

1882

Report of the Agent of the Penobscot Tribe of Indians

Charles A. Bailey

Indian Agent, State of Maine

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REPORT OF THE AGENT

OF THE

Penobscot Tribe of Indians,

FOR THE YEAR

1882.

AUGUSTA:

SPRAGUE & SON, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1883.

REPORT.

To the Honorable Governor and Council:

The agent of the Penobscot tribe of Indians being required by law to submit a report annually of the condition of said tribe and of the expenditures in their behalf, the following with accompanying vouchers is respectfully submitted for the year ending December 1, 1882:

APPROPRIATIONS.

Chapter 50, page 51, Resolves 1881.

Amount, interest Indian Trust Fund.....	\$4,429 70
annual annuity	1,500 00
agriculture	700 00
bounty on crops	450 00
schools.....	600 00
salary of Agent.....	200 00
Governor of tribe.....	50 00
Lieut. Governor of tribe.....	30 00
Priest.....	100 00
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	\$8,059 70

The following is a statement of receipts and expenditures:

RECEIPTS.

1882. Feb., State warrant.....	\$2,000 00
April, " "	1,800 00
Sept., " "	3,000 00
Dec., " "	1,259 70
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	\$8,059 70

From W. H. Chesley, rent Brown islands.....	\$16 00
S. Low, rent Mexico islands	10 00
C. M. White, rent Orson islands.....	10 00
W. Ingalls, rent Boom islands.....	2 00
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	\$8,097 70
annuity appropriation overdrawn.....	218 00
	<hr/>
	\$8,315 70

EXPENDITURES.

For agriculture.....	\$697 23
bounty on crops.....	315 25
goods for annuity.....	1,718 00
schools	580 79
salary of Agent.....	200 00
Priest.....	100 00
Governor of tribe.....	50 00
Lieut. Governor of tribe	30 00
goods for spring dividend.....	701 26
support of poor, sick, &c.....	2,313 79
medicine and medical attendance.	323 00
burial expenses.....	193 28
wood for tribe.....	983 13
incidental expenses.....	109 97
	<hr/>
	\$8,315 70

In addition to the foregoing is the distribution of shore-rents of 1881, under special act, chapter 267, laws of 1873.

The receipts from this source were:

1882, March, State warrant.....	\$1,167 00
Balance from last year	40 00
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	\$1,207 00

CONTRA.

Distribution per capita to members of the tribe as per schedule.....	\$1,141 25
Paid for advertising shores for rent..	13 50
balance to next year	52 25
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	\$1,207 00

The appropriation for the annual annuity again proved insufficient for the expenditures demanded by the treaty, and by authority from the Governor the appropriation was exceeded so far as was necessary to keep the faith of the State, the amount expended for this purpose this year amounting to \$1,718.00; an excess over the appropriation of \$218.00, as shown in the foregoing statement,—the same being rendered necessary in a great degree by the extraordinary high price of corn and pork, which form so large a part of this annual purchase.

AGRICULTURE.

Owing to the very wet and unfavorable spring, operations in this department were much retarded. The tribe being almost entirely dependent upon the agency for team work, and the days suitable for ploughing and cultivating being so occasional, it was very late before the most of them could get in their crops; and the diversion of laborers to the "drives," before this work could be completed, left much of it but partially and unsatisfactorily done. As a consequence the harvest was correspondingly deficient, and in many instances the crop failed utterly.

The following is the aggregate production of the tribe upon which bounty has been paid:

Potatoes.....	3,330 bushels.
Beans.....	253 "
Oats.....	845 "
Peas.....	106 "
Wheat.....	120 "
Vegetables of all kinds.....	387 "

A few members of the tribe have for several years given their undivided attention to the cultivation of their lands, and have proved themselves successful in a marked degree. Notably among these is Governor Stephen Stainslaus of Mattanawcook island, whose products this year were as follows: potatoes, 150 bushels; turnips, 20 bushels; beans, 55 bushels; peas, 25 bushels; wheat, 100 bushels; oats, 150.

bushels ; hay, 30 tons. Joseph Nicolar and Newell Nicolar are also worthy of mention in this connection, having each raised a crop this year which would be creditable to any farmer in the county.

SCHOOLS.

Schools have been taught during the year as usual at Oldtown, Olamon and Mattanawcook. That at Oldtown has continued under the instruction of the Sisters of Mercy, and with the exception of suitable vacations has been in continuous session,—forty weeks of school having been taught, with an average attendance of about fifty pupils.

At Mattanawcook the school is under the supervision of the school authorities of Lincoln. Two terms, summer and fall, have there been taught.

At Olamon one term was taught. The removals from this island to other portions of the reservation have taken most of the scholars from this school,—not more than a half dozen attending. And while it seems important that the few remaining should have educational privileges, it also seems a disadvantageous service where for entire days a teacher is obliged to sit out the time with only two or three primary scholars. Some years ago a provision was made for these families to send their children to the public schools of Greenbush ; but owing to the inconvenience of getting from the island to the school, and more especially, I apprehend, from the want of social affinity, the attempt proved abortive and was abandoned.

