Doctor John Sibley apparently was a "thinker and a doer," with strong acquisitive instincts and a will to flee from a life of monotony. He was born of a sturdy New England family in Massachusetts in the year of 1757. He began his life of public service during the American Revolution, serving as a surgeon's mate. After the close of the Revolution, he moved to Great Barrington, Massachusetts, where he practiced medicine, and acquired a wife and two sons. Then he moved to Fayetteville, North Carolina, where he accumulated town property, farms, a newspaper, and a home. In 1790 his wife, Elizabeth Hopkins Sibley, died. A year later he married a widow, Mary Winslow. Soon misfortune took his properties, and it was said that he fled to Spanish Louisiana to escape poverty and his second wife.¹ The accusation that he was a wife deserter tormented him when he was appointed to an official position in Orleans Territory, not only because the accusation became local gossip, but also because articles on the moral character of Sibley were given space in the newspapers. Meanwhile President Jefferson was forced to read letters on the subject. However, Jefferson declared that the charge was without proof, and that it could not weigh against the integrity of his character as affirmed by others and against his unquestionable good sense and information; furthermore, that his industry and intelligence made him a valuable officer.²

Sibley arrived in Spanish Louisiana in September, 1802, and visited with men of importance. In 1803, he settled without his

family at Natchitoches, Louisiana, which, after the purchase of Louisiana by the United States in that same year, became the furthest outpost of the United States facing Spanish dominions. In March, 1803, he made a journey up Red River, keeping a journal. He was a prolific journalist, with scholarly traits, and a keen power of observation. Hence, he became an authority on western Louisiana, the Indians of the Red River area, and Spanish Texas.

From the time of Sibley's arrival at Natchitoches he was a man of many enterprises. From 1803 until his appointment as an official on the Louisiana-Texas frontier, he was an informer on Indian affairs and on the Louisiana boundary controversy between Spain and the United States. For the information furnished he was appointed contract surgeon to care for United States soldiers at Fort Claiborne in Natchitoches, a position he held until November, 1808. From 1805 to 1814 he served as Indian agent, keeping the Indians as far west as Matagorda Bay friendly to the United States. He supervised Indian trade at the factory at Natchitoches. He managed his cattle ranches, engaged in cotton farming, and sent his cotton to the New Orleans market. He manufactured salt from the salt springs near Natchitoches, which he shipped to Mississippi and Louisiana. He acquired town property in Natchitoches, and fine farms on both sides of the Red River. He kept up a voluminous correspondence, writing to the Secretary of War of the United States, to Governor William Charles Coe Claiborne of Orleans Territory, later of the State of Louisiana, and to his four children of previous marriages. In 1813, he had married a third

\[\text{G. P. Whittington, "Doctor John Sibley of Natchitoches, 1757-1837," The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XX, 469.}\]

\[\text{For a critical analysis of Sibley's survey of the Indians of the Red River area, see Charles Wilson Hackett, Pichardo's Treatise on the Limits of Louisiana and Texas (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1931), II, passim.}\]

\[\text{For an account of the salt springs, see ibid., II, 58-59.}\]

\[\text{In addition to Sibley's journal kept of his Red River journey in 1803, and the historical sketch of Indian tribes, he wrote many letters that are in the collections of the American Antiquarian Society of Worcester, Massachusetts, the Missouri Historical Society, and Lindenwood College, St. Charles, Missouri. Also, he kept a diary or journal which covered the years 1803-1837, a part of which has been edited by G. P. Whittington. For details concerning the journal as well as the diary, see G. P. Whittington, "Doctor John Sibley of Natchitoches," The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, October, 1927, XX, 467-473.}\]

wife, Eudalie Malige, after the death of the second Mrs. Sibley in North Carolina. Through all these many enterprises, the most significant fact is that Sibley moved as a potent force during the most turbulent years in the history of the Louisiana-Texas frontier.

