

The Stone Fort and Manitoba Post Treaties Numbers One and Two

In the year 1871, the late Honorable Joseph Howe, then Secretary of State of Canada, recommended the appointment, by the Privy Council of Canada, of Mr. Wemyss McKenzie Simpson, as Indian Commissioner, in consequence of “the necessity of arranging with the bands of Indians inhabiting the tract of country between Thunder Bay and the Stone Fort, for the cession, subject to certain reserves such as they should select, of the lands occupied by them.” Mr. Simpson accepted the appointment, and in company with Messrs. S. J. Dawson and Robert Pether visited the Ojibewas or Chippawa Indians, between Thunder Bay and the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods, and took the initiatory steps for securing a treaty with them thereafter. On his arrival at Fort Garry, he put himself, as directed by his instructions, in communication with his Honor, the Hon. A. G. Archibald, then Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and the North-West Territories. A conference took place between His Honor, Messrs. Simpson, Dawson and Pether, and the Hon. James McKay, a member, at that time, of the Executive Council of Manitoba, and himself a half-breed intimately acquainted with the Indian tribes, and possessed of much influence over them. The Indians in Manitoba, in the fall of 1870, had applied to the Lieutenant-Governor to enter into a treaty with them, and had been informed that in the ensuing year negotiations would be opened with them. They were full of uneasiness, owing to the influx of population, denied the validity of the Selkirk Treaty, and had in some instances obstructed settlers and surveyors. In view of the anxiety and uneasiness prevailing, those gentlemen were of opinion “that it was desirable to secure the extinction of the Indian title not only to the lands within Manitoba, but also to so much of the timber grounds east and north of the Province as were required for immediate entry and use, and also of a large tract of cultivable ground west of the Portage, where there were very few Indian inhabitants.” It was therefore resolved to open negotiations at the Lower Fort Garry, or Stone Fort, with the Indians of the Province, and certain adjacent timber districts, and with the Indians of the other districts at Manitoba Post, a Hudson’s Bay fort, at the north end of Lake Manitoba, the territory being occupied principally by one nation, the Chippawas, of whom the Saulteaux of the lakes are a branch, although there are also a number of Swampy Crees resident within it.

Mr. Simpson accordingly issued proclamations, inviting the Indians to meet him on the 25th of

July and 17th of August, 1871, at these points respectively, to negotiate an Indian treaty. The Lieutenant-Governor also issued a proclamation forbidding the sale or gift of intoxicating liquors during the negotiation of the treaty, and applied to Major Irvine to detail a few of the troops under his command to preserve order, which request was acceded to.

The Lieutenant-Governor and Mr. Simpson arrived at the Stone Fort on the 24th of July, 1871, but as the Indians had not all arrived the meeting was postponed till the 27th, when a thousand Indians were found to have assembled, and a considerable number of half-breeds and other inhabitants of the country were present, awaiting with anxiety to learn the policy of the Government.

Lieutenant-Governor Archibald, after the Indians were assembled opened the proceedings by delivering the following address:

“On the 13th September last, on my first arrival in the country, I met a number of you at the mission, I told you I could not then negotiate a Treaty with the Indians, but that I was charged by your Great Mother, the Queen, to tell you that she had been very glad to see that you had acted during the troubles like good and true children of your Great Mother. I told you also that as soon as possible you would all be called together to consider the terms of a treaty to be entered into between you and your Great Mother.

“I advised you to disperse to your homes, and gave you some ammunition to enable you to gain a livelihood during the winter by hunting.

"I promised that in the spring you would be sent for, and that either I, or some person directly appointed to represent your Great Mother, should be here to meet you, and notice would be given you when to convene at this place to talk over what was right to be done.

“Early in the spring, Mr. Simpson, who sits beside me, was made Commissioner. He left his home at once for this Province, by Rainy Lake and the Lake of the Woods.

“The Indians of the lake districts meet, as you know, on Rainy River yearly, about the 20th June, to fish for sturgeon, and they could not be called together sooner.

“Mr. Simpson met them there at that time, and talked over their affairs with them, and made

certain arrangements with them. He then hurried on to see you, and reached this Province a week ago last Sunday. He then sent messengers at once to all the Indians within certain bounds, asking them to meet him here on the 25th day of July. Some of you were unable to come so soon, and he has therefore, at the instance of those who were here, waited till to-day to open the talk. I believe that now you are all arrived, and ready to proceed to business.

“It will be the duty of the Commissioner to talk to you on the particular details of the treaty, and I will give place to him presently, but there are one or two things of a general kind which I would like, before I close, to bring to your notice, for you to think about among yourselves.

