

1872

# Report of the Agent of the Penobscot Tribe of Indians

George F. Dillingham  
*Indian Agent, State of Maine*

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# REPORT OF THE AGENT

OF THE

## PENOBSCOT TRIBE OF INDIANS

FOR THE YEAR

1872.

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AUGUSTA:

SPRAGUE, OWEN & NASH, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1873.

# REPORT.

*To the Hon. Governor and Council of Maine:*

Agreeably to the requirements of law, the following report of the Agent for Penobscot Tribe of Indians for the year ending December 1, 1872, is respectfully submitted. The receipts and expenditures under the various appropriations of the last Legislature, as will more fully appear by the accompanying account and vouchers, have been as follows:

EXPENDITURES.		
For amount paid Superintending School Committees of Oldtown, Greenbush and Lincoln, per resolve.....		\$400 00.
Amount paid Susup Sooklexis, salary, Governor, per resolve.....		50 00
“	“ Attian Orson, salary, Lieut. Governor, per resolve....	30 00
“	“ Rev. John Duddy, salary, Priest, per resolve.....	100 00
“	“ Superintendents farming, salaries, per resolve.....	150 00.
“	“ for agricultural purposes, per resolve.....	1,000 00
“	“ for fence around Indian cemetery, per resolve.....	100 00
“	“ for bounty on crops, per resolve.....	500 00
“	“ for goods for annuity, per resolve.....	1,800 00
“	“ salary of agent, per resolve.....	300 00
Amount interest on trust fund, expended as follows:		
“	“ paid for goods for spring dividends.....	\$713 07
“	“ support of poor, aged, infirm and sick.....	3,249 47
“	“ medicine and medical attendance.....	390 49
“	“ funeral expenses.....	149 02
“	“ wood for tribe.....	788 80
“	“ incidental expenses.....	93 18
		4,382 03
		\$8,812 03
RECEIPTS.		
1872.	By warrant, two thousand dollars.....	\$2,000 00
April,	“ two thousand dollars.....	2,000 00
May,	“ one thousand dollars.....	1,000 00
Sept.,	“ twenty-five hundred dollars.....	2,500 00
Oct.,	“ one thousand fifty-four dollars and fifty cents.....	1,054 50
Dec.,	amount received for grass sold.....	3 00
“	“ from appropriation for agriculture.....	151 63
“	“ “ for bounties.....	6 85
“	“ “ for annuity.....	96 05
		\$8,812 03

It will be seen that the appropriation of two hundred dollars to be expended under the direction and supervision of the Superintending School Committee of Greenbush, in building a school

house on Olamon island, has not been expended. Upon consultation with the Committee, it was deemed by them to be for the best interest of that portion of the tribe living in that vicinity to make an arrangement with the school authorities of that town, whereby the Indian children living there could be allowed to attend the district schools of the whites; accordingly such arrangements were made, and the eighty dollars appropriated for support of schools on Olamon island has been added to the fund of that district, and the Indians have attended their school during the summer, and will be allowed to attend during the ensuing winter. There being no present necessity for a school house on Olamon island the Committee have not drawn the appropriation. This arrangement appears to them to be peculiarly beneficial to the Indians, as not only furnishing a longer term of school, but greater facilities and inducements to obtain an education. In the separate schools for the Indians their standard of education is not very high, and whenever any child has come near that standard he seems to think he has acquired all that is necessary in that direction; while by attending school with whites there is set before him a higher standard, and his natural ambition excites him to reach that point and be equal with his playfellows, and seeing and hearing the different exercises of the school, with constant intercourse with the whites, gives him additional facilities for acquiring a knowledge and understanding of our language, as well as the usual studies he pursues.

Under the appropriation of one hundred dollars for building a fence around the old cemetery on Oldtown island, a common picket fence has been built, and one coat of paint put on, at a cost of one hundred and thirty-nine dollars. I used my best endeavors to keep within the appropriation, but was not able in this particular. The fence is about four hundred and fifty feet in length. It will require a second coat of paint in the spring.

