

This article is protected by copyright, East Tennessee Historical Society. It is available online for study, scholarship, and research use only.

Suggested Citation:

“Executive Journal of Gov. John Sevier.” Ed. by Samuel C. Williams. The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications Part IV. 4 (1932): 138-167.

THE EXECUTIVE JOURNAL OF GOVERNOR  
JOHN SEVIER

Edited by SAMUEL C. WILLIAMS

(Continued from the EAST TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS, No. 1, pp. 95-153, No. 2, pp. 135-149, and No. 3, pp. 154-182.)

Knoxville, 5 April, 1798.

Sir: Yours of the 2nd Ultimo I have been honored with, and am highly pleased with the measures you and your colleagues have taken respecting the affair of Judge Campbell. I am happy to learn, that the Secretary at War gives assurances that he will expedite and forward on the treaty, as it is a thing much to be wished; the people being very uneasy and greatly distressed occasioned by their removal. It affords me much satisfaction to find that the President is so well disposed towards the interest of Tennessee; if he should continue favorable and direct the commissioners to promote as much as in them lies the interest of this State, it will so permanently place the confidence of the people in that character that his interest will forever be dear to them. I earnestly hope that Tennessee river will be made the line, nothing short of which can possibly place the State on a footing adequate to the welfare and cultivation of its local and natural advantages.

Honorable Joseph Anderson.

Knoxville, 5 April, 1798.

Sir: Yours of the 2d Ultimo came to hand on the 28th of same month, I am much pleased with the address of yourself and colleagues to the President on the subject of Judge Campbell's arrest; it meets my entire approbation, and I think it very suitable on such an occasion. I am extremely sorry for our critical situation with France, and fear it will become much more serious. I have not had any late accounts of the Commissioners, I hope they will shortly arrive, the people are becoming very uneasy, and anxious to return in time to make crops. I am sensible our delegation is doing every thing on that score that

JOURNAL OF GOVERNOR  
VIER

J. C. WILLIAMS

ORIGINAL SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS, No. 1,  
and No. 3, pp. 154-182.)

Knoxville, 5 April, 1798.  
have been honored with, and  
ures you and your colleagues  
of Judge Campbell. I am  
at War gives assurances that  
e treaty, as it is a thing much  
very uneasy and greatly dis-  
al. It affords me much sat-  
t is so well disposed towards  
ould continue favorable and  
e as much as in them lies the  
permanently place the confi-  
ter that his interest will for  
y hope that Tennessee river  
of which can possibly place  
the welfare and cultivation

Knoxville, 5 April, 1798.  
to hand on the 28th of same  
he address of yourself and  
subject of Judge Campbell's  
ion, and I think it very suit-  
remely sorry for our critical  
it will become much more  
ounts of the Commissioners,  
e people are becoming very  
ime to make crops. I am  
ry thing on that score that

is within their power. I thank you, sir, for the various in-  
formation you have been pleased to favour me with, and beg  
you will do me the honor to continue your communications on  
all suitable oppertunities.

The Indians continue extremely friendly, and am of opinion  
a good treaty may be had, if our Commissioners will act well  
their part.

Honorable Andrew Jackson.

Knoxville, 5 April, 1798.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 9 Ultimo I had the honor to  
receive with a copy of your address to the President, and the  
Secretary of War's answer, and an extract of his letter to Colonel  
Butler, which was enclosed.

Permit me to observe, that your attention and prompt appli-  
cation to the President on the subject of Judge Campbells ar-  
rest was highly characteristic of the representatives of a free  
people, and meets entire approbation. I am induced to believe  
that there has been no mistake on the side of Judge Campbell,  
as to the line; having an oppertunity of a more minute inves-  
tigation, am inclined to think that the two officers were mis-  
taken in supposing the Judge to be within the indian boundary.

I suppose that on an investigation it will be made appear  
that officers have acted contrary to their instructions, and if  
so Colonel Butler will be exculpated. I shall duly deliberate  
on the propriety of a publication of your communication to the  
President and the answer, observing to you at the same time,  
that I find it highly expedient to avoid every kind of irritation.  
The people removed are becoming very restless, their distress  
has been, and still is very great.

Some disorderly persons in Powels valley have lately killed  
several of the public horses, and wounded one of the soldiers,  
and I assure you I fear it will require considerable address to  
keep some of the sufferers within proper bounds.<sup>91</sup>

I am sorry to discover that our situation with France is be-  
coming so critical, but still hope an open rupture may be avoided.

<sup>91</sup>Sevier was concerned and keeping in close touch with Col. Thomas Butler, in  
command of the troops of the United States Army, assembled to keep order on this  
frontier, as the following entry in his diary shows: "March 22: Went to Colo.  
Butler's camp, staid all night. 23rd: Rained; staid all night at camp with Colo.  
Butler. Sat. 24th: Rained and snowed and very stormy. Came back to Knoxville,  
etc." *Tenn. Hist. Mag.*, V, 247. See n. 64, ante.

We have had no late accounts of the Commissioners I hope they are on the road.<sup>92</sup>

Honorable Joseph Anderson, Andrew Jackson, and William Charles Cole Claiborne.

Knoxville, 9 April, 1798.

Sir: Your favor of February 26 and March 6 came to hand on 28 March, and those of January 29 and 30, and 1 February on the 7 Instant, such is the irregularity of the post. I am sorry to find in yours of the 6 March, that our envoys are not likely to be recognized by the French republic, and their mission of course must be unsuccessful. I fear our affairs will become very serious and alarming; the message from the Directory to the Council of five hundred seem to predict it in strong light.

Conciliatory measures will be most conducive to the public interest, if we possibly can obtain such terms, but of this I have my doubts, and fear matters are too far gone.

I have heard nothing of the Commissioners coming on; the people are becoming very uneasy, and fear they will not be able to return in time to make crops. I most sincerely thank you for the various information you have seen pleased to favor me with, since you left the state, and beg to be honored with a continuance of your communications. I am in the dark as to the Natchez posts; whether the Spanish government has evacuated them or not, or likely to do it.<sup>93</sup>

Honorable William Charles Cole Claiborne.

Knoxville, --- April, 1798.

Sir: I had the honor to receive yours of the 6 Ultimo, on the 28, with the copy of a letter to Lieutenant Colonel Butler, which you did me the honor to enclose.

I am perfectly satisfied that you had not given any orders despotic or inimical to the liberties of our citizens, and on the contrary that you was uninformed that any transaction of the kind had taken place until you received my letter of 6 February. I am induced to believe that the arrest of Judge Campbell was occasioned through mistake in the two subaltern officers who

<sup>92</sup>See n. 84, *ante*.

<sup>93</sup>Consult Andrew Ellicott's *Journal*, 173-6. The fort at Natchez was abandoned by the Spanish forces March 30, 1798.

supposed  
the line be  
was found  
done in co

David C  
courts of  
and signed  
Knoxville

Permit  
of your fri  
our state,  
tlers, who  
readiness t  
peculiar of  
gratitude,  
in your ad

Suffer r  
reports tha  
of this Co  
rely with f  
in oppositi  
common co  
John Adar  
President

Friends ar  
gation of t  
is to comm  
they expec  
goods for  
coming on  
will arrive  
a large sur  
indian clai  
gentlemen  
your distre  
to you pati  
period will  
homes and

Commissioners I hope

Knoxville, 9 April, 1798.

March 6 came to hand on  
130, and 1 February on  
of the post. I am sorry  
our envoys are not likely  
lic, and their mission of  
affairs will become very  
om the Directory to the  
et it in strong light.

conducive to the public  
terms, but of this I have  
gone.

Commissioners coming on; the  
fear they will not be able  
t sincerely thank you for  
pleased to favor me with,  
nored with a continuance  
e dark as to the Natchez  
nt has evacuated them of

orne.

Knoxville, --- April, 1798.

s of the 6 Ultimo, on the  
ant Colonel Butler, which

had not given any orders  
f our citizens, and on the  
at any transaction of the  
d my letter of 6 February.  
st of Judge Campbell was  
vo subaltern officers who

he fort at Natchez was abandoned

supposed and believed him to be within the indian boundary, the line being, as I am informed, very near the place where he was found. I further have reasons to believe that it was not done in conformity of any orders given by Colonel Butler.

David Campbell, esquire, one of the Judges of our superior courts of law and equity in this state, is the person who wrote and signed the name of "Campbell" to a late publication in a Knoxville newspaper.

Permit me to say sir, that I have, and entertain, a high sense of your friendship and attachment to the interest and welfare of our state, and particularly towards our unhappy frontier settlers, who have been obliged to remove from their farms. Your readiness to relieve their sufferings, lays this government under peculiar obligations, and wish for an opportunity to repay with gratitude, the munificent and paternal services rendered them in your administration.

Suffer me to assure you, notwithstanding some unfavorable reports that have been circulated to the prejudice of the people of this Country, that if occasion should require it, you may rely with full confidence on their firm and most zealous support in opposition to any invaders, that may attempt an attack on our common country.

John Adams, Esquire,  
President of the United States.

Knoxville, 12 April, 1798.