SISTERS OF MERCY.

Throughout the year these faithful toilers have remained at their post, and I cannot refrain from adverting again to the unselfish devotion with which they have surrendered themselves to this "life among the lowly." Unflinching in their ministrations to the sick and distressed, and laboring with unabated zeal for the general uplifting of the tribe, they

commend themselves as representatives in truth and in deed of Him whose ministry of love they seek to emulate.

CENSUS.

The Superintending School Committee of Oldtown, upon whom devolves the duty of making an annual enumeration of this tribe, return the number this year at four hundred and fifteen (415), as by their report herewith submitted.

ELECTION.

By Chap. 46, Resolves of 1881, provision was made for holding the election of this tribe biennially in conformity with that of the State. An election was accordingly held on Oldtown island on the second Tuesday of September, the time prescribed by said resolve. Sockbesin Swassian was chosen Governor of the tribe, Swassian Fransway Susup Lieut. Governor, and Lola Coly representative to the legislature. By some error the time of holding the election was fixed by the resolve above named, on the second Tuesday of September, instead of the first Tuesday of October as for several years prior thereto. As many of the tribe do not return from their summer vacation until after the time now fixed, I would recommend the re-establishment of the first Tuesday of October as the most convenient time for this purpose.

SHORES.

The leases of certain shores of the tribe having expired the same were re-let on the 20th day of April last, for a term of two years from the first day of January, A. D. 1882. They are as follows:

1. Shore on west side of Orson Island, from the Cook to first bridge of B. & P. R. R.; annual rental, \$100.00.
2. Shore on west side of same island from the bridge aforesaid, to the south line of the public farm; annual rental, \$201.00.

3. Shore of same island from a point opposite the Pea Cove boom to the breakwater at the head of said island; annual rental, \$28.00.

4. Shore of Orono Island; annual rental, \$151.00.

All of said shores except the third parcel, were leased to C. M. White of Oldtown, and the excepted parcel to Low & Maxfield of Milford.

LAND TITLES.

In my report two years ago (1880,) I had the honor to submit at length my views on the condition of the land titles of the tribe as related to individual proprietorship, and then urged the importance of providing some legislative relief from the involved and contradictory state into which their titles have come. Without repeating the suggestions there made I will simply refer to the views then expressed and renew the recommendation then made.

The laws controlling this subject were passed nearly fifty years ago. They were necessarily experimental in their character, and the lapse of time since their enactment has proved wherein they were wisely adapted to the purposes in view, and wherein they were defective. An earlier modification of them would doubtless have saved many complications, and perhaps some expense which may now be necessary to right the wrongs which have grown out of the system. But it would seem to be a matter of imperative justice that the laws which the State has seen fit to impose upon this property should not longer for want of adaptation be allowed to continue and increase the evils complained of; and that the confusion which has grown out of the system, as well as from errors in its administration, should be speedily remedied.

I cannot therefore forbear to commend this subject to the considerate judgment of those whose duty it is to institute whatever proceedings are necessary to meet the exigencies detailed in this and former reports touching this matter.

HEALTH.

The physical condition of the tribe does not improve. The causes of disease being for the most part radical, its development is only a matter of time. With congenital tendencies to physical weakness, their habitual disregard of all hygienic considerations supplemented in many cases by excesses, intemperance and exposure, works the inevitable result of early death. And such seems to be in a marked degree the heritage of this generation.

The number of deaths the past year has been thirty-five, sixteen adults and nineteen children. The adults with but two exceptions were between the ages of twenty and forty years, and the causes of death were principally diseases of a pulmonary character. Two men were drowned while engaged driving logs, and one died from accidental shooting.

Among the children the causes of death are closely allied to the principal causes above stated. Infants in several instances have survived but a few weeks from birth from sheer want of vital force, while others having lived along for months or possibly years have at last died from constitutional inability to continue the struggle. This tendency has however been greatly aggravated the past year by the evil effects entailed upon the tribe by the measles which prevailed among them last year, and from which many imperfectly recovered, leaving them subject to complications which in some instances have terminated fatally.

CONCLUSION.

In material prosperity, however, the year has been more than ordinarily favorable. Those who went upon the "drives" in the spring received high wages for their labor; the summer season was profitable to those who went abroad to vend their manufactured articles; and there has been a steady demand for their wares in the home market. Repairs have

been made upon their houses to a considerable extent and a commendable desire for home improvement has been manifested.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES A. BAILEY,

Agent of Penobscot Indians.

OLDTOWN, December 1, 1882.

STATE OF MAINE.

—
In Council, December 27, 1882.

Received, accepted and 500 copies ordered printed.

Attest:

JOSEPH O. SMITH, *Secretary of State.*