

1886

# Report of the Agents 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

1886

AUGUSTA :

SPRAGUE & SON, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1887.

**STATE OF MAINE.**

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**IN COUNCIL, January 4, 1887.**

**Report accepted, and the usual number ordered printed.**

**ORAMANDAL SMITH,**  
*Secretary of State.*

# REPORT.

*To the Honorable Governor and Council.*

In obedience to the law requiring the Agent of the Penobscot Indians to submit an annual report, "with proper vouchers for the expenditure of moneys entrusted to him for the benefit of said tribe," the following, with accompanying vouchers, is respectfully submitted for the year ending November 30, 1886:

## STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES.

### *Receipts.*

1885, January, State Warrant .....	\$1,500 00
March,           "           .....	1,000 00
April,           "           .....	1,700 00
June            "           .....	800 00
October,       "           .....	3,300 00
December,     "           .....	151 30
	<hr/>
	\$8,451 30

### *Expenditures.*

For Agriculture .....	\$684 16
Bounty on crops .....	347 75
Goods for annuity .....	1,382 09
Schools .....	594 00
Salary of Agent .....	200 00
"    Sup't of farming .....	150 00
"    Governor of Tribe .....	50 00
"    Lieut. Governor of Tribe, .....	40 00
"    Priest .....	100 00
Spring dividend .....	479 34
Support of poor, sick, &c. ....	2,529 91
Medicine and medical attendance ..	500 64

For Burial expenses.....	\$186 75	
Wood and wood hauling.....	1,141 96	
Incidental expenses.....	64 70	
		<u>\$8,451 30</u>

The following is a list of appropriations for the year 1886, as per chapter 195, page 259, Resolves of 1885 :

Amount, interest Indian Trust Fund,	\$4,429 70	
Annuity .....	1,700 00	
Agriculture.....	700 00	
Bounty on crops.....	450 00	
Schools .....	600 00	
Salary of Agent.....	200 00	
“ Supt. of farming	150 00	
“ Governor of Tribe	50 00	
“ Lieut. Governor of		
Tribe .....	40 00	
“ Priest.....	100 00	
		<u>\$8,419 70</u>
Amount of warrants as above.....		8,451 30
Amount of over-expenditure.....		<u>\$31 60</u>

This statement shows a small over-expenditure. This was caused by some unlooked for, and unavoidable expenses just at the close of the year. Joseph Dana of Mattanawcook Island (Lincoln) had to be committed to the Insane Hospital about the middle of November, and his outfit, expense of commitment, and hospital bills to the end of the month, were about \$60.00. A member of this Tribe died the last of November at Pleasant Point, among the Passamaquoddy Indians, and the Agent of that Tribe drew upon me for the expenses attending his death and burial. These items coming at a time when the appropriations were about exhausted gave rise to an over-draft to the amount above stated.

The foregoing statements of receipts and expenditures do not include the distribution of Shore-rents of 1885 under Special Act, chapter 267, Laws of 1873.

The receipts from this source were:—

1886. January. State warrant.....	\$3,933 00	
Balance from last year	140 44	
	<u>          </u>	\$4,073 44

CONTRA.

Distribution per capita to members of the Tribe as per schedule.....	\$3,948 00	
Balance to next year.....	125 44	
	<u>          </u>	\$4,073 44

AGRICULTURE.

The progress of the Tribe at farming is slow. The great hindrance being the want of substantial fertilizers. There is but very little stock kept in the Tribe and the main dependence for manurial effects is upon commercial fertilizers,—superphosphates, ground bone, plaster and the like, which are too temporary in their effect to afford any protracted advantage.

The potato crop is the principal one, and of most general culture. All who do anything at farming or gardening, plant more or less potatoes. Other crops are more experimental and are somewhat stimulated by the higher bounties they secure. The yield of potatoes this year was rather above the average production, while most of the other crops was below it.

The aggregate products of the Tribe upon which bounty has been paid, are as follows:

Potatoes.....	4005 bushels.
Beans.....	219 “
Peas.....	129 “
Oats.....	745 “
Vegetables .....	714 “

SCHOOLS.