Friends and Fellow Citizens: By late accounts from the delegation of this state, I have received information that the treaty is to commence as early as possible, and particularly in time, they expect, for you to return to make your summer crops. The goods for the treaty as I am informed are now in this state, coming on to this place, and I expect that the Commissioners will arrive in a day or two. By the general government there is a large sum appropriated for the purpose of extinguishing the indian claim, and I have no doubt but it will be effected. Thus gentlemen you see the disposition of the government is to relieve your distresses; and, as such is the case, permit to recommend to you patience and fortitude, hoping, as I do, that a very short period will relieve your sufferings and reinstate you all at your homes and plantations.

I sincerely lament your sufferings, and shall always conceive it my duty, and feel a happiness in rendering you every service in my power.

The people lately removed  
from Powel's valley.

*Circular*

Knoxville, 23 April, 1798.

Sir: So various and critical have been our American affairs, for three or four months past, I have not been able to furnish any accurate information that might be interesting and relied upon, for which reason I have delayed my communications.

With respect to European affairs they wear a very unpleasant aspect, notwithstanding the overtures made by the United States to the French nation, for an accommodation of any misunderstandings that have unfortunately taken place between the two governments; yet they refuse a recognition of our envoys, and no terms are likely to be listened to. It is to be lamented that the United States should be drove and compelled to abandon their neutrality at a time, especially, when they wish devoutly to be at peace and friendship with all the world. But should it be our unhappy lot to be impelled into the necessity of resorting to arms to defend our injured country, which I pray God to avert, I trust and sincerely hope that unanimity and an undivided sentiment will uniformly prevail amongst all ranks of Americans. I hope we shall not become the sport of foreign nations, nor the dupes of internal faction; let us be firm and permanently prepared to oppose any foreign invader that may dare to attack us.<sup>94</sup> It must be recent in the memories of my fellow citizens, the calamities, distresses, and irretrievable damages sustained by divisions amongst the Americans in the course of the revolutionary war. Let the past be sufficiently a caution to prevent in us any future conduct that may involve this inviolable country in all the horrors of an inhuman civil war—one of the greatest calamities that ever afflicted a nation.

George Walton, Alfred Moore, and John Steele, esquires,<sup>95</sup>

<sup>94</sup>The best account of this near-war with France is in J. B. McMaster's, *History of the People of U. S.*, II, 375 *et seq.* For a brief period John Adams, the president, became actually popular because of the stand he took against France.

<sup>95</sup>Walton, one time governor of his state; Moore, afterwards a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; and Steele, later prominent in Mississippi.

are appointed  
Walton is from  
from Virginia,  
known patriot,  
that the interes  
duly considered

The federal le  
eight hundred a  
ciation, a sum t  
quate to the ob  
disposition of t  
interest and we  
of our unhappy  
move from the  
treaty will com  
commissioners l  
few days. Wit  
will be readily  
much interested  
happen in any  
would be partic  
have the aid and  
cannot with con  
with considerab  
barrassing to th  
our public fund  
necessity of res  
most likely to pr  
men that nothin  
their present an  
abled under exis

The President  
recommend to h  
humiliation, fast  
apart Wednesda  
citizens of the U  
cupations, and o  
mercies, agreeab  
erally adopted.  
highly essential



shall always conceive  
ing you every service

ville, 23 April, 1798.

our American affairs,  
t been able to furnish  
interesting and relied  
communications.

year a very unpleasant  
e by the United States  
tion of any misunder-  
place between the two  
on of our envoys, and  
is to be lamented that  
compelled to abandon  
en they wish devoutly  
world. But should it  
ne necessity of resort-  
ry, which I pray God  
unanimity and an un-  
amongst all ranks of  
e the sport of foreign  
n; let us be firm and  
eign invader that may  
n the memories of my  
es, and irretrievable  
the Americans in the  
past be sufficiently a  
duct that may involve  
s of an inhuman civil  
ever afflicted a nation.  
ohn Steele, esquires,<sup>95</sup>

in J. B. McMaster's, *History*  
od John Adams, the president,  
against France.  
afterwards a justice of the  
prominent in Mississippi.

are appointed commissioners to hold a treaty with the indians. Walton is from Georgia, Moore from North Carolina, and Steele from Virginia, gentlemen of high respectability, and from their known patriotism and abilities, I have every reason to believe, that the interest of the western country will be deliberately and duly considered.

The federal legislature has appropriated twenty five thousand eight hundred and eighty dollars, for the purpose of the negotiation, a sum that I hope will be fully commensurate and adequate to the object, and evince to our fellow citizens the good disposition of the federal executive and legislature towards the interest and welfare of this state, and particularly in the relief of our unhappy fellow citizens, who have been compelled to remove from their homes and plantations. It is expected the treaty will commence about the middle of next month; the commissioners have not as yet arrived, but are expected in a few days. With respect to the intended treaty, I presume it will be readily conceded that the state of Tennessee is very much interested in the event, and perhaps more so than may happen in any future period. On this important occasion, it would be particularly useful and beneficial to the executive to have the aid and instruction of the legislature; but as that body cannot with conveniency be convened, and at all times attended with considerable expence, and at the present would be embarrassing to the local circumstances of the members, and also our public funds, the executive will, therefore, be under the necessity of resorting to such measures as to him may appear most likely to promote the public interest, assuring his countrymen that nothing shall be lacking that may tend and lead to their present and future advantages, so far as he may be enabled under existing circumstances.

The President of the United States has thought proper to recommend to his fellow citizens the observance of a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer; and for that purpose hath set apart Wednesday the ninth of May, requesting on that day the citizens of the United States will abstain from all worldly occupations, and offer their devout addresses to the farther of mercies, agreeably to those forms or methods they have severally adopted. It is a subject of solemn consideration, and highly essential and expedient in my opinion. I therefore

recommend and hope the inhabitants of this State will pay that due and sacred regard to the president's proclamation, that the nature of the subject may merit and require.

This letter is intended to communicate such information as I possess, and hope you will please make the same public in your neighbourhood.

Knoxville, 24 April, 1798.

Sir: The state of Tennessee perhaps will never be more interested in any event than in the present intended treaty; and, as such is inevitably the case, I feel a duty incumbent on myself to make every provision in my power in order to cause the rights of the state respected, amply supported, and her interest duly and regularly attended to. The executive considers himself bound to appoint some agents to attend the treaty, and of course it will be necessary to furnish them with moderate supplies. There is little money in the treasury here, which impels me to make application to you, praying to be informed as early as possible in what state the treasury of your district may be in, and whether or not you can furnish about one thousand dollars, or what sum can be had, in case you cannot advance the whole amount. You will readily discover the necessity and great propriety of the advance in this present emergency and crisis. Hoping and flattering myself that you will use your utmost industry to comply with the demand, which will very essentially serve the public and very greatly oblige,  
Robert Searcy, esquire,  
Treasurer of Mero district.

Knoxville, 24 April, 1798.

Sir: The Commissioners appointed to hold the treaty are expected here in a few days, George Walton, esquire, of Georgia, and Colonel John Steele, of Virginia, are appointed in the place of Aimes and Washington,<sup>96</sup> an appointment, that I hope will prove satisfactory to the people of Tennessee.

I feel myself much embarrassed on account of appointing some agents to attend the treaty, not so much with respect to

<sup>96</sup>The Commission, as originally appointed, was composed of Moore, of North Carolina, Fisher Ames, the eminent Federalist statesman of Massachusetts, and Bushrod Washington, of Virginia. The ability of these commissioners evidenced the concern of the Federal government in the Cherokee situation in Tennessee.

them, as that here, and, if consider him rant. However think he ought think on the to appoint th that supplies the determin Assembly, fo necessary fo be more inter her, than on indispensable every thing ment.

I am not d yourself; cou it will do me as I do, that to your friend both. I beg flatter myself of the business should you t you will the

I have wro be informed be necessitat should it coi influence wi General Jam Mero district

Sir: Your before me, a prospect of fortunate pe plantations



State will pay that proclamation, that require.

uch information as I same public in your

le, 24 April, 1798.

never be more intended treaty; and, incumbent on my order to cause the ed, and her interest tive considers him- d the treaty, and of with moderate sup- r here, which impels e informed as early r district may be in, ne thousand dollars, t advance the whole necessity and great emergency and crisis. use your utmost in- will very essentially

le, 24 April, 1798.

d the treaty are ex- esquire, of Georgia, ppointed in the place nt, that I hope will ee.

count of appointing uch with respect to

posed of Moore, of North f Massachusetts, and Bush- ssioners evidenced the con- in Tennessee.

them, as that of the supplies. We have no money in the treasury here, and, if we had, I am not certain that the treasurer would consider himself authorized to make any advance on my warrant. However, there is no doubt with me on that head for I think he ought. It must be conceded by every one, that will think on the subject, that the executive have an undoubted right to appoint the agents; this being the case, it necessarily implies that supplies of course ought to be furnished. I have come to the determination to try the event, without convening the Assembly, for that would cost at least double what would be necessary for the purpose of the supplies. The state will never be more interested, in my opinion in any event that may concern her, than on the present occasion; therefore, I conceive it my indispensable duty to make every exertion in my power to have every thing done that may be for the welfare of the government.

I am not determined as yet who will be the Agents, excepting yourself; could you find a freedom to serve, as one of that body, it will do me pleasure to give you the appointment; believing as I do, that it would give general satisfaction to the public and to your friends, having myself no doubt you would be useful to both. I beg, sir, you will please consider the subject, and I flatter myself you will have no objections to the undertaking of the business. Please to let me know as early as possible, and should you think proper to accept, as I trust and hope you will, you will then consider yourself as already appointed.

