

Records of a Treaty concluded with
the Ottawa & Chippewa Nations, at
Washington D.C. March 28, 1836

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RNS 01309

Assembled at the Masonic Hall in the city of Washington on the 15th of March 1836 for the purpose of holding a treaty with the Ottawa & Chippewa Nations of Indians for the lands in Michigan. Henry R. Schoolcraft Esq. Commissioner, John Hulbert, Secretary, John Holiday, Interpreter, Rix Robinson--R. Stewart, John Drew, H. A. Levoke, Wm. Lasley, Geo. Moran, Lewis Moran and Augustin Hamlin & L. Slater in charge of the Indian Chiefs & Delegates.

Aishquogenabee	-	Chippewa Chief Grand Travers
Acose	-	" " " "
Mukutaysee	-	Ottawa Delegate Grand River
Wassubegun	-	" " " "
Wabi Windego	-	" Chief " "
Magis Inine	-	" " " "
Nabuna Ceejichig	-	" " " "
Winemissagee	-	" " " "
Osounaischum	-	" " Maskego
Wassaugaso	-	" Delegate "
Ossawcogai	-	" Chief "
Kitchy Ingosamoon	-	" " Cheboigun
Black Bird	-	" Delegate LartreCroche
Apokosigan	-	" Chief " "
Kemennelohagun	-	" " " "
Tawaganee	-	" Delegate " "
Kiposhansaig	-	" " " "

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Naganigabowa	-	Ottawa Delegate FarbreCroche
Onaassanon	-	" " " "
Chabowawa	-	Chippewa Chief Chenos
Ance	-	" " Oakpoint
Waishkee	-	" " Saut Ste. Marie
Keewasie	-	Delegate " " "
	-	Ottawa " Grand

The council being opened, the Commissioner laid before the Chief and delegates the object of the present council, in the following speech, page 5

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My Children,

You have heard the voice of your great father the President, and shaken hands with him. You perceive his kind feelings for you, and your families. You have heard, from his own lips that he is glad to see you face to face, that he wishes your happiness, and is anxious to do you justice.

Your father has directed me to inform you, that he has appointed me as Commissioner to conduct the business which has brought you here. He has, by the Secretary of War, furnished me written instructions by which to act. You will, therefore, consider my words, as his words, and listen attentively, while I proceed to lay before you the object of your being called together.

Last summer the Indians of Ottawa island in Lake Huron, sent a deputation to Mackinac, with a formal message from their band, offering to sell Drummond island. The President, by the Secretary of War, did not wish to slight them, although it was a part of the country he had not thought of. He asked what they wished for it, and he took the occasion, (as he had heard that some of the Indians of the Peninsula had gone and others were going to live, in that part of Lake Huron) to inquire how much of their land the Indians would sell, and what price they demanded for it. These instructions, I communicated to the Indians at Mackinac and sent word to different places.

The President, by the Secretary of War, directed that answers should be given to the Agent at Mackinac, and that, generally, the Indians of that quarter should transact their business with him and not come to Washington.

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unless they were sent for. A deputation of the Ottawas, living ^S north of the straits, who had heard this message, came here early in December. They called on the Secretary of War and the President, and after remaining some days, they offered to sell the Manito Islands, and also the lands on the north side of the Straits extending from near the Menomonee River to Point Detour. They made their offer in writing, through a young man who accompanied them, and who is now here. They stated that they claimed the lands on the north of the straits by conquest. They represent in their memo that they wish to make money to pay off their debts to the traders, and to procure assistance in agriculture and education.

The President desires on all occasions to know that the persons who offer to sell lands, are the proper authorized chiefs or delegates, and that whatever is done, should be done with the consent of all. Had he wished to buy your lands from a part of the nation, he would have accepted those offers. But he determined although it was winter, and he knew you were absent on your hunting grounds, to send and for you all that you might act together. This is the reason why you were sent for, and is a proof of what the President told you yesterday, in his own House, that he felt friendship and kindness for you, and wished to do you justice.

