


1889

Report of the Agents of the Penobscot Tribe of Indians

J. N. Stone

Indian Agent, State of Maine

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REPORT OF THE AGENT

OF THE

PENOBSCOT TRIBE OF INDIANS,

FOR THE YEAR

1889

AUGUSTA:

BURLEIGH & FLYNT, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.
1890.

REPORT.

To His Excellency the Governor and the Honorable Council of Maine:

As required by law, I herewith submit the annual report touching the welfare and condition of the Penobscot Tribe of Indians, and accompany it with vouchers for all money expended in their behalf, during the fiscal year which commenced December 1st, 1888, and ended November 30th, 1889.

APPROPRIATIONS—RESOLVES OF 1889.

Annual interest of Indian Trust Fund	\$4,429 70
For farming	700 00
superintendent of farming.....	150 00
schools.....	600 00
salary of governor of tribe.....	50 00
“ Lieut. governor of tribe.....	40 00
“ priest	100 00
“ Indian agent.....	200 00
fall dividends (annuity)	1,700 00
bounty on crops.....	200 00
repairs to school-house	50 00
“ island church.....	90 00
	\$8,309 70

Receipts.

Cash balance from last year	\$ 68 67
March, warrant	2,200 00
July “	2,400 00
November “	2,905 00
December “	954 70

\$8,598 37

Expenditures.

For supplies for poor, sick and infirm,	\$2,047 44
spring dividends	456 88
wood and wood hauling	1,213 26
burial expenses	220 62
contingent expenses	167 11
medicine and medical attendance	785 92
farming	677 66
superintendent of farming	150 00
schools	560 49
fall dividends	1,321 75
bounty on crops	350 00
salary of governor of tribe	50 00
" Lieut. governor of tribe	40 00
" priest	100 00
" Indian agent	200 00
	<hr/>
	\$8,341 13
Unexpended appropriation for school-house re- pairs	50 00
Unexpended appropriation for church repairs ...	90 00
Cash balance on hand	47 24
	<hr/>
	\$8,528 37

CENSUS.

According to the last annual census taken in January, by the Superintending School Committee of Old Town, the tribe numbers three hundred and eighty-three, a loss of two as compared with last year's record.

SHORE RENTS.

The leases of all the Island shores belonging to the tribe expired January 1st, 1889; and by direction of the Governor and Council, these shores were again put up at public auction the sale taking place at the Penobscot Exchange, Bangor, April 5th, after the customary thirty days' notice. For

reasons best known to the parties bidding, there was little if any competition for the most valuable privileges, and after the sale had progressed somewhat, I found it necessary to fix a minimum price for the first bid, and in several instances where this price was not offered, I temporarily withdrew the shores, afterwards effecting a private sale to the same parties; thus realizing better prices and apparently satisfying all concerned. The amount obtained at this sale is \$2,182, not taking into account the shores which the Penobscot Lumbermen's Association desired. These latter comprise the entire shores of twenty-five islands, and the equivalent of three and a half more, or twenty-eight and a half in all. All these the association had held the previous five years at a gross rental of \$800 per year, and at the instance of the leading members of the tribe, I fixed the asking price at \$1,000 per year, evidently a very moderate amount for the numerous and valuable privileges desired. But one offer was made by the association, viz., \$800, and in accordance with a previous understanding with that company, the matter was referred to the governor and council for adjudication. All leases run for a period of five years from January 1st, 1889. The following is a statement of the shore rents of 1888, payable to tribe February, 1889, as per special act, chapter 267, laws of 1873.

Receipts.

1889, February, warrant.....\$3,913 00

CONTRA.

Distributed to members of tribe <i>per capita</i> as per accompanying receipts.....	\$3,848 50
Boutelle & Burr, advertising shores.....	28 12
J. C. Wilson, making leases and services as auctioneer.....	12 00
Balance to next year.....	24 38
	\$3,913 00

SCHOOLS.

It is a truism that schools are the most important factor in the elevation and improvement of a people, and this is as strikingly verified when applied to those who have taken only the initial steps in the broad field of education, as when to those, who by virtue of hereditary qualities and constant discipline have been enabled to traverse far, and garner much. That the tribe is, as a whole, more intelligent, better informed, and more thrifty as well, than it was twenty-five years ago, is apparent to the most casual observer who knew them then, and meets them in their homes to-day. The school is gradually and even rapidly bringing such changes about. As nearly nine-tenths of the members of the tribe have their homes on Old Town Indian island, it follows, naturally, that here is their largest and most prosperous school. Of the entire number of fifty-seven school children on this island, with ages from six to eighteen, and capable of attending school, forty-five are on the register this year. Sister Mary Gabriel, who has done good service as assistant teacher for several years past, whenever such services were required, was recalled to Portland this fall in consequence of her failing health. Sister Monica succeeds to her work, and is much liked. Sister Christina, who is still the efficient principal, reports of the school this year, that "there has been a decided improvement in the attendance and punctuality of the children numbering forty-five—twenty-five boys and twenty girls, with an average daily attendance of forty, who enjoy attending school. The new maps, charts and blackboards have added much to the appearance of the school-room, besides being a great assistance to the teacher in imparting knowledge."

