

# MINUTES OF THE 1855 TREATY

Document 1 *Act of Dec. 19, 1854, 10 Stat. 598*

Chap. VII—An act to provide for the extinguishment of the title of the Chippewa Indians to the lands owned and claimed by them in the Territory of MN and the State of WI, and for their domestication and civilization

Document 5

[Longhand notes of ten separate interviews at Washington between the COIA and the Chippewa chiefs, which resulted in the treaty of 1855. From records of Indian Bureau.]

First Interview

Interview between the COIA and a delegation of Chippewas; 19 Feb. 1855

On Monday evening last, a delegation of Chippewa Indians from MN had an informal talk or interview with Col. Manypenny, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Their attendance here, it is said was requested for the purpose of making a treaty for the purchase of a tract of land lying in MN.

The delegation were accompanied by their agent, Maj. David B. Harrison, Truman A. Warren, U.S. interpreter, and Paul H. Boileau, who (owing to the indisposition of Mr. Warren) acted upon this occasion as interpreter. They consisted of the principal chief, the celebrated "Hole-in-the-Day" and the following named subchiefs, viz: "Cropping Sky," "Crowpath," "Bad-boy" (who notwithstanding his name, is said by the agent to be an excellent Indian), "Coming-home-hollowing," and "One-who-knows."

The commissioner asked HID how he liked the method of traveling over railroads, etc. as compared with the Indian mode?

HID said he liked it very much, and admired the wisdom of the white men which enabled them to accomplish such works. Although his color was different from that of the commissioner, he knew the same Great Spirit made both, felt as an American at heart, and took great pleasure and satisfaction in noticing the wonderful increase and progress of the whites in improvements. These things, he intimated, were natural to the whites, as the habits, customs, and pursuits of the red men were to them, and each should adhere to their own way of life.

The commissioner was glad to find that his young friend noticed such things, and felt such pride as an American. Although in this meeting they had no special object to accomplish, he felt that himself and his red brethren could spend an hour or two very pleasantly together. It is true the white people have grown with great rapidity—have spread from the Atlantic to the Pacific; but what has been the destiny of the red men? They have yearly diminished in numbers. Why have they decreased and fallen away while the whites have increased and multiplied? The Great Spirit, as you justly remark, made all, and intended that both should increase and multiply and replenish the land. My young friend, said the commissioner, has thrown out an idea that each should adhere to their manners, customs, and habits, but this suggestion is the offspring of prejudice. So long as the red man relies upon the precarious subsistence afforded by the chase, so long will he remain ignorant of the advantages of industry and civilization—so long will the Indians decrease and diminish in numbers. Let them but once learn to depend upon the cultivation of the earth for their support, and education, improvement, and independence will follow; and then they can accomplish for themselves all that excited their wonder and admiration on their way to Washington.

HID. That is true, very true.

The commissioner said he would like to hear his red brethren talk a little

HID did not know what to say or what to talk about. His ideas were fully expressed in the few words which he uttered in the beginning of the conversation. His idea is to notice what the white people do, and to get hi people, as near as possible, to follow in their footsteps. It would be folly for him to attempt to express his views further than he has already done. He respected all present too much to trifle or joke with them.

The commissioner replied that his wish was to hear the delegates express freely their opinions and views, so that he might the better understand their wants and wishes, and as to whether there was among them any diversity of opinion. He desired to hear their opinions as to his suggestions.

HID, laughing, said as far as the labor and growth of the whites and their increase of territory are concerned, he assured the commissioner if the Indians did not emulate and equal the whites it was not for the want of envy. They did envy them in these things, and felt the greatest ambition to emulate and follow their example if they only knew how to accomplish it. This was the difficulty.

The commissioner said he could see no good reason why they could not, in time, equal the whites in these respects. He believed they had the natural capacity to do so.

HID said the whites had wisdom. They had learning, and, although they are wise, still what could they do with all their wisdom if they lacked money and means. They

could accomplish nothing—they could make none of those improvements. An illustration, my friend, said HID, what could the Chippewas do with the poor paltry sum of \$4 each per year toward supporting their families, and building such railroads as we have passed over in coming to the seat of Government?