From 1803 to 1815, years crowded with history-making events, Sibley in Natchitoches was a purveyor of news, as well as a manipulator of diplomacy and statecraft. The United States, possessing Louisiana with undefined limits, was claiming Texas. In December, 1804, the Secretary of War requested Sibley "to act occasionally as an Indian agent for the United States in the vicinity of Natchitoches." For his occasional services he was allowed four dollars a day, and was furnished with $3,000 worth of goods for presents to the Indians. In his reports to the War Department he advocated alliances with the Indians and the establishment of an Indian factory at Natchitoches to divert Indian trade from the Spanish factory at Nacogdoches. In May, 1805, he was instructed by the War Department of the United States to direct his attention to all Indians as far west as San Bernardo Bay, and was informed that a factory was to be established at Natchitoches in the fall. In October, 1805, Sibley was notified of his appointment as "Indian Agent of Orleans Territory and the region South of the Arkansas River." For his services as permanent agent he was to receive a salary of $1,000 per annum, and his subsistence at four rations per day. Sibley's prolific writings had paid. When President Jefferson was seeking information about western Louisiana and the Indians, Sibley, having made a survey as far west as Santa Fe, sent reports to Jefferson in April, August, and December of 1805. In April of that year he sent to Secretary of War General Dearborn historical sketches of the tribes, and a copy of his journal of the Red River expedition made in 1803. These

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8Clarence Edwin Carter, Territorial Papers of the United States, Orleans Territory, IX, 514-516.
two reports were placed before Congress by Jefferson on February 19, 1806. These historical documents won for him the commission as Indian agent.

This appointment greatly distressed Commandant General Nemesio Salcedo of Spain’s Interior Provinces. Salcedo had knowledge of Sibley’s exploratory surveys, and upon Sibley’s appointment he declared that Sibley was “a revolutionist, the friend of change, and a most bitter enemy of public peace.” Indeed Sibley was dangerous to Spanish interests, since by 1809 he had succeeded so well as Indian agent that he had practically diverted all trade of East Texas Indians from the Spaniards to the United States’ factory at Natchitoches.

Besides serving as Indian agent, Sibley also busied himself collecting information concerning the Louisiana boundary and kept the War Department informed of border activities. In these reports he exaggerated the military strength of the Spanish on the Louisiana-Texas border, and represented many activities of the Spaniards as violations of United States soil. He observed and assisted the Freeman and Glass exploring and trading expeditions up Red River to chart the country. He observed and recorded the Aaron Burr and General Wilkinson episode in his official correspondence. He witnessed the massing of Spanish troops and of the United States Army along the Sabine when

15"Historical sketches of the several Indian tribes in Louisiana south of the Arkansas river, and between the Mississippi and river Grande;" “To General Henry Dearborn, Secretary of War,” Annals of Congress, 9th Congress, 2nd Session, 1087-1104.
16In 1776, by royal order, the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya, Coahuila, Texas, New Mexico, Sinaloa, Sonora, and California were placed under the military and political government of a commandant general, directly responsible to the king of Spain. From 1800 to 1813, Nemesio Salcedo was commandant general of the Interior Provinces. Herbert E. Bolton, Guide to Materials for the History of the United States in the Principal Archives of Mexico (Washington, 1913), 75-77.
18N. Salcedo to Bonavia, Bexar, April 24, 1809, Provincias Internas, Vol. 201, p. 181, Archivo General de la Nación, transcript Bancroft Library (hereafter Archivo General de la Nación will be cited as A. G. N.; Bancroft Library will be cited as B. L.).
19, 20The political activities of Sibley referred to in this brief biographical sketch are revealed in Sibley’s letters, which are published in this Quarterly. These letters were written by Sibley from Natchitoches to the Secretary of War, and were filed in the Old Records Division, the Adjutant General’s Office, Department of War; hereafter cited O. R. W. D.
war threatened between the two powers over the Louisiana boundary dispute. The war was averted by the establishment of the Neutral Ground between Spanish Texas and the territory of the United States. This arrangement Sibley correctly predicted would be a source of trouble for the two nations concerned; and he later advocated its annulment.

Sibley experienced the excitement which seized the Louisiana frontier when Napoleon Bonaparte occupied Spain in 1808, and when the revolution opened in Mexico in 1810, spreading to Texas by January, 1811. During these political upheavals Sibley observed and played his role. The frontier seethed with French agents trying to promote Napoleon's scheme of seizing or revolutionizing the Spanish dominions, and with Anglo-American revolutionists and contraband traders planning invasion of Spanish provinces in the name of liberty and democracy. Because of these conditions he urged the Secretary of War to pursue an active policy on the frontier, as "revolution would change our prospects in this quarter." He followed his own advice, and kept the Texas Indians between the Sabine, Red River, and as far west as Matagorda Bay under close surveillance. His policy was to keep the Indians in Spanish Texas friendly toward the United States, in case they should be needed as allies in a war with Spain or with Britain, who it was predicted would use the Spanish provinces as a base for operations against the United States in the approaching War of 1812.