“First. Your Great Mother, the Queen, wishes to do justice to all her children alike. She will deal fairly with those of the setting sun, just as she would with those of the rising sun. She wishes order and peace to reign through all her country, and while her arm is strong to punish the wicked man, her hand is also open to reward the good man everywhere in her Dominions.

“Your Great Mother wishes the good of all races under her sway. She wishes her red children to be happy and contented. She wishes them to live in comfort. She would like them to adopt the habits of the whites, to till land and raise food, and store it up against a time of want. She thinks this would be the best thing for her red children to do, that it would make them safer from famine and distress, and make their homes more comfortable.

“But the Queen, though she may think it good for you to adopt civilized habits, has no idea of compelling you to do so. This she leaves to your choice, and you need not live like the white man unless you can be persuaded to do so of your own free will. Many of you, however, are already doing this.

“I drove yesterday through the village below this Fort. There I saw many well-built houses and many well-tilled fields with wheat and barley and potatoes growing, and giving promise of plenty for the winter to come. The people who till these fields and live in these houses are men of your own race, and they shew that you can live and prosper and provide like the white man.

“What I saw in my drive is enough to prove that even if there was not a buffalo or a fur-bearing animal in the country, you could live and be surrounded with comfort by what you can raise from the soil.

“Your Great Mother, therefore, will lay aside for you ‘lots’ of land to be used by you and your children forever. She will not allow the white man to intrude upon these lots. She will make rules to keep them for you, so that as long as the sun shall shine, there shall be no Indian who has not a place that he can call his home, where he can go and pitch his camp, or if he chooses, build his house and till his land.

“These reserves will be large enough, but you must not expect them to be larger than will be enough to give a farm to each family, where farms shall be required. They will enable you to earn a living should the chase fail, and should you choose to get your living by tilling, you must not expect to have included in your reserve more of hay grounds than will be reasonably sufficient for your purposes in case you adopt the habits of farmers. The old settlers and the settlers that are coming in, must be dealt with on the principles of fairness and justice as well as yourselves. Your Great Mother knows no difference between any of her people. Another thing I want you to think over is this: in laying aside these reserves, and in everything that the Queen shall do for you, you must understand that we can do for you no more than she has done for her red children in the East. If she were to do more for you that would be unjust for them. She will not do less for you because you are all her children alike, and she must treat you all alike.

“When you have made your treaty you will still be free to hunt over much of the land included in the treaty. Much of it is rocky and unfit for cultivation, much of it that is wooded is beyond the places where the white man will require to go, at all events for some time to come. Till these lands are needed for use you will be free to hunt over them, and make all the use of them which you have made in the past. But when lands are needed to be tilled or occupied, you must not go on them any more. There will still be plenty of land that is neither nor occupied where you can go and roam and hunt as you have always done, and, if you wish to farm, you will go to your own reserve where you will find a place ready for you to live and cultivate.

“There is another thing I have to say to you. Your Great Mother cannot come here herself to talk with you, but she has sent a messenger who has her confidence.

“Mr. Simpson will tell you truly all her wishes. As the Queen has made her choice of a chief to represent her, you must, on your part, point out to us the chiefs you wish to represent you, as the persons you have faith in.

“Mr. Simpson cannot talk to all your braves and people, but when he talks to chiefs who have your confidence he is talking to you all, and when he hears the voice of one of your chiefs whom you name he will hear the voice of you all. It is for you to say who shall talk for you, and also who shall be your chief men. Let them be good Indians, who know your wishes and whom you have faith in.

“You will look to the Commissioner to fulfil everything he agrees to do, and the Queen will look to the chiefs you name to us, to see that you keep your parts of the agreement.

“It is our wish to deal with you fairly and frankly.

“If you have any questions to ask, ask them, if you have anything you wish the Queen to know, speak out plainly.

“Now chiefs and braves and people, I introduce to you Mr. Simpson, who will say anything he thinks fit in addition to what I have said.

“When you hear his voice you are listening to your Great Mother the Queen, whom God bless and preserve long to reign over us.”

Mr. Simpson also addressed them, and thereafter, in compliance with a request of the Lieutenant-Governor, the Indians retired to select their chiefs and principal spokesmen.