The commissioner said the white people were enabled by their industry and labor, after supporting their families, to keep a strong box in which, after building their railroads, they put a great deal of money. But if every white man in the country had a room full of money and no one labored their magnificent roads and other improvements could not be made. Money, with them, was a measure of value, and its accumulation was the reward as well as the result of thrift and industry. You must have observed (said the commissioner) that white men who go to Minnesota are generally poor. They, however, settle upon the public domain, and, before surveyed and brought into market, make enough off the land not only to support their families, but to pay for it when offered for sale. I agree with my young friend that means are necessary to the accomplishment of physical improvements, but had the Chippewas been farmers, they could have had plenty of wheat and other breadstuffs to sell the white settlers, who, for the want of these things were compelled to send for provisions all the way to St. Louis. Had the Chippewas been cultivators of the soil, instead of hunters, they would under this state of things, have had their pockets full of money. Conceding that means are necessary to accomplish great undertakings, it is evident that those who follow the precarious pursuits of the chase will never have the means of success.

HID replied that what the commissioner said was true, true to the letter. He respected his advice and admired his maxims; but, in the rude state of his own people what were they but savages? What could they have done under such circumstances? How could men with their habits and ideas acquire wealth? Their forefathers did not instruct and educate them like the ancestors of the whites, for they, too, were savages. It takes time to wear away attachment to old customs, habits, and superstitions. They can not be got rid of in a day. He was convinced that if each generation adhered to the customs and superstitions of their ancestors, red men will always live in poverty. Everything you have said, father, is true, and if they only could have followed your advice it would be for the interest of the Chippewas.

The commissioner said his remarks were very true, but that there must be a beginning. Their present generation of Chippewas, feeling, as they do, the advantages of industry and civilization, can lay the foundations of a change. When this is accomplished the Chippewas can attain to as high a position as the whites and enjoy all those blessings and advantages which excite their envy and admiration outside the hunts of the Indian country.

HID said that is all very true. He acknowledges that the Indians are rather too foolish. They adhere to customs and habits which are an injury instead of a benefit; “but,

my father, you must recollect that the whites were not always blessed and benefited by civilization. There was a period of dark ages in which they were like us, and from which they slowly emerged. We are now in that state. We know not, father, from one hour to another when life will end. Life is held in the palm of the Great Spirit. We do not know we will be alive tomorrow... [unreadable]... It will be eight years next spring, in the month of May, he continued, since I lost my father. At that time I was nothing but a mere foolish child. I knew nothing and did not care about knowing anything. At the time my father was dying, he said: 'My son, I charge you to take care of the Chippewa Nation, take the tribe by the hand, show them how to walk, and light them to fame, as it were, and make them resemble the whites.' I have, father, listened to his words, and well have I adhered to his advice. After his death I meditated day and night upon what he said, and have done the best I could to promote the welfare of my tribe. My first study was how to make the long sought for peace between the Chippewas and Sioux. I lost no opportunity to bring about that desirable result. The Chippewas have been assailed, their patience tried, and been persecuted, but, when attacked, have had revenge. My great study has been to secure peace, and, since I succeeded have been trying to bring about peaceable and friendly relations with other tribes. I am constantly thinking of the advice given me by my father, to 'please the Chippewas—to do all I can to promote their interest.' With the Indians, as well as with the whites, there is an ambition to excel, and those who go to war generally delight in punishing their enemies. When I go, I do the same, and have revenge. I do not hate the Sioux, I love them, as I do every one on the continent who has a red skin. Of course, as I go to St. Paul very often I frequently meet the Sioux and also the Winnebagoes. I shake hands with them, and, reminding them that the Indians once owned the content, ask them where are they now? I tell them this every time I see them, that when they fight they punish themselves and not the whites. I am a friend of peace."

The commissioner said he was glad to hear these remarks, and hoped a better day and destiny awaited the Chippewas.

