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## Letter from Benjamin Reeves to George Sibley, July 18, 1833

Benjamin H. Reeves

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Fayette July 18 1833

Dear Sir,

I received on yesterday your written letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> inst and need not say how wholly unexpected its contents were. I had flattered myself from your former communication that our accounts were finally adjusted. I am not entirely satisfied myself what course we ought to pursue. But will suggest the propriety of immediate measures to procure a postponement of the business until congress meets, that we may have an opportunity of petitioning that body on the subject. This of course must be done by addressing Mr. Hagner, and requesting him to delay taking any steps for the collection of the money for a few months. In the mean time we may, & I think ought to take the advice of counsel say all \_\_\_ as to the correctness of our construction of the act in relation to our compensation. And if advised that ours is the correct construction, we may then propose an amicable suit with the government, in which this question & this alone shall be raised. This proposition for a suit however ought be resorted to in case all other means of redress fail. In your letter you suggest that Mr. Hagner's construction has been sustained by the authorities at Washington. Has the matter been submitted to the Secretary of Treasury or to the Attorney General? If it has I cannot think it would avail any thing to petition the President on the subject. As he would simply refer the question I presume to some of these officers & abide by his judgement If however the opinion of the attorney General has not been taken, we had better request the Treasury to take it and at the same time submit to that officer a letter drawn up by the counsel sustaining our construction of the act. Of course we must take care in making this referenced to the Attorney General, not to preclude ourselves from the right to having a judicial investigation of the matter. If you know please inform me how it is that Mr. Hagner, as ascertained that I am indebted in one sum, Col. Mather in another & yourself in an other. We all charged the same per diem why is it that I have more to refund than either yourself or Col. Mather. This however is not a matter of great s\_\_\_ with me. I am quite anxious to have the business closed but think it important to us that the matter should be postponed until the meeting of congress. Your correspondence & personal acquaintance with the officers at the city, of Washington will & does enable you to know better than I do. How to arrange or at best to manage the business. I have only draft suggestions. I subject the matter to you more experienced judgement. The existence & spread of that great & mysterious pestilence cholera, alone is sufficient to predicate an application for a postponement upon. This said, that disease has developed \_\_\_ in Old Franklin. On Wednesday, one case proved fatal, a slave, the property of Mr. Kyle who sunk in 6 or 8 hours. With Sunday others in a mild form.

I will certainly aid in the circulation of your handbills and need not say that I sincerely wish you elected. But candidly fear that in the county your vote will fall short of a majority. Many that other \_\_\_ would have supported your pretentious have compromitted themselves to Dr Ball, prior to your becoming a candidate. I stand unpleased myself & \_\_\_ would if I could aid your prospects but as matter appear to stand I fear no efforts can be greatly available.

My respects to your lady & believe me to be yrs most sincerely

B. H. Reeves

G. C. Sibley esqr.