

Assistant Quartermasters Office
Memph. Mis 20th October 1863.

Robertson Tapp Esq.

Memph. Mis Tenn.

Sir,

In reply to your communication of this date I have to say there are no objections to Mr. Church's bringing one or more boats to this place from above for the purpose of establishing a regular line between this city and Vicksburg, on the contrary I shall be glad to encourage any such undertaking by giving freights &c from this point. I cannot however guarantee that such boats will not be taken for government service in case they ^{are} ~~were~~ needed, but will say in this connection it is the policy

to encourage at all times regular lines
of boats, as has been the case with the
Memphis & St. Louis line, the Cincinnati
& Louisville line and other I could name.

This letter is given with the understanding
that in case such a line be established as
you seem to propose, all business will be
transacted strictly in accordance with
military orders now in existence or that
may be issued hereafter as well as those
of the Treasury Department.

About the navigation of the Arkansas
river I can say nothing at present -

Very Respectfully

Yours &c

J. W. Lewis

Capt. U. S. A.