On the next day the conference was resumed, the chiefs and spokesmen being presented. The Indians, on being asked to express their views, “stated that there was a cloud before them which made things dark, and they did not wish to commence the proceedings till the cloud was dispersed.” On inquiry it was ascertained that they referred to the imprisonment of four Swampy Cree Indians, who had been convicted under a local law of breach of contract, as boatmen, with the Hudson s Bay Company, and on default of payment of a fine, had been sent to prison. The Lieutenant-Governor, as a matter of favor, ordered release of these prisoners, and the sky became clear. Next day the Indians met again and declared that they would never again raise their voice against the enforcement of the law, but such difficulty was experienced in getting them to understand the views of the Government—they wishing to have two-thirds of the Province as a reserve. Eventually on the 3rd of August, a treaty was concluded, its principal features being the

relinquishment to Her Majesty of the Indian title; the reserving of tracts of land for the Indians, sufficient to furnish 160 acres of land to each family of five; providing for the maintenance of schools, and prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors on the reserves; a present of three dollars per head to the Indians and the payment to them of an annuity of three dollars per head.* (See copy of treaty which will be found in the Appendix.) On the 21st of August Mr. Commissioner Simpson, accompanied the Lieutenant-Governor, the Hon. James McKay, and Mr. Molyneux St. John (lately Sheriff of the North-West Territories), met the Indians at Manitoba Post, and found them disposed to accept the terms of the treaty made at the Stone Fort, with which they had already become familiar, so that little time was lost in effecting a treaty with them as they had no special terms to prefer. By these two treaties, there was acquired by the Crown, the extinguishment of the Indian title in Manitoba, and in a tract of country fully equal in resources beyond it.

Having submitted these preliminary remarks, I conclude my notice of these treaties by quoting, as matter alike of historical record and practical interest, the despatches of Lieutenant-Governor Archibald and the excellent and instructive report, addressed to the Secretary of State by Mr. Simpson, embracing as it does a full and graphic narrative of the proceedings which took place at the negotiation of these treaties, and of the difficulties which were encountered by the Commissioner and the mode in which they were overcome.

Government House

Silver Heights, *July 22nd, 1871.*

Sir,—I have the honor to enclose you copy of a proclamation I have caused to be issued, with a view to prevent the danger arising from intoxicating drinks being given to the Indians, on the occasion of the meeting to negotiate a treaty.

I look upon the proceedings, we are now initiating, as important in their bearing upon our relations to the Indians of the whole continent. In fact, the terms we now agree upon will probably shape the arrangements we shall have to make with all the Indians between the Red River and the Rocky Mountains. It will therefore be well to neglect nothing that is within our power to enable us to start fairly with the negotiations.

With that view, I have, amongst other things, asked Major Irvine to detail a few of his troops to be present at the opening of the treaty. Military display has always a great effect on savages, and the presence, even of a few troops, will have a good tendency.

I fear we shall have to incur a considerable expenditure for presents of food, etc., during the negotiations; but any cost for that purpose I shall deem a matter of minor consequence. The real burden to be considered is that which has to be borne in each recurring year.

I doubt if it will be found practicable to make arrangements upon so favorable a basis as that prescribed by His Excellency the Governor-General as the maximum to be allowed, in case of a treaty with the Lake Indians.

Nor indeed would it be right, if we look to what we receive, to measure the benefits we derive from coming into possession of the magnificent territory we are appropriating here, by what would be fair to allow for the rocks and swamps and muskegs of the lake country east of this Province.

But to this subject I shall probably take occasion to call your attention at an early day.

I have, etc,

Adams G. Archibald

The Honorable

The Secretary of State for the Provinces

Ottawa.

Lower Fort Garry, July 29th, 1871.

Sir,—I have the honor to inform you that on Monday last I came to this Fort with the Commissioner to meet the Indians called here, with a view to negotiate a treaty, intending to open the business on Tuesday morning.

It appeared, however, on inquiry, that some bands of Indians had not arrived on Tuesday

morning, and we were therefore obliged to postpone the opening of the meeting till Thursday. On that day the Indians from all the sections of the country to which the invitation extended were found present to the number of about one thousand. A considerable body of half-breeds and other inhabitants of the country were also present, awaiting with some anxiety to learn what should be announced as the policy of the Government.

I enclose you a memorandum of the observations with which I opened the meeting. On reading them you will observe one or two points which may require some explanation.

At the time of the treaty with the Earl of Selkirk, certain Indians signed as Chiefs and representatives of their people. Some of the Indians now deny that these men ever were Chiefs or had authority to sign the treaty.

With a view therefore to avoid a recurrence of any such question, we asked the Indians, as a first step, to agree among themselves in selecting their Chiefs, and then to present them to us and have their names and authority recorded.

Furthermore, the Indians seem to have false ideas of the meaning of a reserve. They have been led to suppose that large tracts of ground were to be set aside for them as hunting grounds, including timber lands, of which they might sell the wood as if they were proprietors of the soil.

I wished to correct this idea at the outset.

Mr. Simpson followed me with some observations in the same strain, after which the Indians retired to select their Chiefs and spokesmen.

