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Letter from George Sibley to Samuel Sibley, May 6, 1815

George Champlin Sibley

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Brownsville (Penna) May 6th, 1815

My Dear Brother:

I wrote you last from the city of Washington, a short time before I left that place, which was about a month ago. During my stay in Phil. (ten days) I was very much engaged, and write at all. From Phil. I came on the stage to Pittsburgh in 8 days, the most fatiguing and uncomfortable journey I ever suffered in my life. When I reached Pittsburgh I was more dead than alive, and altho' I remained four days there to rest myself and get rid of a fever and headache, previous to my coming here (which is a day's ride above Pittsburgh on the Monongahela) I have not yet by any means recovered, but am in truth quite unwell at this moment.

My business here is to have a barge fitted up (which was ordered by the Supt. Ind. Trade to be built some time ago for my use) comfortably and securely with cabins etc. for the transportation of myself and stores to St. Louis, and from thence to the Osages. I shall be ready to leave here in about a week, when I shall drop down to Pittsburgh, where I expect to be detained till about the 25th I shall set out for St. Louis using all diligence till get there, which I suppose will require near month from the time I leave Pittsburgh. I expect therefore to be at St. Louis sometime between the 20th of June and the 1st of July next, when I hope to find there many letters from you all at Natchitoches.

The last letter I rec. from Father, mentioned the arrival of Mr. Gales, to supercede him in the office of Ind. Agent at Natchitoches, and requesting me enquire the reason of his being dismissed in so unceremonious a way. I discovered at once that it was the effect of a pitiful

intrigue, which it would be all together impossible for me to fathom, and I therefore ended my enquiry with a few plain up and down questions, which produced nothing but evasive answers. If Father could make it convenient next fall to pay a visit to the seat of Govt. I think he had better do so, for the purpose of settling his accounts and making such enquiries and investigations as are necessary and proper, concerning his dismissal from office. If he goes there however, he must prepare for a very expensive trip. Since I left St. Louis in Sep. last my ordinary expences have exceeded \$1000. exclusive of what I have laid out for furniture, a few books, etc., and I assure you, I have not been by any means extravagant, tho I confess I have not been quite as economical as I might have been. My trip will cost me al together \$2000., but I shall go into the Indian Country prepared to live much more comfortably, and much more happily than ever any person went there before. I am to make a new establishment, build large and comfortable houses, and have everything snug and secure about me, and I flatter myself that there is a certain fair one, whose beauty, amiable disposition, and elegant accomplishments, would adorn a palace; who will go with me to the forest, and share with me, whatever hardships and whatever pleasures are incident to a life of seclusion among the Indians. Such at least are my calculations at present, and have the very possible reasons for believing they will be realized, unless something, very extraordinary and altogether unlooked for intervenes to prevent it.

Do not suppose tho' that I mean to remain very long in the Indian Country. I propose in about two years to commence the Dry Goods and Indian Trade business at St. Louis on a pretty extensive scale, in partnership with an old friend of mine, a wholesale merchant of Baltimore, with whom I have lately had a good deal of conversation, on the subject, and have received several advantageous offers from him. The prospect however, at present, being rather unfavorable for such an establishment, I have declined it for a year or two, and in the mean time

it may happen that something very advantageous to me may be offered me in the Public service. So you see, I have two strings to my bow.

The connection which I expect soon to form (matrimonial) will inevitably fix my residence in the Missouri Territory near St. Louis, I am decidedly much better pleased with that country & the prospects there than any I have seen, and I think I have made up my mind and fixed my determination to settle myself there.

And I take pleasure in the belief that are many years, I shall prevail on you and Margaret to join me. I certainly was much pleased with your Red River Country, and still think it has any advantages over the country of the Missouri, but it is not worth while now to discuss the question "which is best", (even if I had time), -suffice it for me to stay at present, that I have seen both, have reflected seriously on the subjects; and after the most mature mature deliberation, my best judgment has given a decided preference to the Missouri.

You may expect to hear from me again on my arrival at St. Louis, unless something worthy of your notice should occur, I shall not write you before. It is needless to put you to the expence of a letter merely to say that I am well., I would write to Father now, but for that reason, I have nothing more to say that I have already said, this letter will do you all.

I hope Henry returned from the campaign at N. Orleans in good health, I trust he done himself and his command some credit, it will always afford me very great pleasure to hear of his doing well and deserving well. I cannot express how anxious I feel to get a letter from Ann S. She has never written me since she was married. I hope she enjoys good health and passes her tie happily. Send her my love & my best respects to the judge, and if A.S. will not write to me, I pray you in your next tell me about hee. Give my love to Father & Henry, & compts. To all acquaintances who enquire after me.

Love to Margaret and ten thousand kisses to the little ones, give George one more that the rest. Since I have been writing this letter my headache has gone off, and I feel now as if I shall be quite well again in a few days.

Yours very affectionate Brother,

G. C. S.

Mr Samuel, H Sibley,

Natchitoches, La.