(Here the conversation dropped, and HID, looking at a map before him, pointed out the land belonging to the Chippewas. Had he not been at the treaty of La Pointe last fall, he remarked with a smile to the commissioner, the land embraced in the purchase then made would not have been now "marked on the map." To this the commissioner assented, remarking that he was well aware of the fact).

HID, having changed his position in the room, resumed the conversation by remarking that having now had a social talk they would like to come to the point as to the nature of the business for which they were invited to come to this city. He regretted that all the chiefs were not here, but hoped they would soon be. Seven was the number you wanted; there are only six here, but believed there was one on the way. Those here would esteem it an especial favor to be informed of the object in sending for them, and to get some insight into the business to be transacted. They had heard of a building called a "penitentiary" here, in which they understood persons were sometimes imprisoned, and

had thought that perhaps it was contemplated to give them a taste of confinement, so as to enable them to understand how persons so situated would feel.

The commissioner said he had no such design as that intimated by his young friend. The object was to do good to the Chippewas. His object in sending for them was to buy from them a portion of their lands lying in the Mississippi country, which, when the Chippewas became cultivators of the soil like white men, they will not want, or be necessary to their support. They will then, like the whites make a living on less land. He desired to wait until the Sioux came before they would talk about business. He did not wish to talk in two tongues.

HID. The Great Spirit, although he made the Indian and the white man of a different color, gave each a dialect by which they could understand each other. The Master of Life gave us a faculty of using our tongues, and we should use words enough to make ourselves understood. Take the white man, with all his wisdom, and he is not infallible to faults. Your words strike us in this way. They are very short. "I want to buy your land." These words are very expressive, very curt.

The commissioner said his language was misunderstood. He did not mean to accuse his friend of speaking with forked tongues. What he meant is, that if arrangement could be made for the purchase of the lands a fair consideration shall be paid therefore. He did not wish to act toward his red children in such a way as to overreach them; to say to them what he did not mean, or to make promises which he did not intend to fulfill.

HID replied that he did not misunderstand the language of his father, the commissioner; and in his remarks he merely meant to say that whatever was done should be done openly and frankly, so that no misunderstanding or misapprehension should afterwards arise. The Great Spirit blessed us with tongues to express our feelings, and we should not abuse the gift by using it to deceive. The Indians have heretofore been too often deceived, because there were too many words used, and too few of them carried out.

The commissioner said we must try and avoid such things in the future, and so act as to leave no room for misunderstanding.

HID said he had occasion every day to envy the way the whites do business, in black and white.

The commissioner said one great impediment to a good understanding between the Government and the Indians arose from the fact that that latter can not read or understand the contracts which they make. HID replied that where persons have faith in the paper it [i]s as good and valid as if they could read it.

The commissioner said that was very true. If no deception be used such faith was just as safe and reliable. The Indians are doubtless often deceived by papers drawn up for their signature, which could not be the case could they read and judge for themselves.

HID. Our people must have faith in somebody or they can not trust anybody. If not, they could do nothing. Flattery is not my habit; but I must thank the commissioner for his unusual frankness. It is the first time a person about to do business with us has, in advance, put us on our guard, and I shall try and profit by the advice.

The commissioner remarked if their fathers had educated them they could judge for themselves—they could not be deceived; and hence he hoped they would see the necessity of educating their children so that in all their dealings with the world they can protect themselves.

HID. The whites have too much wisdom for the Indians.

Commissioner. The reason is that they are educated. The Indians are naturally as susceptible of education as the whites, and should exert themselves to acquire the wisdom which they envy in us.

HID. We appreciate this talk very much. I view my position in the same light you do yours. In your present situation you are the Great Father's man. I am the Indian's man. I stand in the same relation to my tribe that you do yours. You are not willing to do anything which will displease those who have selected you; neither am I willing to run counter to the wishes of my people. In this respect we are both occupied alike in acting for others as well as ourselves.

The commissioner said that was right. It is the true doctrine for the guidance of men in authority who should do their duty to those they represent.

After some further conversation about a house, shoes, etc., the Indians took their leave, apparently well pleased with their talk.