I have wrote to Mr. Searcy, the treasurer of your district, to be informed what monies may be in his hands, and that I shall be necessitated to draw on him for the use of the treaty, and, should it coincide with your own sentiments, please to use your influence with the treasurer, and urge him on the occasion. General James Robertson, Mero district.

Knoxville, 12 January, 1798.

Sir: Your esteemable letter of the 15 December Ultimo is now before me, and it is with great pleasure I observe there is a prospect of something likely to be done in favour of the unfortunate people, who have been compelled to remove from their plantations and improvements. Those distressed inhabitants

have been and are suffering very great injuries, both in their persons and properties; and, except some speedy relief is afforded, I am not able to foresee the consequences. I am constantly recommending to them patience and fortitude, notwithstanding they are becoming very restless and clamorous. In case a treaty should be set on foot, I beg leave to submit to your consideration an extinguishment of the indian claim on the north side of Clinch as low down as the mouth of Emery's river or the Cumberland road, up to the top of that mountain, and along the extreme height up to the Kentucky road—from the mouth of Clinch up the Tennessee to the Chilhowa mountain, along the extreme height thereof to the late line run by the commissioners. I mean this as a partial acquisition, in case no more could be obtained, of which you will be most capable of judging as to the propriety.

Honorable Andrew Jackson, Joseph Anderson, and William Charles Cole Claiborne, Members of Congress.

The copy of this letter was not forwarded to this office in time to be record it in its proper place.

Knoxville, 27 April, 1798.

Sir: By last mail I was honored with a letter from Secretary Pickering, enclosing the President's proclamation. In the Secretary's letter mention is made that he has furnished the agent with a number of the proclamations. Will you have the goodness to inform me whether or no you had any opportunity to send any of them to Mero, or do you know of any immediate opportunity. I wish to send a number of letters into that district of a public nature, one of the kind I do myself the honor to enclose you.

Colonel David Henley, Agent of the department of war.

Knoxville, 27 April, 1798.

Sir: I beg leave to communicate to you, in confidence, that I have it in contemplation for to send a suitable person into the Cherokee nation, in order to transact some business of importance, which will require both secrecy and address. You will much oblige me, would you undertake the mission, and knowing you can form an idea of the errand, I shall forbear saying more on the subject, only begging you will please to inform me imme-

diately, v  
take, and  
ten or tw  
shall fur  
you, on t  
Colonel .

Sir: TH  
from the  
which I  
quarter.  
case to y  
has hith  
conduct  
much pa  
are from  
obliged  
procure  
convince  
those un  
critical  
mony an  
I believe  
Such be  
able ind  
extended  
deplorab  
and hum  
and feel  
relief th  
Lieuten  
troops i

97Col. C  
a mercanti  
Draper Ms  
okees sugg  
would be w  
of Grainge  
biographic

injuries, both in their  
ne speedy relief is af-  
sequences. I am con-  
and fortitude, notwith-  
ss and clamorous. In  
eg leave to submit to  
the indian claim on the  
mouth of Emery's river  
of that mountain, and  
ntucky road—from the  
ne Chilhowa mountain,  
e late line run by the  
acquisition, in case no  
will be most capable of

erson, and William  
gress.  
led to this office in time

xville, 27 April, 1798.  
h a letter from Secre-  
s proclamation. In the  
t he has furnished the  
ns. Will you have the  
ou had any oppertunity  
know of any immediate  
of letters into that dis-  
I do myself the honor  
artment of war.

xville, 27 April, 1798.  
u, in confidence, that I  
suitable person into the  
ome business of impor-  
and address. You will  
ne mission, and knowing  
all forfear saying more  
ase to inform me imme-

diately, whether or not, it will be convenient for you to under-  
take, and if so I wish you to be prepared to set out in about  
ten or twelve days, and take this place in your way, where I  
shall furnish you with instructions, and communicate in full to  
you, on the business.

Colonel James Ore,<sup>97</sup> Grainger County.

Knoxville, 1 May, 1798.

Sir: There are daily complaints and petitions coming forward  
from the people of the valley, setting forth their distresses,  
which I believe bears very heavy on the poor people of that  
quarter. I am solicited by some of the inhabitants to state their  
case to you, and if possible to obtain some more indulgence than  
has hitherto been afforded. They complain that at times the  
conduct of some of the officers appear to be very rigorous, and  
much pains are taken to apprehend the poor inhabitants, who  
are from their indigent circumstances, and extreme wants,  
obliged to visit their little late farms, in order to collect and  
procure something to supply their families upon. I am well  
convinced that the general government is disposed to render  
those unfortunate people relief; and I am also satisfied that the  
critical situation of American affairs require the utmost har-  
mony and unanimity amongst ourselves at the present day.  
I believe, sir, in this you will readily concur with me in opinion.  
Such being the case, I most earnestly hope that every favour-  
able indulgence you can consistently with your duty will be  
extended towards those unhappy sufferers; their case is truly  
deplorable, and I do not entertain a doubt but your tenderness  
and humanity will cause you to sympathize for their distresses,  
and feel for their embarrassed situation, and render them any  
relief that may be in your power.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Butler, Commanding the federal  
troops in the state of Tennessee.

<sup>97</sup>Col. Ore on April 31 wrote from German Creek, where he resided and conducted  
a mercantile business, accepting, and promising to report at Knoxville for duty.  
Draper Mss., 11 DD, 134-5. On May 19 Ore wrote from Hiwassee Town of the Cher-  
okees suggesting that assistant agents go among the Indians to assure them that they  
would be well fed at the treaty. *Ibid.*, no. 36. Col. Ore was one of the early settlers  
of Grainger county, and a forceful figure of his generation, who is deserving of a  
biographical sketch for these *Publications*.

Knoxville, 4 May, 1798.

Sir: I learn with regret the menaced situation of our common country. I am led to believe that every prudent and honorable means have been pursued with ardent desire for the restoration of peace and harmony, but in case those laudable intentions of accommodation should fail, and nothing but a recourse to arms must be the alternative, be assured, sir, that my cordial and utmost exertions with the good people of the state shall and will be devoted in supporting and defending our country against any invader that may dare to attack us.

Not far from this place, and on the main river Holston I have a new and well erected set of iron works,<sup>98</sup> suitable for the casting almost every kind of mettle, and manufacturing of bar iron; the same shall on the shortest notice be converted to any public use, that might be deemed expedient, and should be glad to be honored with any commands that might be thought necessary.

Honorable James McHenry,  
Secretary of the department of war.

Knoxville, 4 May, 1798.

Sir: Your favor of the 23 March Ultimo, I have the honor to acknowledge, is duly come to hand, with the enclosed proclamation which latter has been promulgated as extensively as possible agreeably to the short time for the purpose.

I learn with regret the menaced situation of the United States; on the other hand I feel a consolation in hoping that nothing has been neglected on the part of our government to conciliate and amicably adjust any difference or complaints that have taken place. I beg you to believe, sir, that in case a war should take place between the United States and any of the European nations, that you will find us firmly disposed to lend every aid and support that may be within our power. You will please assure the President that I shall heartily and cordially together with the good people of this state cooperate in the protection of our common country.

Not far from this place and on the main river Holston, I have a valuable set of new iron works, suitable for casting of almost every kind of mettle and manufacturing of bar iron. The same

<sup>98</sup>In Sullivan county near Kingsport, in partnership with his son-in-law, Walter King, who married Nancy Sevier, the fifth daughter, Feb. 19, 1795. Sevier's diary abounds in references to visits to these iron-works.

shall on the  
public use, a  
on that head  
Honorable T  
Secretary of

Sir: I feel  
experienced  
made by the  
be no less fa  
rights of ou  
been hitherto

It would b  
examine the  
those causes  
Commissione  
tion of comp  
mitted, is ac  
wish of the U  
we have suff

In you, si  
with the diffi  
tiers unfaill  
tion, both of  
the effects t  
satisfaction  
committed to  
be more prop

Accept my  
my full assu  
support in ev  
of your missi  
Colonel John

<sup>99</sup>In his diary  
into town by the  
to a view favorab  
was such acts as  
folk.



Knoxville, 4 May, 1798.

situation of our common  
y prudent and honorable  
desire for the restoration  
those laudable intentions  
othing but a recourse to  
red, sir, that my cordial  
ople of the state shall and  
nding our country against  
s.

main river Holston I have  
ks,<sup>98</sup> suitable for the cast-  
anufacturing of bar iron;  
e converted to any public  
and should be glad to be  
ght be thought necessary.

Knoxville, 4 May, 1798.

time, I have the honor to  
th the enclosed proclama-  
ed as extensively as pos-  
the purpose.

ation of the United States;  
n in hoping that nothing  
government to conciliate  
or complaints that have  
that in case a war should  
and any of the European  
disposed to lend every aid  
power. You will please  
tily and cordially together  
operate in the protection of

main river Holston, I have  
table for casting of almost  
ng of bar iron. The same

ership with his son-in-law, Walter  
ter, Feb. 19, 1795. Sevier's diary

shall on the shortest notice if required be converted to any  
public use, and should be glad to be honored with any commands  
on that head.

Honorable Timothy Pickering,  
Secretary of the department of state.

Knoxville, 8 May, 1798.

