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Letter from John W. Johnson to George Sibley, April 28, 1817

John W. Johnson

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George C. Sibley Esq.

Jno. W. Johnson

Prarie du Chien 28th April 1817

Dear Sir

Your esteemed favour dated 12th August, only reached me a few days since, I was fearful the great & round about way our letters would have to Travel might be the fore reason of our not hearing from each other again, I have wrote you two or three times, this I believe is the first since you left St. Louis, the navigation now being open we can communicate with more ease & certainty by directing our letters to Simpson, though I fear his time is so much employed with the cursed Politics, our little matters will be unnoticed or not attended to, he wrote me lately, & promises fair, so let us try him-

I have spent a winter of more pleasure than one could calculate on from the society around me, we (I use this word meaning the Americans here) had to immagin them to be a white People, their manners were very much in favour, under this impression we made a Solection, had our little Balls, card parties, etc. slaying, (not killing) in great stile - as it respects my houses, garden, & & I have given you a full description in a former letter. They were the property of Southwest Compy from Mackinack (British) which after a little repairs will be comfortable. The Indians who have visited me have been numerous, though not a profitable set to the Government- I fear the calculations made by the Supt of Indian Trade will not be complied with- I am sure it will not, so long as the British Traders are permitted- on account of their Superior Quality of goods, this with the natural attachment they have for the British, will ever make us second, in their estimation- my last goods, which only reached here 14th of this month, are of a much better quality than any I ever recd- The Blankets are considerably larger, but not so thick, the strand will have a better comparison, had they come

last fall I should have made a better out- as yet I have not gained much, taking in view all expenditures- In a few days a large number of Indians are expected though I fear not much to Trade as their Traders have arrived- we have here now the principal British Traders including Robert Dixson. I have heard by Capt. Ofallon Dixson has obtained a permission from our heads of department, to Pass through our Indian County & hold counsils with the Indians, & that he is requested by his Government to inform them, never to lift a Tommyhawk against the Americans, as no support can or will be given them by the British- We have Two Comps. arrived here six days since from Green Bay, under the comd. of Colⁿ, Chambers. I hear Capt. Bradford is to command your Post. if he is with you, Tender my respects to him, he is Singular Character- very obliging where he takes-

It is reported the Sack & Foxes have moved back to the river, the former joined by the Pusants (?) intend to attack the Fort at Rock River- I have recd. several letters from the new Supt. Ind. Trade- the latter making some little changes in my favor of Salary, etc. I have received a very large supply of Indian goods, many Damaged last fall on the way here from St. Louis, 12 of Double cord Strands (?) missing & some Blankets - I have also received goods and not yet the invoices- they continue to shove in a great many useless articles & of a very bad quality - reports say there will be 8 new factory & our Salarys raised; god send to us- the (latter)- Ben Ofallon has arrived from his wintering ground up the river; he says the British are using their influence to draw the Soos across to the Red River County. the Chipaway were sent to make Peace with them- they did not entire succeed- I have recd. orders to call on the Military for men- which will not be given, I believe. I hope it will not, as it is a forerunner of Quarling-

The Indians in this Quarter says. Only children have been down yet to see the Commissions. It is a fact, as it respects the Sooes, -not a Chief has gone down-- Rollings has written his third addition, he is by himself doing a little business. talks of love matters & Maryland affairs, with a great desire to return there to get a wife & remove to the Westward, perhaps St. Louis- I have recomd. a relation of mine, who wants a Husband, & presume, she possesses every quality to make a man happy & in every respect will be fully his match- Sibley, I am determined to get a wife, the first Lady, I must wish that, I think will answer, young or old, the former preferred, ask Mrs. Sibley to recommend one & let us settle in the same neighborhood & leave the cursed stinking Indians, I am now serious- I send to Simpsons care for you a small Bell, supposing if the grass gets high, it will be serviceable to you; for fear of loosing some of the flock; if a second one should be necessary write me as they are well calculated to please- Mrs. Bett's death occasions Mrs. Betts to visit St. Louis in B. Ofallons Boat. She leaves this Tuesday- I have clothed her with great power- her return in a month or two will be desireable. Tender my warm respects to Mrs. S. & believe me sir to be your

friend

Jno. W. Johnson

George C. Sibley Esq.