He corresponded with Claiborne on the subject of revolution in the adjoining Spanish provinces. Like him and other frontier notables, he believed that the revolution "should assume a

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23Julia Kathryn Garrett, Green Flag Over Texas (Dallas, 1939), 36-45.
26Sibley to Secretary of War Dearborn, September 7, 1808, MS., O.R.W.D.
27William Shaler to Secretary of State James Monroe, Natchitoches, May 7, 1812, MS., Special Agents, William Shaler, 1810, II, MS., Archives of the State Department, Washington, D. C. This is a volume of mounted manuscripts consisting of all of William Shaler's correspondence from New Orleans and Natchitoches to the Secretary of State, Monroe. (Hereafter cited as Shaler to Monroe, MS., SD.); W. C. C. Claiborne, Official Letter Books, VI, 37-38.
proper direction, that is in the interest of the United States.\(^{28}\) This policy Sibley apparently supported from 1812 to 1813 in his relations with José Bernardo Gutiérrez, the Mexican revolutionist, Lieutenant William Augustus Magee, formerly of the United States Army, and William Shaler, Special Agent of the United States. In his official correspondence to the Secretary of War, he assiduously recounted the robust preparations in Natchitoches for the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, destined for Texas and Mexico to aid in their liberation from Spain. He revealed the machinations of French agents on the Louisiana-Texas frontier, attempting to give French direction to the revolution in Texas and Mexico. After the entrance of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition into Texas, he narrated every event of the revolution in Texas from 1812 to 1813, and may be considered as one of the chief chroniclers of this episode.\(^{29}\)

Another of Sibley’s many activities, it may be concluded, was that of furnishing information for editorials concerning events in Texas and Mexico, which were published in the newspapers of Natchez, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington, D. C.\(^{30}\)

In 1814 he wrote of the “unlawful enterprises” of the filibusterers, General José Alvaredo Toledo and Dr. John Hamilton Robinson.

On January 25, 1815, Sibley was removed as Indian agent; he declares that he was not notified of his removal as Indian agent until the arrival at Natchitoches of his successor, Thomas Gale. This fact grieved him; to assuage his injured feelings, he wrote the War Department\(^{31}\) requesting an explanation of his removal. None was furnished.

Sibley, entrenched at Natchitoches, continued his activities in the political life of Louisiana. He served as captain of militia,


\(^{29}\)For an account of these activities see Julia Kathryn Garrett, *Green Flag Over Texas*, 83-233.

\(^{30}\)A conclusion drawn by the writer; the accounts of the revolution in Mexico and Texas published in *The Aurora*, Philadelphia, the *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, the *National Intelligencer*, Washington, D. C., *Niles' Register*, and *The Weekly Register*, Baltimore, from the year 1811 through 1813, contain many of the exact phrases that Sibley used in his reports to the Secretary of War. Sibley either sent information directly, or it was copied in Washington from his reports to the War Department.

\(^{31}\)Sibley to Secretary of War, September 8, 1815, MS., O. R. W. D.
as justice of the peace, and later became parish judge, and a member of the State Senate. In 1837 he died, a man of large properties and many achievements.

The letters of Sibley, which follow, are those he wrote as Indian agent to the Secretary of War. They include all of Sibley's letters found in the files of the Old Records Division, the Adjutant General's Office, Department of War. These letters begin with a notification of a draft for money dated August 19, 1806, and conclude with a letter written July 23, 1816, relative to the adjustment of expenditures of his agency for the year 1814.

No orthographical corrections have been made, nor of punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, or grammar. In most cases, the correct spelling of proper names has been inserted in brackets, as well as some few additions which have been made in order to clarify the meaning.

Paschal High School, Fort Worth.

LETTER 1

Natchitoches Jany. 10th 1807

Sir

Our latest accounts from the Province of Taxus [Texas], are that all the Spanish troops except about one Company have left Nacogdoches and are taking away all the Cannon they had there consisting of Eleven Pieces; tis said they have heard of the Meditated Invasion of Mexico & that their force will be drawn to the defence of that place & Vera Cruz [Vera Cruz].

I am informed Capt. Burling late Aid to General Wilkinson, on

32Clarence Edwin Carter, Territorial Papers of the United States, Orleans Territory, IX, 632, 759.