On Friday morning the Chiefs and spokesmen were duly presented, and after their names were recorded, the Indians were invited to express their views.

After some delay they stated that there was a cloud before them which made things dark, and they did not wish to commence the proceedings till the cloud was dispersed.

On inquiring into their meaning, I found that they were referring to some four of their number who were prisoners in gaol. It seems that some Swampy Indians had entered into a contract with the Hudson's Bay Company as boatmen, and had deserted, and had been brought up before

magistrates under a local law of last session, and fined, and in default of payment sent to prison for forty days.

Of this term some considerable part had expired. A few of the offenders had paid their fines, but there were still four Indians remaining in prison.

On learning the facts, I told the Indians that I could not listen to them if they made a demand for the release of the Indians as a matter of right; that every subject of the Queen, whether Indian, half-breed or white, was equal in the eye of the law; that every offender against the law must be punished, whatever race he belonged to; but I said that on the opening of negotiations with them the Queen would like to see all her Indians taking part in them, and if the whole body present were to ask as a matter of grace and favor, under the circumstances, that their brethren should be released, Her Majesty would be willing to consent to their discharge; she would grant as a favor what she must refuse if asked for on any other ground. They replied by saying that they begged it as a matter of favor only. Thereupon I acceded to their request, and directed the discharge of the four Indians. This was received with great satisfaction. I explained again, that there might be no misunderstanding about it, that henceforth every offender against the law must be punished. They all expressed their acquiescence in what I said. The discharge of the prisoners had an excellent effect.

Next morning the Indians, through one of their spokesmen, declared in presence of the whole body assembled, that from this time they would never raise their voice against the law being enforced. After the order of the release, the Chiefs and spokesmen addressed us, questions were asked and answered, and some progress made in the negotiations. Eventually the meeting adjourned till this morning at ten o'clock.

A general acquiescence in the views laid down by Mr. Simpson and myself was expressed; but it was quite clear, by the proceedings of to-day, that our views were imperfectly apprehended. When we met this morning, the Indians were invited to state their wishes as to the reserves, they were to say how much they thought would be sufficient, and whether they wished them all in one or in several places.

In defining the limits of their reserves, so far as we could see, they wished to have about two-

thirds of the Province. We heard them out, and then told them it was quite clear that they had entirely misunderstood the meaning and intention of reserves. We explained the object of these in something like the language of the memorandum enclosed, and then told them it was of no use for them to entertain any such ideas, which were entirely out of the question. We told them that whether they wished it or not, immigrants would come in and fill up the country; that every year from this one twice as many in number as their whole people there assembled would pour into the Province, and in a little while would spread all over it, and that now was the time for them to come to an arrangement that would secure homes and annuities for themselves and their children.

We told them that what we proposed to allow them was an extent of one hundred and sixty acres for each family of five, or in that proportion; that they might have their land where they chose, not interfering with existing occupants; that we should allow an annuity of twelve dollars for every family of five, or in that proportion per head. We requested them to think over these propositions till Monday morning.

If they thought it better to have no treaty at all, they might do without one, but they must make up their minds; if there was to be a treaty, it must be on a basis like that offered.

That under some such arrangements, the Indians in the east were living happy and contented, enjoying themselves, drawing their annuities, and satisfied with their position.

The observations seemed to command the acquiescence of the majority, and on Monday morning we hope to meet them in a better frame for the discussion and settlement of the treaty.

I have, etc.,

Adams G. Archibald.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State for the Provinces.

Lower Fort Garry, Manitoba, July 30th, 1871.

Sir,—I have the honor to inform you, for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General, that I arrived in this Province on the 16th instant, and, after consultation with the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, determined upon summoning the Indians of this part of the country to a conference for the purpose of negotiating a treaty at Lower Fort Garry, on Tuesday, the 25th instant, leaving for a future date the negotiation with the Indians westward of and outside of the Province of Manitoba.

Proclamations were issued, and every means taken to insure the attendance of the Indians, and on Monday, the 24th instant, I proceeded to Lower Fort Garry, where I met His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor.

On Tuesday, finding that only a small portion of the Indians had arrived, I held a preliminary conference with Henry Prince—the Chief of the Swampies and Chippewas residing on what is known as the Indian Reserve, between Lower Fort Garry and Lake Winnipeg—at which we arranged a meeting for the next day at twelve o'clock, for the purpose of ascertaining the names of the Chiefs and head men of the several tribes. At this preconference, Henry Prince said that he could not then enter upon any negotiations, as he was not empowered to speak or act for those bands of Indians not then present.