## Second Interview

Interview between the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the Chippewa delegates

On Thursday evening last (15<sup>th</sup> instant) JColonel Manyheny had a second interview with the Chippewa delegation upon the subject of the purchase of a tract of land west of the Mississippi, lying between where the Crow Wing and the Watah Rivers empty into the same, containing about 800,000 acres; for which, it is understood, the commissioner proposes to give a tract of about 250,000 acres in the interior of Minnesota, some distance south of their present reserve, with such pecuniary consideration as might

be agreed upon between the parties. The delegates present on this occasion consisted of those headed by HID, with whom he had an interview last Monday evening, and the following chiefs and headmen of the Pillager and Winnepec Band of Chippewas, who have since arrived, accompanied by Mr. J.W. Lyon, a trader, and Peter Roy, interpreter, viz, Eske by ge kose, or Flatmouth; Bejcke, or Buffal; Nabanosh, or Young man's son; Magegabo, Magizzy, or Eagle and Cobmibby.

Commissioner. I am very glad to see you all this evening. Having understood that the Chippewas were desirous to visit Washington, and being anxious myself to see them, I directed the agent to cause a delegation of your tribe to proceed to this city that I might talk with you and discuss matters pertaining to your future prospects. Your present condition, I am satisfied, is not a desirable one or calculated to benefit you. A roving life is not productive of good. You should change and conform to the times and the spirit of the age in which we live.

As par of the Chippewas, with your hereditary chief, were here a few evenings since, and we had an informal conversation, but said nothing on business, but as the Chippewas are fully represented to-nigh we will proceed to talk over business matters. In looking at your affairs I am satisfied that the Chippewas should confine themselves to a smaller extent of territory, and use every means in their power to induce their young men to abandon their present mode of living and turn their attention to the cultivation of the soil.

I suppose, however, these matters have occurred to you, and you have doubtless talked them over at your distant homes, and are therefore aware of the necessity of something being done to provide for your welfare. I should like much to have your views—perhaps you have had some conversation in regard to your affairs since your arrival in Washington; if so, I would like to hear your views fully.

Flatmouth (head chief of the illager and), shaking hands with the commissioner, said: Father, not that I am afraid to speak, but I think I can explain my views in one word. It is enough, father, to show the confidance reposed in me that I am here. I am deaf, father, and can hear with difficulty; but the few words you have uttered have given me confidence. It appears to me that I understand what you want, and know your views from the few words I have heard you speak. You want land. You look at me, father; you see how old I am. On account of my advanced age, I find it difficult to make myself undersood. It is one of my characteristics not to understand all thout is said; and as I am old I want time for reflection. I want time for reflection—one day or one nigh, and then I can answer you. Appoint a day or an hour, and after this night I will respond to your question.

Commissioner. I am struck with the old gentleman's remarks. He says he understands exactly what I want; why then should he ask time to reflect? The giddy and

inexperience young man might well ask time, but the old should be always prepared from long experience, to express their views and make known their wants. He did not, however, wish to hurry his old friend, or urge him to act precipitately. He appears to understand the object of the interview. His people had more land than they wanted or could use, and stood in need of money; and I have more money than I need, but want more land. Hence it is that the necessities and wants of both would be relieved by coming to a proper understanding in respect to the object of this interview.

(Here Paul, the interpreter, suggested that, as his memory was defective, he would be glad if the speeches were broken into shorter fragments).

The commissioner remarked to Buffalo, that if he was a young man he would insist upon his dispensing with his headdress of feathers, but that, as he was old, he would not disturb a custom which habit had endeared to him.

Buffalo replied that the feathered plume among the Chippewas was a badge of honor. Those who were successful in fighting with or conquering their enemies were entitled to wear plumes as marks of distinction, and as the reward of meritorious actions.

The commissioner asked him how old he was.

Buffalo said that was a question which he could not answer exactly. If he guessed right, however, he supposed he was about fifty. (He looked, and was doubtless, much older).