1Sibley refers to the withdrawal of the Spanish troops which had been massed on the Sabine since 1806 under command of Simén Herrera. He had been sent to prevent the invasion of Texas by Aaron Burr, and to defend Texas against invasion by the United States Army under General Wilkinson, who, it was believed, would occupy Texas as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Border friction between the United States and Spain was temporarily ended with the Neutral Ground Agreement, and General Wilkinson's withdrawal of troops from the Sabine in November, 1806. Thomas Maitland Marshall, A History of the Western Boundary of the Louisiana Purchase, 1819-1841 (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1914), 20-30.

2Sibley refers to a reported plan of Miranda and Burr, who were planning to revolutionize all the Spanish dominions, and would probably apply to England for assistance. However, the chief reason for the withdrawal of
his arrival at Nacogdoches was announced as a Public officer on important Public business. An officer with a detachment of Cavalry was immediately Ordered to attend him to St. Antonio, that he there Met with Salsido [Salcedo] the Governor General, soon after an Express arrived at Nacogdoches ordering Govr. Herrera with all the troops & cannon to proceed to St. Antonio, and that Capt. Burling has gone on towards Mexico, it is now believed his business in that Country is not to buy Mules. The Scenes lately acted in New Orleans are extraordinary & astonishing. The Civil power Ought Certainly to be able to prevent & Punish any Infractions of the Laws of the Land, it is enough to drive a people to acts of desperation & distraction to witness the necessity of the Civil Authority giving place to Military power, it will hardly admit of a question whether such a remedy is not worse than the disease, but much more so If it is Usurped without Necessity, to know the Existance of the fact without commenting upon it renders it impossible to suppress feelings the Most horrid. I pray God if it was Necessary I may never witness a repetition of it and more ardently do I pray for the same. If it was done without necessity.

Spanish troops from Nacogdoches was in order to execute the “defense and exclusion policy” of the Commandant General Nemesio Salcedo. He believed that in spite of the temporary boundary agreement made by General Wilkinson and Herrera in 1806, the United States continued to plan aggressions against Texas. Therefore, his plan was to concentrate forces at San Antonio de Béxar, and exclude all immigrants from across the Sabine. The troops of which Sibley speaks were moved from Nacogdoches to San Antonio where they were remounted and reclothed. See correspondence of Herrera and other officials, Provincias Internas, Vol. 201, pp. 15-70, B. L.; W. C. C. Claiborne, Official Letter Books, II, 54-342.

The Spaniards in their official correspondence seldom used the complete title San Antonio de Béxar, employed the name “Béxar,” omitting the name “San Antonio.” The Anglo-Americans never used the name “Béxar,” preferring “San Antonio.” Sibley anglicized the word san [saint] and abbreviated it [st.].

Commandant General Nemesio Salcedo ruled over the Interior Provinces from his headquarters in Chihuahua; but because of continued rumors of invasion of Spanish dominions after the Burr episode, and because of his fear of Anglo-American aggression, he went to Texas on a personal tour of investigation. He was in San Antonio in December, 1806, at the time of the arrival of Captain Burling. Mattie Austin Hatcher, The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement, 1801-1821 (University of Texas Bulletin, No. 2714, Austin, 1927), 118.

Due to the border friction between Spain and the United States in 1806, Simón Herrera, governor of Nuevo León, was ordered by Don Nemesio to Texas with the troops of his provinces and those of Nuevo Santander to assume chief command of military affairs in Texas. He held this office until his assassination in April, 1813, when the army of Anglo-American volunteers led by Samuel Kemper and José Bernardo Gutiérrez proclaimed Texas independent of Spain. Henderson Yoakum, History of Texas (New York, 1856), II, 129.

Sibley refers to the alarm and terror that was prevalent in New Orleans during November and December of 1806, when General Wilkinson occupied
Last Saturday at the Salt Works a few Miles from this place a dispute took place between a White Man, a Labourer by the Name of Watson and a Creek or Conchatta Indian. Watson discharged a Gun at the Indian and Killed him Instantly, in presence of several persons, who suffered him to load his gun again & go away without Molestation, I did not hear of it till tuesday when I sent out Warrants for his apprehention, the Men have not returned & I doubt If he is taken, I have likewise Sent for the relations of the Indian who are pretty numerous & influential. I shall do all I can to Pacify them & hope to prevent any attempt on their part to retaliate.

