

Wheat would thrive in the fertile soil, but it was not grown because there were no mills for grinding flour. Large plantations were also in evidence where corn, cotton, and tobacco were raised for sale, and at Lac Moir were salt-works where two crippled old men with a dozen pots and kettles made six bushels of salt per day, enough to supply the whole region. Saline springs were abundant, and a Captain Burnett had brought negro slaves up the river, meaning to exploit this industry.

Dr. Sibley turned back far short of the source of Red River, but from a Frenchman, Brevel, who had been bred among the Pamis, he learned that the upper river was not navigable. The Indians themselves had no boats, partly because there was no timber available and partly because the treacherous current, fairly disappearing in the dry season and rising to a torrent with the spring and autumn floods, made even canoes an uncertain means of transportation. They relied rather on horses, with which they were well furnished, and on which they hunted the wild bison of the plains. Brevel had accompanied his Indian friends as far west as the Spanish settlements in the Rio Grande Valley. He estimated the distance from the Pima villages to be some three hundred miles. Sibley thought that the most valuable land on Red River began about sixty miles above the upper settlements (seventy miles above Rapide) and extended four hundred miles beyond. "About eighty or ninety years ago, a number of Frenchmen settled on this part of Red River; they built a merchant mill, with burr stones (which they brought