Commissioner. I would think, my friend, you were older than that. I would like to philosophise with you about that headdress, and desired to know if he had a farm, a house, stock, and other comforts about him.

Buffalo. I have none of those things which you have mentioned. I live like other members of the tribe.

Commissioner. How long have you been in the habit of painting—thirty years or more?

Buffalo. I can not tell the number of years. It may have been more or it may have been less. I have distinguished myself in war as well as in peace among my people and the whites, and am entitled to the distinction which the practice implies.

Commissioner. While you, my friend, have been spending your time and money in painting your face, how many of your white brothers have started without a dollar in the world and acquired all those things mentioned so necessary to your comfort and independent support. The paint, with the exception of what is now on my friend's face,

has disappeared, but the white persons to whom I alluded by way of contrast are surrounded by all the comforts of life, the legitimate fruits of their well-directed industry. This illustrates the difference between civilized and savage life, and the importance of our red brothers changing their habits and pursuits for those of the white.

(The Indians have held a running conversation and consultation as to what was best to be done, a circumstance which their interpreter explained).

HID said the Pillagers being the parties addressed this evening he did not feel it incumbent upon his band to take any part in the discussion. It was for the Pillagers to respond to the remarks of the commissioner.

The commissioner said that his friend HID was mistaken. He did not think the Chippewas had an[y] distinct interests, and he therefore addressed himself not to the Pillagers alone but to the Chippewa Nation.

Buffalo said his people lived much father back than any other band of the Chippewas, and consequently did not enjoy opportunities to understand the matters discussed as well as others. Only in a single instance had he anything to do with annuity payments. Hence he desired time to reflect before he could give a definite answer.

The commissioner said he was fully aware of the remote position of the Pillagers, but did not think there existed rival interests between the different bands of the Chippewa nation. In respect to the business which brought them together, he said he was anxious to act with dispatch, so that the great council of the nation, now in session here, might give their acts its sanction before its adjournment, which will soon take place. He addressed them altogether, because he could recognize among them no separate or rival interests. He would be glad to hear what his friend HID had to say upon the subject.

Buffalo inquired if he properly understood the commissioner as wishing to make one nation of the Chippewa people. If this is not so, he would like to be corrected.

The commissioner replied that he had no desire to disturb or interfere with their internal affairs. He wished to treat with them, however, as Chippewas.

(Captain Eastman, who was present, here suggested that if they were converted into one nation several persons would lose their offices, and hence their repugnance to a change in the present order of things).

Very true, said the commissioner; the Indians, in this respect, are like their white brothers—fond of power and distinction and opposed to any arrangement which deprives them of either or diminishes their chances of promotion. He should not, therefore, attempt to disturb them in their offices.

Flatmouth. There is truth, father, in everything you have said. We feel that it is all true. We should have no conflicting interests but we are in this respect like the whites. We have separate and distinct interests. We know our own possessions. We know what property we own. We want to do the best we can for ourselves. We want time to reflect. We do not want more than a day, perhaps; but if it takes four to reflect upon it, we want to take it. We know the great council has not long to sit, and we shall therefore act with all possible dispatch.

The commissioner said he desired prompt action, but he did not wish anything unreasonable. He was aware of their separate interests and did not wish to disturb them. He presumed they understood their boundaries and would be able to define them. For his part he did not would have to be informed upon that point before he could make a proposition to purchase.

HID. Father, there is no use in looking at the map or attempting to find out the boundaries between different bands. Make your proposition, say what you want, and what you will give, and we will consider of it. There is no use of making child's play of the matter. It can be expressed in a few short words.

Flatmouth. Our great father knows our lines better than we do. The Indians know nothing on paper. We know what our father desires.

Commissioner. My friend Flatmouth seems, after all, to be prepared to act, and I therefore presume a treaty can be made to-night.

Flatmouth. It is not a fault of mine not to be prepared to act. I want to understand and reflect upon the subject and to study my own interest.

Commissioner (jocularly). I hope my friends do not want to study how to cheat or take advantage of their father.

Flatmouth. Father, you have the advantage of us, but I hope our father will not use his power to injure his red children.

