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Letter from Mark H. Sibley to George Sibley, September 12, 1851

Mark H. Sibley

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Canandaigua N. Y.

Sept. 12. 1851

My dear cousin

I am, at last, able, with the kindness of some relatives, to furnish you with a map of family statistics. Much more and much more minute, I dare say, than you expected or desired, or will fall within the scope of your plan. I would have made the effort to save you some of the labor of ___ by attempting an analysis myself, had time allowed; but I am pressed with occupation just now so you must marshal the language to your liking.

My wife suggests that it may be gratifying to you to know more of me and my family that is set out in the tables, Not that you would wish to insist even as much as is there furnished in your labor of love, but that it might be a personal gratification to yourself to know more about us. This suggestion is prompted, I presume, by the kind interest you have manifested in us. So I will venture to oblige the lady, even at the hazard of being thought an Egotist. For mind, you, her suggestion does not contemplate the ___ of any of the dark shades of our history. Even a modest man should become an autogeographer if his wife commands it. So here goes. Know then, that my good father designed to give me a collegiate education and then let me make my way in the world as I best could. But the floods came and swept away his ,ills and with them my prospect of the A.B. I did not feel like adding to his troubles and took \$25 and his blessing as my portion and started for this place in the winter of 1815. This was the leading ___ in Western New York. The thro progress of improvements as now ___ it far in the background; I was an entire stranger in my arrival, but, after inquiring about a little, made up my mind to try to find a seat in the office of Dudley, ___ Esq. then one of the most promising young lawyers of ___ pursue my law studies with him. So after giving the book black a suspense for polishing me up a little, I started for the law office with a \$10 note all my estate. In my pocket. I intruded myself to my future principal and before night was regularly installed at my table. By ___ of scribing and petty fogging I worked my way through my clerk's life and then sat down to practice my profession here among the ___, Spencer, Greiss, Marorn, Warns, and other friendly giants of those days there residing at this place in whose shadow I hoped to ___ a little, ___ not of flourishing. I soon found , however, that I was succeeding beyond my most sanguine expectations and after 14 years of patient and laborious application to the duties of my profession found myself in the ___ handsome ___ and a full ___ lucrative practice had I been wise enough to have pursued the course for another ten years I should had fortune enough and probably as much higher professional position that I have attained but, in a ___ hour, I continued, in 1834, to go into public life by accepting a nomination by my party then in minority in this Co. to the state legst. I was elected, made the candidate of the minority in the House for Speakers, placed and by my successful ___ at the head of two of the most important and labouris committees Worked hard all winter. Was ___, against my remonstrances, to the following legislature. Again minority candidate for speaker again elected and ___ like ___ from my opponent. Elected to Congress (H.R.) in 36. Remained there till 39. When I was and as chm. Of judiciary comll. Two of them, when I resigned with the resolution of returning to my profession and devoting my efforts to the restoration of a pecuniary capitol which had been much reduced by the expenses of public life, and to the attainment of as high a position in my profession as I could reach. Had just got fairly into the harness when the plege on the bench of the Supt. Ct. was ___ me, which I had wishes enough to decline, but ___ to peculiar temptations to to my present office of the judge of the county and probate court. From which I shall be delivered on 1st Jany. next. (Having just

declined a nomination for an election) which, I am resolved shall terminate my public life. I never have desired, but always shuned it. As far as the obligations of party associations and the ___ of partial friends would allow.

Although expensive habits and an unwilling ___ to be banished from my family (which induced the taking them unto me) have greatly diminished my estate, yet I have moderate competency and much reason to be grateful to a kind providence for his care of me & mine.

My son, in law, John Ganson Esq. of Buffalo, is one of the most promising young lawyers in the state of Excellencies, ___, & habit and in lucrative practice. My son John C. also a lawyer is pursuing his profession in this place. Tho very desirous of going to Minesota but cannot obtain his mothers consent and is too dutiful to go without. He has good talents and habits and ___ a very ___ portion of our homestead. The ___, Emily, is a model of amiability and a great blessing to us. Too great to be spared in any matrimonial adventure.