Sir: I feel real pleasure in announcing to you the happiness  
experienced by the people of Tennessee on a review of the choice  
made by the President; to conduct to Issue, which we trust, will  
be no less favorable in the end, than flattering in prospect, those  
rights of our citizens, from the enjoyment of which they have  
been hitherto held by the interfereance of indian claims.

It would be a painful and certainly an unnecessary task to  
examine the ground on which opinion has differed, or to retrace  
those causes that has produced clamour in the appointment of  
Commissioners. We see the means of removing every founda-  
tion of complaint, and the names to whom this mission is com-  
mitted, is accepted by us as tho but testimony of the sincere  
wish of the Union to apply an efficient remedy to the past evils  
we have suffered.

In you, sir, we recognize with pleasure a mind conversant  
with the difficulties under which inhabitants of exposed fron-  
tiers unfailingly labour, not the least of which is missrepresenta-  
tion, both of their views, and conduct. Secure as we feel from  
the effects this cause might otherwise produce, we see with  
satisfaction the management of our most important interests  
committed to your hands, assured that the trust can no where  
be more properly placed.

Accept my congratulations on your safe arrival, and also  
my full assurance of the most chearful cooperation and firm  
support in every measure that will tend to facilitate the objects  
of your mission.

Colonel John Steele.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>99</sup>In his diary Sevier wrote, Tues., May 8: "John Steele, Colo., arrived escorted  
into town by the light horse." Sevier promptly addressed him, trusting to win him  
to a view favorable to the inhabitants who had been removed from Indian lands. It  
was such acts as this that won Sevier his unparalleled popularity with the common  
folk.



Knoxville, 9 May, 1798.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge yours of the 11 April Ultimo, with the paper containing the instructions to our envoys, and a copy of their dispatches which are amusing enough.

Mr Steele arrived here yesterday, Walton and Moore are daily expected; great complaints among the poor inhabitants, that have been forced from their farms and homes; their prospects for making crops is very doubtful. Your brother<sup>100</sup> is in good health and doing well. Pray write me on every opportunity, and let me know what you are all about. Tallyrand together with the Directory are great lovers of money, and understand the diplomatic negotiating business.

I take the liberty of enclosing you one of my circular letters. Honorable William Charles Cole Claiborne.

P. S. The President's late conduct towards this country has gained him much friendship, and, should he continue to manifest his regard, he will become much admired by the people.

Knoxville, 9 May, 1798.

Sir: I do myself the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of 23 March Ultimo, in which you express your uneasiness on account of the unfortunate people that has been compelled to remove; be assured sir that I do not entertain a most distant doubt of your real concern, and I feel fully convinced that both you and your colleagues have been sufficiently attentive towards those unhappy settlers' interests, and have done everything in your powers to serve them. I do most sincerely lament their condition, am extremely doubtful, that they will not be relieved in time to make crops. Mr Steele arrived here on yesterday; the other two gentlemen are expected in a day or two. I have great hopes that matters will go on well; appearances at the present are favorable. The President's late conduct towards this country has gained him much friendship, and should he continue to manifest his regard, he will be very much admired by the people. I am sorry the peace of our country is so likely to be disturbed. Should it be the case, I hope that our American

<sup>100</sup>Dr. Thomas A. Claiborne, then of Knoxville. Between Sevier and the two Claibornes there was a pronounced friendship. Sevier had induced William C. C. Claiborne to come to Tennessee to practice law, had taken the young man into his home until he could locate, and he did much to further Claiborne's promotion, which was spectacularly rapid. For an evidence of this friendship, see S. C. Williams, *Beginnings of West Tennessee*, 62.

Knoxville, 9 May, 1798.  
 e yours of the 11 April  
 instructions to our envoys,  
 e amusing enough.

lton and Moore are daily  
 e poor inhabitants, that  
 homes; their prospects  
 our brother<sup>100</sup> is in good  
 e on every oppertunity,  
 out. Tallyrand together  
 money, and understand  
 e of my circular letters.  
 rne.

towards this country has  
 d he continue to manifest  
 d by the people.

Knoxville, 9 May, 1798.  
 ledge the receipt of your  
 ou express your uneasi-  
 ople that has been com-  
 do not entertain a most  
 d I feel fully convinced  
 e been sufficiently atten-  
 interests, and have done  
 em. I do most sincerely  
 doubtful, that they will  
 Mr Steele arrived here  
 are expected in a day or  
 will go on well; appear-  
 President's late conduct  
 ch friendship, and should  
 ill be very much admired  
 f our country is so likely  
 I hope that our American

e. Between Sevier and the two  
 vvier had induced William C. C.  
 d taken the young man into his  
 her Claiborne's promotion, which  
 friendship, see S. C. Williams,

patriots will become United, and repel every insult that may be  
 offered to the sovereignty and dignity of our nation.  
 Honorable Joseph Anderson.

Knoxville, 12 May, 1798.

Colonel James Ore: You will proceed from this place into the  
 Cherokee nation; you will there endeavour to gain information  
 from the Chiefs and others, their intentions with respect to the  
 present intended treaty; if they intend to dispose of any of  
 their claims to land, or not, if they be divided or unanimous  
 either in disposing or refusing. If they mean selling, what part  
 of country.

You will effect to be disinterested on the occasion; give no  
 advice, except they request it, or the subject is introduced by  
 some of their own party, on that occasion signify to them that  
 the hunting is much deminished and is daily becoming more so;  
 that in case the United States would engage to give them an  
 annuity in addition to the present one that probably it might  
 be much to their advantage, as they would get more goods in  
 that way than they could possibly make by hunting; their old  
 and young helpless people would be provided for; it would also  
 prevent the young and foolish from going to war, for that would  
 forfeit all their annuities. They claim much land, could sell a  
 great deal and have enough left. They ought to learn to raise  
 stocks and make crops of grain, which is by far the most profit-  
 able way of living, and the only sure way of living easy, well  
 and becoming rich. Such is the manner in which all the  
 machinal arts are supplied and carried on. Observe to all those  
 that follow hunting, are always poore and few in number, and  
 many by that practice fell into nothing and is now no more.  
 The Creek Nation is composed of about seventeen different  
 tribes, yet they do not the whole of them amount to five thousand  
 warriors. I mentioned this about the Creeks because they know  
 it to be a fact. The indian nations are as old as the white, and  
 have been as numerous, but now there is a million of white  
 persons to that of one indian; their peculiar practices and man-  
 ner of living has been the cause; therefore, it is time for the  
 present existing tribes to quit the old forms.

A large trading town at the Muscles Shoals would be the mak-

ing of their country;<sup>101</sup> every thing can be brought there by water, and a probability that every thing would be as cheap, as at Philadelphia, or any other place. Contrast that place with Tellico, and shew them the advantage the Shoals would have by suffering every body to carry on trade at a place where every thing would be received for goods, and not confined to skins and furs; those articles would soon be done away, what then will be their condition if other arrangements are not made to receive such things as they can make and raise in their country? If a town was settled at the Shoals, in the room of one store, there might soon be several hundred, and every one trying to sell lowest; their country is well suited for raising stocks and grain, and the present race had better enjoy the fruits of those advantages, and make the best of it now than to leave it to the chance of their posterity, who may be foolish and loose it all. It is the duty of the old and leading men to leave those that stay behind them, in as safe a condition as possible, and not grasp, to hold too much, for fear they may lose all. The earth is the mother of all people; the great being above made it for all men, and they will all have a share of it.

By the law of nations, it is agreed that no people shall be entitled to more land than they can cultivate. Of course no people will sit and starve for want of land to work, when a neighbouring nation has much more than they can make use of. Convince them by argument the great propriety of always being in friendship with the people of this quarter, for on such depends their success or ruin. Impress them with an idea, that whoever advises them to hold a large tract of country, and live by, and follow hunting, are their enemies, and will in the end cause them to be totally ruined. Endeavour to persuade them that the Point,<sup>102</sup> or Mouth of Holston is the most suitable for the treaty; the Point I prefer.

The foregoing are the outlines of your mission, but the principal and sole object is for you to prepare them for as an extensive disposal of their claim, as can be possibly obtained. Recommending to you to be as private on the occasion, as the

<sup>101</sup>Sevier did not easily give over old-time plans for the development of the country in the Big Bend of Tennessee River, in North Alabama. See S. C. Williams, *Lost State of Franklin*, 13, 176. Col. Z. Coxe was in this year, 1798, arrested at Natchez because of a violation of law in trying to settle the country of the Bend.

<sup>102</sup>Southwest Point, at the junction of Clinch and Tennessee rivers.

nature of  
caution an  
necessarily  
to make,  
for the pr  
intended f  
prove in th  
of that nat

Sir: You  
and while  
pointment  
it will not  
treaty. C  
Walton is  
certain ac

I under  
cannot be  
soon as I  
shall advi  
hold your

I beg y  
provide se  
article, I  
the treaty  
General J  
Mero Dist

Sir: I ha  
of the 6  
crisis is a  
instance i  
than in th  
sir, to sol  
the treaty  
stated to

<sup>103</sup>This 1  
*Hist. Mag.*

can be brought there by  
ing would be as cheap,  
Contrast that place with  
e Shoals would have by  
at a place where every  
not confined to skins and  
e away, what then will  
are not made to receive  
e in their country? If  
room of one store, there  
very one trying to sell  
raising stocks and grain,  
e fruits of those advan-  
to leave it to the chance  
and loose it all. It is the  
e those that stay behind  
and not grasp, to hold  
The earth is the mother  
ade it for all men, and

that no people shall be  
ultivate. Of course no  
land to work, when a  
n they can make use of.  
propriety of always be-  
s quarter, for on such  
them with an idea, that  
tract of country, and  
emies, and will in the  
Endeavour to persuade  
ton is the most suitable

r mission, but the prin-  
are them for as an ex-  
be possibly obtained.  
on the occasion, as the

r the development of the coun-  
Alabama. See S. C. Williams,  
n this year, 1798, arrested at  
e the country of the Bend.  
Tennessee rivers.

nature of the object will admit, making use of all necessary  
caution and circumspection the importance of your business will  
necessarily require. The observations which are stated for you  
to make, as you will discover, are intended to prepare them  
for the primary object. They are truths, and notwithstanding  
intended for to answer peculiar purposes to this state, but will  
prove in the end, if attended to by the indians, the very salvation  
of that nation.

