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## Letter from George Sibley to Thomas McKenney, February 3, 1818

George Champlin Sibley

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*Extract of a letter from George C. Sibley, United States Factor at Fort Osage, to the Superintendent of Indian Trade, dated*

FEBRUARY 3, 1818.

A prejudice has already gone forth among the Indians that the Americans cannot make goods of a good quality. They believe that all the blankets, cloths, &c. of *common quality*, are of American manufacture, and that the *British* only make the *best kinds*. The traders tell them that there are none but *American goods* for sale at the factory, and that, although they are sold at low prices, they are, nevertheless, *very dear*, considering the quality; but that their goods are of the *real British kind*—a little dearer, to be sure, but also a great deal better and handsomer. This is an argument that operates most powerfully against the factories, and not a little, I assure you, in favor of British politics. This present season I have had the good fortune to check, in some degree, this prejudice, as it relates to this trading-house. My goods are of better quality than I have generally been supplied with, and, although inferior to the British northwest goods, will still bear some comparison with them, and have given rise to an opinion among the Indians that the Americans are improving in the important art of making blankets and cloth; which opinion I desire to strengthen and confirm by means of the excellence of next year's supplies.