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4-12-1825

## Letter from Thomas Hart Benton to George Sibley, April 12, 1825

Thomas Hart Benton  
*St. Louis, Missouri*

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ALS: Thomas H. Benton, St. Louis

To: George C. Sibley, Fort Osage, Mo.

In executing the late act for making a road to N. Mexico, you will have an opportunity to become acquainted with the intervening country. I would, therefore, suggest the propriety of keeping a journal in which the soil, timber, water courses, grasses, minerals, fossils, fall of the country, and everything calculated to increase our geological information, should be carefully noted. Such a work may be advantageous to yourself as well as the country, and if published among the documents, would be a lasting moment.

If forwarded to me, my well known desire to develop the resources of the west would be a guaranty of my good offices.

A problem yet to be solved is to ascertain how much water transportation can be had between Mo. And Mexico. The trade carried on between them will not be in heavy and bulky articles, such as tobacco, flour, whisky, etc., which require large boats and deep rivers, but it will be in dry goods, and light articles, and small boats and shallow streams may be useful.

In this point of view it would be well to ascertain the character of the Kansas, Osage, Arkansas, and of the Rio del Norte as far as the Passo; whether from snow or rain; how near their navigable points approach each other, etc. I should think that a stream which would float small light boats of 5 or 10 tons would be found very valuable when the trade becomes more considerable.

Thomas H. Benton