Knoxville, 13 May, 1798.<sup>103</sup>

Sir: Yours of the 6th Instant, I have been duly honored with,  
and while I am much pleased with your acceptance of the ap-  
pointment of Agent, I regret much your indisposition, but hope  
it will not be so obstinate as to prevent your attendance on the  
treaty. Colonel Steele one of the Commissioners have arrived;  
Walton is expected tomorrow or next day, we have not had any  
certain accounts of Moore.

I understand that a time for the commencement of the treaty  
cannot be fixed, until more than one Commissioner arrives, as  
soon as I am informed with certainty of the time and place, I  
shall advise you immediately; in the mean time you will please  
hold yourself in readiness, to set out on the shortest notice.

I beg you will please to urge Mr. Searcy, the treasurer to  
provide some money. Unless he supplies me with some of that  
article, I fear I shall not be able to get any for the purpose of  
the treaty.

General James Robertson,  
Mero District.

Knoxville, 13 May, 1798.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favour  
of the 6 Instant. You have justly observed that the present  
crisis is a very important one to the state. I assure you, in no  
instance in my opinion it will ever be more essentially concerned  
than in the event of the present intended treaty. Permit me,  
sir, to solicit your earnest exertions to procure for the use of  
the treaty the thousand dollars, which in my former letter, I  
stated to be necessary; if it should not be convenient for you

<sup>103</sup>This letter was printed as a part of the Robertson Correspondence in *Amer. Hist. Mag.*, IV, 356.



to raise that amount, endeavour to furnish as large a sum as may be in your power. Should I fail in receiving a supply from you, I know of no other recourse. Colonel Steele one of the Commissioners have arrived several days since, Walton is expected to-morrow, we have had no accounts from Moore.  
Robert Searcy esquire  
Treasurer of Mero District

Knoxville, 14 May, 1798.

Sir: Viewing the importance of the present intended treaty, and the manner in which this state is so materially and essentially concerned and interested, I have deemed it necessary and highly expedient to appoint three Agents to attend the same, in behalf of this state. I have proceeded to appoint two (to wit) General James Robertson and Major Lachlan McIntosh,<sup>104</sup> and for the third have taken the liberty to nominate yourself, should you think proper to serve in that capacity. I make no doubt your appointment will be very satisfactory to your fellow citizens in general, as also to myself and your other friends. Should you think proper to serve you will please signify the same to me as soon as possible, also your attendance at this place will be expected so soon as you can conveniently prepare for attending the treaty, which is supposed will be held either at South West Point, or Tellico Blockhouse.

Colonel Steele only, has as yet arrived, the other two Gentlemen are daily expected.  
James Stewart, esquire,  
Washington District.

Knoxville, 18 May, 1798.

Sir: It affords me pleasure to announce to you the general satisfaction experienced in this state on your appointment. The inhabitants of Tennessee feel on this occasion but one sentiment, an entire approbation of the executive choice.

<sup>104</sup>Lachlan McIntosh, Jr., who had just come to Tennessee from Georgia and was advanced for appointment by ex-governor and Senator William Blount. "Major McIntosh will also be appointed. I wish you would take some pains to render this appointment acceptable to the people, especially to members of the General Assembly. Besides his being a man of talents and information as appears by his writings, he will have much influence with Mr. Walton. I think his appointment highly proper and that it will prove satisfactory to the State." Blount to Robertson, May 14. *Am. Hist. Mag.*, VI, 353. Three were to attend as Tennessee's agents to represent that commonwealth's interests before the national commission.

They  
interests  
can no w  
lic life,  
habitant  
solicitud

The in  
and the  
of much  
truly imp  
as unequ  
an effici

Accep  
and full  
support  
mission.  
George

Gentlem  
that two  
of that  
pressed  
such po  
negotiat

We a  
measur  
Point.  
such re  
more co  
of whic  
mission  
force to

We b  
of the s  
the ren  
mission  
aries se



furnish as large a sum as  
fail in receiving a supply  
course. Colonel Steele one  
several days since, Walton  
no accounts from Moore.

Knoxville, 14 May, 1798.  
The present intended treaty,  
is so materially and essen-  
tially deemed it necessary and  
warrants to attend the same, in  
order to appoint two (to wit)  
Lachlan McIntosh,<sup>104</sup> and  
nominate yourself, should  
be capacity. I make no doubt  
of satisfactory to your fellow citi-  
zens and other friends. Should  
this signify the same to me  
and hence at this place will be  
able to prepare for attending  
held either at South West  
Point, the other two Gentle-

Knoxville, 18 May, 1798.  
I announce to you the general  
of your appointment. The  
occasion but one sentiment,  
the choice.

to Tennessee from Georgia and  
Senator William Blount. "Ma-  
jor would take some pains to render  
ly to members of the General As-  
sembly as appears by his writ-  
ing. I think his appointment highly  
desirable." Blount to Robertson, May  
1798, as Tennessee's agents to repre-  
sentational commission.

They see a share in management of their most important  
interests committed to your hand, with assurance that this trust  
can no where be better placed. Your uniform exertions, in pub-  
lic life, to vindicate the rights of the too much neglected in-  
habitants of the frontier is accepted by them as proof that this  
solicitude will be coextensive with appointment.

The interference of claims between the Citizens of this state  
and the adjacent tribes of Indians has certainly been a source  
of much uneasiness; at length we see the adjudgment of this  
truly important trust committed to men whose names we receive  
as unequivocal proof of the sincerity of government to apply  
an efficient remedy to the past evils we have suffered.

Accept my congratulations, on your safe arrival to this place,  
and fullest assurance of my most cheerful co-operation and firm  
support in whatever may tend to facilitate the objects of your  
mission.

George Walton, esquire.

Knoxville, 20 May, 1798.

Gentlemen: Presuming from the nature of the appointment,  
that two of the Commission are adequate to assume the functions  
of that trust, with which you are charged, I feel it a duty im-  
pressed on me to suggest to you the public wish in favour of  
such points, as seem most eligible to become the scene of your  
negotiations.

We are taught to believe that the latitude of choice is in some  
measure confined to Tellico, Belle Canton,<sup>105</sup> and South West  
Point. Assuming on this belief, suffer me to suggest to you  
such reasonings, as from my knowledge of Indian habits, and  
more correct of the geography of that country (the acquirement  
of which seems to be at once both the object, and end of your  
mission) in support of the last, and which will apply with equal  
force to oppose the two first.

We believe the approaching treaty commenced at the instance  
of the state of Tennessee, and that it has for its primary object  
the removal of inconveniences thrown on her inhabitants by  
missionaries, to whom it was committed to designate the bound-  
aries separating the two people.

<sup>105</sup>Bell Canton was on the site of the present Lenoir City.

In this view of the subject, some attention may perhaps be thought due to the general wish, where it is unopposed by more weighty considerations. Let it be added that the experience of ages to the belief that soil is with difficulty obtained in the rear of ground on which indians treat, whilst they yield without much reluctance to that point. South West point is situated at the confluence of the rivers Tennessee and Clinch, and is yet within the unextinguished limits of the indian hunting grounds; the line passing up the right bank of the Tennessee leaves the confluence of the Holston with that river within the indian boundary. The Holston and Clinch rivers, with the various streams falling into them, have their passage thro far the most populous settlements of the state; to enjoy their communication with the parent stream, by which they communicate with each other, will readily suggest itself to you, and is of the utmost importance to their happiness.

At present the wants of one part of the state cannot be supplied with the redundancies of another without the delay of passports, and instances are not wanting of the most capricious detention, calculated only to fret the general tranquility. My present purpose is not to complain of the past, but to afford every aid to what I believe will be your endeavour to remove future inconveniences.

Should any weight be attached to the facility of supplies, or the conveniences of removeing the goods destined for the treaty, the preference of a water, to land carriage, as opposed to Tellico admits of no comment; it is also calculated to remove all misunderstandings as to future construction of intended lines, as every object which negotiation can embrace as to bounds will be under your immediate view.

George Walton & John Steel, esquires,  
Commissioners on the part of the  
United States, to treat with the Cherokees.

Knoxville, May 31st, 1798.