You see, in your midst, some men from the north shores of the straits, and a few, even from the foot of Lake Superior. Those men, were also invited here, at the same time that the others were, and came, as I am informed, to check on the subject of their lands. As the President is informed, that you are brother tribes, have always lived in peace together, and are much intertwined, in blood and location, he has authorized me to treat with them, as with you, and I therefore address you together.

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The Chippewas of Sault Ste. Marie assembled in council at that place, last fall, and forwarded an offer to the President to sell a part of their lands, extending from the mouth of the Minushco to a point south west of Grand Island, on Lake Superior, provided they could obtain suitable annuities for twenty years, with a smith shop, and other advantages stated in a letter from the Commanding Officer of fort Brady, accompanied by a map. The President has been informed that this portion of your people, are very destitute, and that their country yields but little game, which is a reason for his having listened to their offer.

It is understood that the Indians living near Michilimackinac on the west side of the straits, have signed a paper, containing the basis on which they feel disposed to cede a portion of these lands. But this paper was never received. Its purport will be made known to you when it arrives.

You have now before you, the subject of the several communications, the President has received, both from the Ottawas and Chippewas. And it is probably the most important subject, viewed in its broadest sense, which you, in your day, will be called to deliberate upon. It opens the question of the sale of your possessions in Michigan. It is proposed to extend the cession south to Washtanong on Grand River on Lake Michigan, and north to Chocolate River on Lake Superior. How much you will cede, depends upon your wisdom. Deliberate on the subject with calm minds, and with kind feelings towards each other and do not let one party cast blame on the other. It is only noble minds which can rise above little things.

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For such cessions as you may agree to make, I am authorized to make you the most liberal offer. There is every wish on the part of government, to do you full justice, and to furnish the means of exalting your situation in scale of society, and making you, and your posterity, happy. Take time to consider the subject, and when you have made up your minds as to the quantity of land you will cede, let us know it, that I may declare to you the full terms which I feel disposed to allow.

With respect to the debts you owe to the traders, the President proposes to appoint a Commissioner to go into your country next summer, to ascertain and pay the amount of every just debt and claims against you, so that every one may receive ample justice.

No objection will be made, if you deem it imperative, to your fixing on proper and limited reservations to be held in common; but the President judges it best, that no reservations should be made to individuals. Your relations, who could be entitled to such reservations, will be compensated for their value, in money. The usual privilege of residing and hunting on the lands sold till they are wanted will be granted.

The commissioner submitted the foregoing proposition to the Chiefs and Delegates for their consideration, and requested them to specify the time, for their answer.

The chief speaker rose and addressed the commissioner, stating that they had listened to all that had been said to them with pleasure, and appointed the time for said answer, after three nights which would be on Friday March 18th. 1836, after which the council adjourned to that day.

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Friday, March 18th, the Council assembled this morning agreeably to adjournment on Tuesday last. After the usual ceremony of the peace pipe the Commissioner gave notice to the Chiefs in council, that he was prepared to listen to what they have to say on the subject referred to them for consideration at the first council. The chief speaker, rose and addressed his Commissioner as Father and requested him to listen to the few words he had to say, stating that they had been called by their Great Father to Washington to talk about their lands and that they had a great desire to know also, what the Chief from LaPoudre Croche was about to do. (This chief with several others had previously come to Washington without instruction from the Government or wish of the Indian generally) said that your children were pleased to hear your proposition at the first council, to purchase their lands and to hear of the kind feelings of their Great Father towards them, but when we look on the map of our country it appears very small and we conclude not to part with any of our lands. Our Father said something at the last council, to us about our half breeds and white friends that they were not to be allowed, reservations in land, but were to have all ^{of} the chief thought best to give them in money. This course we do not fully understand and we object to it. One reason why we do not wish to dispose of our lands, is this, we fear that the whites, who will not be our friends, will come into our country and trouble us and that we shall not be able to know where our possessions are. If we do sell our land it will be our wish that some of our white friends have lands among us and be associated with us.