The commissioner said the Pillagers and the Mississippi Bands must determine the lines of their boundaries. He had no desire to confound their respective interests. He wished them to define among themselves their boundaries and say what quantity of land they wish reserved and where. If they will make known through some friend to-morrow their boundary lines and the quantity of land they wish to have reserved, etc., he would be prepared to make them a proposition at once. Without this information, however, he could not make the necessary calculations as to the extent of their respective interests, which is indispensable as the basis of an offer.

Flatmouth made a remark which the reporter did not understand.

HID. Father, I respect every man because he is a man; but I respect still more the American people, and why should I not? My views are such, father, I can not express them, and why? Because they are grand. My views are not limited, not on account of their wisdom but of their highness, and I can not find words to express my meaning. I respect the American people, and I thought, father, that you with your gray hairs would express something more explicit than you have made known this evening. I do not possess the spirit of hypocrisy, and want everything said to be plain, direct and to the point.

The commissioner regretted that it was not in his power, with his present information, to come at one to the point, as required by his friend the head chief. "As I said the other evening, I do not speak with forked tongue, and am not the man to deceive my red brothers; but until they settle their respective interests among themselves it is plain I can not talk with that frankness and directness which is my habit and which I would like. I might the other night have made a proposition, but for the want of knowledge of the respective interests of those represented here to-night it might not be just. When the Pillager and Mississippi Bands shall have settled these things among themselves, and stated the extent of the reservations which they desire, I will then be able to act understandingly and will make a proposition. I hope, under these circumstances, that my friend, HID, will see the propriety of my course and the reasons which have influenced my conduct."

HID. My father misunderstands me. I did not mean to impute to him a design to deceive us or a want of frankness; but I think he should have given us a general idea of what he wants us to do.

The commissioner said his friends of both bands can define their boundaries and describe what kind of reservations they desire. Should there be any difficulty in their doing so, he would do all in his power to produce a proper understanding between them.

HID. We understood all that before. All we want is a fair understanding. I may have uttered some words, father, which you do not like and you may have said some things which we do not like. Both should act in a forgiving spirit; and if such has been the case, let those unpleasant words pass without hard feeling. We have said enough and will now retire. We all fully understand what you want, and now is the time for consultation and reflection.

The commissioner said when they had decided among themselves about their boundaries, etc., he would have some figuring made on the map, so sa to make the matter plain and easily understood.

HID. That is just what we want. We will select two men from each band to come up, after we have deliberated, to mark out our boundaries, and the land which we want reserved and hope those selected will be acceptable.

Buffalo. Look in our faces, father, and say if you think we look like enemies! We are not enemies, father; we are brothers. We can, if necessary, deliberate upon your words this night, without sleep, but we would prefer to have time to think.

Commissioner. That is not necessary. I do not want my red brothers to lose their rest. I want them to take necessary time.

Buffalo. What time does our father rise in the morning?

Commissioner. I rise early enough to shave every morning before daylight; and, I presume, will be here to-morrow before HID gets out of bed.

HID. Father, I am a young man, and want to enjoy myself and take my ease. Our father is an old man, and does not. That is the difference.

Commissioner. Your father has to rise early to work for and take care of the interests of his red children.

HID. We are rejoiced to know that he takes so much interest in our welfare.

The delegation, shaking hands with the commissioner, then departed for their lodgings.

---

### Third Interview

Interview between the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the Pillager and Winnepec Band of Chippewas on Saturday morning, Feby. 17, 1855

These Indians, of which there are upwards of 2,200, exclusive of the Red Lake Indians, live in the northern border of Minnesota. The object of their interview this morning with Col. Manypenny was to make a treaty for the sale of their land to the United States. After a desultory conversation among themselves their principal chief, Flatmouth, in reply to the inquiries of the commissioner said:

“My father and friend, I am glad you have come right to the point. My reason yesterday in pointing out the limits of our boundaries was to show you the country which you ought to have, and not to state precisely what our bands claim as a right. We are not like the whites. We differ among ourselves in respect to our boundaries. Our ideas, owing to our ignorance, are conflicting. We intended to designate what we want to cede. If we sell, we do not want to part with all. We want reserves to live upon at Lake Winnepec, Cap Lake, and Leech Lake. We feel that as we have yet the control and possession of our own lands, we should not part with them without reserving a home. We had better not be in existence than not to have a place we can call our own”

The commissioner then informed them if reservations at those places would be satisfaction? They responded, Yes. He also asked them if they desired a reserve at Otter Tail Lake? They replied that if they had desired one there, they should have mentioned it.

