

Ottawa, Michigan
Washington Dec 5 1885

Memorial of the
Ottawa delegation
by A. Hamelin Jr.

#229

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HRA001400

Honorable L. Cass Secretary of War.

Sir

Having had a conversation between us, the
Delegates of the Delaware and part of the Chippeway tribes,
upon the expediency of making known the object of our
visit, we have agreed to make the following statement
in writing. We fondly hope that these matters will be
taken notice of by the ministers of government and
complied with as far as it may be necessary for us, and
consistent with both. We cherish this hope in our
hearts the more because we know that the govern-
ment is in the hands of ministers and friends, are men
of integrity, wisdom, and humanity; men who having
a conspicuous place in this flourishing republic, will
not suffer to see dark clouds of distress to hang over them,
over whom they preside - men, in fine, who will not
bear the dishonor to be swayed by party feelings.

It is now about five or six years since we have begun
to write to our friends, agents for permission to go to Washington.
Since Mr. Armstrong has been stationed at Buckhannon, we
have spoken to him about this affair several times,
and at each time he tells us either that he had already
written that he would write, or that he never receives
an answer to his letters upon this subject. We thought
it strange, that an individual so distinguished, and
in office, should not at least receive one solitary line.

Yours

HR00142

He visited a few months ago, when he told us that he
had now received a letter which as far as it contains
a negative answer to our former applications. Notwith-
standing this, we have endeavored to reach the seat of
government as far as our own expenses in order that we
might have the satisfaction of knowing its true sentiment
in regard to us the Ottawa of Michigan and make some
arrangements according as we would agree. Truth and
falseness blended together, has been so often represented
to us in our country, that we scarcely know the differ-
ence between the two.

The principal objects of our visit here were these we
would make some arrangements with government
for remaining in the Territory & Michigam in the
quiet possession of our lands, and to transmit the
same safely to our posterity. We do not wish to sell all
the lands claimed by us, and consequently not to remove
to the west of the Michigam. But, if the government
wishes, we might sell some lands on Lake Huron,
and also our claims with some reserves on the
North side of the Straits of Michillimackinac, a
tract of land beginning somewhere near the Mono-
minies on the west, and terminating at Nottaw
on the east. The claims which we have on that
side of the Straits we claim them by the right
of conquest.

It is a heart-rending thought to our simple feelings
to

and perfect our condition by their example. With these things in view, we propose to submit ourselves to the Laws of that country within whose limits we reside. Only, perhaps, a few years hence, our people could not very well submit themselves to the Laws of that State, we are confident, however, that when the benefits of civilization would be more generally diffused amongst them, they would embrace those salutary regulations with cheerfulness.

But there are some obstacles which stand in our way, and which we are, at this moment, unable to surmount; and therefore, it is also the object of our visit here, to obtain some assistance from government in these matters. We would wish to be assisted in our Agricultural pursuits. We would be happy to obtain implements of husbandry, and a fund for procuring things in this line. Again, we would wish to represent to government the need of assistance we have in the education of our young people and children in the necessary and useful branches of arts and sciences.

We gratefully acknowledge and return our thanks for the assistance already received from government for the education of our children.

We -

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to think of leaving our native country forever; the land where the bones of our forefathers lay thick in the earth; the land which has drunk, and which has been bought with the price of, their native blood, and which has been thus solemnly transmitted to us. It is, we say, a heart-aching thought to us to think so; there are many local inducements which make the soul shrink with horror at the idea of rejecting our country forever - the mortal remains of our deceased parents, relations, and friends, cry out to us as it were; for our compassion, our sympathies and our love.

But, we are aware of this plain fact, that we Indians cannot long remain peacefully and happily in the place where the tribe is as numerous as we were in the beginning of that war and manner of life, which we have hitherto led although now it is a life which is more and more incompatible with that of a civilized man; and therefore we would wish to exchange the former for the latter. We have already made some progress in this, leaving, both, and tasted some of its comforts; and it is our desire and will to advance more and more in it. We survey the happy state and condition of the civilized people almost with envy, not indeed by endeavoring to copy theirs in order to build ours upon it, but by doing all that lies in our power to better and -

to see the benefits of it; and we would extremely
glad if Congress would have the benevolence to
add something more to this fund, and placed
in the hands of the Rt. Rev. Frederic Rose
Catholic Bishop of Detroit, who has the use
of the money in the same manner as the
other L. M. C. C. and other Societies.

I now remain to assure you, Sir with what regard and
esteem

Yours humble servant,

Augustine Hamilton.

In the name of the African Society.

Washington D. C.

Dec 5th 1837.

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