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Letter from the Secretary of War to the Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, recommending the removal of the Swan Creek and Black River bands of Chippewa Indians

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LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR

TO

The chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, recommending the removal of the Swan Creek and Black River bands of Chippewa Indians.

JANUARY 29, 1839.

Submitted by Mr. WHITE, referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT, January 28, 1839.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, a communication of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, together with the papers referred to therein, relative to "the removal of the Swan Creek and Black River bands of the Chippewa Indians, residing in the limits of Michigan, to the west of the Mississippi," and beg leave, respectfully, to recommend the subject to the favorable consideration of the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant;

J. R. POINSETT.

Hon. H. L. WHITE,

Chairman Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Office Indian Affairs, January 23, 1839.

SIR: I have the honor to lay before you copies of a communication from the acting superintendent in Michigan, and of a letter addressed to him by the principal chief of the Chippewas of Swan creek and Black river.

In the 4th article of the treaty concluded with these Indians on the 9th of May, 1836, the United States stipulate to furnish them 8,320 acres of land west of the Mississippi, or northwest of St. Anthony's falls; but no provision is made for the payment of the expenses of their removal. The lands ceded by them have been surveyed, and the accompanying extract from a letter of the Commissioner of the General Land Office will explain why they have not been sold, and why it has been deemed expedient to postpone the sale till May next, the time fixed in the proclamation of the President of the 19th inst. Upon considering the statements of the acting superintendent, of the present condition of these Indians, and the application of their chief, I am disposed to regard the suggestion of the former as

a judicious one. And I, therefore, respectfully recommend that an appropriation be asked of Congress to defray the expenses of the emigration beyond the Mississippi, an estimate of which is submitted, and the amount of which shall be reimbursed hereafter from the proceeds of their lands. The appropriation should be, I think, specific for their removal beyond the Mississippi. No location could be found for them northwest of the Falls of St. Anthony, in which they would not be exposed to collision with the Sioux. It was probably some consideration of this kind that induced the Senate to amend the 8th article of the treaty with the Ottawa and Chippewas of March 28, 1836, so as to restrict their choice of a new residence to the country southwest of the Mississippi. Besides, a location of the band in question beyond that river will be more in consonance with the policy of the Government, and will place them in the vicinity of their kindred of Saganaw, who will probably emigrate next season.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

T. HARTLEY CRAWFORD.

Hon. J. R. POINSETT, *Secretary of War.*

WASHINGTON, January 3, 1839.

SIR: I have received an application from the Swan Creek and Black River Chippewas; through their principal chief, for aid in their removal west. He states that they wish the Government to advance the means of their removal, as well as to enable them to put up buildings and fences on their arrival.

I have the honor to observe, in relation to this application, that these fragmentary bands are in a rapid state of deterioration, and cannot, for any length of time, successfully resist the cause of their depression if not removed. Having sold their reserves on the principle of receiving the avails and no sales having yet been made, they are wholly without the means of leaving the present place of their residence.

It is my impression that an appropriation had better be asked for to effect their removal, the amount of which to be charged to them as an *advance*; and that a special agent, with two assistants and an interpreter, would encounter no extraordinary difficulty in getting them to go in the months of July and August, provided it was understood that no farther annuities would be paid to them until they reached the place of their destination. Their number, according to a census just reported to me, is one hundred and ninety-eight. This is considerably below previous accounts of their population. I am not apprised of the cause of the discrepancy, but suppose numbers have gone into Upper Canada.

I am, sir, &c.,

HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT.

Hon. T. HARTLEY CRAWFORD,
Commissioner, &c.

DETROIT, December 14, 1838.

SIR: I take the liberty of addressing you on the subject of emigrating to the west of the Mississippi. I am without the necessary means, in con-

sequence of being disappointed in the payment of the \$800 coming to me by treaty, and which you assured me would be paid to me this winter.* With this sum, and the aid from the Government, I would, on my arrival at my destined home, I *would* have the means of building *an* house, and having rails split to enclose a sufficiency of land for the subsistence of myself and family. But as it is, I have not the faculty of a bird, to alight on a branch when tired, or when I wanted to take up my lodging for the night. I wish, therefore, for both yourself and the Government to know, that, situated as I am at present, without any means, it is impossible for me to think of emigrating.

I wish to know if the whole of the annuity will be sent west of the Mississippi to those that emigrate, or if part will be retained here for such as remain behind. If this latter course should be pursued, you will never get those that remain to cross that river: for their great inducement to go will be on account of receiving the annuity on the west of the Mississippi.

I am ready and willing to go, when the means will be furnished me.

I have the honor to be, &c.

his
FRANCIS x MACOUNSE.
mark.

P. S.—I hope you will favor me with an early answer.

F. M.

HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT, Esq.

Extract of a letter from the Commissioner of the General Land Office to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated 5th January, 1839.

"Inasmuch, however, as the proceeds accruing to the Indians from the sales would probably be diminished by offering the lands during the winter months, it was conceived to be proper (in view of the general provisions of law, requiring public lands to be advertised for a period not less than three nor longer than six months, which provisions are understood to be applicable to the lands now treated of) to suspend the advertisement so as to provide for the sale either in May or June next, without, at the same time, giving any longer notice than would be useful."

Estimate of the amount required for the removal of the Swan Creek and Black River bands of the Chippewa nation, residing within the limits of Michigan, to the west of the Mississippi, and for their subsistence one year in their new location.

For the removal of 300 Indians, including subsistence on the route, at \$40 each	\$12,000 00
For the subsistence for one year of the same number in their new location, at ten cents per ration	10,000 00
	<hr/>
	22,000 00
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OFFICE INDIAN AFFAIRS, January 24, 1839.

* No such sum is, *never was*, coming to him, by any treaty; and no such "assurance," nor any thing in the remotest degree countenancing it, was ever made by me.

HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT.

JANUARY 2, 1839.