

## Letter from William Clark to Charbonneau

Unit: Women (Middle and High School)

On Board the Perogue Near the Ricara Village  
August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1806

Sir

Your present situation with the Indians gives me some concern. I wish now that I had advised you to come on with me to the Illinois where it most probably would be in my power to put you in some way to do something for your self. I was so engaged after the *Big White* had concluded to go down with Jessomme as his Interpreter, that I had not time to talk with you as much as I intended to have done. You have been a long time with me and have conducted your Self in such a manner as to gain my friendship, your woman who accompanied you that long dangerous and fatiguing rout to the Pacific Ocean and back deserved a greater reward for her attention and services on that rout than we had in our power to give her at the Mandans. As to your little Son (my boy *Pomp*) you well know my fondness for him and my anxiety to take and raise him as my own child. I once more tell you if you will bring your son Baptiest to me I will educate him and treat him as my own child. I do not forget the promise which I made to you and shall now repeat them that you may be certain. Charbono, if you wish to live with the white people, and you will come to me I will give you a piece of land and furnish you with horses cows & hogs. If you wish to visit your friends in *Montrall* I will let you have a horse, and your family shall be taken care of until your return. If you wish to return as an Interpreter for the Menetarras when the troops come up to form the establishment, you will be with me ready and I will procure you the place—or if you wish to return to trade with the Indians and will leave your little *Son Pomp* with me, I will assist you with merchandize for that purpose from time [to time] and become myself concerned with you in trade on a Small scale that is to say not exceeding a perogue load at one time. If you are disposed to accept either of my offers to you and will bring down your *Son* your famn Janey had best come along with you to take care of the boy until I get him. Let me advise you to keep your Bill of Exchange and what furs and pelteries you have in possession, and get as much more as you can—and get as many robes, and big horn and Cabbra skins as you can collect in the course of this winter and take them down to St. Louis as early as possible in the Spring. When you get to St. Louis enquire of the Governor of that place for a letter which I shall leave with him for you. In the letter which I shall leave with the governor I shall inform you of what you had best do with your furs pelteries and robes &c. and direct you where to find me. If you should meet with any misfortune on the river &c. when you get to St. Louis write a letter to me by the post and let me know your situation. If you do not intend to go down either this fall or in the Spring, write a letter to me by the first opportunity and inform me what you intend to do that I may know if I

may expect you or not. If you ever intend to come down this fall or the next Spring will be the best time. This fall would be best if you could get down before the winter. I shall be found either in St. Louis or in Clarksville at the Falls of the Ohio.

Wishing you and your family great success & with anxious expectations of seeing my little dancing boy Baptist I shall remain your Friend,

WILLIAM CLARK

Keep this letter and let not more than one or 2 persons see it, and when you write to me seal your letter. I think you best not determine which of my offers to accept until you see me. Come prepared to accept of either which you may choose after you get down.

Mr. Teousant Charbono

Minnetarras Village