

Lindenwood University

Digital Commons@Lindenwood University

George Champlin Sibley Papers

George and Mary Easton Sibley Papers

8-17-1828

Letter from George Sibley to Benjamin Reeves, August 17, 1828

George Champlin Sibley
St. Charles, Missouri

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/george>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Sibley, George Champlin, "Letter from George Sibley to Benjamin Reeves, August 17, 1828" (1828). *George Champlin Sibley Papers*. 120.

<https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/george/120>

This Correspondence is brought to you for free and open access by the George and Mary Easton Sibley Papers at Digital Commons@Lindenwood University. It has been accepted for inclusion in George Champlin Sibley Papers by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Lindenwood University. For more information, please contact phuffman@lindenwood.edu.

St. Charles 17. Augt. 1828.

Dear Sir,

I received your favour of the 8th. Ulto. in due course of the Mail, and Should have written you long ago, if I had not been a good deal engaged, and was Somewhat in expectation of seeing you = I had attributed your not answering my Letter to you from Ft. Osage of 1: May, to the right cause = You will very much oblige me, by forwarding the Account. I requested as Soon as possible.

It will be necessary I ___ to make out our Accounts entirely anew, and present them to the Govt. before the balance due the Govt. can be obtained = The Statement forwarded last fall by me to The Secy. of War, has, I understand, been mislaid; which was the reason given for the omission to make the necessary appropriations = It is I assure you, a very Sore inconvenience to me; to wait thus long for the refunding of the Amount I advanced for the Road Service; and it must be my Special look out, that it is reimbursed in the early part of the ensuing Session of Congress = I want the Copy of our Pent. (?) Acct. Current that I left with you = from which to make a Duplicate for the Government; upon which, to ask an appropriation of the Amt. due.

I am Sorry I omitted to keep a copy of the Acct. = but I was So hurried last fall, that I could not well make copies; and kept not at (?) all, of *any* of the Reports that I Sent in. – I have not Seen or heard from Col: Mather Since early in last December = He was in Washington last Winter; and told Wahrendorff that the Accts. Report +. had all been received at the War Office in good time, but were mislaid, and not to be found = They may possibly have been found Since; but I ought not to trust to a contingency So very uncertain ==

I make but little progress in my new establishment here. the Season is unfavourable for clearing up thickets of Briars and Harla__ (?) Labourers are not to be had on any terms just now; So many have gone to the Mines – When the Season wears round that is most appropriate for prosecuting my improvements to the best advantage; I am advised that I Shall most probably find little or no difficulty in procuring labourers to hire = It is thought to be rather more healthy than usual hereabouts, this Season= I have one case of fever in my own family (my Niece, from Louisiana) which tho' Somewhat Stubborn, is by no means dangerous = Our ___ are, I understand, generally very promising in this county = And upon the whole, we are getting along quite well, except in the Single matter of Politics = In this respect we are pretty nearly as wild + crazy as you Seem to be in your Section of the State = I am in hopes however, that it is a disease, by way of Substitute for the Bilious fever, and I am Sanguine in the opinion, that it will disappear in a very great degree, when the frosty season sets in. and that a "Healthy action" (as G. Lane Says) will Succeed in the body-politic of the Whole State –

The result of the late Congressional Election, really Staggers my faith in the value of the elective franchise; Or more properly Speaking in the practical use of that truly glorious priviledge – I cannot find a more fit comparison of the Shameful abuse of this great right, on the occasion of the recent Election, than the homely Saying of "Putting a Diamond ring on a Hog's nose" – It is extremely mortifying to be Subjected to Such mad pranks of the People = Not the People either, currently Speaking, but the hot headed irresponsible Boys, + Stupidly ignorant.

Yet as it is the fundamental principle of Republicanism, that the will of the majority must govern, even tho' in point of character, wealth, (?) talents, + virtues; that Majority Should be as "Dust in the balance" compared with the Minority= we of that Minority are bound as good Citizens and consistent Republicans to Submit without a Murmur.

For myself, I do Submit – I take leave however to qualify my Submission as merely referring to the Physical force of the decree, reserving to myself the right of freely reflecting its folly –

The Jack . Cade party can never convince my Judgment of their Moral fitness, of Substituting their "Man of Straw" for E____. Bates. to represent the interests of Missouri in Congress. – I will for the Sake of conciliation, and peace; and in Consideration of the defects of poor human nature; admit also upon this Special occasion; for the benefit of the Majority; the force of the old adage "Every Dog will have his day"=

Notwithstanding this horrendous Broadside of Small Shot that "The Boys" have given us by order of Benton, in the late "affair", in which they kept – Sharp (?) eye to the Land; it does not discourage my hopes of a favourable result to the great cause

[Here there is a page split. The third and final page of the photocopy of the letter appears to have been stapled upside down. When turned around so that it can be read, the top of the page reads as follows.]

and I am confident they will not look in vain – If we have not a Majority (a matter by no means decided yet) let us by all fair and honourable means, Swell our minority as much as possible -

Please to present my respects to Mrs. R: +your family, + offer my greeting to Owen (?) - Wilson + other friends – Y^{rs}. very truly. G. c. Sibley

To Col: B. H. Reeves.

[Here the rest of the page is confusing. There is a sideways inscription, presumably an address, facing to the left of the sheet. It seems to have been originally written on a separate sheet of paper which was copied over a little bit of upside-down writing which is difficult to make out and presumably is not intended to be read as part of the letter (since marginal, undecipherable writing often occurs in these photocopies.) The address is copied below. The number "37" or "31" is very large and very smudged. The address is flourished in several places, (I could not reproduce the flourishes using a keyboard) so it is possible that the smudged number is actually a smudged flourish.]

St. Charles Mo. 37 (?)

August __

Benjamin H. Reeves Esquire

Fayette

. Howard County

Missouri =

[Several numbers seem to have been carelessly jotted upside down on either the photocopy or whatever was copied on this page (which is clearly different parts of different sheets of paper). It is difficult to make out, but reads roughly as follows.]

S 29/ __ 39

[At the bottom of this same third sheet of paper, there is some more writing. It appears to be part of the letter, but I don't know where it belongs. It doesn't seem to be a postscript since it picks up in mid-sentence. It is copied below; the lowest line was cut off by the copier and cannot reliably be made out.]

and profanity of the country. – Men of information and known character + influence, ought to take pains to undeceive their ignorant neighbours – Nay it is their interest as well as their duty to do So, at this time = There can be nothing wrong in an honest effort to dissipate the illusion of error, by the propagation of Truth. – I Shall offer no apology to you, my dear Sir, for thus treating of these matters-

You are in the field – and are of course looked up to for instruction and advice by many – The friends of “Clay + the American System” have ____ also for un_____ in the