A Party of Caddo Indians lately returning from the Panis Nation were robed by a Party of Osages of 74 Horses; but received no other injury they sent a runner to inform their Chief of it, who immediately Set off with a Strong party of his
own & some other Tribes to the relief of his people & to Attack
the Ozages [Osages] if he could find them, I have not heard
from him since his departure; but soon after the Chief left
home a Small Child of his family Carrying some fire Either
in or out of his house Set it on fire, it was very Large and com-
posed of a frame of Timber covered with Thatch upon Ribs of
Cane & Burnt up in a few Minutes, with all he had in it, &
his Corn House with his whole Crop of Corn; the disasters of
this year bear very hard upon them & Strengthen their claim
upon us for some Assistance. There are now at the Conchettas Village 25 Barrels of Flour remaining of what was left there
by Major Freeman, it is Said to have received Some damage
by getting wet and would not be Worth the Expense of bringing
it down. If so, I think by dividing of it among the Caddos it would
have a good Effect, & be the best appropriation of it, when
Major Freeman left this [Natchitoches] he left with me Some
Instruction about his Boats & in Case the Voyage should not
be renewed,12 the River is now ten feet higher than it was
when he went up it last Summer, the Boats might have been
easily brought down, I shall attend carefully to any Instruc-
tions I may receive about them, Should it be concluded to have
the Boats brought down it will require 25 Men, it will be Ex-
pensive hiring hands here, & the commanding officer will require
an Order to furnish them.

Inclosed is a Small Acct. for ten nights & days Service in
attending the Sick at this Post while the troops were at the
Sabine River. I had a great deal of fatigue with them. You
will please dispose of it as you May think proper.

Am
Sir Most Respectfully
Your Obt. Hble Servt.
John Sibley.

General Dearborn

11The Spanish spelling is Conchatas. Sibley's spelling is Conchattas in
his report. "Historical sketches of the several Indian Tribes in Louisiana."
The first time Sibley uses the name in this letter he spells it Conchattas.
However, within this same letter, and all letters which follow, he uses the
form Conchette more frequently than Conchattas. Annals of Congress,
9th Cong., 2nd Sess., XVI, 1085.

12In April, 1804, Thomas Freeman was appointed by President Jefferson
to explore the Red and Arkansas Rivers. The expedition was postponed due
to the hostile attitude of Spanish officials; and not until April, 1806, did
Freeman begin his journey up Red River. After traveling three months
the Freeman expedition was stopped by a party of Spanish soldiers sent
by Commandant General Salcedo to find Freeman and to prevent the fur-
ther exploration of this area. He was checked in his exploration at a point
where the present boundaries of Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas meet.
Sir

From a paragraph in the Presidents Message to the last Congress, he appears to have been mistaken with respect to the Spaniards having had a Guard at Bayou Pierre previous to the surrender of Louisiana to the United States. The first guard they ever had there, arrived in June 1805. The 23d of that month I was at Bayou Pierre on business to see an amiable family distressed with sickness. On my return I met the Spanish Guard consisting of a corporal & 5 or 6 soldiers twelve miles this side of Bayou Pierre, they had not then been there, when Capt. Turner arrived at this place on the 27th of April 1805. The Spanish Government had no guard this side of Nacogdoches, except 7 or 8 soldiers the commandant of this place had about him, nor had they had for about 40 years, since their abandonment of the Adaize [Los Adaes]. Should you think it important I can have these facts established by the depositions of all, or a sufficient number of the most respectable inhabitants of this part of the country. By the arrival of a number of persons from Nacogdoches within a few days we are informed that Governor Herrera [Herrera] with three companies of the troops who had left that place have returned again and are fortifying a hill near the town of Nacogdoches, and that more troops are expected there, and that the talk of war [between the United States and Spain] that had subsided amongst the inhabitants after the Sabine campaign had revived.

I hear every few days by hunting parties from 3 or 400 miles up this river; but can get no account of Lieut. Pike. I have engaged for him the friendly services of all the Indians above

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13At this time the United States was pursuing negotiations at the court of Spain to obtain a permanent boundary adjustment between Louisiana and Spanish territory. Meanwhile Governor Claiborne of Louisiana and Sibley gathered information concerning the boundary, and kept Washington informed of border activities. Here, Sibley refers to the occupation of Bayou Pierre by Don Antonio Cordero when he was made governor of Texas in 1805 with instructions to fortify Texas against aggression by the United States. At that time the United States was fortifying Louisiana, and claiming Texas to the Rio Grande. See W. C. C. Claiborne, Official Letter Books, III, 384-392; Marshall, A History of the Western Boundary of the Louisiana Purchase, 27-28.

