

1876

Report of the Agent of the Penobscot Tribe of Indians

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Indian Agent, State of Maine

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REPORT OF THE AGENT

OF THE

PENOBSCOT TRIBE OF INDIANS,

FOR THE YEAR

1876.



AUGUSTA:

SPRAGUE, OWEN & NASH, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1876.

REPORT.

To the Honorable Governor and Council of Maine :

Agreeably to the laws requiring the Agent for the Penobscot Tribe of Indians to make report yearly of the moral, social and physical condition of that tribe, and also an account of the receipts and expenditures of money in their behalf, the following is respectfully submitted as such report, for the year 1876. The Governor and Council have issued their warrants for the benefit of the tribe of the following dates and amounts, viz :

April,	warrant.....	\$2,100 00
June,	“	1,500 00
October,	“	3,000 00
December,	“ for support insane.....	99 21
December,	“ for balance	1,479 70
	Amount from appropriation for agriculture	34 60
	“ “ annuity	215 75
	“ Spring dividend.....	7 75
		\$8,437 01

This has been expended under the several treaties, laws and resolves of this State in behalf of the tribe, for the following general purposes, viz :

For agricultural purposes,	per resolve.....	\$800 00
	bounty on crops, “	400 00
	chapel repairs, “	100 00
	Lola Coly, “	100 00
	goods for annuity, “	1,800 00
	superintendents of farming, “	150 00
	salary of Agent, “	300 00
Interest on trust fund expended as follows, viz:		
For goods for spring dividend.....	\$652 25	
support of poor, aged, infirm and sick	2,165 08	
“ insane	105 48	
medicine and medical attendance	342 31	
funeral expenses.....	198 83	
wood for tribe	1,014 57	
bounty on crops in excess of appropriation	48 80	
repairs of chapel and purchase of vestments in excess of appropriation	136 30	
incidental expenses.....	123 09	
		4,787 01
		\$8,437 01

The items composing these general charges are herewith submitted in the accompanying vouchers.

Not included in the above named warrants are the rentals from leases of the tribe's shores. For the year 1875,

Received from State Treasury, Feb. 26, 1876.....	\$5,084 43
Unexpended from 1874.....	277 77
	<hr/>
	\$5,362 20

From this fund have been paid, under the requirements of the resolve of the Legislature of 1873, the special appropriations for the year 1876, to wit:

To S. S. Committee of Oldtown, for support of school on Oldtown island.....	\$255 00
To S. S. Committee of Lincoln, for support of school on Mattanawcook island.....	80 00
To S. S. Committee of Greenbush, for support of school on Olamon island.....	70 00
To Rev. John Duddy, salary as priest.....	100 00
To Sabattis J. Mitchell, salary as Governor.....	50 00
To John Neptune, salary as Lieut. Governor.....	30 00
To repairs of schoolhouse on Olamon island.....	56 06
There has been divided among the members of the tribe, as required by chapter 267 of the laws of 1873, and paid over to them, as will appear more fully by the account herewith submitted and marked "G"....	4,466 00
Leaving a balance to be added to the fund for distribution in February next among the tribe, as provided by the last named chapter, of.....	260 14
	<hr/>
	\$5,362 20

The census of the-tribe, as taken by the Superintending School Committee of Oldtown, in January, 1876, shows the number to be four hundred and forty-eight.

Chapter 267 of the laws of 1873, provides that "Specific appropriations for the benefit of the Indians of the Penobscot tribe, for support of schools, salaries of Governor, and Lieut. Governor and priests, shall be paid by and under the direction of the Governor and Council, from rents accruing to the State under the provisions of chapter nine section twenty of the Revised Statutes, and received into the treasury during the year such appropriations are made; and the balance of the annual aggregate of such rents for

such year, shall be divided among the members of said tribe per capita." Whether this law should be amended, or the acts of appropriation for the above named specific purposes should give the Governor and Council power to draw for such appropriations from other sources, in case of deficiency of such funds, will depend probably upon the action of the Legislature upon several cases where lessees have failed to pay the rents as stipulated in their leases. Should the action desired by these lessees be granted by the Legislature, it is fair to presume that other lessees will decline to pay and ask for similar action on their leases, thus postponing payment of all rentals, compelling the reforming of all leases and depriving the Indians of the fund from which to pay said specific appropriations. The facts in the cases I refer to, as near as I am able to ascertain, are as follows: Leases of certain shores, requiring payment of the rental to be made to the Treasurer of the State of Maine, on the first day of May, annually, have been executed to Daniel Lunt, Lunt & Rolfe, White, Averill & Co., Samuel Low, Wentworth Maxfield and Isaac F. Russell. These parties neglected to pay the rents accruing last May, and still do decline to make such payments, claiming that such rents are excessive and that a reduction should be had corresponding to the depreciation in the demand and price for labor and materials and other expenses that enter into the lumbering business, and in proportion to the decline and depression of the lumbering business generally. Suits to enforce the payment of the stipulated rents have been instituted and are now pending in the Supreme Court at Bangor. It is believed that said parties are all responsible and will pay whatever judgment may be obtained in those suits, but are now delaying action before the court for the purpose of gaining time to lay the matter before the Legislature, and asking them to grant a reduction on their rents. Such delay in the payment of these shore rents is injurious to the Indians, not only in the matters above named, but in their general manner of conducting their business. The dividend from this source, coming to them in midwinter, enables them in a large degree to procure credit, or the means of sustenance during all the winter, and is in fact one of their principal means of subsistence, not only at Oldtown island and vicinity, but along the whole river, at Olamon, Mattanawcook and other permanent settlements, and without this, they would be unable to save so large a portion of their productions of baskets and other wares, manufactured by them in the winter for their