Sir: In obedience to your instructions to me of the 12th, I immediately proceeded to the Cherokee nation by way of South West Point, to execute the same as far as was in my power, to this place yesterday by way of Tellico Blockhouse. The towns I visited were Hiwassee, Chistooee, Shoemach, Estanaula and

Amuch  
the pr  
Fellow  
Creek  
Stand  
major  
about  
who w  
My os  
busine  
partur  
instru  
or ind  
to wit  
the Co  
a part  
sumed  
Aft  
at wa  
staye  
Point  
gatah  
of the  
free c  
to the  
verse  
who s  
They  
consu  
when  
treaty  
lives  
his tr  
acter,  
his na  
sever  
freely  
occasi  
treaty

the attention may perhaps be  
ere it is unopposed by more  
added that the experience of  
difficulty obtained in the rear  
, whilst they yield without  
th West point is situated at  
ssee and Clinch, and is yet  
the indian hunting grounds;  
of the Tennessee leaves the  
at river within the indian  
h rivers, with the various  
r passage thro far the most  
o enjoy their communication  
they communicate with each  
you, and is of the utmost

of the state cannot be sup-  
er without the delay of pas-  
ing of the most capricious  
ne general tranquility. My  
of the past, but to afford  
your endeavour to remove

the facility of supplies, or  
ods destined for the treaty,  
riage, as opposed to Tellico  
culated to remove all mis-  
action of intended lines, as  
embrace as to bounds will

es,

okees.

Knoxville, May 31st, 1798.  
ions to me of the 12th, I  
kee nation by way of South  
far as was in my power, to  
ico Blockhouse. The towns  
Shoemach, Estanaula and

Amuchcha where there was a general ball play at which were  
the principal chiefs of the nation, namely, John Watts, Bloody  
Fellow, Dick Justice, Glass, Taulontiska, Cabin, Chuleoah or  
Creek Linguister, Kittagisha, the Jobber's son, the Badger, the  
Standing Turkey, James Vann and other Chiefs, and a great  
majority of the most influential warriors, making the whole  
about seven hundred and fifty. The chiefs of the most note,  
who were not there, were the Little Turkey and Double Head.  
My ostensible business was the transaction of my own private  
business as was understood by your Excellency before my de-  
parture, tho' I kept constantly in view the object of your  
instructions, and did whatever was in my power, in an informal  
or indirect way to forward the object of the approaching treaty,  
to wit, to induce the indians to attend the call or invitation to  
the Commissioners of the United States to a treaty and to sell  
a part of their land for a valuable consideration which I pre-  
sumed would be offered to them.

After I left South West Point the first indian house I arrived  
at was Arthur Coody's<sup>106</sup> one of the interpreters with whom I  
stayed one day, and found him well disposed, and preferred the  
Point as the place for the treaty. The next day I saw Tuske-  
gatahee, the Woman Holder and the Hare (Tarrapine) Chiefs  
of the second order, and about thirty warriors. I had much  
free conversation with them, and they appeared well disposed  
to the object of the treaty. At the Shoemach I saw and con-  
versed with Clem Vann, a white trader, two Fallings, half breeds,  
who spoke English and young men of pretty good information.  
They said a number of chiefs, (not at a public council) had  
consulted together at Estanaula on their return from Tellico  
when the nation received the annuity, where it was agreed the  
treaty should be held at Estanaula. James Vann, a half breed,  
lives near this town, who from his wealth and extensiveness of  
his trade, together with his ability, has become a leading char-  
acter, and is daily growing into consequence and importance in  
his nation. I was at his House three days, during which time  
several Chiefs and warriors visited him. Rum was given out  
freely, and of which he himself drank freely. I embraced this  
occasion to collect his sentiments; he was much opposed to the  
treaty being held at Tellico, and in favour of Estanaula, his

<sup>106</sup>For Coody, see S. C. Williams, *Early Travels in the Tennessee Country*, 235.

opposition to Tellico proceeded from an opposition to the public store at that place, which he considered a great injury to his nation; he would prefer the Point or any other place to Tellico; he is opposed to a large sale of land, but appeared disposed to sell a lesser quantity to accommodate citizens of the United States resident in Tennessee. I repeat that he is a man of consequence and of rising importance. From James Vann's I proceeded with him to the Ball play at Amuchcha, forty miles from his house on our way we fell in with a large party of the Ball Players of the upper towns, and stayed with them one night, and next day I left them and passing the Ball play grounds I joined the players of the lower towns and returned with them to the play. This Ball play took place on Friday the 25th Instant. As I have before observed the principal Chiefs whose names I have before given, and others, and a great majority of the most influential warriors were at it. This afforded a very good opportunity for the objects of my mission as before stated, and I improved it to the best of my abilities. The Chiefs, however, notwithstanding my efforts to draw forth their sentiments appeared very tacit and reserved, which I attributed to a report in circulation among the warriors that they (the Chiefs) were to be bribed to sell lands. Watts, to my suggestions as to the little value of the lands adjacent to the white settlements, said that if the young warriors wanted to hunt Rabbits they might be opposed to the sale of those lands; he appeared very friendly in all his conduct and conversation. Late in the day of the Ball play Mr. Dinsmoore<sup>107</sup> appeared, collected the Chiefs and informed them he had the day before received a dispatch from the Commissioners at Knoxville directing him to inquire of them at what time it would be convenient for them and the warriors to meet the Commissioners in treaty. The Chiefs answered on the 14th June and added, as the Commissioners had referred the time to them, they considered they had a right to fix the place and named Estanaula as the place. To this Mr. Dinsmoore replied that his business as Agent was distinct from the powers of the Commissioners; he had no right to agree to the place offered reasons against Estanaula; the Chiefs appeared determined and said they supposed land was the object; Dinsmoore said it was. The Chiefs again said the object was

<sup>107</sup>Silas Dinsmore, agent of the Federal government to the Cherokees.

with the  
they (the  
distance t  
would con  
he was to

I had n  
great opp  
they dran  
mission, r  
to bear p  
informati  
the Chief  
and that  
Tellico-B  
of the inf  
there are  
they rece  
inquiry I  
French ha  
however p  
number o  
It is acco  
Mississipp  
treaties w  
who sell l  
my opinio  
without th  
by them,  
purchased  
that is, th  
lately at T  
and that r

His Excel

<sup>108</sup>The ea  
bands of diss  
tory, shortly  
lying between  
jurisdiction o  
or 1795, led b

om an opposition to the public  
sidered a great injury to his  
or any other place to Tellico;  
and, but appeared disposed to  
modate citizens of the United  
repeat that he is a man of  
ance. From James Vann's I  
lay at Amuchcha, forty miles  
l in with a large party of the  
d stayed with them one night,  
sing the Ball play grounds I  
owns and returned with them  
place on Friday the 25th In-  
l the principal Chiefs whose  
others, and a great majority  
were at it. This afforded a  
ects of my mission as before  
t of my abilities. The Chiefs,  
ts to drew forth their senti-  
erved, which I attributed to  
arriors that they (the Chiefs)  
atts, to my suggestions as to  
nt to the white settlements,  
anted to hunt Rabbits they  
ose lands; he appeared very  
versation. Late in the day  
ppeared, collected the Chiefs  
before received a dispatch  
lle directing him to inquire  
onvenient for them and the  
s in treaty. The Chiefs an-  
, as the Commissioners had  
sidered they had a right to  
as the place. To this Mr.  
as Agent was distinct from  
ne had no right to agree to  
Estanaula; the Chiefs ap-  
posed land was the object;  
again said the object was

ument to the Cherokees.

with the Commissioners; it was to buy their lands, and when they (the Chiefs) had business in view they never thought any distance too far to effect it; they supposed the Commissioners would come there. Mr. Dinsmoore concluded by remarking that he was to see the Commissioners on the 29th at Belle Canton.

I had many conversations with Chiefs and warriors as I had great opportunities for, as well when they drank water as when they drank spirits, keeping always in view the object of my mission, most if not all of which were too loose and desultory to bear particular recital, but my opinion founded upon such information as I collected is, that with proper men and measures the Chiefs and warriors would agree to a Treaty at the Point, and that an advantageous purchase of land may be made. Tellico-Blockhouse is particularly offensive to a great number of the influential men of the nation. They say the goods sold there are old and rotten, hardly bear a second washing, and that they receive but a small price for their skins. Upon further inquiry I do not discover that it is certain that the British or French have not sent letters to the Cherokees. Such a report however prevails. Upon this visit to the nation I discover the number of the Cherokees is much lessened within a few years. It is accounted for by their emigrations to the west of the Mississippi and it is said many more contemplate going.<sup>108</sup> In treaties with indians it is generally believed that it is the Chiefs who sell lands; and, however true it may have been heretofore, my opinion is on the present occasion no lands will be purchased without the consent of the warriors. The Chiefs are governed by them, especially in the sale of lands; and if lands are to be purchased too much attention cannot be paid to the warriors; that is, the most leading of them. Great complaint is made that lately at Tellico Blockhouse notice has been taken only of Chiefs and that none others were allowed provisions.

I have the honor to be

Your Excellency's

most obedient servant

His Excellency, John Sevier

JAS ORE

<sup>108</sup>The earliest of these migrations, of which we can speak assuredly, was of small bands of dissatisfied Cherokees to St. Francis River in Arkansas, then Spanish territory, shortly after the Treaty of Hopewell in 1785. Later they removed to lands lying between the Arkansas and White rivers, where in 1803 they came under the jurisdiction of the United States. Another considerable migration occurred in 1794 or 1795, led by Chief The Bowl. Yet earlier western migrations of the Cherokees, of



Knoxville, 1 June, 1798.

