

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Public Documents of Maine:

BEING THE

ANNUAL REPORTS

OF THE VARIOUS

Public Officers Institutions

FOR THE YEAR

1895

VOLUME II.

AUGUSTA:

BURLEIGH & FLYNT, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1895.

REPORT OF AGENT

OF THE

PENOBSCOT TRIBE OF INDIANS

FOR THE YEAR

1894

AUGUSTA

BURLEIGH & FLYNT, PRINTERS TO THE STATE

1894

REPORT.

To His Excellency the Governor and the Honorable Council:

It is my duty and pleasure to report to you such of the doings and conditions of the Penobscot Tribe of Indians as may interest and concern the State—whose wards they are,—and at the same time render to you an account of the moneys received and paid out by me in behalf of the tribe, for the year past, viz. : from December 1, 1893, to December 1, 1894 :

APPROPRIATIONS (RESOLVES of 1893).

Interest of Indian trust fund.....	\$4,429 70
For farming	600 00
Schools	600 00
New school-house on Old Town Indian island,	400 00
Fall dividends (annuity).....	1,700 00
Bounty on crops.....	200 00
Salaries :	
Governor of Tribe.....	50 00
Lieutenant-Governor.....	40 00
Superintendent of Farming.....	100 00
Priest.....	100 00
Agent	200 00
	<hr/>
	\$8,419 70

RECEIPTS.

Balances from last year as follows :	
School	\$391 91
Mattanawcook road	250 00

April 16th, warrant.....	\$2,500 00
May 11th, warrant.....	1,800 00
October 18th, warrant.....	2,890 00
December 3d, warrant.....	400 00
Contribution of Indians in aid of new school-house	400 00
December 20th, warrant.....	829 70
December 20th, warrant to cover bounty.....	44 08
	<hr/> \$9,505 69

EXPENDITURES.

Supplies to poor, sick and infirm.....	\$2,217 50
Burial expenses.....	108 71
Wood and wood-hauling.....	865 52
Medicine and medical attendance.....	796 09
Contingent expenses	269 30
Spring dividends	465 30
Farming.....	691 78
Schools	688 03
Fall dividends (annuity).....	1,315 50
Bounty on crops.....	244 08
Mattanawcook road	200 00
New school-house, Old Town Indian Island.....	1,000 00
Salaries :	
Governor of Tribe.....	50 00
Lieutenant-Governor.....	40 00
Superintendent of Farming	100 00
Priest	100 00
Agent	200 00
Cash on hand—school balance	103 88
Mattanawcook road	50 00
	<hr/> \$9,505 69

SHORE RENTS.

The leases of all the island shores belonging to the Tribe expired January 1, 1894, and, in accordance with law, they were sold at public auction at Bangor, last April. The most

valuable shores, those in proximity to the Nebraska and Argyle booms brought about the same price as when last sold five years ago, but the remainder, being in the main those accommodating logs from the lower or Peacove boom, sold at a much lower price than formerly, the chief reason for this being the fact that of late years many more logs have been rafted and cared for at the Upper booms than at the Lower, whereas the latter place used to get a large proportion of the work. In the particular case of Island No. 1 the fall in price was chiefly owing to decrease of rentals of the Milford mills, for whose benefit these shores are leased. Believing that the low prices were due in some measure also to the hard times, which should not extend indefinitely, I leased the cheaper shores for a period of three years, while those commanding better prices run for a period of five. As the money received from shore rentals any given year is not paid out to the Tribe until the next, the following exhibit for 1894 shows a larger division per capita than can be made in February, 1895.

CR.

By balance from last year (Feb. 10th)	\$1 58	
By warrant.....	3,182 00	\$3,183 58

CONTRA.

Paid members of Tribe, per capita.....	\$2,960 00	
Paid municipal acct. (see Resolves of 1893)	223 58	\$3,183 58

CENSUS.

On the first day of January, 1894, the Tribe numbered 390, as per report of superintendent school committee of Old Town, a gain of four over last year.

FARMING.

The number of those who plant crops seems to be on the increase and it is difficult to give much aid to all with the money now appropriated. The object of the State, however, being to encourage the Indians to till the soil rather than to pay any large part of their farming, the proper solution of the question for the present seems to be to assist them in proportion to what they assist themselves without asking any increase in the appropriation.