14Marquis Aguayo had expelled the French from East Texas, and reasserted Spanish authority beyond the Sabine by establishing the presidio of Los Adaes, which he proclaimed the capital of the province of Texas in 1721. When Spain received Louisiana at the close of the Seven Years War, Los Adaes was abandoned, according to the new regulations of 1772. Now Cordero reoccupied Los Adaes and Bayou Pierre as Spanish territory which had been temporarily abandoned. Herbert E. Bolton, Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century, 5, 94, 113-115.
this On River, & when he does arrive here I shall do every thing I Can for him And for Any Indians that May Accompany him.\(^\text{16}\)

The Indians Seem all friendly to us & well attached to Our Government nothing extraordinary has Occurred Amongst them Except a Man by the name of Samuel Watson at the Salt Works on the 10th. of Jany. last Killing an Indian of the Creek Nation by the name of Tom. Watson made his escape & could not be Taken though all due Measures were persued to apprehend him,\(^\text{________}^{\text{-}}\)from what I Can learn The Indian was Coming upon Watson with a Knife, & Watson shot him dead.\(^\text{________}^{\text{-}}\) The Relations of the Indian were Out hunting a distance off. I have not Yet Seen them tho: I dispatched a Messenger for them some time Ago. I shall Pacify them to prevent any attempt to retaliate & have no doubt of Succeeding. Tom that is Killed was considered a Bad Man by both white & Red people. I have been More than Once obliged to Imprison him for his Outrageous Conduct at this place.\(^\text{________}^{\text{-}}\)

I am
Sir Most respectfully
Your Obt. Servant
John Sibley

Genl. Dearborn

LETTER 3

Natchitoches 3d April 1807

Sir

Everything is quiet in this quarter at Present. In the Month of Jany. last a party of about 25 Ozages [Osages] crossed Red River above the Caddo Nation & stole from the Caddos 72 Horses, and it is reported have Killed one of a hunting party of white men who went from here & Robed the same.\(^\text{-8}\) Eight or nine Chochattas (or Creeks) & Alibamis\(^\text{18}\) were out a hunting, fell in with the Same party of Ozages, Attacked them in the night, killed five of them, Routed the whole party, & Retook

\(^\text{15}\)In July, 1806, Pike had been sent by General Wilkinson to explore the Arkansas and Red Rivers. He had been arrested on the Rio Grande and taken to Santa Fé; thence he was sent to Chihuahua, where Commandant General Saleedo was holding him for investigation. For details see Zebulon Montgomery Pike, The Expedition of Zebulon Montgomery Pike—to the Headwaters of the Mississippi River—and in New Spain During the Years 1805-6-7 (New York, 1895; Elliot Coues, ed.), II.

\(^\text{16}\)The Spanish spelling of this word is Alivamo. They migrated from the Alabama River in West Florida. One group lived on Red River near the Cadodachos. Another group lived in the Opelousas district. In May, 1804, the commandant general decreed that some Indian tribes from Louisiana might settle in Texas. A group of Alibamis settled on the Neches south of Nacogdoches. Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1085; Mattie Austin Hatcher, The Opening of Texas, 76.
about 40 of the Horses they had Stolen from the Caddos, they have brought in the five Scallops to their Village.

