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**Letter from George Sibley to William Russell, Thomas Biddle,
Tracy & Wahrendorff, February 17, 1831**

George Champlin Sibley

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William Russell
Thomas Biddle &
Tracy & Wahrendorff
St. Louis, Mo.

G. C. Sibley
Feb. 17, 1831

Linden-Wood (near St. Charles) February 17th, 1831

To William Russell
Thomas Biddle &
Tracy & Wahrendorff
St. Louis.

Gentlemen,

After much reflection, I conclude it is proper for me to say to you what follows=

I stand indebted to you in the aggregate sum of (near about) \$3000= principal, besides some interest= for which you have security by mortgages on my property worth at the lowest computation not less than \$7000= So that I am confident you are all perfectly secure of ultimate payment, and if you so determine immediate payment= And I do not think it is less my interest than it is yours, that these obligations shall all be immediately discharged, provided I can effect it without making almost ruinous sacrifices= which it is my purpose now in part, to assure you cannot be done= Until late last autumn, I entertained strong hopes of effecting advantageous sale of stock to the amount of about \$1600: When I unexpectedly, failed in this= it was too late in the season to think of selling the animals at publick auction, and I was obliged to keep them= The great severity of the winter has caused me to lose many of them, and what remains, are in so unmarketable a condition, as to make it quite certain that I could not sell them for near half their value now, or until they are much improved in their appearance=

I have also been disappointed in the expectation of receiving this spring a debt of \$1500 that I had a fair right to count on long ago; but which I now despair of receiving this year if ever= These dis-

appointments Gentlemen, embarrass me not a little, as you will perceive; when I tell you that they absolutely leave me without any Ready Resources with which to discharge my engagements to you as promptly as I wish and you have the Right to expect=

I have determined to appropriate the following property, or as much of it as may be necessary, to pay the Sums I owe you Respectively= and this I pledge my Sacred honour to do effectively, and in Such manner as you may deem most adviseable= to Wit

140 Arpens of my Linden Wood tract of Land=

Four Slaves - Henry, Edward, Baltimore and George=

About 30 head of Mares, Horses, and Asses.

the above will I think be quite Sufficient= if it Should not, I will make the balance otherways= But I must ask the favour of you Gentlemen to give your consent to the following proposition-

Allow me 'till next fall to get my Stock in Marketable order and to make Sale of them- and the use of my Servants 'till Say 1^t Dec^r. to make & gather another crop, and to take care of the Stock= The Land, two of the Slaves, and Such of the Animals as I can dispose of, as they Recruit, Shall be Cashed for your use as quickly as possible- the Slaves immediately after the Crop is laid by, Say in July- the other two Slaves as Soon after the Crop can be gathered & housed as possible- that is, if it Shall be necessary to Sell them both= If it is desired I will have one of the Slaves (George) Sold by the first of May next, to meet what Interest may be due= In my estimate of the property herein Set apart, is included, as I think, Sufficient to discharge the interest 'till next December= The Slave George is at present hired in St. Louis County to a Farmer near Mr. Ja^s. Russell's, by name Bingham= I Shall not need him at home any more= As this effort (which nothing Shall induce me to

relax) must necessarily change materially all my plans here, if not entirely break up my Farming= I am naturally desirous of effecting the change Somewhat by degrees= Suffer me once more to fill my Cribbs, to Remodel my plans, and I Shall be content, perfectly content, to await a change of fortune in humble obscurity=

Have the goodness to consider what I here write to you, and favour me with your answer as Soon as your Convenience will allow=

And believe me Gentlemen,

Yours with great Respect & esteem

G. C. Sibley