The school on Mattanawcook Island is placed by law under the direction of the supervising school committee of Lincoln. As the spring term was poorly attended even by the few scholars who could have taken that advantage, (and there are less than ten all told) the supervising committee, after con-

sulting with me, deemed it advisable to open the schools of Lincoln, under tuition fees, to all of the Indian pupils who wished to attend, not attempting to keep a separate school on the island. The plan has, I believe, worked well and given good satisfaction to parents and scholars; and among the number who improve the opportunity to enjoy common and equal school advantages with the whites, may be found two in the Grammar school of Lincoln and one in Mattanawcook academy. The supervisor of schools of Olamon has oversight of the Indian school on Olamon Island, and is doing all she can for the few children who live there.

AGRICULTURE.

The policy of the State in making appropriations to assist and encourage the Indians in agricultural pursuits is, in my judgment, a wise one. As, among the whites, not all farmers are successful; so of the Indians whom the State seeks to interest in that most important industry there are always some who do not come up to expectations; but by enforcing the principle of helping those most who most help themselves, very substantial results are attained. The crops of this year were, the whole, quite bountiful. They suffered but little injury while maturing, except in case of potatoes growing on low, wet ground; these rotting somewhat, but not to any serious extent. While not wishing to make invidious distinctions, I would mention the following as the six most successful of the Indian farmers of this year; judging from the standpoint of quantity and value of crops raised, and ranking in the order given: Stephen Stanislaus, Mattanawcook island; Joseph Francis, Old Town Indian island; Joseph Nicola, Old Town Indian island; John Altean, Sr., Mattanawcook island; Tomekin Ranco, Olamon island; Frances Andrew, Old Town Indian island.

The following is a list of the crops raised and on which bounty was paid:

Potatoes.....	3,647 bushels.
Beans	170 "
Peas	51½ "
Oats	1,173 "
Wheat	40 "
Buckwheat.....	59 "
Vegetables	286 "

The Committee on Indian Affairs of the last legislature saw fit to reduce the appropriation for bounty on crops, from three hundred and fifty dollars, as made for the years 1886 and 1887, to two hundred dollars, for the years 1888 and 1889 respectively. This amount proving insufficient to carry out provisions of the law as given in chapter 9, section 33 of the Revised Statutes, I applied to and obtained from the governor and council an additional allowance of one hundred and fifty dollars from the contingent fund, in order to meet the requirements of the case.

IN GENERAL.

There has been much sickness among the members of the tribe during the year, and the deaths resulting therefrom number twenty-seven, fourteen adults and thirteen children. Consumption is the most prevailing disease. It is unquestionably true that the Indians pay much more attention to the attempted cure than to the prevention of maladies. The large amounts annually expended for medicinal purposes attest the truth of this statement. The bill for medicine and medical attendance as given under the head of expenditures on a foregoing page include several quite large accounts carried over from last year; so that this year's showing is really exaggerated therein; but the truth remains, that the Indians to this day place too great reliance upon the efficacy of medicine, and too little upon their own power to prevent those disorders, which they afterwards find it impossible to cure.

The industrial life of the tribe, in its general features and compensating results, has been almost a repetition of that of

last year. A profitable driving season for the young men employed on the water in spring and early summer, was followed by a very poor sale of baskets at the summer resorts; the general depression in their trade being largely due to the cold, wet season, and to the fact that foreign attractions, notably the Paris Exposition, drew away from our own seaside rendezvous, very many of their old-time patrons. A few of the Indians, however, did a remunerative business, and were able to repair or make additions to their houses upon their return home; one of the best tests of a prosperous year being the changes made in their home surroundings. The present winter all are finding ready sale for their wares, either at home, or in filling orders from abroad which they took in the summer for the holiday trade. The Indians are, as a rule, of elastic temperament, and though sometimes worsted by circumstances, are seldom in despair; and while not as well equipped as many of their white brethren, they enter with equal courage into the great struggle for existence which all men of all races are of necessity brought to join. In conclusion, I would add that there have been unavoidable delays in the matter of repairs to school-house on Olamon island and the Island Church at Old Town; but these will be attended to as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted.

J. N. STONE.

Agent Penobscot Tribe of Indians.

OLD TOWN, ME., December, 1889.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN COUNCIL, December 31, 1889.

Accepted and the usual number ordered printed.

ORAMANDAL SMITH,

Secretary of State.