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Letter from Benjamin O'Fallon to George Sibley, August 25, 1819

Benjamin O'Fallon
Martins Cantonment

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George C. Sibley Esquire
U. S. Factor
Fort Osage
Interpreter

B. O. Fallon
25 Aug^t. 1819

Martins Cantonment
25th August 1819

Dear Sir,

We arrived at this place on the 15th instant as soon and with as little difficulty as we expected- we found at this place every thing as usual- Old Joe did not arrive with the Kansas Ind^{ns} untill yesterday, just as were preparing to proceed on our voyage- He brought with him about 150 men including the chiefs and principal men of the nation- I have just finished counciling with them- they promise to conduct themselves better for the future- from some cause or other a great revolution has taken place in the nation- their deportment less offensive than formerly- the Kansas have (since among us) conducted themselves with a good deal of circumspection- I found old Joe much more ignorant of the Kansas language than I expected- he brought with him an old superannuated Indⁿ. who spoke french, and who acted as Indⁿ. Interpreter- his mind was too inactive. he wanted intellect I found much difficulty in counciling with the Ind^{ns}. owing to the ignorance of the Interpreter- The Kansas on their way to this place met with an unsuccessfull war party of osages on their return from the ottoe village. Eleven of them are here now, the rest continued on home-. I have been much in want of some of your knowledge of the Kansas in drawing the line of distinction between the pretenders and the meritorious chiefs- old Joe, conducted himself as well as his limited capacities would serve him he appears to be a very honest inoffensive man- I thought proper to pay him twenty Dollars, although you had the goodness to let me have him on account of the Factory Dep^t.

I have requested Capt. Bissell to procure him a passage as soon as possible- I think he will set out tomorrow or the next day- The evening on which the Indians arrived, we discharged several rockets & which appeared to increase much the exalted opinion they have entertained of our means of War- We set out at sun rise in the morning accompanied by Lt. Fields and 16 men who have but lately returned from the Council Bluffs- Please to present my best respects to Mrs. Sibley and accept of my best wishes for your health and hapiness-

Yours &

B. o' Fallon

Mr. George C. Sibley