in the Murderer according to promise & pledges left by them with my predecessor, they pretend that they joined a band of Savages, going to war with others: I at first refused them admittance; which by advice of the Traders was afterwards granted them & I dismissed them convinced to all appearance of their Breach of Faith & Resolution to make it good next Spring; I don't imagine much faith is to be given to their promises. a greater quantity of Packs I have room to think have been made this season than usual; but as the Traders increase yearly in numbers & each

³⁶ For the evils of this period of unorganized competition in the Lake Superior region, see Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, ii.—Ed.

³⁷ This arrest of Ducharme was supposed by earlier historians to be the inciting cause of the attack on St. Louis in 1780; see *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, iii, pp. 231-233. Ducharme's arrest was in accord with the settled Spanish policy to exclude foreign traders.—Ed.