Megis Innine, Ottawa Chief rose and said it was the will of the chiefs that he should stand before this Father and say something about the sale of their lands. He was pleased to hear that his great Father had such kind

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feelings, and wished to do them good, but something was said to them about the Chippewas, the half breeds and whites that they did not like. Said that the Ottawas objected to the Chippewa coming into the treaty. That they also made objections to the course which the chief and party from Labre Croche, Apakosigan, had taken, that the Chippewas and Ottawas were Brothers, yet they occupied a different section of country. He was well pleased to hear that his Father had such kind feeling and wishes to benefit them and their children after them. That he was well pleased that his Father had advised them to keep reservations for themselves, but his was displeased that his Father had objection to the half breeds and their white friends holding reservations of land among them, said their lands were very small on the map he had seen, and they have concluded not to sell any. They had never before refused to listen to this call of their great Father but at this time they must.

Apakosigan, Chief from Labre Croche addressed the Commissioner, as follows. I am one of the number who first came to this place (without instruction) and on my arrival here, understood what you said to us at Mackinac, respecting our lands. You have heard what has been said to you by the Ottawas who have spoken, I wish to say that some chiefs present have sold lands and have been benefited, but as for myself and my people, we have not received so much as one pipe of Tobacco. That he was satisfied with propositions respecting Reservations made to them at the first council.

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Black Bird, Speaker of Delegates mentioned that he had but a few words to say, that he was opposed to the sale of their lands, at another time he would say more on this subject. His voice was now with the Ottawas.

The Commissioner gave them to understand that he had listened to what they have said. He was pleased to notice the interest they manifested for their half breed, and their desire to provide for them but he was very sorry that the Ottawas should object to the treaty that had been proposed to them, which would result in so great, and lasting benefit to them as a people. That they were refusing to listen to a subject of the deepest interest to them. That their great Father now had a wish to do them good, but as they had given no for an answer to his call, it was uncertain when he would listen to them again. He would now call the minds of the Chippewa's Chief north of the straits, to what he had today. Your great Father has thought of you, he knows your situation, that you are poor, and destitute, he is aware also that your lands are poor, that but very little game is to be found, and that you obtain less and less every year, notwithstanding your country is, of little value, yet feeling a desire to benefit you, he thinks your lands may be of some value to him, on these accounts a proposition will be made to the Chippewa on Tuesday next at this place to purchase their lands in the north Peninsula. If in the meantime the Ottawas should change their minds and agree to come into the Treaty and sell their lands, they would have an opportunity of communicating the same on Tuesday next previous to the proposition being made to the Chippewas. Otherwise the Government had nothing more to say to them on the subject of their lands. The Commissioner assured the Ottawas that no lands would be purchased except from the rightful owners of the soil, that this was all that he had to say to them at this time.

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except a little advice, which was for them as a delegation and chiefs, to think seriously of the proposition that had been tendered to them as a nation. If a Chippewa could give advice to an Ottawa, or an Ottawa could give advice to the Chippewa by all means to do so, they always had been Brothers, and he wished them to still act as Brothers, also like men of sense, -- advised the Ottawa so to act, that when they went home, they would not feel ashamed at seeing their Chippewa Brothers, in possession of many goods, and much money and themselves entirely destitute and very poor.