Having been for so many years on the professional, political, and ___ treadmill I propose to look about the world a little, if the means are found sufficient on gathering them up, after the expiration of my present office it was in view of this anticipation that I suggested the possibility of seeing you on the Banks of the Missouri. Of course, I did not promise myself that pleasure under a year or two to come. ___ feel very sensibly the cordial & hospitable terms on which greeted my suggestion and hope yet to espress to you personally our sense of your kindness. I have built since you were here, a large and commodious residence in the village upon a 46ac. Lot. It abounds in accommodations for cousins and we hope & trust it will yet be honored and it inmates made happy by the presence of yourself and wife in a long old & as ___ visit. Set this down on you list of duties, not ___.

You lamented sister Helena favored us with her society a portion of two of the last years of her life. We formed a strong attachment for her and hope we were to some estent instrumental in alleviating the suffering and sorrow of her declining days. A frail and sensitive flower she drooped and died when her protecting branch was withdrawn and she left alone to suffer with the storms of life.

We have a cousin at Rochester, named Hiram Sibley, who is remarkable man and you must make his acquaintance. He was a great favorite of helenas & s of my wife. When at his house the other day he gave me the statement, which I send herewith, of his fathers family. I took it down from his lifes ___ some nonsense of my own as we went along. He has acquired for ___ and position by his energy and good qualitys. He has a special love for cousins and would be the happiest man in the world to welcome you are his hospitable residence. His wife is one of the most practical & sensible of women and his daughter lovely & accomplished.

Where is ___ Copeter, into whose society I was so lucky as to fall on our way way to the Rockshire jubilee and made a heroine of there. If with you, pray present to her my most profound regards.

That asparagus is a prize. One of the chufest wonders of my grounds; but I cannot look it in the face without blushing for my shabby treatments of you in not as much as acknowledging the receipt of the gift. She seed is much in demand and dispenses much good.

My wife suggests that I have gone far beyond her design in prompting me to write geography and is quite sure you will be half disgusted with so much egotism; but my pen having run on without the rudder of __, I must let it go & take my chance with your clemency.

I was pained to hear so unfavorably an account of the gentlemen about whom I troubled you with an inquiry, and as he has been hospitably received and entertained by several of our most respectable citizens, and (for his wives sake to whom Mrs. Has formed quite a a friendship during her stay here) at our house. I shall not give __ for any regrets or unpleasant reflections by even divulging the contents of your letter to her which will deprive her of participations in the pleasure you favorable account of Judge J. has afforded me.

The gentlemen first referred to has returned with his lady to St. Louis, his children remaining at school here, she is to return in the spring and pass the summer here. I hope he will not allow me again to solicit you caution against to possibility of his know that I have made any inquiries in relations to him.

With renewed assurance of the kindest regards of all our family for your good Lady & yourself and a prayer for your forgiveness of me for this long hurried, incoherent inflection.

I remain truly yours etc.

Mark H. Sibley

George C. Sibley

Lindenwood

Mo

I forgot to say that I shall be greatly obliged by a copy of your family lineage and if not imposing to too great a labor upon you, hope you will forward one.

[Letter followed by a collection of genealogies]

Of the family of my father Stephen Sibley my nephew Mark S. Sibley furnished me with the following account which he copied from the family records of his father George Sibley late of Grafton deceased. M.H. Sibley Aug. 29. 1857

“Stephen Sibley 5th son of Col. Timothy Sibley was born 19th Nov. 1759, Married Jemima Hopkins of of Gr. Barrington Berkshire Mass. 23 Feb. 1785. He died at Grafton __ Co., Ohio 10 aprl. 1829. She died at the same place 1st jany. 1835 age 78 yrs.

They had children as follows

John Sibley born March 15 1792

Giles Sibley “ March 6 1793

George Sibley “ Augt 20 1794 died at Grafton Oct. 15th 1848

Mark H. Sibley " Nove – 6- 1796

Nancy Sibley " Oct – 16 – 1798

Mary Sibley " July – 28 – 1807

John, the oldest son, married Rhruba Boynton of West Stockbridge Berkshire Mass Jany 10. 1815 of whom were born

Henry Artemas on 28th Nov 1815 who died 27 May 1831

Mary on 20 Augt. 1818 at Grafton Ohio married Francis Forrest of Newburry N. Y. resides at Richmond Co. Illinois (Have 2 sons)

Charles W. Born Mar. 22d 1821 married Lucy Fellows of schoocraft Michigan. Reside at Richmond aforesd. (have three daughters).