In the meantime it was found necessary to feed the Indians assembled here, and accordingly provisions were purchased and rations served out.

On Wednesday, the 26th, His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor and myself met those Indians who had arrived, in council, and addressed them with the view of explaining the purport of my commission, and the matters which were to form the subject of a treaty.

It having been reported that the Indians who had not then arrived were on their road here, we agreed that another meeting should take place on the following day, at which the Chiefs and head men were to be presented to us.

On Thursday, pursuant to appointment, we again met the Indians, when the Chiefs and head men of the several bands present were named and presented. I then explained to them the nature of Indian reserves, and desired them to determine, in council among themselves, the locality in which they desired their reserves to be laid out.

On Friday, the 28th, we again met the Indians, but they were not then prepared to state their demands, and another meeting was appointed for Saturday.

On Saturday, the 29th, we again met them, all having by this time arrived. When the subject of reserves came up, it was found that the Indians had misunderstood the object of these reservations, for their demands in this respect were utterly out of the question. After a prolonged discussion with them, I consulted with the Lieutenant-Governor, and determined to let them at once understand the terms that I was prepared to offer, and I pointed out that the terms offered were those which would receive Her Majesty's consent. On further explanation of the subject, the Indians appeared to be satisfied, and willing to acquiesce in our arrangements as hereinafter mentioned; and having given them diagrams showing the size of the lots they would individually become possessed of, and having informed them of the amount of their annuity, it was finally settled that they should meet on Monday, the 31st, and acquaint me with their decision.

The reserves will comprise sufficient land to give each family of five persons one hundred and sixty acres, or in like proportion, together with an annual payment in perpetuity of twelve dollars for each family of five persons, or in like proportion.

As far as I can judge, I am inclined to think that the Indians will accept these terms.

I am happy to be able to say that the precautions taken to prevent the introduction of liquor amongst the Indians have been wholly successful, and that perfect order and contentment have prevailed up to the present time.

I have, etc.

Wemyss M. Simpson, *Indian Commissioner.*

The Honorable

The Secretary of State for the Provinces,

Ottawa.

Ottawa, November 3rd, 1871.

To the Honorable

The Secretary of State for the Provinces,

Ottawa.

Sir,—I have the honor to submit to you, for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General, a report of my negotiations with the Indians of the Province of Manitoba, and with certain of the Indians of the North-West Territory, entered upon by me, in accordance with your instructions, dated 3rd May, 1871.

Having, in association with S. J. Dawson, Esq., and Robert Pether, Esq., effected a preliminary arrangement with the Indians of Rainy Lake, the particulars of which I have already had the honor of reporting to you in my report, dated July 11th, 1871, I proceeded by the Lake of the Woods and Dawson Road to Fort Garry, at which place I arrived on the 16th July.

Bearing in mind your desire that I should confer with the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, I called upon Mr. Archibald, and learned from him that the Indians were anxiously awaiting my arrival, and were much excited on the subject of their lands being occupied without attention being first given to their claims for compensation. Amongst the settlers, also, an uneasy feeling existed, arising partly from the often-repeated demands of the Indians for a treaty with themselves, and partly from the fact that certain settlers in the neighborhood of Portage la Prairie and other parts of the Province, had been warned by the Indians not to cut wood or otherwise take possession of the lands upon which they were squatting. The Indians, it appeared, consented to their remaining on their holdings until sufficient time had been allowed for my arrival, and the conclusion of a treaty; but they were unwilling to allow the settlers the free use of the country for themselves or their cattle. Mr. Archibald, and those residents in the Province of Manitoba with whom I conversed on the subject, appeared to think that no time should be lost in meeting the Indians, as some assurances had already been given them that a treaty would be made with them during the summer of 1871; and I therefore, at once, issued notices calling certain of the Indians together, naming two places at which I would meet them. The first meeting, to which were asked the Indians of the Province and certain others on the eastern side, was to be held on the 25th of July, at the Stone Fort, a Hudson's Bay Company's Post, situated on the Red River, about twenty

miles northward of Fort Garry—a locality chosen as being the most central for those invited. The second meeting was appointed to be held on August 17th, at Manitoba Post, a Hudson's Bay Company's Post, at the north-west extremity of Lake Manitoba, as it was deemed that such of the bands of Indians residing without the limits of the Province of Manitoba, as I purposed to deal with at present, would meet there more readily than elsewhere.

