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6-30-1825

Letter from Thomas Hart Benton to George Sibley, June 30, 1825

Thomas Hart Benton
St. Louis, Missouri

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[6-30-1825]

ALS Thomas H. Benton, St, Louis

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

Sir,

On my return home I found your letter of the 24th Jan. The dispositions which have been made for carrying into effect the Act of Congress for marking out the road to Mexico are, in my opinion, judicious, and well calculated to assure the satisfactory execution of the work.

The appropriation of \$30,000 was not made as a limit beyond which the expenditure was not to go. I put it in myself, and if I had said 10 or 15,000 more, it would have passed just as easily. If a further appropriation shall be found wanting, it will be made without the least hesitation. In executing the work, I would wish the Commissioners not to consider themselves limited, either by time or money. It is not a country or state road which they are to mark out but, but a highway between nations and which when once finished, cannot be altered for ages and centuries to come.

The necessity of proceeding with due deliberation, and doing the work so as to need no attention is therefore apparent.

The Secy. At Wat wishes information which will enable him to fix a military post at the crossing of the Arkansas – facility of transportation by land or water, number and character of the neighboring Indians, the capacity of the soil to produce grains and vegetables, are among the point of his inquiry, and upon which the report of the Comsnrs. Are expected to give the most exact information.

Wishing to the expedition health and success. Signed Thomas H. Benton.

[1-1-1833] (Appended)

ANS G.C. Sibley, Linden wood.

Although this letter from Col. Benton did not in the smallest degree influence the Comsnrs. In their dispositions for carrying the Act of Congress into effect (for those dispositions were carefully made in the view of confining their expenditures strictly within the sum appropriated) yet when nearly at the close of their labor the Comsnrs. Found that in order to complete fully and perfectly every object, a small sum of money, they were then undoubtedly influenced in their determination to make such and advance, by the assurance s contained in Mr. Benton's letter. I make the declaration for myself, and for my late colleagues, Col. Reeves and Mather.

[Original forwarded to J.S. Johnston, and a copy to Genl. Ashley 1-4-1833]