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5-16-1820

Letter from George Sibley to Thomas McKenney, May 16, 1820

George Champlin Sibley

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No. 16.

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

MAY 16, 1820.

About half of the Little Osages were here a few days ago; they brought little or nothing to trade. They came to ask for their annuity for 1820, which I, of course, refused to pay them, having received no order to do so, it not being yet due, and the tribe not being fairly represented.

They had been sent by the traders, in order to excite a spirit of hostility against the Government, knowing full well that their application must fail. They affected to be very angry; left me hastily; declared the treaty between them and the United States at an end, and said they never would come here again. I made no attempt to stay them, knowing that they were merely playing the fool, and that it was better to let them discover their folly themselves.

But if those peddlers are not kept from among the Indians, they will, most inevitably, all be totally ruined; cruel wars will be excited; our frontiers will again bleed; and the wretched Indians crushed. Mark me, sir; these things are near at hand.