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Letter from George Sibley to Samuel Sibley, January 21, 1815

George Champlin Sibley

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Mr. Saml. H. Sibley
Natchitoches
Louisiana

Geo. C. Sibley
Washington Jan^y. 21, 1815

Washington City January 21^t. 1815

My dear Brother,

Your two favors of the 7th and 14th of Dec. both reached me yesterday- they found me in excellent health and spirits, (altho' we are surrounded here by gloom and Sickness) but I confess their contents have very sensibly and materially affected the latter- When will the time come that is to relieve our family of that cursed state of bondage which is ever produced by imprudently and unnecessarily contracting debt- I hope and trust that Father will for the future beware how he places his fortune, his peace of mind, and personal liberty, at the mercy of every Gentlemanly adventuring Scoundrel, who insinuates himself into his confidence and palms himself on his hospitality- Surely he has already been sufficiently Schooled by painful experience, in this respect to warn him of its dangers and its fatal consequences- He not only thus lays his fortune open to the art of every plausible Villain, who passes, but he also puts it in their power to assail his reputation by every artful contrivance that Such designing Villains can invent- Some of his Secret enemies have lately been exerting themselves here to effect his removal from the Office of Indian Agent- A member of Congress yesterday rec^d. a letter from a person at Natchitoches (in whom he declares he has the utmost confidence) containing insinuations calculated to injure him- I Shall make it my business to get to the bottom of it- A Doctor Slocum lately passed thro' the City (while I was at Phil^a.) and informed a friend of mine (Cap^t. Knight) that Father was removed from his office and that your Wife was dead- it happened luckily for my peace of mind, that I

had just Rec^d a letter from Father before I heard this Story, which effectually and Satisfactorily proved to me that both those reports were false- I know nothing of D^r. Slocum, nor do I care anything about him- A Mr. Nancarrow was here with Slocum- I saw neither of them- The purport of the letter Rec^d. by the Kentucky Member of Congress from Natchitoches, as I was informed is this- the writer says that Father has represented to Gov^t. that he has organized 5 or 6 companies of Indians for the Service of the U. States- when the fact is (as the writer States) Father has not got nor cannot get one Single Indian. the writer insinuates that Father is drawing pay and Rations for those Indians when in fact he has not got any of them to go into Service.

I shall endeavor to find out who the writer is, and if possible get a copy of his Letter- from what Father has written to me on the Subject of those Indians, I Should judge that, the writer above alluded to, has been guilty of mistating facts with the view to injure Father.

I wrote to Father on the 10th or 12th Inst. and in that Letter anticipated a Reply to your Letters now before me, on the Subject of the embarrassments you are under Respecting Grand Ecore- it is utterly impossible for me to afford you any aid at present- my funds are extremely low- my expenses very great- the continuance of my salary extremely doubtful after the 4th of March- and I am entirely in the dark as yet, what business I Shall engage in- I wrote repeatedly to Father more than a year ago, and repeated often my wish, my ability and readiness to aid him with about \$1000 - I actually bought a Dft: for \$1127 on Gov^t. advised him of it, and waited (till I lost

all hope of hearing from him) for his directions how and where I Should Remit the money- I Really felt extremely anxious to Send him the money, and Suffered many excellent opportunities to pass, that I could easily have availed myself of, to Secure great bargains in valuable and productive property about and in St. Louis-

In fact I consider that I have Suffered a loss of at least \$1000 by holding my funds So long for Father's use, not to Say anything of the benefit I might have derived from the aid I might have afforded in releasing Father from his embarrassments, which I was always convinced would be considerable- I cannot in candor charge myself with the least blame or neglect in that affair- I am allowed by all who know me to be extremely punctual and attentive to business, and particularly Such as I am as deeply interested in, as I really felt myself in that I am alluding to.- It appears from your Letters that the valuable place Grand Ecore must inevitably be sacrificed about the middle of February, this will have taken place a week or ten days before this can Reach you- I cannot but deeply lament the unfortunate mismanagement that has lost us that fine estate- its value will be very great now that you are beginning to turn your attention to Sugar planting on Red River- and unless the State of things at New Orleans Should Suddenly arrest the fate, I Should Suppose that place would bring a high price on that account- Yesterday's mail brought us accounts from New Orleans up to the 23^d Dec. at which time Gen^l. Jackson was in action with the British invading army, and the accounts leave us in the most painful Suspense as to the Result- We have no news here of any importance- There is a Rumor of Peace, and everybody seems anxious to believe it; there can be no doubt however but it is illusory.