On Monday, the 24th of July, I met the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba at the Stone Fort; but negotiations were unavoidably delayed, owing to the fact that only one band of Indians had arrived, and that until all were on the spot those present declined to discuss the subject of a treaty, except in an informal manner. Amongst these, as amongst other Indians with whom I have come in contact, there exists great jealousy of one another, in all matters relating to their communications with the officials of Her Majesty; and in order to facilitate the object in view, it was most desirable that suspicion and jealousy of all kinds should be allayed. The fact of the Commissioner having arrived was sufficient evidence of the good intentions of Her Majesty's Government, and it seemed better to await the arrival of all whom I had summoned, than to press matters to an issue while any were absent. This, however, entailed the necessity of feeding those who were already there, and others as they arrived.

It is customary in dealing with Indians to do so, and in this case it was absolutely necessary, for, obviously, it would have been impossible to invite those people from a distance, and then leave them to starve at our doors, or, in search of food, to plunder the neighborhood into which they had been introduced. At that season of the year the Indians were not engaged in fishing or hunting, and consequently large numbers of men, women and children attended at the place of meeting, for all of whom food was provided. The price of provisions, even at the lowest price for which they could be obtained, was high, pork being fifty dollars a barrel, and flour twenty shillings sterling per hundred, and such cattle as I was able to purchase £16 per head; so that the expense of keeping the Indians during the negotiation of treaty and payment of the gratuity, which lasted eleven days, forms no small share of the total expenditure. In addition to this expense, it was thought necessary by the Lieutenant-Governor that Major Irvine, commanding the troops at Fort Garry, should be requested to furnish a guard at the Stone Fort during the negotiations, and that there should be at hand, also, a force of constabulary, for the purpose of preventing the introduction of liquor amongst the Indian encampments. Other expenses of a

somewhat similar nature were incurred, which would be totally unnecessary upon any future occasion of payment being made to the Indians of Manitoba, I may here refer to the apparently prolonged duration of the first negotiation, and explain, in reference thereto, the causes, or some of them, that entailed the loss of time and attendant expense. For some time a doubt has existed whether the Chief, nominally at the head of the Indians of the Indian settlement, possessed the good will and confidence of that band; and I thought it advisable to require that the several bands of Indians should select such Chiefs as they thought proper, and present these men as their authorized Chiefs, before anything was said as to the terms of a treaty. The Indians having acquiesced in this proposal, forthwith proceeded to such election; but the proceeding apparently involved discussion and consideration amongst themselves, and two days elapsed before the men chosen were presented for recognition, and the business of the meeting commenced.

When the peculiar circumstances surrounding the position of the Indians of the Province were pointed out, the future of the country predicted, and views and intentions of the Government explained by the Lieutenant-Governor and myself, the Indians professed a desire for time to think over what had been said before making any reply; and when their answer came it proved to contain demands of such an exorbitant nature, that much time was spent in reducing their terms to a basis upon which an arrangement could be made.

Every band had its spokesman, in addition to its Chief, and each seemed to vie with another in the dimensions of their requirements. I may mention, as an illustration, that in the matter of reserves, the quantity of land demanded for each band amounted to about three townships per Indian, and included the greater part of the settled portions of the Province. It was not until the 3rd of August, or nine days after the first meeting, that the basis of arrangement was arrived at, upon which is founded the treaty of date. Then, and by means of mutual concessions, the following terms were agreed upon. For the cession of the country described in the treaty referred to, and comprising the Province of Manitoba, and certain country in the north-east thereof, every Indian was to receive a sum of three dollars a year in perpetuity, and a reserve was to be set apart for each band, of sufficient size to allow one hundred and sixty acres to each family of five persons, or in like proportion as the family might be greater or less than five. As each Indian settled down upon his share of the reserve, and commenced the cultivation of his land, he was to receive a plough and harrow. Each Chief was to receive a cow and a male and female of the

smaller kinds of animals bred upon a farm. There was to be a bull for the general use of each reserve. In addition to this, each Chief was to receive a dress, a flag and a medal, as marks of distinction; and each Chief, with the exception of Bozawequare, the Chief of the Portage band, was to receive a buggy, or light spring waggon. Two councilors and two braves of each band were to receive a dress, somewhat inferior to that provided for the Chiefs, and the braves and councilors of the Portage band excepted, were to receive a buggy.

Every Indian was to receive a gratuity of three dollars, which, though given as a payment for good behaviour, was to be understood to cover all dimensions for the past.

On this basis the treaty was signed by myself and the several Chiefs, on behalf of themselves and their respective bands, on the 3rd of August, 1871, and on the following day the payment commenced.

The three dollars gratuity, above referred to, will not occur in the ordinary annual payments to the Indians of Manitoba, and, though doubling the amount paid this year, may now properly be regarded as belonging to a previous year, but only now liquidated.