The portion of the appropriation of 1871 for support of schools, reported by me last year as retained by the Superintending School Committee, was during the past winter fully expended, and a portion of the appropriation of 1872 is retained for the purpose of defraying the school expenses of this winter. Schools have also been taught during the past summer at Mattanawcook and Oldtown, and opportunities for schooling furnished at Olamon, as before stated. From personal observation and inquiries I consider this department to have been carefully and judiciously managed

by those who have the more immediate charge of the matter. For an account of the attendance, progress, and other particulars of the various schools, I would refer to the reports of the respective Superintending School Committees.

In the winter an unusual amount of sickness prevailed among the tribe, especially measles, scarcely a family escaping the disease, and in many instances every member of the family was sick with the epidemic at the same time.

Many of the tribe have during the fall made improvements in their houses. This they are enabled to do from their savings in the result of their labor and profits in selling baskets and their other wares at the different watering places. Such investments have ever appeared to me as highly commendable in them, as well as a true indication of advancement, for they thereby not only promote their comfort and convenience, but also cultivate habits of industry, prudence and economy, as a necessary result.

Horses, cows and oxen, are now owned by different members of the tribe. I would instance this fact as another indication of an intention to abandon a roving life, and make their home a permanent place of abode.

The trust fund of this tribe now amounts to about seventy-one thousand dollars, the interest on which at six per cent. being about forty-two hundred dollars, supports the poor, furnishes them with medicine, medical attendance, defrays their funeral expenses, and provides for the spring distribution to all the tribe, of goods consisting of corn, flour, pork and molasses. From the increased amount of interest I have been enabled to give to each person one bushel of corn, being double that heretofore given, and also a larger amount of wood than in previous years.

Prior to 1869 the leases of the shores of the tribe yielded a merely nominal rent, an amount not sufficient to awaken interest enough in the tribe to look after the rents. Under those circumstances all rents had been paid into the State Treasury without question. Since that date the rent, under the new leases, have become of importance to the tribe, and they are desirous of examining into their rights thereto. The increase of interest results from the leasing of these shores. The shores now under lease yield an income of about five thousand dollars yearly, which is paid, according to the terms of the several leases, into the State Treasury, and has hitherto been added to the trust fund of the tribe. There is no law or resolve for such disposal of the shore

rents. There is a growing impression among the tribe that these rents belong to them, and that some provision should be made by which they could be distributed in cash equally among the tribe, rather than simply to receive the interest on such amounts. There would appear to be some justice in their claim, and I know of no reason why they are not as much entitled to receive rents for the use of their shores, as to receive rents for the use of their other lands or houses. I would suggest as equitable and probably satisfactory to the tribe that the usual appropriation for the schools, for salary of Governor, Lieutenant-Governor and Priest, be authorized by a general law to be taken from these rents and the balance be to equally divided among the tribe, and paid over to them in the months of February or March of each year.

This method would accomplish another desirable result. Many of the tribe have by the middle of winter used up the money they have obtained in the previous summer by work and traffic and are frequently in destitute condition in the early spring. If they could then receive the assistance these rents would afford, it would relieve them of much distress, and would prevent their roving off to distant towns, where by any accident to them or their business, they may be compelled to ask charity or become town charges.

Last year, I suggested that a change in the time of holding their election would be of benefit to the tribe, without any injurious effect on legislation, or on the State. Upon further experience I am more fully convinced that the change should be made. They esteem it a matter of vital importance that they should vote at every election, and the present time assigned for their election subjects them to much loss in time as well as money and business. In September, the greater part of the tribe are at the watering places selling baskets and other wares. To leave at that time involves loss in time and trade, also expense of travel in coming and returning. In December, and during Christmas days, they are all or nearly all at home, I would therefore recommend that the time of their election be changed from the second Tuesday of September to the third Tuesday of December.

GEO. F. DILLINGHAM,  
*Agent Penobscot Indians.*

December 1, 1872.