

William Dunbar to Thomas Jefferson, November 10, 1805, from Thomas Jefferson and Early Western Explorers, Transcribed and Edited by Gerard W. Gawalt, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

William Dunbar to Thomas Jefferson

Natchez 10th Novr. 1805

Dear Sir

An Apology is due for the late appearance of my sketch of the Washita river, and I have not a good one to offer; I was not aware that upwards of twelve hundred Courses and distances would require so much time to reduce from time to measure in length & into latitude and departure; I had counted only upon a few days labor & therefore delayed too long to commence; and now it is not completed as I intended, which was to mark out the valley within which the Washita describes its meanders, and the alluvial Country below, subject to the inundation of the Mississippi; but I expect every instant the Post rider to call returning from Fort Adams, and I think it better to Send it in its present State, than to delay another week, fearing already that it may arrive later than it was your desire to receive it.

I shall have the pleasure of writing you again in a few days & will then transmit a calculation for the Longitude of the Post of Washita from the Moon's greatest altitude near the meridian; it agrees very near with a calculation from an observed eclipse of the Moon. Some distance above the Washita; I place so much confidence in it, that I believe it to be my best observation for the Longitude of that place.

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I have the honor to be with the greatest respect, Your most Obedient Servant, William Dunbar

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