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1-18-1809

## Letter from George Sibley to Samuel Sibley, January 18, 1809

George Champlin Sibley  
*Fort Osage*

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MHS  
Sibley Papers  
A.L.S. GCS to SHS

Fort Osage (350 Miles up the Missouri)  
January 18th 1809

My dear Brother,

I will not suffer an opportunity to pass, and not drop you a line. The present is an express returning to St. Louis who arrived here Some days ago by land. I was, as you may well imagine very much disappointed in not receiving any Letters from a single person beyond St. Louis. I am utterly at a loss to account for this gloomy Silence of my friends. Several Letters have been rec'd at this place from the neighborhood of Natchitoches, and I get the "Raley's Register" pretty regularly. yet I have never Since my arrival at this palce got a Single line either from Natchitoches or North Carolina. I forbear to dwell on this Subject any longer.

At this dull and dreary Season (the more so being in the wilderness) when all Nature is buried in deep Snow, and the Rapidity of this mighty River is even Stopped and its waters locked up by the Severity of the Weather; you must not expect any thing further from me than a bare relation of my Situation and circumstances, and perhaps Some reflection Suited to the gloom of the Season in this gloomy place heightened by the gloomy Silence of my friends.—

This however a pleasant circumstance that in the midst of all these melancholy considerations, I am favored (?) with exceeding good health, and my Spirits are to tell the truth tolerably good, being kept up in Some measure by having a great deal to do with the Indians, who are daily coming and going more or less, to and from this place — So that from the whole, I have not So much to complain of after all; especially when it is considered that my exertions have been Successful in keeping the Indians about here friendly friendly to the U. States, and there is every prospect of their contin=

=uing So, notwithstanding all the exertions that will be made by the Agents of England to Set them on us, in the event of a War between the U. States and that Power, which appears to be the inevitable consequence of our quarrel, and indeed I cannot well See any possibility of avoiding it after the repeated injuries and insults we have received, and the recent declarations of the British Gov't to Mr. Pinkney about the dam'd Orders in Council and our Embargo Laws – for my part I hope we may have a War with them, for matters have gone too far, that peace cannot be maintained on honorable terms, and I would Sooner go to War twenty times that Submit to the insolent and dishonorable terms of that overbearing Nation. We ought to have prepared for War the monent Rose's deceitful mission was at an end – They deceive themselves with the expectation of causing a Revolution in the U. States about the Embargo, and So get an ascendancy again in this Country but I am happy to find, that our Citizens are above the reach of their intrigues, and that they appear to be on the alert to defend them effectually, which the elections will shew. – The Embargo Seems to be viewed now by the Sensible and American part of the community, in its true light. The great benefits arising to the country from it are now as clear as daylight; on my honor I consider it as one of the most blessed Acts of Gov't on Record, and entitles those who laid it, to immortality – Those who look no farther than their own Speculations, condemn it of course; But thank God the country has nothing to fear or to hope from Such Narrow-minded Peddlers: their influence extends no farther than their own groveling ideas. And whether the country be free or not, they are always to be found, in the dirty walks of filthy Speculation. Should we go to war with England, and Spain Should also declare against us, it is likely that this ~~post~~ [Copyist's note: it looks as though the word "post" is struck through, though the intention is not clear] will be a rallying post from whence to attack Santa Fee, we could March there and

Seize their Rich Mines in less than 20 days. And I have no doubt if we have a war, but Seize them we Shall. – To those who look upon Wealth as the chief good, here is a field worth their attention. 20 days or a Month at farthest would place them in the very lap of Fortune. On this Subject I could greatly enlarge but the time has not yet arrived (tho it approaches fast) for the consideration thereof.-

I am certain that letters from you must be now on their way answering my earnest inquiries after your welfare Situation, prospects etc. I repeat to you, that you cannot be too particular on these heads, and rest in full confidence that you will be very communicative and let me hear from you often. You See I let no opportunity go by without writing to you, it is true I have not wherewithal to make my Letters very interesting, except the Simple concerns of my private affairs are So Judging your feelings by my own in this respect I conclude that they are.

As it is at present doubtful with me whether I Shall have time to write by this express to F. Ville (having a number of Public Letters to write) I must request you to communicate to them whatever you may Suppose they may feel an interest in hearing concerning me, as far as this Letter will enable you. Present my good wishes to all who are kind enough to inquire after me, but particularly to Mr. Cochran and Family.– I address you Still at Wilmington, this I Sometimes feel inclined to doubt the propriety of So doing, for I am So confident that your true true interest lies far from North Carolina, that I am in expectation of hearing that you have abandoned the narrow and confined prospects of that country altogether, and have gone in pursuit of better fortune in a better country. You know my Sentiments on this Subject and I believe you know the reason why I have not long ago pressed you to go to Natchitoches, with all the earnestness, which my Zeal for your pecuniary interest

would dictate. I hope arrangements are by this time nearly matured for the removal of the Family to the West. I have not failed to use all my influence with Father to effect this desirable object. It will afford me the greatest possible joy, to hear of your all being snugly settled at Natchitoches (or its neighborhood) and I shall not lose a single moment to join you, to put an end to my rambling, and to plant myself for life in the bosom of my dearest relations. I doubt not but you have frequently pressed this subject on the attention of our Father, indeed, ~~It appears~~ ["It indeed" appears to be struck through, though the intention is not clear] we ~~it~~ it to be an object no less a favorite with him than with ourselves, and is only delayed from unavoidable causes.

my particular compliments to all friends in F, Ville particularly Mr Winslow & all his Family Mr Grove & his, Mr Harke, & Hay and have my name mentioned with particular sentiments of esteem to Miss Nesfield and among the Girls, Love to the Family a million of kisses for Ann Clign, and one choice one for Pretty Polly – Let Major Owen know that on my next visit to Carolina I shall make it a point to call him to an account for his shameful treatment of me; you may however in the meantime accept of his apology and extend to him my good wishes

adieu, God bless you.

w. affect'n

G.C. Sibley

S.H.S.

P.S. direct to me as usual at St. Louis

[Copyist's note: I am copying this from someone else's transcript. This transcriber apparently left blank spaces for indecipherable words, rather than underlined spaces. It is not always clear what the transcriber's intentions were, so I have attempted to reproduce his/her transcription as closely as possible even where his intention is not fully clear, including apparent "typos" as well as the divisions between lines of text, with the exception of page boundaries/numbers which are excluded as they are almost certainly not part of the original document. The transcriber also inserted question marks above uncertain words; this proved difficult to reproduce, so I have put "floating" question marks into parenthesis and moved them to immediately follow the word which they reference.]