

1884

Report of the Agents of the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians

C. H. Porter

Indian Agent, State of Maine

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REPORT OF THE AGENT

OF THE

Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians,

FOR THE YEAR

— 1884 —

AUGUSTA :

SPRAGUE & SON, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1885.

REPORT.

To the Honorable Governor and Council of Maine:

I herewith present my report as Agent of the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians for the year ending November 30th, 1884.

The appropriations made for years 1883 and 1884 by the Legislature, were as follows, viz:

For May dividends	\$400 00
November dividends.....	300 00
bounty on crops.....	300 00
distressed poor	2,000 00
ploughing.....	150 00
salary of Governor.....	100 00
salary of Lieut. Governor	40 00
wood	200 00
contingent purposes.....	100 00
educational purposes.....	600 00
salary of Priests	100 00
dressing for land	100 00
salary of Agent	200 00
contingent poor	500 00
agricultural purposes.....	600 00
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	\$5,690 00

The expenditures were as follows, viz:

For May dividends	\$361 20
November dividends.....	335 40
distressed and contingent poor.....	2,685 55
agricultural purposes.....	513 00
bounty on crops.....	164 85
ploughing	136 50
salaries of Governors.....	100 00

STATE OF MAINE.

IN COUNCIL, December 30, 1884.

Received and ordered that 500 copies be printed.

Attest: JOSEPH O. SMITH, *Secretary of State.*

PASSAMAQUODDY INDIANS.

For salaries of Lieut. Governors	\$40 00
wood.....	199 50
contingent purposes.....	126 44
educational purposes.....	600 00
salaries of Priests	100 00
dressing for land.....	138 73
salary of Agent	200 00
	<hr/>
	\$5,701 17

RECEIPTS.

1883. Dec. 28, balance due Indians on settlement,	\$11 17
1884. Feby. 14, warrant on State Treasurer.....	2,000 00
April 21, " " "	1,500 00
Aug. 12, " " "	1,200 00
Sept. 12, " " "	990 00
	<hr/>
	\$5,701 17

The population of the tribe, Nov. 1st, was540

The number of deaths during the year was twenty, of which fifteen were young children.

The excessive mortality among the young is attributed to the prevalent use of pork, and the frequent cases of scrofula in the tribe are probably largely due to the same causes.

Pork is used to a great extent as an article of food, and, as a consequence, many fall victims to ignorance of the most simple rules of diet on the part of their parents.

AGRICULTURAL.

The crop for the year was as follows, viz :

Potatoes	1,650 bushels
Oats	390 "
Beans	92 "
Peas	42 "
Wheat.....	40 "
Turnips.....	150 "
Other vegetables.....	50 "
	<hr/>
	2,414

It will be seen that more attention has been paid to farming this year than during the year previous, and I am in hopes that the next crop will show a still greater increase.

Being unable to keep any stock on their farms, with two or three exceptions, the Indians are wholly dependent upon the State for their dressing, and the appropriation of one hundred dollars for dressing for land is quite insufficient for the attempt to make farmers of over five hundred Indians, or one hundred and seventy-five families.

The number of horses owned in the tribe is six. Five cows are supposed to furnish all the milk used, and only one or two families keep hens, while but few are too poor to own a dog.

EDUCATIONAL.

The school at Pleasant Point numbers from ninety to one hundred pupils. This school is held for nine months of the year, while that at Peter Dana's Point, numbering thirty pupils, is in session but three months, from September till December. The pupils attend quite regularly, and show a steadily increasing degree of proficiency. Sister Clare is again at her post, and she and Sister Stanislaus are untiring in their devotion to the effort of educating and elevating the tribe.

At the election held in September, Lewy Francis was elected Governor, and Pierpole Sebattis Lieut. Governor of Pleasant Point, for a term of two years. The first election of Representative to the Legislature having resulted in a tie vote, a new election was called in October, by which Mitchell Lewy of Peter Dana's Point was chosen.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Penobscot tribe of Indians have had appropriations from the State for the past year or more, of eight thousand four hundred and nine dollars (\$8,409). They number about four hundred and forty. They have had the advantages of efficient schools for years, and are situated in a favorable location for remunerative labor. Quite a number of them, I

am told, by their perseverance and frugality have become quite comfortable in their homes and surroundings. The Passamaquoddy tribe, with a population of five hundred and forty, are situated more remote from centres of business and labor, have not the advantages of education to such a degree, and, as a consequence, have not attained to such a state of thrift as have the Penobscots. The State appropriation in their favor the past year was but five thousand six hundred and ninety dollars (\$5,690).

