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Letter to George Chase

Dudley Chase

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Washington Dec: 6th 1816
K. Ch. 161206

Dear George,

Your highly esteemed favor of the 8th Inst. is rec^d and very attentively perused. It is with peculiar pleasure that I observe in your letter the honorable emotions which prompted you to form, and the very flattering confidence that induced you to communicate to me, the project therein developed. Your studies of late have been calculated to excite a taste for such an expedition, and your zeal to engage in it, is certainly praiseworthy; and I have not the smallest doubt that your information and acquirements, amply qualify you to acquit yourself in the undertaking with honor.

If the object of the Gov^t, in sending Genl. Porter & Col^l Hawkins to the Lake of the Woods, was to obtain a knowledge of the Geography of that district, and hitherto unexplored section of our Country - to ascertain its soil, mines, minerals, fossils, its vegetable and animal production, the organization of a corps of men of learning and science to accompany the commissioners would be highly proper. Such was the object of the Gov^t when the expedition under Lewis & Clarke was projected. Perhaps the course you allude to, that the Gov^t neglected to engage a suitable number of men of science to attend that expedition, was just. But I apprehend that the business of the Commissioners above

mentioned is of a different nature, having little or no
analogy to objects of that sort. The ascertainment of the
boundary line between the United States and the Province
of Upper Canada is the only business that constitutes
the official duty of the Comm^{rs}. The main channel of
the rivers, and the middle of the lakes, which sep-
-ates the adjacent territories of the two countries
are to be ascertained & delineated. The line will be
a water line nearly if not quite the whole way. The
bone of contention, will be the Islands that lay in the
rivers and lakes thro' which the line passes. Besides, the
expenses of this survey are to be born by the two nations
jointly, and any arrangements for researches & exami-
-nations which are to result in the special & peculiar
benefit of one only of the two countries, will not be
wholly to receive the cooperation of the other.

However, it may be that the Executive Authority
has made some calculations to avail the United
States of the opportunity for the purpose of obtaining
a knowledge of that section of our country, so
desirable, & which would prove highly useful
to the Nation. The opportunity is certainly safe, tho'
it may not in other respects be apropos.

I will, my Dear General, enquire into the views
& intentions of the Government, in relation to
this subject, and if there is any intention
of the nature you mention, I will not fail
to obtain for ^{you} a place suited to your wishes, in
one or the other of the expeditions alluded to.

The wish you have expressed, meets with my

cardinal approbation.

I can not but think that the General will
not deem it proper to use the occasion in the
way you have imagined. Should therefore
advise you not to engage your feelings
too much in the expectation of being
fixed.

I am, Dear George,

Yours most affectionately

Dudley Church

Mr. George Bruce

Newbury

Canada