Gentlemen: Messieurs Samuel Handley,<sup>109</sup> Thomas Galliher, David Coldwell and Alexander Ford are a deputation from the people lately removed from their farms, from what is called indian lands. The object of their mission is to lay before you the distressed situation of those unfortunate people who have been compelled to remove, with a hope and solicitude that you will render them some relief if in your power, of which I have no doubt will be the case.

The Commissioners on the part of the United States, to treat with the Cherokees.

Knoxville, 2 June, 1798.

Gentlemen: I hope I may be pardoned for being so inquisitive respecting the approaching treaty. The state of Tennessee being so materially concerned in the event, I hope will sufficiently appologize for the inquiry I am about to make. It is a request to be informed when and where the intended treaty is to be held; having to make some arrangements on the part of the state increases my solicitations on this occasion.

The Honorable, The Commissioners, on the part of the United States to treat with the Cherokees.

Knoxville, 6 June, 1798.

Sir: The Commissioners have requested the indians to meet them near Tellico Blockhouse on the 25th Instant, and it is supposed that the treaty will be held at or near that place.

I have thought it would be proper for the Agents to attend at this place on the 20th Instance, at which time you will please give your attendance, in order that you may receive further instructions, and deliberate together on the business of your Agency.

James Robertson, James Stewart  
& Lachlen McIntosh, esquires, on  
the part of the state of Tennessee  
to attend the Treaty with the Cherokees.

which there were doubtless some, are shrouded in tradition. See John Howard Payne Mss., Ayres Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago.  
<sup>109</sup>For Handley, see Ramsey's *Annals*, *passim*.

Sir: I have  
Ultimo, which  
papers enclosed

I fear this  
be much shown  
with you, that  
with you, should  
have good success  
shall be my  
the people in  
will be easily

I am sorry  
Representative  
violent opposition  
mon defence  
the envoys, and  
every reason  
Also I have  
and think our  
and unanswered  
reader.

I observe  
I need not  
how inadequate  
country again  
came invaded  
very much the  
indeed—perhaps  
place, however  
may be, they  
permanent pro  
Honorable Jo

Sir: Your  
pleasure to

<sup>110</sup>This letter  
army made up of  
led militia and vol

Knoxville, 1 June, 1798.

ey,<sup>109</sup> Thomas Galliher, a deputation from the ns, from what is called n is to lay before you the te people who have been solicitude that you will ver, of which I have no

Knoxville, 2 June, 1798.

d for being so inquisitive e state of Tennessee be- t, I hope will sufficiently to make. It is a request nded treaty is to be held; the part of the state in-

the part of the es.

Knoxville, 6 June, 1798.

ted the indians to meet 25th Instant, and it is or near that place. For the Agents to attend hich time you will please ou may receive further on the business of your

dition. See John Howard Payne

Knoxville, 11 June, 1798.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 25th Ultimo, which come to hand on the 9th Instant, with the two papers enclosed.

I fear this will not find you in Philadelphia; therefore, shall be much shorter than I should otherwise have been. I believe with you, that a war with France is inevitable, and also hope with you, should it be the case, that the American people will have good sense enough to avoid division. Be assured, sir, it shall be my earnest study to have a perfect unanimity among the people in this quarter, and do not entertain a doubt but it will be easily effected.

I am sorry so much division still appears in the House of Representatives. Surely if a war is likely to take place, such violent opposition ought to be at an end, and all unite in a common defence of their country. I have read the instructions to the envoys, and think them fully ample and commensurate to every reasonable demand that could be made by the French. Also I have with much pleasure perused the communications and think our envoys' address, of the 18th of January, masterly and unanswerable, and must be satisfactory to every impartial reader.

I observe much opposition to the raising of a regular army; I need not observe to you, or any other military Character, how inadequate a militia only will be to the protection of our country against invasions of regular armies. If America became invaded, and militia only to oppose the enemy, I shall fear very much the protection of the country will be a feeble one indeed—permit me to observe, that in case a war actually takes place, however disagreeable and burdensome regular armies may be, they must inevitably be resorted to, for the efficient and permanent protection of our country.<sup>110</sup>

Honorable Joseph Anderson.

Knoxville, 11 June, 1798.

Sir: Your two favours of the 16 and 24 Ultimo I had the pleasure to receive on the 9 Instant, also four enclosures of

<sup>110</sup>This letter and the following are instructive as to Sevier's attitude towards an army made up of militia, in a struggle against trained regulars of France. He had led militia and volunteers in the Revolution and the Indian wars.

Gazettes and pamphlets. I am doubtful this will not find you in Philadelphia; therefore, shall only write you a short letter. You are pleased to ask my opinion of your envoys' address to the French republic. I will give it you in a few words, that it is a production of talents, a general knowledge of National affairs, an ample and compleat justification of the Executive conduct, and unanswerable by the French Directory; these are my sentiments.

I discover you have much division in your house, respecting the mode of protection, either by an army of regulars or militia. You will readily grant I ought to be acquainted with the mode of Militia warfare, and also you know how highly that very valuable class of Citizens stand in my estimation. On the whole I believe that the American Militia are the bravest and most intrepid in the world; but after giving them all the credit that can be due, innumerable and conclusive objections may be stated that they are not a force by any means sufficient to protect our country against the invasions of regular armies; and suffer me to say that, if attacked by the French, and our opposition is to be by militia only, our expectations of defence will be illusive, vain, and visionary. Should the Ten of Twenty thousand regular troops be raised, as contemplated by some, I shall then have my doubts. Such an army, together with the aid of our militia, would be inadequate to an efficient protection. Permit me to say that, should a war take place, however disagreeable and burdensome regular armies may be, they must inevitably be immediately resorted to, for the protection and safety of the country. I have seen the instructions to the envoys, and so far as I am able of judging they are ample and commensurate to every reasonable claim, that could be made by France.

Honorable William Charles Cole Claiborne.

Knoxville, 11 June, 1798.

Sir: I do myself the honor to acknowledge I have received your favour of the 25 Ultimo, with the several pamphlets therein enclosed. I have read the whole with pleasure, and am perfectly satisfied our government have discovered every reasonable disposition suitable for the purpose of re-establishing that friendship and harmony that a former period existed in so great a degree between the United States, and the French nation. I trust

butful this will not find you  
ly write you a short letter.  
of your envoys' address to  
you in a few words, that it  
knowledge of National af-  
fection of the Executive con-  
ch Directory; these are my

n in your house, respecting  
army of regulars or militia.  
e acquainted with the mode  
know how highly that very  
y estimation. On the whole  
a are the bravest and most  
ing them all the credit that  
ive objections may be stated  
ans sufficient to protect our  
regular armies; and suffer  
French, and our opposition  
ations of defence will be il-  
the Ten of Twenty thousand  
plated by some, I shall then  
together with the aid of our  
efficient protection. Permit  
place, however disagreeable  
y be, they must inevitably be  
protection and safety of the  
ions to the envoys, and so  
re ample and commensurate  
d be made by France.  
Claiborne.

Knoxville, 11 June, 1798.  
I have received your  
several pamphlets therein en-  
pleasure, and am perfectly  
covered every reasonable dis-  
re-establishing that friend-  
period existed in so great a de-  
the French nation. I trust

and earnestly hope the measures, which have been taken by the  
Executive of the United States, will be deemed by the good peo-  
ple of America ample and highly proper and becoming the dig-  
nity of our American government. I beg leave to repeat that  
you may confidently depend that I shall use every means in my  
power to evince to the people of this state the great necessity  
of their united exertions, in defence of their country; and with  
great pleasure I do assure you I have not the smallest doubt, in  
case America should become invaded, that the people of Ten-  
nessee will unanimously be firm and alert in defending their  
country from the attacks and invasion of any foreign power  
whatever.

Permit me, sir, to solicit the honor of your communications on  
such matters as may be deemed proper to impart, touching the  
safety and interest of the United States.  
Honorable Timothy Pickering, Secretary  
of the department of State.

Knoxville, 20 June, 1798.

Dear Sir: Yours of the first instance I had the pleasure to re-  
ceive the sixteenth. Some considerable time since, I called on  
Colonel Henly to be informed what measures had been taken re-  
specting the muster rolls of the Nickajack expedition.<sup>111</sup> His  
answer was, that they had been forwarded to the Secretary of  
war's office, and that he had wrote him where they could be  
found. I suppose he has informed me candidly; it has not been  
in my power to apply a second time to Colonel Henly since I re-  
ceived your letter, but I will shortly do so, and inform you his  
answer. I am sorry that a war cannot be avoided; but, if it  
must be the case, I hope sincerely that our Americans will be  
unanimous in defending our country; division will ruin us, and  
it must be avoided.

Some of the Indian Chiefs have arrived at Tellico, and more  
daily expected, and as the Commissioners are all present I ap-  
prehend the negotiations will soon commence. All is peace in  
this country, and a prospect of fine crops.  
Honorable William C. C. Claiborne.

<sup>111</sup>Of September, 1794, Gen. James Robertson, of Mero District, and Maj. James  
Ore, of Washington District, being the leaders in the successful campaign.

Knoxville, 24 June, 1798.