A few days ago Capt. William Grinnalds Arrived here from Nacogdoches, has entered & sworn to a protest Including the following Points (viz). That he was master of the Schooner Harmoney belonging to Alexandria in Virginia, owned by Capt. Tucker of that place, & sailed from Alexandria in Decr. last Bound to the W. Indies, was at Antigua & St. Thomas, where he took On board One, Moore as a passenger, from thence went to Turks Island, took in a Cargo of Salt & Sailed for New Orleans. a Day or two after leaving Turks Island, was Boarded & Robed of a number of Articles by the Crew of a French Privateer, who put on Board him, two prisoners they had taken from a Brig belonging to Baltimore; by the names of Craig & Dorce. They Layed their course for the Balize [Belize], were on Soundings to the East of the Balize [Belize] as he seposed; after which Experienced Some Cloudy Bad Weather, Beat off & on for Some days, could not find the Balize, Sometimes in Sight of a Low Marshy Coast unknown by Any One on Board, were Scarse of provisions, when the three passengers & three of the Crew Mutinied took the control of the Vessel from him, and Ran her ashore On the Coast Some Leagues to the Eastward of the River Trinity, where the Vessel & Cargo was lost, after abandoning the Vessel the Captain continued with the Men, for Some days, groped about Amongst Lakes, Rivers, Woods, Swamps, & Praries till they at length fell in with the Spanish Post of the Accokesacos [Orcoquisac] about a League East of Trinity River in the edge of a large Prarie where they found Captain Herrara [Herrera], Brother to the Governor commanding with about 50 Men, was treated Kindly by him [Herrera], who sent Three Soldiers to Escort him to Nacogdoches, about 150 miles distant, on his way thither, Met One hundred Spanish Soldiers going to Reinforce the Post of Accokesacos [Orcoquisac], he Arrived at Nacogdoches, found Capt. Viana (commonly Called the Inspector) Commanding, about three companies who treated him with Hospitality & Kindness, this being the first place where he found Existing Anything

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17This presidio was a short distance from the east bank of the Trinity River, about two leagues from the bay. The Spaniards called the Indians living on the banks of the Trinity Orcoquizas, and named the presidio which they founded in 1756, El Orcoquisac, as the site of the Orcoquizas village was called. The form of the word adopted by the Bureau of American Ethnology is Arkokisa, which is slightly related to Sibley's spelling Acokesacos. However, the Spanish form is more commonly used. Herbert E. Bolton, Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century, 332-342, 346, map.

18Herrera was the commander of military forces in Texas and not the governor of Texas. Cordero was governor of Texas until the spring of 1809. Herrera was addressed as governor because he was governor of Nuevo León before his arrival in Texas in 1806. Provincias Internas, Vol. 201, pp. 165-166, 183, B. L.
like Civil Government, applied for the Arrest & Imprisonment of the Six Mutineers, they were Accordingly Arrested, and after remaining there about a Month till the Government came to some determination respecting them, they were conducted in here [Natchitoches] under a guard of Spanish Soldiers, and were taken into the Custody of the Sheriff, have since been examined by the Civil Authority, &—recommited for trial, & will in three or four days depart from here to New Orleans for trial. The Captain has already gone with two of the Crew who were not implicated, whose testimony Agrees with his relative to the transaction, he expresses himself very grateful to the Commanding Officers of the Accokesacos [Orcoquisac] & Nacogdoches for their humanity & kindness. The Guard who came here with the Prisoners behaved with great propriety, & were very Decent men.__________

I have been requested by Major Freeman to have his Boats & the articles he left with them at the Conchetta [Conchatta] Village brought down to this place as Soon as possible, & have taken Means to have it done, they will be here by the 20th. Inst. Accidents Excepted, the Service will be performed, Principally by Indians Under the Direction of Mr. Philebare Our Indian Interpreter; the Boats will want some Caulking, etc., which will be done, the Best Care Shall be taken of the property & at the least possible Expense.__________

There is no news from Capt. Pike whose Arrival here has been looked for for sometime past, I have engaged the Indians to give me the earliest Intelligence they get of him; fears are expressed that Some Accident has befallen him.__________

In my last I mentioned I had been informed by a person from Nacogdoches that Gov. Herrera [Herrera] had returned there, my informant was Mistaken he had not Arrived there when Capt. Grinnalds left that place, but was expected. Capt. Grinnalds left there about the 20th. of March.__________

I believe that nearly all the Spanish Troops that were at the Sabine River last Fall are now Either at Nacogdoches, the Accokesacos [Orcoquisac] & the Trinity River. And it is in the Mouth of everybody that Considerable Reinforcements will come on as soon as the grass will sustain their Horses, this may or may not be so, I do not mention it as to be relied on.__________I do not know of a Single Instance of the Attachment to us of Any Tribe or Individual Indian being either lessened or removed, the Relations of the Creek who was killed at the Salt Works by Watson I have Seen & Satisfied. And the Relations of the Chacta [Choctaw]10 who was killed in the

10In Sibley's historical sketches of the Indians, he described the Choctaws as living on the west bank of the Mississippi, and that their number was considerable. There were two villages, one was on the Ouachita River, another was in the northern part of the Opelousas district. Besides these
County of Oppelousas [Opelousas] by Thomas are the Same. Some particular Cases require Some Small presents; but they are made with Caution & to the best of my judgement & discretion.