The commissioner then informed them that he was prepared to make them a proposition. He would do so frankly, and hoped it would be acceptable. He proposed to pay them an annuity of \$20,000 a year for thirty years, the same to be paid either in cash or part cash and part goods, as the President might judge best for their interests; to furnish them with two blacksmiths, and tools, iron, steel, &c., for ten years; to erect a sawmill, with portable gristmill attached, and to furnish them with a miller for ten years; to give them at the first payment a present of \$10,000 in gems, traps, blankets, &c.

The commissioner explained the reasons for limiting the services of the blacksmith and miller to ten years. At the end of that time, he had every reason to believe his Pillager and Winnepec friends would have made such progress in civilization as to be enabled to attend to their own business, that, by that time, they would raise up millers and blacksmiths of their own. It was bad policy for the Indians to rely upon others for what they can do themselves; and concluded by asking if they could repeat the proposition, and if they fully understood it.

Flatmouth. Father, I do not desire to repeat it, but we have reflected upon, and fully treasured up, all you have proposed and understand now, for the first time, what we were sent for.

The other delegates signified the same things.

The commissioner explained the reason why he wished to reserve to this Great Father, up at the White House, a control over the manner in which the annuity of \$20,000 was to be expended, either in money or agricultural implements, &c., as to him might seem best for the interests of his red children. He himself preferred it should be paid in money as soon as they knew how properly to take care of and appropriate it, because the sooner they were thrown upon their own resources the better for themselves. Until that time arrived, however, and until they displayed sufficient capacity to trade and manage for themselves, he wished to reserve the right to their Great Father of expending a portion, at least, of their annuity in operating farms, buying agricultural implements, &c. The commissioner then caused the provisions of the Omaha treaty of last year to be interpreted for them, to illustrate his views upon the subject. He also informed them that he would reserve the right to survey their land, and divide it among them like the whites.

To these propositions the delegates signified their assent and said they understood the matter fully.

The commissioner desired to know what they thought of his propositions.

Falmouth, after consulting with the other chiefs, said, "Father you can see I am old. I see, father, you are old too, but I am much older than you or anyone in the room. I came here to act not for myself alone but for my associates and my people at home. You desire to purchase our land—our homes—it is an important matter to us; and I therefore desire time for reflection until Monday morning. Under the circumstances stated, father, you would not think well of us if we were to jump right at your proposition without taking time to consider it. We should study the interests of our people.

The commissioner said he was willing to give his venerable friend all the time he could, under the circumstances of the case. Of course, if they asked time until Monday, it must be conceded, but it should be considered that the Great Council of the nation, now in session [line deleted] no treaty which they might make could go into effect, had only about twelve working days left. Consequently, whatever is done should be done quickly. In view of this, he asked if the delegates could not go home, council together, and announce their decision at 1 o'clock to-day.

Delegates. We would rather postpone it till Monday; but will try and get through as quick as possible, and, if we make up our minds to-day, we will come here at once

prepared to announce our decision. We desire to consult a friend in whom we have much confidence.

The commissioner said if they desired to consult a friend in whom they had confidence he had no objection. It should be borne in mind, however, that the subject of their negotiations was a matter which concerned himself and his red brethren alone, and no extraneous influence should be brought to bear upon their deliberations.

Delegates. We understand that, and we will attend to it.

The conference here ended , and the Indians took their departure.

---

Fourth Interview, Feb. 17, 1855

A map of the country owned by them, drawn by Capt. Eastman, was brought forward and examined....

