



## THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI RESEARCH CENTER-KANSAS CITY

K0147

Fort Osage Records

1808-1815

Four rolls of microfilm

*Correspondence, reports and other documents found in the National Archives pertaining to the establishment and operation of Fort Osage, near what is now Sibley, Missouri.*

### HISTORY:

Fort Osage, located in the northeast corner of Jackson County, near the town of Sibley, Missouri, was the first occupation of the county by the United States and the most westerly and successful of the 28 such posts operated under the United States factory system.

The Fort and its adjacent factory (e.g. trading post) were constructed between September and November, 1808 by the St. Charles Dragoons and the First U.S. Infantry under the direction of William Clark, newly appointed Commander of Militia and Indian Agent for the Louisiana Territories, and the command of Captain Eli B. Clemson. The structures represented an established federal policy to regulate the rapidly growing fur trade, discourage British traders from the North and Spanish merchants from the South, and to provide protection for the new western settlements from the Osage and other tribes of the area. While supervising the construction of the Fort, Clark signed a treaty with the Great and Little Osage ceding to the Osage all territories west of a line beginning approximately 27 miles east of the mouth of the Kaw River and running south from the Missouri River to the Arkansas state line. The ceded lands included all of present day Jackson, Cass, Bates, Vernon, Barton, Jasper, Newton and McDonald Counties, excepting a six mile square area near the Fort which provided for its support. In return, the Great and Little Osage removed their villages to the vicinity of the Fort and relinquished their claim to all lands east of this line.

During its brief history, the Fort hosted many important events and individuals. In 1811, the Astorians left Fort Osage on the first expedition, after Lewis and Clark, to reach the Pacific. Daniel Boone spent nearly two weeks

visiting the Fort in 1816, his 85th year. In 1819, the Army's Yellowstone expedition under the command of Stephen Long brought the first steamboats up the Missouri and removed the Fort garrison to establish Fort Atkinson, near the present Omaha. The first successful trading party to Santa Fe under Captain William Becknell stopped at the Fort in 1821. And, the 1825 federal survey of the Trail began at the gates of the Fort with George C. Sibley appointed as one of its commissioners.

The trading house continued in operation until 1822, when the United States factory system was abandoned under pressure from the fur companies. The Fort's structure remained, but was eventually dismantled by local residents after the 1825 Osage treaty which granted the remaining Osage lands to the state of Missouri and cleared the way for the establishment of Jackson and the other counties which had been Indian Territory under the 1808 agreement. By the beginning of the 20th century, only a part of the rock foundation remained.

In the early 1940s, the Native Sons of Kansas City and other local organizations undertook to locate and reconstruct the Fort which culminated in the dedication of Blockhouse No. 1 in September of 1948. Reconstruction and maintenance of the Fort as a museum has continued under the direction of the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department.

#### PROVENANCE:

These records were a gift from Gary Toms, Curator of Historic Sites with the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department as accession KA0279 on April 1, 1985. The film is a duplicate of rolls owned by the Department and the National Archives - Kansas City Branch.

#### COPYRIGHT AND RESTRICTIONS:

The Donor has given and assigned to the University of Missouri all rights of copyright which the Donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

#### PREFERRED CITATION:

Specific item; folder number; *Fort Osage Records (K0147)*; The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

#### CONTACT:

*The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City  
302 Newcomb Hall, University of Missouri-Kansas City  
5123 Holmes Street, Kansas City, MO 64110-2499*

(816) 235-1543 [SHSofMO-KC@umsystem.edu](mailto:SHSofMO-KC@umsystem.edu)  
<http://shs.umsystem.edu/index.shtml>

#### DESCRIPTION:

The records are microform copies of correspondence, reports and other documents found in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. pertaining to the establishment and operation of a fort and factory, Fort Osage, near what is now Sibley, Missouri. Two of the rolls are part of the National Archives Microfilm Publication Series for letters received between June 1808 and December 1809, by the Secretary of War from correspondents whose surnames or offices began with the letter "C". The remaining two rolls were specially microfilmed for the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department from the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Record Group 75); the records of the Office of the Quartermaster General (Record Group 92); and the records of the Adjutant General's Office (Record Group 94).

#### INVENTORY:

- Roll 1. Letters Received by the Secretary of War, "C" Letters, June-November 1808 [NARA C90-C269, Microcopy #221, roll 19]
- Roll 2. Letters Received by the Secretary of War, "C" Letters, October 1808-December 1809 [NARA C270-C691, Microcopy #221, roll 20]
- Roll 3. Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, re: Fort Osage and Factory, 1808-1815 [RG 75]
- Ft. Osage Factory records (Arrow Rock)
  - Ft. Osage Trading House, 1808-1809 [154 pages]
  - Ft. Osage Trading House, 1810 [172 pages]
  - Ft. Osage Trading House, 1811 [142 pages]
  - Ft. Osage Trading House, 1812 [165 pages]
  - Osage Factory at Arrow Rock and St. Louis , Mo. after September 30, 1813 [187 pages]
  - Osage Factory at Arrow Rock - Geo. C. Sibley 1814 [126 pages]
  - Osage Factory and St. Louis Factories – Johnson and Sibley, 1815 [110 pages]
- Roll 4. Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General and the Adjutant General, re: Ft. Osage, 1808-1812 [RG 92]
- Consolidated Correspondence File: Fort Osage, Missouri, 1808-1811

General Information Index: Typed copy of letter from Captain  
E.B. Clemson to Lieutenant Col. D. Bissell, July 22, 1812

Letter from Captain E.B. Clemson to Secretary of War,  
William Eustis, July 16, 1812