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Letter from George Sibley to Josiah Johnston, December 17, 1832

George Champlin Sibley
Lindenwood College

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Linden Wood 17. Dec. 1832

My dear Sir.

You will find enclosed herewith my Petition to Congress for Some measure of relief from the Security Debt that the Government Still holds me liable for – I owe the Govt. nothing nor ever did, on any other account –

You must doubtless have heard with Surprise, that our Legislature has actually fastened on your Honorable body for Six years longer, Thos. A. Benton – The deed was done precipitately; and those who committed it have no other excuse to offer, than that they owed the compliment to Gen. Jackson. Will he receive it very kindly? – As the Jackson party was doomed to inflict evils on the Country for Still four years longer, it is perhaps fit enough that its majority in Missouri Shd. be truly represented in the National Senate – It is not improbable that the Same 46 Legislators who paid their fine compliment to their great idol; will before the end of their Session pay another compliment to Belial, (?) by recognizing the principle of nullification in its fullest extent.

[The word “precipitately” is hard to make out and appears to read something like “precpitately.”]

For my own part, the late doings of “the People”, directly and indirectly, have thrown me into a State of utter amasement. I feel Something like the Sailor who was blown up by an accidental explosion of the combustibles of a Necromancer, falling, not much hurt, in the adjoining garden, and Supposing the blow up, to be a part of the regular Show, he exclaimed, as he brushed off the durt + smoke, “I wonder what the d___l the fellow will do next?” –

[In the previous paragraph, the blank space left between the letters “d” and “l” does not indicate, as it usually does in my typed transcriptions, letters that could not be made out. Sibley intentionally left this area blank and underlined it to indicate that the reader should supply the missing letters. By underlining the part I am but copying the original. Also, the word “explosion” could possibly be read “exeplosion,” but since I am not sure of the misspelling I did not include it in the text.]

But Seriously; I never before, could bring myself to entertain any great fears for the liberties of my Country – I trust that there will be no relaxation on the part of the great minority in their efforts to keep our Noble Ship afloat, and in trim, (?) to weather this popular gale - it must certainly blow over very Soon, and if we continue manfully, and without flinching in our duty, all will be well again, tho’ doubtless, the damages will be very great -

I hope you will think of me Sometimes (and perhaps Some other friends may do So too if you name it, it is not much trouble you know) when you are distributing knowledge + information by means of those innumerable documents, Pamphlets, Speeches +., that every Senator has the disposal of thro’ the medium of the Post Office) –For one, I wish all the light I can obtain, and you may be Sure am not disposed to hide what I get under a bushel –

I am onno terms, nor do I desire it, with either of the Missouri delegation, except Genl. Ashley – He does, I verily believe, represent, the unbiased, free, untrammeld majority of Missouri, + he has their

entire confidence. He is a Gentleman, + man of Honor, and will wear (?) Well. God only knows, what kind of Man, we Shall elect to be his colleague – whilst Cade is excited, it is all chance. He being a Whimsical dog, may in all probability appoint Some one, the very opposite in all respects, to Ashley –

How dreadfully your good City of N. Orleans has been Scourged!! - Our proud little neighbor St. Louis, was also Severely afflicted - The Pestilence appears to have Shunned the Missouri River - Possibly there is Some cause for this in the peculiar quality of its turbid Water – Nor a Single case has ocured as yet on this River – My family has not however escaped Sickness. both myself +Wife were in bad Some time with bilious attacks – We are now all well again -

As yet we have had no winter Scarcely, in Missouri.

Present me affectionately to Ann E. + William – I paid them but a hasty visit at Phil^a. as I came home, I had heard that the Ohio was rapidly falling, + that my family was Sick – I therefore hurried along, all the way by land, without ten minutes Sleep, to Cincinnati.

I Shall have to trouble you Soon, with Some papers relative to my claim for Services on the Road to N. Mexico. Meanwhile, I remain

Ever +truly yrs.

G. c. Sibley

Hon. J. S. Johnston

Washington City.

[When George Sibley writes a word ending in “ing” or in “ly,” the “n” or “l” frequently runs into the “y” so as to be almost unreadable. Since this appears to be a matter of handwriting style rather than a matter of actually misspelling the word, I have stopped making notes of it in the text.]