



Beyond Penn's Treaty

Letter, account of Canandaigua Treaty negotiations

ID_TEI: SW_Letters_1794_12_20
TYPE_OF_MANUSCRIPT: letters (correspondence)
CALL_NO: Mss 004/ 1794 12 02
DATE: 1794
LOCATION: Swarthmore College
AUTHOR: John Parrish, others
SUMMARY: John Parrish was a Quaker minister and member of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting for the Northern District. He travelled first to visit the Delaware Indians in western Pennsylvania in 1773. Letter from Parrish, Bacon, Savery, and Emlen to the Meeting for Sufferings summarizing the events at Canandaigua in the fall of 1794.

How to cite: Accessed online Sat 20 Apr 2024 09:36 AM EST

This page is intentionally left as blank.

To the Meeting for Sufferings

Dear Friends

Agreeably to our prospect of attending the Treaty to be held with the Indians of the Six Nations at Canandague in New York Government, we left this City the 15th of the 9th Mo: and reached that place on the 26th of the same: On our arrival we found but about 160 collected, and these chiefly of the Oneida Tribe, with whom we had divers conferences before the others came in; we also found about 30 Members of our religious Society settled within the compass of fifteen Miles of the place of Treaty who had emigrated chiefly from the New England Governments, these friends in their distant & scattered situation appeared glad to see us and engaged our attention & concern. — We had Meetings on the first Days of the Week during our continuance there, which were held to satisfaction and attended by our fellow professors & many others both Indians & Whites; amongst these people we apprehend a few Books might be profitably distributed. —

All the Indians who were expected being at length assembled to the amount of 1600 and upwards, the Treaty commenced; we attended all the public Councils as well as some which were held by the Commissioner more privately, and had frequent & satisfactory opportunities of conference with the Sachems & other Chiefs, in which we endeavoured to impress their Minds with a sense of the advantages to be derived from living in peace one with another and with all Men, and of the expediency of leading a more sober & quiet Life, that they might draw down the divine Blessing upon them; they heard us with attention and we hope it was not without some good effect. — They stil^l retain a lively remembrance of the just & friendly treatment their forefathers experienced from the first founder of Pennsylvania, continue to distinguish him by the name of Onas and consider friends as his descendants, expressing that "if we deceive them they can no more place any confidence in mankind".

As an enquiry had been made in time past respecting the original Owners of the Land about Hopewell in Virginia; soon after the Indians were collected, some of the principal Chiefs of the different

Transcription

yt f ytf ytf To the Meeting for Sufferings
yt f Dear Friends
yt f Agreeably to our prospect of attending the Treaty to be
held with theytf Indians of the Six Nations at Canandaque in New Yorkyt f
Government, we left this City the 15th of the 9th Mo: andyt f reached that
place on the 26th of the same: On our arrival we found butyt f about 160
collected, and these chiefly of the Oneida Tribe, with whom we had divers
conferences beforeyt f the others came in; we also found about 30 Members of
our religiousyt f Society settled within the compass of fifteen Miles of the place
of Treatyyt f who had emigrated chiefly from the New England Governments,
these friendsyt f in their distant & scattered situation appeared glad to see us
andyt f engaged our attention & concern. We had Meetings on the
first Days ofyt f the Week during our continuance there, which were held to
satisfaction andyt f attended by our fellow professors & many others both
Indians &yt f Whites; amongst these people we apprehend a few Books might
be profitablyyt f distributed. ytf All the Indians who were expected being at length assembled
to the amountyt f of 1600 and upwards, the Treaty commenced; we attended
all the publicyt f Councils as well as some which were held by the Commissi
oner moreyt f privately, and had frequent & satisfactory opportunities of
conferenceyt f with the Sachems & other Chiefs, in which we endeavoured
to impressyt f thier Minds with a sense of the advantages to be derived from
living inyt f peace one with another and with all Men, and of the expedi- ytf
ency of leading a more sober & quiet Life, that they mightyt f draw down
the divine Blessing upon them; they heard us with attention andyt f we
hope it was not without some good effect. They still retain a
yt f lively remembrance of the the just & friendly treatment thier forefathersyt f
experienced from the first founders of Pennsylvania, continue to dis- ytf
tinguish him by the name of Onas andyt f consider friends as his de-
scendants, expressing that if weyt f deceive them they can no more place
any confidence in mankindyt f ytf As an enquiry had been made in time past respecting the
original Owners ofyt f the Land about Hopewell in Virginia , soon after
the Indians wereyt f collected, some of the principal Cheifs of the different

Nations visited us on the occasion and revived the subject, expressing their gladness that friends were willing to do justice; divers conferences were held amongst themselves and with us relative to that business, the Issue of which was that we were all of opinion the Tuscaroras were the people who formerly owned that Country; they are now the sixth Nation in the Confederacy, live on the Seneca's Land and sit with them in Council, but we believe are not considered as having a right in the Soil: General Chapin, Superintendant of the Six Nations upon enquiry being of the same opinion, gave us his judgment in writing, which we have now to present to the Meeting. — About 20 Delawares also attended the Treaty, some of whom came from Conestogoe Manor & complained to us of the murder of their relations and of their having been driven from their possessions without any just compensation being made, requesting we would mention it on our return, that the Injuries done them & their people might be redressed.