Bounty on crops has been paid this year as follows: On 2,705 bushels potatoes, 25 bushels buckwheat, 135 bushels beans, 20 bushels wheat, 91 bushels pease, 364 1-2 bushels vegetables, 615 bushels oats. This shows a shortage in the appropriation of \$44.08. As the State law (Revised Statutes, Chapter 9, Section 33) makes it mandatory upon the agent to pay the Indians so much for every bushel of potatoes, beans, pease, oats, etc., raised, the appropriation plainly should be large enough to allow the payment of such bounty. In 1891 the amount so appropriated was \$300, but in 1893 this was reduced to \$200. I believe that \$250 will not on the average, more than suffice for the purpose.

ELECTION.

The election of tribal officers was held October 9th, at which time the following named were chosen: Governor, Francis P. Socklexis; lieutenant-governor, John Saul; representative to State legislature, Lola Coley. In my report of 1892 I called attention to the desirability of changing the date of holding the biennial election of officers from the second Tuesday in October to some later date in November, but no action was taken by the legislature,—presumably the matter was overlooked. The election this year illustrated anew the need of such a change; for out of a possible total of some fifty votes, there were present on the island to vote less than one-third of that number, the others being absent, in

most cases guiding up river, and not able to return home without much sacrifice and loss. As the guiding season now extends into November, I would renew my recommendation that the date of election be changed from the second Tuesday in October to the second Tuesday in November, at which latter date all, or nearly all, the voters may arrange to be at home.

SCHOOLS.

There are usually taught on Olamon Island two terms of seven weeks each, or fourteen weeks in all, yearly. This season the supervisor of Olamon schools, in whose care the law places the island school also, considered it for the interest of the pupils, as well as for the convenience of the parents, to unite the two terms, an arrangement which she thinks resulted well. It is evident, however, that schooling of fourteen weeks per year, howsoever it be divided, can bear at best but indifferent fruit. There are not many scholars on the island, it is true, but as the State recognizes the necessity of giving them instruction, it can hardly afford to stint the amount. An appropriation of one hundred and twenty-five dollars would enable the supervisor to furnish a teacher for twenty-three or twenty-four weeks a year, and I would recommend that that sum be given. This can be done, too, without increasing the general appropriation, inasmuch as there need be no sum set aside for scholars on Mattanawcook Island for 1895—there being none there now to attend school. In fact, for two years past, the only one who would avail himself of school privileges was Francis Stanislaus, a young man now twenty years of age, who with laudable ambition has attended for two terms the Poughkeepsie Business College, Poughkeepsie, New York, and will complete the course this winter. As the young man—aided very much by his parents, of course—was expending some six hundred dollars in pursuing his studies, I felt it incumbent on me to recommend to your honorable board—being seconded in this matter by the supervisor of schools at Lincoln—that Stanis-

laus be granted the sum appropriated by the State for Mattanawcook Island; and the suggestion being approved by you, I have paid him that sum as follows: In 1893, \$75; the present year, \$175. I believe that he fully appreciates your generosity, and he is proving that he means to be worthy of it by an earnest, sober and industrious life. The school on Old Town Island has been taught as usual by the resident Sisters of Mercy, who report an average attendance of forty-three and a good degree of progress by the pupils. The visit paid them last summer by members of your honorable board, was the source of much pleasure to them, both in anticipation and realization. Such visits give an added zest to their school life and at the same time show their legal guardians that the money thus spent for schooling by the State is to some good purpose and effect.

I am happy to be able to report that the new school-house for Old Town Indian Island so long wanted by the tribe is now an accomplished thing, and we have a commodious building, 28x41 feet in dimension, with separate entrances and entries for boys and girls, and with good main and recitations rooms. Single seats of the most approved pattern, and slate black-boards of ample size have been provided. A basement under the rear of the building contains privies and storage room for wood and coal. The whole building is neat, well arranged, and roomy, and will undoubtedly provide good and sufficient school quarters for this island for many years to come. I need hardly remind you that the money used for this purpose was provided in part by the State, which, in 1893 appropriated \$400, which sum was given with a former unexpended grant of \$200—this latter being at the time designed for repairing the old house—but with the provision that the Indians themselves raise \$400 to make up a total of \$1,000. The appropriation was available last year but not until this year were the Indians themselves able to help in the matter. As it was, they procured \$200 of the amount required through the generosity of the priest and Sisters of Mercy—

this being a two years' saving by them from baskets contributed by the Indians to form a fund to repair the church. But as the new house seemed about to go by default, owing to the hard times, the money was diverted from its original purpose and used as above stated. Scholars, teachers and parents are alike rejoicing in the possession of their new school quarters, which are now ready for occupancy. I may here be permitted to advise that if, as suggested, the next appropriation for Olamon schools be made \$125 per year, the sum of \$475 be given to the Old Town Indian Island school, making the total amount appropriated \$600, the same as for many years past. This would give the two teachers employed here a needed increase in wages of fifty dollars and allow twenty-five dollars for the purchase of school supplies.