The Senate passed the Bank Law last night by a very small majority in the Shape it was last sent to them from the House of Representation- Capital 35 Millions- it is Rather doubtful whether the President will Sign it or not- and it is Still more doubtful whether most harm or most good will proceed from it-

Our Public Affairs Seem to be in a most depressed state at present, many of our Congressmen are totally disheartened and not a few of them think that the Union will ere very long be dissolved- If tomorrow's mail brings intelligence of Jackson's defeating the British at New Orleans it will impart new life to Congress, put down the factious opposition and Save the Nation from Ruin- If on the other hand Jackson is beaten & N. Orleans lost, it is my firm belief that the Eastern States will make peace with the Enemy, and use all their influence to effect the disunion of the Western States and to put them under the protection of England- This is the Plan I am pretty well assured- and you See it all depends on the Battle of New Orleans, whether it will be attempted or not- If Jackson Succeeds or not, one thing is certain, the Western States will never submit to any terms with the enemy inconsistent with their Rights and the duty they owe to the Union-

Mr. Monroe is very ill, tho' better today than he has been for several days- When he is able to attend to business, I Shall see him about the passport.- I Shall also see Mr. Meigs about the Matter Father has desired me to attend to- As fast as I am able, I Shall attend to all his requests and Shall write him respecting them after I have done So, and probably not before- I mentioned to you that I was yet doubtful what business I Shall pursue. I Shall at all events return to S. Louis early in the Spring, probably I Shall Remain here

A few weeks longer, possibly a month, but I hope to See St. Louis early in May- I Shall write you or Father as often as anything occurs worth noticing, and Shall keep you well advised of my own movements, plans and views, &s- It would not at all Suit me at present to undertake the journey you speak of to Mont Clover (or Cloven (?)) in pursuit of Dr. Pons (Pous (?))- I cannot help thinking that Such a journey would be entirely useless at the present time tho' to be Sure you ought to know best, and some attempts ought to be made to recover from the Said Swindling Doctor, the money he contrived to cheat Father out of- but I should be the very worst person that could be pitched on for such an errand, for I Should be more apt than not to put a bullet thro' the Scoundrel and get into a difficulty about it.-

While I was at New York, I met with an old Schoolmate F. McRae He was just from Gen^l Issard's Army in which he is a 2^d Lieut. and Regimental Paymaster- he knew me in an instant, but I did not recollect him- his Hair is quite gray, but I found after an hour's chat with him that he is in all other Respects (and a Swinging pair of Whiskers which prevented my Recognising him) the same old 2/6 he used to be- the Same giddy, generous, noble hearted and honorable fellow that he always was- I was glad to see him, we traveled together to Phil^a. & were there 2 days together, he was obliged to come on here, & I was too agreeably employed to leave Phil^a. So Soon- so we parted- I found him here tho' & for several days met him- He is now in Fayetteville but is to be here Soon- he enquired very particularly for you, and was anxious to hear how you are doing- His Standing is very Respectable in the Army I believe, he is yet Wild, but is attentive to his duty and will make a good Officer I

think- Give my love to your Wife and Smother your little ones
with kisses for me. tell Margaret she need not make further
Search for a Wife for me, as I am now I believe in a very fair
way to help myself to one-

Love to Father, Ann E Henry, Johnson & and Compt^{ts} to all
our friends who ask after me- you need not write me again at
this place-

Yrs. with true affection

G. C. S.

S. H. S.