Early in the Business we presented the address of friends, which was read & interpreted, they were attentive to its contents and expressed their satisfaction.

During our stay with them they made several speeches to us, and some difficulties occurring in the course of the Treaty, they requested our council & advice, which we gave them as well as we were qualified in our delicate & trying situation: some of these Speeches express a regard & friendship for our religious society, which, with some observations & occurrences contained in our Notes, may if the Meeting thinks proper be selected with the assistance of a few friends & offered to a future Meeting.

It may be proper to remark that altho' it afforded us satisfaction that a Treaty was concluded in such a manner as that we hope peace is established between the six Nations & the United States, yet as it confirms the right of the United States to large Tracts of their Country which were obtained by ~~right~~ conquest we were therefore most easy to omit subscribing our Names as witnesses to the Articles thereof.

At the close of the Treaty we assembled the Chiefs of all the Nations and delivered them the presents of friends, which they

Transcription

Nations visited us on the occasion and revived the subject, expressing their gladness that friends were willing to do justice; divers conferences were held amongst themselves and with us relative to that business, the Issue of which was that we were all of opinion the Tuscaroras were the people who formerly owned that Country; they are now the sixth Nation in the Confederacy, live on the Seneca's Land and sit with them in Council, but we believe are not considered as having a right in the Soil; General Chapin Superintendent of the Six Nations upon enquiry being of the same opinion, gave us his judgement in writing, which we have now to present to the Meeting. About 20 Delawares also attended the Treaty, some of whom came from Conestogoe Manor & complained to us of the murder of their relations and of their having been driven from their professions without any just compensation being made, requesting we would mention it on our return, that the Injuries done them & their people might be redressed. Early in the Business we presented to them a Paper which was read & interpreted, they were attentive to its contents and expressed their satisfaction. During our stay with them they made several speeches to us, and some difficulties occurring in the course of the Treaty, they requested our council & advice, which we gave them as well as we were qualified in our delicate & trying situation: some of these Speeches express regard & friendship for our religious society, which; with some observations & occurrences contained in our Notes, may if the Meeting thinks proper be selected with the assistance of a few friends & offered to a future Meeting. It may be proper to remark that altho' it afforded us satisfaction that a Treaty was concluded in such a manner as that we hope peace established between the six Nations & the United States, yet as it confirms the right of the United States to large Tracts of their Country which were obtained by right of conquest we were therefore most easy to omit subscribing our Names as witnesses to the Articles thereof. At the close of the Treaty we assembled the Chiefs of all the Nations and delivered them the presents of friends, which they

gratefully received; Jasper Parrish an Interpreter for Government distributed them at their request agreeable to the Numbers contained in each Nation. —

We continued with them about seven weeks, and had no cause to doubt our having been in our proper places, yet with sorrow had to observe that the pernicious effects of spirituous liquors being handed freely to them were highly injurious and considerably retarded the Issue of the Business.

Many are the Difficulties & Sufferings to which the Indians are subjected and their present situation appears loudly to claim the Sympathy & attention of the Members of our religious Society & others who have grown numerous & opulent on the former inheritance of these poor declining people: we cannot but believe some mode may be fallen upon of rendering them more essential service than has yet been adopted.

Our Engagements were often very trying & tiring, yet thro' the kindness of providence we were preserved in much harmony & Unity through them all, and on the whole have reason to hope, the object of the Concern was in some degree answered, & are thankful in being permitted to return home with a portion of peace after an exercising & fatiguing Journey —

Philad: 20th: 12 mo: 1794

John Parrish
David Bacon
William Avery
James Emlen

Transcription

gratefully received; Jaspar Parrish an Interpreter for the Government distributed them at their request agreeable to the Numbers contained in each Nation. We continued with them about seven weeks, and had no cause to doubt having been in our proper places, yet with sorrow had to observe that the pernicious effects of spirituous liquors being handed freely to them were highly injurious and considerably retarded the Issue of their Business. Many are the Difficulties & Sufferings to which the Indians are subjected and their present situation appears loudly to claim the Sympathy & attention of the Members of our religious Society & others who have grown numerous & opulent on the former inheritance of these poor declining people: we can not but believe some mode may be fallen upon of rendering them more essential service than has yet been adopted. Our Engagements were often very trying & straitning, yet thro' the kindness of providence we were preserved in much harmony & Unity through them all, and on the whole have reason to hope, the object of our Concern was in some degree answered & are thankful in being permitted to return home with a portion of peace after an exercising & fatiguing Journey

Philada: 20th:12mo:1794

John Parrish