Hamlin

Augustine/~~Amos~~, half breed, and delegate from LaBre Croche, requested of his Commissioner the privilege of saying a few words before the council should adjourn. He observed that it was painful for him to make any, exposure, but the interest he felt for his nation and the consequences that would result from the course that had been taken, compelled him to make known what had been done. He stated without reserve that the words the Commissioner had just heard from the Chiefs, was not their words, not their feelings of their hearts--but the words of white men who wanted reservations, and have dictated to them what to say. These men cared not for the Indian, they wished to benefit themselves. He was confident (knowing the minds of the Indians) that in case they had been left to make up their own minds on the subject of the treaty, their moods would have been entirely different, but they were constantly beset by individuals and disturbed in their private councils, often called out sometime one,--then two and as many as six had been called at one time, then minds were disturbed--perplexed and they did not know how to act, in answer to the proposition respecting the Treaty, they had been instructed to say No, once, twice and thrice in order

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that they might obtain more for their lands, closed by saying if the Indians were left alone, they would sell, with some Reservations for themselves, He was confident it was their wish to dispose of their lands and derive present benefit.

The Commissioner requested the Interpreter to communicate to the Chiefs, the substance of ^{Hamlin} ~~Emier~~'s statement, give directions to persons having Indians in charge, to see that they were furnished with a private and room for their councils/not allow any person to disturb them. The council then adjourned over to Tuesday, March 22nd, 1836.

Tuesday, March 22nd, the council was postponed until Wednesday, March 23rd.

Wednesday, March 23rd council assembled agreeably to postponement, Commissioner gave notice that he had received the paper from Mackinac, which he spoke of a few days since in council, which contained many names of their people offering to sell their lands, with some Reservations. Then said to them he was prepared to hear what they had to say.

Apokosegan offered to sell all their lands in the lower Peninsula except lands north of the Manistic--Sturgeon and Cheboigun, and south of a line commencing half way between the Maskego and Grand Rivers, on Lake Michigan, and running in a strait course to the eastern boundary of their lands. He invited the Grand River Indians to consent to live in his reservation north.

Nagis Ininne, offered to sell provided his great Father would give them such reservations as would benefit them and their children, and it was the

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wish of the Chief, that some of their friends should examine the Treaty after it was made, and see that all was right, --that they were provided for, requested that their friend might act for them, Mr. R. Robinson was appointed by the Grand River Indians to act for them.

Commissioner proposed a Reservation of 100,000 acres of land north of the waters of Grand River to be located in two places, by the Chiefs after their return home. Asked them to think of his proposition and let him know the result on the morrow -- council then adjourned.

Thursday, March 24th, 1836, council convened agreeably to adjournment.

Apokosigan asked for the same reservation as of yesterday.

Big Sail presented a paper containing the wishes of his band, all fully assented to the proposition of the reserve of 100,000 acres. Asked that Drew and his daughter might have a reservation, also J. Holiday and his family. They appointed Mr. Robert Stewart to examine the stipulations of the treaty for the Cheboigan band.

Megis Ininee approved the 100,000 reservation, asked that Mr. R. Robinson & his family might receive a reservation of one mile square at Grand River Rapids.

Wassangaso gave full consent to the sale, and reservation of 100,000, and requested that William Laslie and his family, six in number, might have one section each. They appointed William Laslie to act for the Grand Traverse band.

Black Bird gave his assent to all the propositions -- and appointed Hamlin to examine the Treaty for the M'atre Croche band.

Point St. Ignace band appointed Mr. J. Drew to act for them in forming the treaty.

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Saut Ste. Marie band appointed Mr. H. A. Levake to transact business for the band.

Wasawbegum presented a paper purporting to be a protest but in consequence of his saying that, it was not his own act, it was returned to him. He then requested that whatever allowance was made by the Government for their improvements at the rapids of Grand River might be paid to Nawquageezick, then asked for a reservation for their teacher Mr. Slater.

Commissioner gave them notice that on Monday he would meet them with the Treaty for their signatures. Council then adjourned.

Monday, March 28th, the council convened agreeably to adjournment. The Treaty was presented for the signatures of the Chiefs and Delegates and was signed by the Commissioner, and all the Chiefs and Delegates of the Ottawa and Chippewa Nations who attended for the purpose of concluding said treaty.

John Hulbert

Secretary

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Charles F. Schmitt

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