William born July 7th 1823 at same place.

Their mother Rhuba Sibley died March 14 1827 at Grafton in April 1828 then father John Sibley married Charlisa Kilbown of Gt. Barrington, with whom he is still living at Montalano _- Henry Co. Illinois and by whom he has 3 children our

Robert K. Born July 13th 1829

Stephen born July 4 1831

Sarah Ann Born Apr. 1834

(John is a __ has been a merchant some what in public state & a worthy man tho in moderate __ over __ copes)

Giles Sibley 2nd son of Stephen & Jemima Sibley married Lydia Stupson of La Grange Loraine Co Ohio Nov 1839. They reside at that place, have not had any ofsue [offspring?] (He is a farmer & a very dull man owing to a personal injury)

George Sibley 3 son of S.&G. Sibley- married Rhoda Boynton of Weslockbridge Aug. 10 1817. She being 23 years of age at the time of her marriage. By her he had 5 children.

Mark Sumner born Nov. 24 1817 at Grafton married Lorelia Adeline Preston sep 30th 1839. Then 20 yrs of age. They have 3 children

Mary Francis born Jany 14. 1841.

Henry A. Born Sep 9. 1842

James K. " Apl. 16. 1847

Francis M Born June 16. 1822 at Grafton, Married David B. Simmons of medina Medina Co. Ohio 10 jany. 1842. He being 31 years of age, by whom she has had 3 children vis

David P. Simmons born at Medina Dec. 29 1843

Sarah E Simmons " Aprl. 16/47 died June 13 1850

George Sibley Simmons born Jany. 3. 1850

Elbert M. Born June 9 1825 at Grafton, married Mary A. Coheeler of same place Sep. 10 1849

Thaddeus P. Sibley born March 23 1827 at Grafton

George Sibley born March 8 1835 at Graton

(My brother was a worthy man, an excellent citizen, and greatly respected. He was one of the best farmers of his county, acquired a reasonable competency for himself and his children. All of whom with his widow now reside upon it in Grafton Loraine Co. Ohio)

Mark Hopkins Sibley The 4th son of Stephen & Jemma Sibley was married to Maria ___ Clark of Canandaigua Ontario County N. York on the 29 Nov 1821. She being then 18 years of age. They have ever since & now reside at that place. Have 3 children viz Mary Hopkins. John Clark & Emily Ward all living. (See my own acct. of this branch)

Nancy Sibley the 5th child and 1st daughter of Stephen & Jemima Sibley married Rev. C. P. Bronson of Norwalk Harron Co. Ohio 12 Oct. 1826. She died at Mount Vernon in that state on 5th sept. 1827 childless.

Mary Sibley the 6th child & 2nd daughter of S & J Sibley married ___ Franklin Wells of Greenfield Mass. On 20th Sep 1824 at Grafton Ohio. He died Oct. 13. 1845 leaving by her 3 children him surviving viz Herman, Nancy, and Mary S. in 1849 she married again with S.B. Badger of Montville Medina Co. Ohio

(Mr. wells the first husband of my sister Mary was a highly intelligent & respectable gentleman for many years of the magistracy and Judiciary of the state of Ohio, and a brother of ___ Henry arlls the present ch Justice of the ___ of the state of Massachusetts. Mr. Badger her present husband is a respectable farmer and her children reside with them at Montville)

The ___ the forgoing in brackets are note of my own.

I add some particulars in relation of my own family.

Mark Hopkins Sibley was born at Great Barrington Berkshire, Mass. 6 Nov 1796. Took up his residence at Canandaigua Ontarion County New York Jany. 1815 and studied the profession of law under Dudley Maoin. Married Miss Maria ___ Clark a native of that place and daughter of John & Eunice Clark on the 29 day of Nov. 1821. She being then just 18 years of age. They have since resided and still reside at the same place.

They have had 3 children all surviving Viz,

Mary Hopkins born Sep. 19 1822 married to John Ganson Esq. of Leroy, N.Y. Counsellor of law Sep 20. 1844 They reside at the city of Buffalo N. Y. and have one child named John Sibley Ganson who was born 28 Feb. 1849

John Clark born May 6th 1824 resides at Canandaigua where he is pursuing his profession as an attorney at law. Is not married.

Emily war born Oct. 20 1829. Resides with her parents and is not married.