Dear Sir: I received your favour of the 17 instant on the 23rd and learn with much regret that you have not received my letter. I wrote some considerable time past by a Colonel Jones, who promised me that the same should have a sure and speedy conveyance; I did not entertain the smallest doubt, but Mr. Jones would be as good as his promise, he knowing the contents, which was requesting your attendance at this place on the 20th Instant. If this should arrive before you have set out, let me entreat of you to come forward as speedily as possible to this place. To-morrow is the day appointed for the Indians to meet at Chota, and the treaty I expect will open in the course of this week, tho' I expect the Indians will be somewhat tardy in coming forward. Pray use your influence with Mr. Searcy to send forward some money.

General James Robertson,  
Mero District.

Knoxville, 24 June, 1798.

Sir: It is some considerable time since I wrote you a second letter on the subject of raising some money for the use of our Agents at the treaty. As I have received no answer to my second, I am much at a loss to know what I may depend upon. I shall be very much embarrassed, indeed, if you have it not in your power to furnish me with the thousand dollars, or considerable part, in fact any part will be of great utility, and never will in my opinion be of more essential service. Pray afford every assistance in your power, and send it forward as soon as possible. Whatever sum you may send forward, I will give a warrant and receipt for, to Mr. Maclin or any other person you may choose to receive the same on your behalf.

Robert Searcy, esquire, public  
treasurer Mero District.

Knoxville, 25 June, 1798.

Gentlemen: I am honored this day with yours of the 21st Instant. It affords me much pleasure to be informed that the Indians are about to assemble; hoping, as you have been pleased to suggest, that the treaty will shortly commence, and also, should the objects of your mission be accomplished, I have not

a doubt r  
missioner  
place it b  
self, with  
that the  
shortly b  
The Hon  
United S

Dear sir:  
24th. I l  
from me,  
Claiborne  
set out fo

The tre  
favorable  
if desired  
their plan  
as former  
every oth  
I assure  
governme  
in my op  
very shor  
done ever  
assuring  
ernment  
speedy a  
enemies  
little use

The en  
this coun  
Honorab

Dear Sir  
the mail  
quent, an  
its being



Knoxville, 24 June, 1798.  
 of the 17 instant on the 23rd  
 have not received my letter.  
 ast by a Colonel Jones, who  
 have a sure and speedy con-  
 nallest doubt, but Mr. Jones  
 knowing the contents, which  
 t this place on the 20th In-  
 you have set out, let me en-  
 speedily as possible to this  
 nted for the Indians to meet  
 ill open in the course of this  
 l be somewhat tardy in com-  
 nce with Mr. Searcy to send

Knoxville, 24 June, 1798.  
 since I wrote you a second  
 e money for the use of our  
 ceived no answer to my sec-  
 what I may depend upon. I  
 indeed, if you have it not in  
 thousand dollars, or consid-  
 e of great utility, and never  
 ntial service. Pray afford  
 send it forward as soon as  
 send forward, I will give a  
 lin of any other person you  
 our behalf.

Knoxville, 25 June, 1798.  
 with yours of the 21st In-  
 to be informed that the in-  
 g, as you have been pleased  
 ortly commence, and also,  
 e accomplished, I have not

a doubt remaining that nothing will be left undone by the Com-  
 missioners to designate the boundary in such a manner as to  
 place it beyond the possibility of misconstruction. I flatter my-  
 self, with great hope, you will have a successful negotiation, and  
 that the distressed people which have been removed will very  
 shortly be permitted to return to their farms and habitations.  
 The Honorable, The Commissioners on the part of the  
 United States, to treat with the Cherokees.

Knoxville, 28th June, 1798.

Dear sir: Yours of the 8th Instant, I was honored with on the  
 24th. I learn with surprize you have not received any letters  
 from me, for I beg you to be assured that I write to you and Mr.  
 Claiborne by almost every post, with few exceptions, since you  
 set out for Congress.

The treaty is just about to commence; the prospects appear  
 favorable, and I have no doubt a good treaty may be obtained  
 if desired by the Commissioners; the people are still kept off  
 their plantations, and the measures against them are as rigorous  
 as formerly, a conduct very contrary to my expectations, as also  
 every other person, a misfortune I am extremely sorry for; and  
 I assure you it begins to lessen the people's confidence in the  
 government beyond calculation, and nothing but a good treaty,  
 in my opinion, will ever regain that confidence, the people, a  
 very short time since, so fully placed in the government. I have  
 done every thing in my power to quiet the minds of the people,  
 assuring them that I had every reason to believe that the gov-  
 ernment would afford them every kind of relief in the most  
 speedy and ample manner; their patience is worn out, and the  
 enemies to government are in an indirect manner making no  
 little use of the opportunity to sour the minds of the people.

The emigration throughout the whole winter and spring to  
 this country, is beyond the most sanguine expectation.  
 Honorable Joseph Anderson.

Knoxville, 4 July, 1798.

Dear Sir: No mail from Philadelphia last week, the stopage of  
 the mail between Staunton and this place has become very fre-  
 quent, and it seems useless to complain with any expectation of  
 its being remedied, tho' the abuse is too great to be suffered. It

is a fact that one half of the papers and letters come to hand so late that we pay the postage for nothing; and another evil, I believe the half of the letters to and from this place neither comes or goes safe to hand.

The Indians comes in but slow to the treaty, tho' I am of opinion there will a great many attend after some time, nothing as yet is done in treaty. The people removed has obtained a few days to reap their grain, which has been suffering for the want of cutting.

Honorable Joseph Anderson and  
William C. C. Claiborne.

Knoxville, 4th July, 1798.

Gentlemen: Having appointed you as Agents on the part of this State, to attend the ensuing treaty now about to be held between the United States and the Cherokee Indians, you will therefore please to repair to Tellico Blockhouse, at which place you will be on the sixth Instant prepared to attend the negotiations at whatever point they may open.

It will be impossible to instruct you in the minutia of those interests, to which you are called to attend; as an outline, you will understand the State to require as extensive an extension of the indian claim north of the Tennessee, as may be obtained.

The communication of the Holston and Clinch with the Tennessee, and the right hand of the last river from our Southeast boundary to its confluence with the Clinch, are points to which you will direct your attention, as also to secure from future molestation the settlements so far as they have progressed on the northern and western borders of the state. The connecting the districts of Mero and Hamilton now separated by a space of unextinguished hunting grounds of near eighty miles in width, will be considered by you Gentlemen as an object of great importance, as the inconveniences resulting from the present state of our settlements must be obvious to every mind conversant with the geography of the country, and is certainly too irksome to be continued, when the facts are fairly represented.

Among your duties will be an examination of the ground of the Cherokee claim, either as derived from original rights, or founded on treaties; and, if on investigation you shall find such right settle into a mere temporary use, antecedant to the Holston treaty, it may perhaps be proper to question the constitu-

tionality  
of the w  
the gove

In all  
rily be l  
that dis  
on the p  
it canno  
to the ac

I trust  
your ob  
part of  
interest  
selves w  
tures yo

Roads  
to settle  
utility a  
molested  
ed bound  
be nece  
from riv  
the imp  
commer

You v  
with nee  
at the t  
warrant  
expende  
ceed in  
agency,

Wishi  
state.  
James I  
Lachlan

and letters come to hand so  
g; and another evil, I be-  
n this place neither comes

treaty, tho' I am of opin-  
er some time, nothing as  
moved has obtained a few  
en suffering for the want

noxville, 4th July, 1798.

as Agents on the part of  
y now about to be held be-  
erokee Indians, you will  
lockhouse, at which place  
red to attend the negotia-

in the minutia of those in-  
nd; as an outline, you will  
ensive an extention of the  
s may be obtained.

and Clinch with the Ten-  
river from our Southeast  
linch, are points to which  
to secure from future mo-  
y have progressed on the  
state. The connecting the  
eparated by a space of un-  
eighty miles in width, will  
n object of great import-  
from the present state of  
ery mind conversant with  
ertainly too irksome to be  
epresented.

mination of the ground of  
d from original rights, or  
gation you shall find such  
e, antecedant to the Hols-  
to question the constitu-

tionality of that measure, that prostrated the guaranteed rights  
of the whole state, and to shew the Act of Cession, operative on  
the government prior to this treaty.

In all appointments however of this kind much must necessa-  
rily be left discretionary, and perhaps there is no instance where  
that discretion must be suffered to assume a wider range than  
on the present occasion. Accept the assurances of my belief that  
it cannot be better placed, and will in no instance be used more  
to the advantage of the state you represent.

I trust it is unnecessary to remind you that your duties, and  
your objects, will be so connected with the Commissioners on the  
part of the United States, that you will yield every thing of the  
interest and dignity of the State you represent to preserve your-  
selves well with them. Please advise me frequently of the fea-  
tures your negotiations assume.

Roads opened from this state, to any of the adjacent ones, and  
to settlements in various parts of our own State, will be of much  
utility and convenience, and also to have the privilege of the un-  
molested navigation of all rivers and waters within the charter-  
ed bounds of the State, and particularly to obtain, where it may  
be necessary, suitable ports for deposit, and carrying places  
from river to river, so as to facilitate, and make easy as possible  
the import and exportation of all the articles necessary for the  
commercial intercourse of the state.

You will please engage some suitable person to supply you  
with necessary stores for your support during your attendance  
at the treaty, and for the discharge of the same I will grant a  
warrant or warrants on the treasury for the necessary sum to be  
expended on that occasion, which is to be understood not to ex-  
ceed in the whole expedition relative to the objects of your  
agency, one thousand dollars.

Wishing you every success compatible with the interest of the  
state.

James Robertson, James Stewart,  
Lachlan McIntosh, esquires.