We find Since the peace between the Caddos & Chactas [Choctaws]20 that the number of the Latter are very much increased on this side the Mississippi, and Since the death of their great Chief they are rambling about in Small Idle Hordes, are troublesome amongst the Inhabitants, and often disorderly & dishonest. There is not a Man Amost them fit for a Successor to the Deceased Chief—I wish to Collect & Settle them together & appoint a Chief that they will respect & with whom affairs Amongst them may be transacted. We find likewise that Inconveniences arise having the factory in the little Town of Natchitoches, bringing the Indians Amongst the Citizens where there are so many shops or places where Spiritous Liquors are Sold, all our Vigilance is ineffectual in keeping them from Intoxication, & disturbing the Village, and they are when in that State frequently Robed of their property by negroes & unprincipled white men with which this place is invested—The Troops being stationed here is in Some respects Subject to the Same Objections.

Capt. Strong the Commanding Officer at the Fort here has been Under the necessity of paying a Very Extravagant price for a few Barrels of Flour the Garrison had been On reduced Rations for some days, the Contractor Agent had Encouraged the hope of a supply from day to day, or in case of failure a substitute of Corn Meal, both of which failing, a small Boat Arrived with a few Barrels as the Owner Sayed he was on his way with it to Bayou Pierre where he was to have a good Mule for each Barrell, he refused to take less for it than $50 a Barrel & passed on with it, the Captain was reduced to the Necessity of sending after him & giving him his price, or doing without Bread. Since that [incident] Lieut. Pratt has made a trip to Natchez in a Small Boat in a less time than it was ever done before & brought a small supply. Since that time [flour] has Arrived for Sale & offered at Sixteen Dollars a Barrel & it will probably be Lower. There are good Mill Seats in this Country and Wheat grows as well as Any where, and it may perhaps One day be a Flour Country; but Labour when directed to the Cultivation of Cotton which is better here than Any where I

villages there were some wanderers among their tribe, who roved through all the high country of Lower Louisiana. Sibley said that neither white people nor Indians liked them. *Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 2nd Session, 1807.*

20In Sibley's survey, made in 1803, he stated that the Choctaws were at war with the Cadodachos. These tribes made a peace pact in Natchitoches on May 17, 1804, which Sibley witnessed. Sibley to General Dearborn, Natchitoches, July 8, 1807, MS., O. R. W. D.
know yeilds so large a Profit, that it is no object Amongst the Cotton planters to purchase what Flour they want & from 10 to 14 Dollars a Bbbl.

I should not have taken the liberty to have troubled you with what I have Said above relative to the Flour Capt. Strong purchased; but the Captain thinks he had Some reason to believe such a representation of it may; or will be made, as may, throw Some blame On him, and my being made Acquainted with the Circumstances by all the parties, enables me so far as I am Capable of judging to acquit him of all Blame, having as I verily believe no alternative:———-I have this day drawn in favour of Thomas M. Linnard for the Sum of four hundred Dollars, being for One quarters Salary & Seven Months Subsistance.————-I have Received your Packet containing the Commission Bond etc for Mr. Linnard;21 they will be duly executed & Returned; we have but an hour or two between the coming in and going Out of the Mail, it must be deferred till next Post. I am very glad of Mr. Linnard's appointment, he is in my Opinion worthy of the trust. I wish my Son was placed under him.

I am  
Sir most Respectfully  
Your Obt. Servt.  
John Sibley

Genl. Henry Dearborn

NB The Post not going out so soon as was expected the Oath & Bond of Mr Linnard are Enclosed—I observe a Mistake in the Bond, in referring to the Law Establishing trading houses & says April 21st. 1807.22

21Mr. Linnard became factor or superintendent of the Indian factory (trading post) at Natchitoches. This factory was established in the autumn of 1805 by order of the War Department at Sibley's suggestion. The Secretary of War to Sibley, May 25, 1805, Letter Book B, April, 1804-July, 1809, 80-81, I. A. D. I.

22An act for establishing trading houses with the Indian tribes was passed by Congress, April 21, 1806. The superintendent of Indian trade was to receive "an annual salary of two thousand dollars, payable quarter yearly, at the Treasury of the United States." Each agent gave bond in such sum as the President directed. Annals of Congress, 9th Cong., 1 Session, 1, 1287-1290.

(To be continued)