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Letter from John Mason to George Sibley, July 2, 1811

John Mason

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John Mason to George C. Sibley

George Town, Indian office

July 2 1811

G. C. Sibley Esq U. S. Factor Fort Osage

Sir,

I have received your letters of the 27 of Jan, 7 March, 20 april--- 10 may--- I have written to you on 1 feb 16 april, 17 April 22 April last and 1 July Ins--- I am much pleased to see that you are likely to increase the making of candles and thereby give to the Indian much employment and of course the means of subsistence and comfort--- your plan of putting up a slight building for that purpose is approved and I beg you will give the subject every attention--- I had two Boxes of your last years candles brought here by way of sample and trial---They were no great proofs of skill--- but your red women it is to be hoped will become more neat in execution--- They sold pretty well as a matter of curiosity but they will not bear the carriage to this place your principal market must be St. Louis for them as I presume--- I enclose you a list of sales of the articles from your factory and that of Fort Madison made here this spring for your information--- I have found this one of the best Fur markets we have tried, as you see by the prices--- You will readily see by this list, what are the articles you should most encourage the Indians to bring in--- The Beaver and Racoon you will find do very well--- The Dressed Deer Skins will not discourage the Indians from preparing them in that way--- to return to the Candles those that were sent here, were very badly put up in the shorter of the two. They lay unevenly and the shaking so occasioned broke them to pieces the Boxes should be made just of the length of one Candle---Deer skins are a great drug now---to save carriage--- and the better to preserve them from the worms, it will be best to encourage the Indians to shave as many as possible---

On the presumption that Mr. Rawlings will be fully able to manage the business of the factory in your absence--- and as at the season you point out there will not be much to do I consent with pleasure you have a furlough from the middle of Nov; to the middle of April next--- provided nothing in the mean time occurs of such a nature as should require that continue at your post of which you in such case---will be duely advised---

It has become my duty to request of Gen Wm. Clarke to make enquiry into certain charges brought against you by Capt. Clemson late Commandant at Fort Osage, and stated by him to the Secretary of War by whom they were some time ago sent to me---In order to prepare you for them---I send you copies of all the papers in this affair Capt. Clemson to the Secretary of war of the 20 July 1810 Copy of two depositions of Paul Loise of 16 July 1810 and one of Joseph at once see the propriety of making such explanations and adduceing such proofs on the points in question as you have it in your power to do in order that a final opinion may be made up here as to your conduct---on the occasions I referred to--- I consider but justice to you--- to furnish Gen Clark, as I have done with an extract of all that part of your letter to me of 13 April 1810---which relates to the account then given by you of shutting the factory to one of the bands of the Osages, and the reasons therefor---Should you during

your absence next winter visit the seat of Government you will come prepared to give any further explanation of this affair that may be requisite.

J.M.

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