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Letter from John Sibley to George Sibley, January 29, 1817

John Sibley
Natchitoches

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George C. Sibley
St. Louis
Territory of Missouri

John Sibley
Natchitoches,
Jany 29th, 1817

Natchitoches Jany. 29th, 1817.

Dear George,

It is a long time since I have heard from you I sepose when other animals begin to crawl from their winter retreats & thaw out you will do so to, when we may be favoured with a letter from you. We are all well, hear sometimes from Henry at Philadelphia. The last mail but one brought me a letter from Col. Johnston written in New York where he landed the 11th Decr. Last with his family from New Orleans, he is bound to Washington City his Business to Advocate some large land claims before a Committee of Congress, he will return next summer by the Ohio, a Neighboring Judge holds his courts 'till he returns. Your sister and her little boy all well, a little Sea Sick a day or two. Hopkins his mother in law & all the children have lately moved down from Grand Ecore, & the two Girls Ann & Eliza go to School, which was one inducement to move down, some Gentlemen Board with them & Madam Mc Donald provides for the Dancing Assemblies. Four finer children no country can Exhibit than Hopkins are. Henry and youngest rather exacts (?) my little Heurietta now 10 months old has no Superior, she is healthy, not fat Enclining to be tall, begins to talk everything & know everything & is every day more and more engaging. She is not weaned nor shall she be 'till grass as plenty.

We have lately had here the most extraordinary fall of rain I ever saw, it rained 52 hours incessantly like a thunder shower, the River Never rose so rapidly not this 14 years not so high. It has done a great deal of damage by carrying away Bridges Mills & has Drowned Thousands of Cattle & Horses, & It is now getting down again. Several persons have lately arrived here from the Randovous of the Republicans engaged in the emancipation of Mexico, & bring the

Unpleasant News of the Death of our friend Doctor Robinson as they state he with a party were obliged to retreat cross a Small River that was swimming & it was believed that the Doctor had received a wound, he sunk & Rose no more his death is much lamented even by those who have 'till lately been his Enemies, he has lately made many friends, his enemies had become his warmest. I am unwilling to believe it; but fear it is true. I shall not write to his wife 'till hear father. These gentlemen say that at Galveston Bay near the mouth of Trinity River at Serpent Island is the Randovous of Commodore Aujrey, who has about 20 vessels there & Cruising against the Spaniards under the Mexican flag. There they have a court of Admiralty who tries & condemns their prises, they have about 400 land forces under the Immediate Command of Col. Perry. They are well supplied with everything even cash. General Mino is there lately from London, accompanied by an Englishman by the name of Stewart who it is said has funds furnished by a Company in London to the Amt. of half a million of dollars for the use of the Mexican Republic, a Col young lately of the 49 U.S. Regiment is there, he bought 250 Men Capt. Benish & a number other officers late of our army. We are hourly expecting 3 or 4 hundred men from New York & Philadelphia or Baltimore. General Bernardo is here, promoting the expedition all he can his bills are paid at sight & is authorized to draw for any Sum. He will start off about 150 pretty soon. The late accounts from South America encourages them highly. They will move southerly early in the Spring by land & Water. Accounts from St. Antonio State that there are only 50 men there & the Same number at Labadie & they will join the patriots in their approach. They hope for a war between our governments & Spain, which would be very popular as far as my Acquaintances Extends through the U.S.- on the whole I think the prospect Brightens in favor of the Patriots.

Natchitoches will feel its effects. I have enjoyed good health for about a year past. Am acting Surgeon to the U.S. Troops here & have considerable Practice, Am Engaged in improving some lands near the town, have opened a Spring, Cleared some lands & am planting Orchards, Grapes & with which am amused. Grand Ecore Plantation is not sold, if it is not in a few weeks it will be rented for one year.

Our lands are rising though most of the emigrants to Red River stop below us; but they are coming over every day.

The officers now stationed here are Brevet Major Riddells who knows you, Capt. Fowler & Lieut. Arnold, they are going on with a New Fort above Gd. Ecore & Expect to move there altogether in about two months the Rifle companies that were here are gone to Batton- Rouge. All your friends greet you. Much love & compliments to your wife. I wish you would write oftener & a little more when you do write.

Most Affectionately Yours

John Sibley

George C. Sibley Esq.