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Patron: Huffman, Paul

Journal Title: Southwestern historical quarterly.

Volume: 47 Issue: 1
Month/Year: July 1943- Apr. 1944 Pages: 48-51

Article Author:

Article Title: Garrett, Julia; Letters and documents; Dr. John Sibley...'

Imprint: Austin, Tex.; Texas State Historical As

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SIR

Mr Erwin has lately informed me that he shall leave this place on the first of April next & return Again to Philada [Philadelphia]: I have a Son in Wilmington N. Carolina by the name of Samuel Hopkins Sibley, 47 about two years younger than his brother George C. Sibley (who you know), 48 who I take the Liberty of Recommending as the Successor of Mr Erwin & Shall feel much obliged & gratified should you think proper to give him the appointment. ———I think him as Capable as his brother & will be responsible for his good Conduct in every respect. His appointment will be perfectly Agreeable to Mr. Linnard, who wishes Mr Erwin's place may be Supplied by the time he will leave this. I very much regret the loss of Mr Erwin from our Small Society, for I never knew a young man of a Purer Mind, or of more Chaste morality. I shall always esteem his Virtues as well as admire his Understanding all good Men who know him cant help but wish him well. ———Everything in this quarter is quiet. The season is healthy & very great Crops of everything. no Occurrence Amongst the Indians worthy of notice. everybody wishes the embargo raised; but not untill the Object for which it was laid is affected: or if it is found insufficient to affect it. The late events in Spain Seems to me very much to Change our prospects in this quarter. If the Govt of Spain in Europe is destroyed by France, Mexico & its dependencies are prepared to declare themselves independent, & will place the Present Vice King of Mexico 49 at their head,

47Samuel Hopkins was Dr. Sibley's second son of his first marriage, and was given the name of his grandfather, Reverend Samuel Hopkins of Newport, R. I. G. P. Whittington, "Doctor John Sibley of Natchitoches," The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XX, 468.

48In 1808, George Sibley was appointed Indian Agent in Missouri, and located at Fort Osage. Ibid., 471.

49José de Iturriagaray. Hubert H. Bancroft, History of Mexico, XII, 42-47.
Untill some Branch of the Bourbon family shall Arrive in America, they will cultivate the friendship of the United States by all means in their power. A very friendly Intercourse on their part has already Commenced, the heart of the New Governor Salcedo is entirely with us.

About Thirty Negroes from two or three plantations on Red River about 40 Miles below this Town deserted Yesterday morning together they stole Arms, Ammunition & Horses, their Persuers have not Returned. They went towards the River Sabine. Governor Salcedo Said repeatedly when here, that he would have all Such Sent Back that might Come into his Province after his Arrival, Unless he received from the King an express order to the contrary. his Sincerity will in a few days be put to proof—

I am

With great Esteem

Your Obt Servant

John Sibley.

Genl. Henry Dearborn

LETTER 10

Natchitoches Nov. 20th 1808

Sir

The Object of this letter is to explain to you a Circumstance which I have reason to believe has been falsely represented & from evil Intentions.

In the Month of Augt. last when I received a friendly visit from the Chiefs of the Hietans, Tawakenses, Panis or Tawiaches. & they expressed a great desire that some traders from

Sibley is mistaken in his belief that Salcedo's heart was with the United States. Immediately upon crossing into Texas, he sent from Nacogdoches to Don Nemesio an alarming message telling of the rebirth of a Burr conspiracy, and expressing his suspicion of the United States. Provincias Internas, Vol. 201, pp. 285-288, B. L.

At this time Governor Claiborne was corresponding with Spanish officials of Texas concerning the protection given runaway slaves in Texas. W. C. C. Claiborne, Letter Books, IV, 299, 306, 319-321, V, 388, 389.

Don Nemesio had decreed in August, 1805, that all slaves escaping from the United States into Texas were to be declared free. Mattie Austin Hatcher, The Opening of Texas, 100.

The Spaniards called them Tahuacanes or Tuacanas. They lived in the area between the headwaters of the Sabine and Red River. See Herbert E. Bolton, Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century, map; Charles Wilson Hackett, Pichardo's Treatise, II, 230.

Father Pichardo, also an authority on Indian tribes of this area, said that Sibley was in error when he said "The Panis or Tawiaches, the French call them Panis and the Spaniards Towaiches." Pichardo said the Spaniards called them Taobayas [Taoayyas]. They lived on the south bank of Red River, about eight hundred miles from Natchitoches, and three hundred and forty miles by land. Ibid., II, 232.
this place might be encouraged to come to their Country, that they might become better acquainted with us, & have An opportunity in their Own Country of proving their friendship, & complained that they were imposed upon by traders that were fitted Out from Nacogdoches. (You have a Copy of The Speech of the Tawakeno [Tuacanas] Chief expressive of the Above).