The commissioner explained HID the nbmer of acres in the tract which he was desirous of purchasing, which Paul D. Boileau, the interpreter, said it was difficult to make them understand, owing to the large quantity of acres in the tract. By dividing the numbers, however, he finally succeeded.

Commissioner. Where do you wish your reserve, if you sell your country?

HID, pondering thoughtfully, said: Father, you ask us where we want our reserves set apart. This question implies that you want to buy our land. Do I understand you?

Commissioner. Certainly; but I want you to have a home.

HID. We did partially understand, but now we understand fully what you want. Before, wwe commence to trade, father, let us lay dignity aside. Will you allow me to look at you as a trader? As you want to buy my land, I must be excused if I look upon both of us as speculators. I desire to act in this matter as a business man, and lay all dignity aside. You have just now told me the number of acres I own, and, of course, when men trade for land they are in the habit of asking or offering so much per acre. Now, what are you willing to give per acre?...

Commissioner. I proposed to make a round offer of a certain sum to be paid in a given number of years.

HID. I have a general idea of the way the white do business. I want to know how much the country we occupy is worth in your estimation.

It is worth, in yearly payments, say from \$250 to 300,000, or 250 boxes (?) of a thousand in a box(?).

HID. Do not joke with me, my friend. I wish you to be serious, and I want a fair understanding. I want to ask you should we be thrown out of your possessions and you should take all the land, take all the water, take the graveyards of our fathers, is \$250,000 all the land is worth?

Commissioner. Yes; I think so.

HID (laughing). Our father is very stingy! Leaving business aside, and viewing it as one of natureal feelings, everyone knows that there is not an Indian tribe in America but what calls you "father." This being the case, what should you as in dealing with your red children? The natural feeling of a father is to try and help his children and leave them as a legacy enough to save them from want, and enable them to live after him. See the Indians here—we all have fathers, but you are the only person living who we call father in common. It is in this view of the case, that we appeal to your liberality and good feeling in behalf of your red children. (75-95)

---

Fifth Interview, Feb. 17 1855

On Saturday evening at 7 o'clock, the Pillager and Winnepec Bands of Chippewas resumed their talk with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs upon the subject of selling their lands, in pursuance of their adjournment that morning.

The commissioner, after complimenting them on their punctuality, said he presumed they came this evening fully prepared to announce the result of their deliberation during the day.

The delgates signified that they had.

The commissioner said, if so, the best way was to lose no time, but to proceed with the work.

Flatmouth [head chief of Pillager tribe] said he desired to tell his father what he has been, what he now is, and how he has been looked upon by the Indians and the whites. "You see me here before you, father, and it would be useless for me to attempt to hide my age. My old head and my gray hairs tell for themselves. I have seen a great many snows and rains. It is many years, father, since I first became acquainted with the long-knives.... Now to the point, my father, as I must call you, although, from the

difference of our ages, I might call you my son. I will speak to you plainly. I am not afraid to talk to a white man, because when I look back upon my life I can see no black stain on my path which should make me ashamed to look you in the face....

Do you see me, father? When I say a word I stick to it. If my name is not recorded in the annals of history according to the whites, I feel that I am a big man with my tribe. They have witnessed my actions and know me. You can see, my father, from my looks and from the manner in which I address you, what I think of you. I call you father, a name which we as a people give to none among our tribe. We look up to you for protection. If I were traveling and meet a person, and that person should be a spirit, I should ask that spirit for what I wanted. If I beg of you a little more money to clothe and provide for my children which I have left back, I hope you will excuse me. They are poor and in want, and expect me to protect their interests and provide for them....

Even if your heart was made of rock, father, if you could accompany me when I return to my home on the beautiful lake where I reside, and see my people coming nearly naked to meet me and ascertain what their great father has done to relieve their wants it would move you to pity, and you would excuse me for asking, on their behalf, a little more than was offered this morning. You see, my father, I am taking a great deal of pains to explain, because I am about to part with the graves of my fathers and to sell my birthright as it were....