A large number of Indians, entitled to share in the treaty, were absent on the 3rd August, and in the belief that I should, almost immediately, be able to obtain a more accurate knowledge than I possessed of the numbers of the several bands, I paid to each person present only three dollars—the gratuity—postponing for a short time the first annual payment. Having completed this disbursement, I prepared to start for Manitoba Post, to open negotiations with the Indians on the immediate north and north-west borders of the Province of Manitoba, promising however to visit the several bands of the first treaty, in their own districts, and to there pay them. By this means the necessity for their leaving their own homes, and for the Government's feeding them while they were being paid, and during their journey home, was avoided.

After completing the treaty at Manitoba Post, of which mention is hereinafter made, I visited Portage la Prairie, the Indian settlement at St. Peter's, Rivière Marais, and the Town of Winnipeg, according to my promise, and at each place, with the exception of Rivière Marais, found the Indians satisfied with the treaty, and awaiting their payment. At Rivière Marais, which was the rendezvous appointed by the bands living in the neighborhood of Pembina, I found that

the Indians had either misunderstood the advice given them by parties in the settlement, well disposed towards the treaty, or, as I have some reason to believe, had become unsettled by the representations made by persons in the vicinity of Pembina, whose interests lay elsewhere than in the Province of Manitoba; for, on my announcing my readiness to pay them, they demurred at receiving their money until some further concessions had been made by me.

With a view to inducing the Indians to adopt the habits and labors of civilization, it had been agreed, at the signing of the treaty as before mentioned, to give certain animals as a nucleus for stocking the several reserves, together with certain farming implements; and it was now represented to me by the spokesman of the bands, that as the Queen had, with that kindness of heart which distinguished her dealings with her red children, expressed a desire to see the Indians discard their former precarious mode of living and adopt the agricultural pursuits of the white man, they were desirous of acceding to the wish of their great Mother, and were now prepared to receive the gifts she had been good enough to speak of, through her Commissioner, in full. But, as it could make no difference whatever to their great Mother whether these things were given in kind or in money value, her red children of the Pembina bands were resolved to receive them in the latter form. I had put a valuation upon all the articles mentioned in the supplement to the treaty, and could go no further in the matter unless I was prepared to pay them for all these articles at the rates they would now proceed to mention. I declined to comply with the request, and they declined to receive their first annual payment, whereupon I broke up my camp and returned to Winnipeg. As I foresaw at the time, this determination on their part was shortly repented, and a number of their leading men were subsequently paid at Winnipeg; while at the request of the Indians, the money for the remainder, together with a pay sheet, was forwarded to the officer in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's Post at Pembina, with instructions to pay the Indians as per list as each might present himself. At Portage la Prairie, although the number paid at the Stone Fort was largely increased, there still remained many who, from absence or other causes were not paid, and by the request of the Chief the money was left for these with the officers in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's Post, in the same manner as was done for the Pembina bands.

As I was unable to proceed to Fort Alexander, the payments for the Indians, or for such of them as were present at the signing of the treaty, were sent in like manner to the officer in charge of

the Hudson's Bay Company's Post at Fort Alexander; but it may be as well to mention that the number so paid will fall far short of the total number belonging to that place. The latter remark will apply to the Pembina band, for their payment was sent as per gratuity list, and there must necessarily have been others who did not receive payment. All these must receive their back payments during the course of next year.

During the payment of the several bands, it was found that in some, and most notably in the Indian settlement and Broken Head River Band, a number of those residing among the Indians, and calling themselves Indians, are in reality half-breeds, and entitled to share in the land grant under the visions of the Manitoba Act. I was most particular, therefore, in causing it to be explained, generally and to individuals, that any person now electing to be classed with Indians, and receiving the Indian pay and gratuity, would, if believed, thereby forfeit his or her right to another grant as a half-breed; and in all cases where it was known that a man was a half-breed, the matter, as it affected himself and his children, was explained to him, and the choice given him to characterize himself. A very few only decided upon taking their grants as half-breeds. The explanation of this apparent sacrifice is found in the fact that the mass of these persons have lived all their lives on the Indian reserves (so called), and would rather receive such benefits as may accrue to them under the Indian treaty, than wait the realization of any value in their half-breed grant.

The Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba having expressed a desire to be present at the negotiation of the treaty at Manitoba Post, His Honor, accompanied by the Hon. James McKay, proceeded thither with me, in company with Mr. Molyneux St. John, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, who had assisted me in the duties connected with the former treaty and payments. I left Winnipeg on the 13th August, but owing to adverse winds on Lake Manitoba did not arrive until two days after the time appointed. I found that, in the meanwhile, the officer in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's Post had been obliged to give some provisions to the Indians pending my arrival; but on my speaking to the leading men of the bands assembled, it was evident that the Indians of this part had no special demands to make, but having a knowledge of the former treaty, desired to be dealt with in the same manner and on the same terms as those adopted by the Indians of the Province of Manitoba.