It will be remembered that the site of the old school-house here is low and so cramped in area as to afford no play-ground for the children. Fortunately I found that for a reasonable price an adjoining lot could be purchased, which by reason of its elevation and extent supplies a good building site and a roomy play-ground. The lot borders on two main streets and is in size 83 1-2x134 feet. At the time that I learned that this site could be had your honorable body was not in session and was not to meet for a month. The near approach of cold weather, and the impossibility of at once consulting you, led me to purchase, at my own risk, the lot in question, paying therefor the nominal sum of \$125. As I was soon offered by a member of the Tribe \$100 for the old house and lot, which I deemed a fair price—and no more has since been offered by any one—I proposed to sell the same, provided your permission was obtained, and thus be reimbursed in larger part, for the money paid for the new lot. I was much gratified to learn that you so heartily approved my course and would sanction the sale proposed as well as the purchase consummated. The deed of the new lot was made out to the State in trust for the Tribe, was duly recorded in the agent's book as well as in the county clerk's office at Bangor, and is now on file at Augusta. All feel that the new school quarters

will prove a great addition to the health, comfort, and convenience of scholars and teachers, and that the practical results will soon offset every outlay that has been made.

IN GENERAL.

The Tribe has not suffered from any inroads of epidemic or other maladies of a severe nature, and apart from sickness due to colds, has enjoyed a good degree of health. The deaths during the year have numbered thirteen, five adults and eight children, which is about the average number. Among those who have passed away may be mentioned Joseph Nicolar, who was well known even beyond the borders of our own State. Naturally intelligent, he had acquired a fair common-school education and was often termed the lawyer of the Tribe. Fond of composition, and somewhat ambitious for literary honors, he had been Island correspondent of one or more newspapers for years and last fall completed a book which he published under the name of "Life and Traditions of the Red Man." At the time of his death, which occurred in February last he was engaged in writing a history of the Penobscot Tribe. Mr. Nicolar possessed many good qualities and is much missed by his friends and neighbors. I may also mention the death of one of the oldest men and hunters of the Tribe, Peal Nicolar Francis, who died in November at the age of about ninety.

The general business depression has made itself felt in the wages and profits of Indian workers, no less than in the case of the whites. "Driving" wages were reduced last spring from twenty to thirty per cent, while at the summer resorts the trade in baskets and other Indian wares was less active and less profitable than usual. The only industry that shows real improvement over last year is that of guiding, wherein more members of the Tribe found employment—and without reduction of pay—than ever before. The sporting fraternity evidently appreciate a good Indian guide. I am glad to be able to report a considerable diminution of drunkenness

among the members of the Tribe during the past year, due largely to the determined efforts of the present mayor and his associates to better enforce the prohibitory law in Old Town, where it had become almost a dead letter. While many of the Indians use no intoxicating drinks—there are many with whom the use has become a habit; and as the Keeley cure is beyond their reach, their succour seems to depend upon the success of efforts to keep liquor a safe distance from them.

There is one more matter to which I would call your attention, viz.: the desirability of the passage by the coming legislature of some law regulating the adoption into the Tribe of aliens and the possible subsequent discarding of them from membership.

The customs in such cases are neither fixed nor certain, and some law is required to prevent wrangling and discord. A tardy effort was made two years ago to effect the passage of certain regulations, but the legislature was too far advanced in its session to take the matter up at that time. The two Indian parties are likely to send spokesmen to Augusta this winter to consult our law-givers on the subject in question, and I trust they will be duly heard and their wishes granted.

Very respectfully submitted,

GEORGE H. HUNT, *Agent*.

OLD TOWN, December, 1894.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN COUNCIL, }
December 20, 1894. }

Ordered printed.

Attest: NICHOLAS FESSENDEN,
Secretary of State.