

Lindenwood University

Digital Commons@Lindenwood University

George Champlin Sibley Papers

George and Mary Easton Sibley Papers

4-11-1836

Letter from George Sibley to Archibald Gamble, April 11, 1836

George Champlin Sibley

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



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

Copy

Arch^d. Gamble Esq.
St. Louis

Geo. C. Sibley

Linden Wood April 11th, 1836.

My dear Sir,

Yours of the 7th came to hand on Saturday evening- this is Monday morning- I am much gratified to learn that your trip to the "Upper Country" was attended with results So favourable; for altho' I could entertain no reasonable fears, yet considering the temper of the times, & and the general obliquity of the Public Agents, I confess that I was So unreasonable as to feel Somewhat doubtful whether Right & Justice might not be denied you upon Some pretence or other- Ryland I was sure would under all circumstances act correctly in his office; and I thought it most probable that his coadjutor would So also, provided you had the good fortune to approach him exactly in the Right way- Well, the Result proves, either your good luck or your discreet management, perhaps a little of both.

And now Sir you are in the possession of the very best Town Seite on the Missouri River- The natural point of Depot, for the finest part of the State: and you have determined, upon information recd. & your own personal observations, to lay off a Town there forthwith, & to offer Lots therein for Sale in next June or July- It is doubtless the best plan to push forward this thing as fast as possible; whilst the public appetite craves this kind of food, let it be Supplied. I think you may count on Selling half the Lots for good prices in June; which will, if I be not mightily mistaken, Secure Such an interest for the Town, as will promote its Rapid growth and thereby enable you to reap a rich harvest

at your leisure, from the Residue- Having determined thus to proceed, you ought undoubtedly to let the Public know your determination immediately thro' many channels- By going "right straight ahead," promptly and resolutely you will bear down all opposition effectually, and make it the interest of those inclined to oppose you, to promote your views- By Such a course, you force all opposition out of its own channels into yours- So it is clearly your policy Sir, to "push on"- "go ahead"- "Strike while the Iron is hot"- "Jump whilst the maggot bites" &. and may every Success attend you, is my Sincere & earnest wish.

But you Seem to be at a loss for Name for your bantling, & ask me for my "views on this matter"- You remember that I did in my preliminary Mem^o. to you in January last, half Stipulate, that the Town Should bear a name, composed of the characters that are used to Set forth my own cognomination- If there be no very cogent objections to this word, I would again express my own wish that it be adopted- The word is short, plain, Sightly & Sonorous- not at all identified with popular or unpopular men, parties, or associations; tho' it is the appellation of him who cut the first Tree, and as a Public Servant, dwelt nearly Twenty Years on the Spot- Whenever I have thought of this Same Town project within the last 12 years, my mind has been fully fixed & decided as to the Name. It should either bear that of its Original founder, or else that of my aboriginal friends. it should be either "Sibley" or "Osage"- And so it should now be, if I had the Right to decide- In either case, whichever of the two is adopted, there Seems to me to be a peculiar fitness, that the Public mind would readily understand, and appreciate, & heartily acquiesce in- You may call it weakness

or Vanity or folly, or what you please. For me, circumstanced as I now am, & expect to remain, while I live on earth, (in a Nutshell) to be thus Solicitous on this point.- But it strikes my mind, that I may present this suggestion without justly incurring any Such censure- There are very many of the incidents of my life, that afford me ample apologies, & reasons for wishing the remembrance of my public Services & association at Ft. Osage to be stamped on the very Spot that witnessed them for So many years- It cannot be disputed, that there is a moral right, a just obligation involved in this pretension-

I will not condescend to compare it with those on which the designations of many of our counties are founded.- Thus have I frankly replied to you on this point, and I am Sure you will rightly interpret what I have Said; that it is not So much from weakness, vanity, or folly as from a Sense of Justice, which there Surely is not the least indelicacy or impropriety in my urging, being personally concerned- This is not by any means a sturdy, Bentonian demand for a compliment, I care not not a Rush for compliments- But I should never have preferred this pretension to any other person than yourself.- Please to understand me clearly, that So far as I am allowed any right in this matter, I prefer the word "Sibley" first, & next to that, "Osage"- They are in themselves both good enough words, and are both naturally associated with the Spot designated, its past history, &c.-

You also desire me to draft for you a Suitable advertisement &c.- Not being at all accustomed to write Such things, it is probable that I shall perform it clumsily- but as I make it a Rule to try to do whatever you ask of me, I shall annex hereunto, Such a

form as I believe to be consistent with the well known facts of the case-

I have Read with utter amazement, The "Marion City" puff-Why Sir it eclipses far away, Uncle Bobby's Ne Plus Ultra - But this is no Joke. Very large Sums of Money have been Secured to the projectors of this new City; and I very much fear that the very popular name of "Marion College", (popular in the eastern Cities) has been So associated with "Marion City" (doubtless not by design) as that a Reaction may take place fatal to both the college and City- I have never yet been Satisfied of the feasibility even of the College plan- If this City Speculation is to be in any way hooked to the college, or if it should be Suspected so to be, I have no hesitation in Saying that both must eventually fail- Why Sir the Western Public care incapable of comprehending Such grand Schemes; we Stand off in Wonder, and wait the Results. We dare not touch, and cannot cooperate, and what can be expected without the Public approbation? all well here.

YRS; ever thine

G. C. Sibley

Arch^d. Gamble Esq.
St. Louis.