In the Spring following I received a Message from the Great Panis or Tawiache Chief [Taovayas] informing, “that in the Summer there would be assembled at or Near his Village a very large Number of friendly Indians of the Nations in his Neighbourhood, for the purpose of holding a trading fare, & they would be much pleased If some traders from this place would attend the fare. This I mentioned in presence of Captain Anthony Glass. Soon after Mr Glass informed me If he could procure at Natchitoches Suitable Goods. & I would Give him a Licence, he believed he would take a trip to the Panis Nation.” I Shew’d him the Act of Congress by which I was governed in Such Cases; & told him he would perceive the Condition that a bond with Security to the amt of One thousand dollars would be required. Some Short time after he Came Again with a Security, executed a Bond, & I gave him a Licence in the usual form he took with him a Mr Alexander from No. Carolina a relation of the late Governor Alexander, and of Mr. Alexander of Congress—a Man of great Sobriety, discretion, and a very honest Character. Mr Alexander the Year before had been at the Panis Nation with Mr Lewis & five or six other persons, who took their departure while General Wilkinson & Col Cushing were here I am pretty Confident with the knowledge of the General. Mr Alexander being an Ingenuous friendly Man taught the Indians Several Usefull things & became thereby a great favourite among them. Mr Glass had 5 or 6 other persons as hirelings or assistants, all of them Characters that I knew & approved of, he left with me a list of the Goods he took Out, all which I found to be proper Articles. They were Armed Only

“Claiborne in reporting this incident to the Secretary of War described Glass as if he were not a well known personage, and stated that Glass gave himself the title of captain, that for this expedition he had procured from several army officers an epaulet, a sword, a belt, and a military coat. Claiborne declared that it was improper for Glass to boast to certain men that he had a commission from the United States, therefore the Spaniards could not touch him, and to confide in them that the real object of his party was to visit a silver mine. Claiborne concluded his report by stating that he did not know the object of Glass’s expedition, and added, that “probably it may be nothing more than a plundering or silver mine expedition set on foot by Glass—But it may be a prelude to a project of greater moment;—It has a squinting toward Burrism.” Clarence Edwin Carter, Territorial Papers of the United States, Orleans Territory, IX, 799-800.

Sibley refers to General Wilkinson’s presence at Natchitoches in October and November of 1806, when the Neutral Ground Agreement was made. Marshall, A History of the Western Boundary of the Louisiana Purchase, 1819-1841, 29-30.
as hunters, or people who had to Subsist Some Months upon what game they could kill. I promised the Panis Chief a Small United States Flag which Capt. Glass Carried with him And likewise a Present of a Scarlet Uniform Coat & gave him a Writeen memorandum of Instructions relative to his treatment of the Indians, and they set off about the 20th of June with An intention of keeping up all the way on the North East Side of Red River, till they Arrived at the Panis Villages, 57 Some of whom are Situated On that Side of the River. I have heard Nothing direct from the Party Since excepting I was informed by the Caddo Chief that they Arrived Safe at the Panis Villages. There never has to my knowledge, so respectable a trading party taken their departure from this place, nor one on whose prudence I had Such Confidence, knowing them all well Attached to our government. I have always calculated that good would result from it.——That a trading House at Nacogdoches who have annually been in the Habit of Sending goods to the Tawakeno [Tuacanas] Nation which House is Connected with persons here should Exert all its Influence to prevent being Rivalled in their Trade is not extraordinary, nor that they Should draw into their party a band of foreigners who live here, who are more friendly to any other government that that under which they live. It is vexatious that there are Amongst us persons who are never satisfied with attending to those affairs with which they have business; but busy themselves with Other affairs; It appears to me to be a Connection with a certain foreign Influence that is distracting the United States from one end of them to the other, & from which we have more to fear than from all our transatlantic enemies.

When General Wilkinson was here he read to me a letter from Governor Salcedo in which the Governor Complains to the General of my interfering with Indians who live in the Country Claimed by the King of Spain, the General at the Same time Observed “that our Government would Consider that Complaint against me as the highest praise.” It is notorious that I have been in the Habit of Licencing Traders to the Panis Nation Since I have been Indian Agent. If Any regulations have been entered into between Our Government & Spain that would render it in future improper I have not been informed of them.

I am

Sir

With great Esteem
John Sibley.

57 While they remained on the northeast side of Red River, they were in territory of the United States. When they crossed to the Panis villages, they were in Spanish territory. Governor Claiborne, in a report to President Jefferson, declared that the Glass expedition was a violation of Spanish dominions. W. C. C. Claiborne, Letter Books, IV, 187, 189, 194, 199-200.