The islands in the St. Croix river, originally granted to this tribe, were taken from them because of a prior grant made by Massachusetts, and they have never received any compensation therefor, but I cannot see why they should be given less aid than the Penobscots receive, simply because the latter were protected in their treaty rights, while the Passamaquoddys were deprived of theirs. Nor can I conceive why there should be any difference in the aid given the two tribes. If the lands belonging to the Passamaquoddys were taken from them by force, while those of the Penobscots were procured by purchase, it certainly should make no difference in the moral obligation of the State toward the Passamaquoddy tribe.

The appropriations made for the tribe, while quite sufficient for their wants many years ago, are inadequate for their present needs. Their means of subsistence have been in a measure cut off. Game and fish have become scarce, and they are not now allowed by law to hunt and fish during the season they most require those means of subsistence. During seasons of depression in trade, their business of basket making and selling will not sustain them, and in many cases they must suffer. The appropriation for distressed poor, of twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2500.00) may, at first sight, appear sufficient, but when it is considered that fifteen hundred dollars (\$1500.00) are expended in pensions to the widows, aged and infirm, who are wholly or partially unable to provide for themselves, leaving but one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) to be expended among five hundred and forty Indians, all of

them poor, for aid in sickness, for food, wood, clothing, medicine, physicians' services, burial expenses, etc., etc., it will give us some idea of the insufficiency of the amount appropriated. The priests, who are really the only persons who have any degree of influence over them, in the faithful discharge of their duty, actually expend more than their salaries in travelling expenses.

Rev. Father O'Dowd, who has charge of the church at Pleasant Point, lives in Eastport, five miles away, and visits the Indians twice a week, regularly. In his zeal for the welfare of his flock, he has paid out more than the amount of his salary for materials necessary for the comfort of the Sisters of Mercy, and used in the house occupied by them. Rev. Father Conlon, living at Calais, who has charge of the church at Peter Dana's Point, twenty-five miles distant, visits the Indians at some seasons of the year once a week, and it costs him more than the amount of his salary for travelling expenses alone. Besides this, he has repaired the house at that place at his own expense, in order to make it habitable for the Sisters while there teaching, at an expense of one hundred and twenty-five dollars, for which there has been no appropriation made. These facts furnish conclusive evidence of the need of increased appropriations, if the State wishes to deal justly with those who are giving their best efforts to improve the condition of the tribe.

In view of these facts alluded to, I respectfully recommend the following appropriations :

For May dividends.....	\$700 00
November dividends	700 00
distressed and contingent poor.....	3,500 00
bounty on crops.....	300 00
ploughing.....	150 00
salary of Governor.....	100 00
salary of Lieut. Governor.....	40 00
wood.....	300 00
contingent purposes	200 00

For salaries of Priests.....	\$300 00
dressing for land.....	350 00
agricultural purposes.....	600 00
educational purposes.....	900 00
salary of Agent.....	200 00
	\$8,340 00

It will be seen that the total appropriations recommended are less than the sum paid to the Penobscot Indians last year, although the latter, as I have here stated, are considerably the smaller of the two tribes in number, and are much less needy. I have always supposed that the State desires to promote the welfare of the Indians, and this can be done only by such aid as will enable them to help themselves. That the present aid is not sufficient, can be clearly seen by a little reflection as to the number to be aided and the sums appropriated.

The family ties among the Indians are now as strong as among the whites. A little incident showing this came under my observation only a few days since. I saw a poor Indian who had walked twenty-five miles after a coffin for his dead boy. He had lost a wife and child hardly six months previously. As he started on his return to his desolate home, the mercury ten degrees below zero and night coming on, with the silent reminder of his bereavement strapped to his sled, I thought that the efforts put forth to educate and civilize a people showing such devotion to their dead, could not be considered hopeless.

Incidents of similar nature occur frequently, tending to the same conclusion, and affording the best of reasons why our efforts should be continued and increased.

Respectfully submitted.

C. H. PORTER,
Agent Passamaquoddy Indians.

CALAIS, December 27th, 1884.