The negotiation with these bands therefore occupied little time, and on the 21st August, 1871, a treaty was concluded by which a tract of country three times as large as the Province of Manitoba was surrendered by the Indians to the Crown. Payment in full, that is to say, the gratuity and the first payment, was at once made; and I have since written to the officers in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's Posts within the tract above referred to, requesting them to procure for me a reliable census of the Indians, parties to this treaty.

I have referred to the cost of effecting these treaties, and remarked that it will prove to be exceptional. It may be regarded as entirely so, as far as the Indians with whom the dealings were held are concerned. In the future the annual payment will be only one half to each Indian of the amount paid this year, for the gratuity was the same as the payment, and the heavy expense of feeding the Indians while at the place of meeting and on their journey home, will be avoided by the payment being made at or near their own reserves.

All the collateral expenses, therefore, of this year, including dresses, medals, presents to the Indians, etc., etc., will not appear in the expenses attending during future payments.

But it is to be remembered that a large number of Indians, whose lands were ceded by the second treaty, were not present. The distance from the hunting grounds of some to Manitoba Post is very great; but while their absence was to be regretted for some reasons, it effected a very considerable saving in the item of provisions.

During the ensuing season, these persons will probably be found at the place where the payments will be made, and will then require their payments as if they had been present at the signing of the treaty.

Of the land ceded in the Province of Manitoba, it will be hardly necessary for me to speak, as His Excellency the Governor-General is already in possession of accurate information touching its fertility and resources; but I may observe that, valuable as are these lands, they are fully equalled if not exceeded by the country of which the Government now comes into possession, by virtue of the treaty concluded at Manitoba Post. Already, settlers from the Provinces in Canada and elsewhere are pushing their way beyond the limits of the Province of Manitoba; and there is nothing but the arbitrary limits of that Province, and certain wood and water advantages found in

the territory beyond it, to distinguish one part of the country from the other. The fertility that is possessed by Manitoba is shared by the country and its confines. The water courses of the Province are excelled by those of the territory; and the want of wood which threatens serious difficulty in the one, is by no means so apparent in the other.

The Indians of both parts have a firm belief in the honor and integrity of Her Majesty's representative, and are fully impressed with the idea that the amelioration of their present condition is one of the objects of Her Majesty in making these treaties. Although many years will elapse before they can be regarded as a settled population—settled in the sense of following agricultural pursuits—the Indians have already shown a disposition to provide against the vicissitudes of the chase by cultivating small patches of corn and potatoes. Moreover, in the Province of Manitoba, where labor is scarce, Indians give great assistance in gathering in the crops. At Portage la Prairie, both Chippawas and Sioux were largely employed in the grain field; and in other parishes I found many farmers whose employés were nearly all Indians.

Although serious trouble has from time to time occurred across the boundary line, with Indians of the same tribes, and indeed of the same bands as those in Manitoba, there is no reason to fear any trouble with those who regard themselves as subjects of Her Majesty. Their desire is to live at peace with the white man, to trade with him, and, when they are disposed, to work for him; and I believe that nothing but gross injustice or oppression will induce them either to forget the allegiance which they now claim with pride, or molest the white subjects of the sovereign whom they regard as their Supreme Chief.

The system of an annual payment in money I regard as a good one, because the recipient is enabled to purchase just what he requires when he can get it most cheaply, and it also enables him to buy articles at second hand, from settlers and others, that are quite as useful to him as are the same things when new. The sum of three dollars does not appear to be large enough to enable an Indian to provide himself with many of his winter necessaries; but as he receives the same amount for his wife or wives, and for each of his children, the aggregate sum is usually sufficient to procure many comforts for his family which he would otherwise be compelled to deny himself.

I take this opportunity of acknowledging the assistance afforded me in successfully completing

the two treaties, to which I have referred, by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, the Hon. James McKay, and the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company. In a country where transport and all other business facilities are necessarily so scarce, the services rendered to the Government by the officers in charge of the several Hudson's Bay Posts as been most opportune and valuable.

I have, etc.,

Wemyss M. Simpson,
Indian Commissioner.

*In consequence of misunderstandings having arisen, owing to the Indians alleging that certain promises had been made to them which were not specified in these treaties, a revision of them became necessary, and was effected in 1875, as will be seen reported hereafter.

Source: Alexander Morris, *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians* (Toronto: Belfords, Clarke & Co., 1880) 25–43.