Schools have been taught at the usual places, viz:—Old-town Island, Olamon Island and Mattanawcook Island, with good success.

The school on Olamon Island is ordinarily small, and the absence last spring of some families from the island took away nearly all the scholars accustomed to attend this school. Under these circumstances it was not deemed advisable to open a school for the few remaining, but arrangements were made for them to attend the spring term of the Greenbush public school upon the main land adjacent to the island. In the fall, the absentees having returned, a school was taught with good results.

Sister M. Frances Borgia, of the Sisters of Mercy, who for the last eight years has been the accomplished teacher of the Oldtown School, was not returned to Oldtown after the summer, her place here being assigned to another. Her removal from this field was a source of very deep regret by all the Tribe, to whom she had greatly endeared herself by her long, patient and faithful labors in their behalf. Her successor is doing good work and showing herself worthy of the favor she is gradually winning.

#### CENSUS.

The annual enumeration of the Tribe, made by the Superintending School Committee of Oldtown, according to the law providing for the same, shows the number at the beginning of the year to be 383.

#### ELECTION.

The regular biennial election of the Tribe was held on Oldtown Island on the first Tuesday of October—the time designated by law. The new party having the right of choice at this election, Joseph Francis was chosen Governor, Francis Socalexis Lieut. Governor, and Lola Coly Representative to the Legislature.

#### IN GENERAL.

There appears to be a process of physical deterioration going on in the Tribe, gradually accelerated as the years go by. The percentage of mortality is large—twenty-six having

died during the year, fourteen adults and twelve children. The increase from births, and accessions from intermarriage with those of other tribes, hardly keep the numbers good from year to year. This physical degeneration is also manifest in the great amount of sickness among them from ordinary ailments, as evidenced by the expenditures for medicine and medical attendance during the year, there having been no extraordinary causes for this expenditure.

The Tribe, this year, have lost some of their best known members. Notably among these is ex-Governor Sockbesin Swassian who died suddenly near the close of December, 1885, at about the age of 60 years. He had occupied all positions of prominence in the councils of the Tribe, had been their Representative to the Legislature several terms, and had filled the offices of Lieutenant Governor and Governor of the Tribe. He was a man of exemplary life, of established convictions of right and an earnest advocate of the moral and educational advancement of the Tribe. Of commanding presence, sagacious, positive in his opinions, but not obtrusive, he early became a leader by common consent, and easily held that position as long as he lived.

There have been some quite serious losses by fire on Oldtown Island—three fires having occurred during the summer and fall. The first destroyed a dwelling-house owned by Joseph Nicolar and occupied by a tenant; the second destroyed a barn for Joseph Francis, which, nearly new and substantially furnished, was destroyed with all its contents, consisting of several tons of hay and grain, wagons, sleds, farming implements and other property, involving a very serious loss to the owner; the third fire partially burned the dwelling-house of John Saul. The difficulty in reaching this island from Oldtown, with fire engines, could not be overcome in season to save the buildings in which the fire originated, although they arrived upon the ground in time to prevent a spread of the fire to surrounding buildings.

Admonished by these fires the Tribe have raised a fund and purchased a hand fire engine, of the town of Oldtown, which

had been superseded by a steam engine. They are, however, in need of hose to make their purchase effective and propose asking for an appropriation from the State for the purchase of necessary hose. This would seem to be a matter worthy of consideration by the Legislature, as the difficulty of communication with the main land makes the necessity of having an engine of their own obvious. There are many very good houses and buildings in this Indian village, and whether better or poorer, they are the homes of those who occupy them, and any loss of them is a cause of great distress and embarrassment.

By owning a well-equipped fire engine, danger from fire will be lessened, rates of insurance reduced and reasonable security will be assured.

The Tribe has had quite a favorable year in opportunities for labor at fair rates; a profitable season at the summer resorts; and a fair home market for their basket productions. Some new buildings have been put up and others have been more or less improved, indicating a desire for better dwellings as they get further away from the wild life of their ancestors.

CHARLES A. BAILEY,

*Agent of Penobscot Indians.*

December, 1886.