sales at the seaside and summer watering places, where they realize much larger prices for such results of their labor than they would if compelled to sell them in the dull season of winter at their homes. These parties do not claim any inability to perform their part of the leases, but simply a depreciation in the value of the shores, and that they bid off said shores at the public auction at a much higher rate than they or any one would be willing to pay for them now. All these shores were formerly let for a long term of years to the lumbering community, at a nominal sum, (for about one hundred dollars) and the business largely increased during the life time of such lease, but I have yet to learn of a case where any lessee came before the Legislature and prayed justice, and for the privilege of paying a higher rent, and in proportion to the demands of business.

Schools have been taught during the year at all the places designated in the appropriation act. In some of them the whole appropriation has been fully expended, and in the others will be expended before spring, schools being now in operation.

Annual election was held November 1st, at which Tomer Attian was elected Governor, Saul Neptune, Lieutenant Governor, and Sabattis Dana, Delegate to the Legislature. A larger vote was cast than at previous elections, many participating in the election who have in former years refrained from voting, and the indications are that a much pleasanter state of political feeling prevails than for several years past.

There has been less demand for labor, and consequently a lower rate of wages has prevailed among the tribe for the past year. Sales of baskets, etc., at summer resorts, have been less in quantity and in price than in previous seasons.

No prevalent diseases have raged among the tribe during the year, and their condition socially, morally and physically has remained about the same. They have during the year established and maintained certain police regulations at Oldtown village, which has produced highly commendable results.

One of the tribe has been confined in the State hospital, for insanity. In July last he was discharged as wholly recovered, and has appeared sane ever since. The expense attending his treatment has been \$105.

On a petition presented to the Legislature last winter by the Indians, an appropriation was granted to be used exclusively for chapel repairs. Under that appropriation the old pews have been

removed from the chapel and replaced by new ones of ash, and built in modern style, improving very much the interior appearance of the building. As the petition asked more particularly for a grant to purchase vestments for their church, it was deemed that such purchase would come within the intention of the act, and accordingly there was purchased by the priest suitable vestments, which are charged in the accompanying accounts. It will be perceived that the cost of the repairs and vestments has exceeded the appropriation by \$136, and that this excess has been paid from balances remaining unexpended from appropriations granted for other purposes, as shown in this settlement.

In 1836 a large lot of land was surveyed and laid out on the west side of Orson island and reserved for a public farm. A farmer was employed, in accordance with the treaty, and paid by the State. A dwelling house and other suitable buildings were erected for his use on the farm, a yoke of oxen purchased to do the farm work, to plow for the Indians on their individual lots and also to draw wood and work generally for the tribe in the winter season, and various tools and farm implements were purchased for the use of this public farm. It may be that this investment did not prove very successful or very beneficial to the tribe, but from some cause or other, it appears to have been decided to abandon the public farm, and by act (chapter 96) approved March 14th, 1862, "The Agent of the Penobscot tribe was authorized to lease the public farm on Orson island, and appropriate the accruing rents to the use of the schools of said tribe." In conformity with that act the farm was leased for a term of five years, at twenty-five dollars per year, the farmer was discharged, the oxen and all the farming implements sold. The farm has been under lease ever since that time, the last lease having been made on the 10th of March, 1873, for five years, on a yearly rental of fifteen dollars.

Complaints are frequently made by the Indians that the wood cut by the occupant of the farm is of much greater value than the annual rent received for the farm. Applications are also made to the Agent, each spring, for land to cultivate, by members of the tribe who have not land, they neither never having had any lot assigned to them, or, if assigned, having sold or otherwise lost it; or the lot assigned them having been located on some distant island, too far away to be available. I would, therefore, respectfully recommend, in order to obviate these complaints and to satisfy such applicants, that, at the expiration of the present lease

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PENOBSCOT INDIANS.

of the public farm, the Agent should be authorized to assign, for such term as he may deem for the interest of the applicants, respectively, lots on the cultivated portion of said farm to the members of the tribe who may desire to use such land for agricultural purposes.

GEORGE F. DILLINGHAM,

Agent Penobscot Indians.

STATE OF MAINE.

In COUNCIL, Augusta, December 21, 1876.

On motion of Mr. STANLEY,

ORDERED, That 1,000 copies be printed.

S. J. CHADBOURNE,

Secretary of State.