

5-10-1889

Relating to Condition of affairs at Ponca Agency, Indian Territory

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Relating to Condition of affairs at Ponca Agency, Indian Territory

About

Cattle on Indian land, Government Relations with Native Americans, Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma

Identified Persons

Frank La Flesche; J. Owen Dorsey; Little Warrior; McDonald; Ta-tun-ga-nuz-ze-a

Identified Places

Ponca, Pawnee, Otoe, and Oakland Agency

Recipient

Commissioner of Indian Affairs

(a) Carral near depot - shipping in Spring
carcasses will be left as usual, no cause
of complaint now.

(b) Oklahoma people steal beef houses =

(c) depot

d Did not get pay. Expects it. Mc Donald still here,
yet may know of it they saw his work at it

⑦ 12432
Washington, D.C., May 10, 1889.

To the Hon. Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

Grandfather:

I will tell you of two or three things to-day. My friend here, Mr. Dorsey, sent for me to come and work with him. When I was about to take the train, the Ponkas who had followed me to the station said that I ought to talk to you.

I. We bought our present reservation for fifty thousand dollars. It is ours. Yet we have much trouble from the many cattle brought
(a) through our land. We sold the right of way to the railroad, a tract one hundred feet wide, for one thousand seven hundred dollars. Some
(b) people going to Oklahoma with their cattle leave the dead ones on our land, dragging the bodies far and wide, leaving them to decay above ground, making all our land smell, and covering it with bones without giving us any damages.

(c) II. Cattle are brought to our reservation, as to a common centre, and are sold there to persons who take them in different directions, going at random over our land, covering our fields and pastures with cattle trails, bones, etc., so that we cannot cut hay, and also injuring our crops.

We begged the agent to help us about these things, but he has done nothing. So we Indians consulted together, and said, It is proper to tell the President or the Commissioner. Therefore we made up two hundred dollars to pay the traveling expenses of some of our men

to and from Washington. But as it is difficult to see you without gaining your consent to come, the Indians said that I should tell you about this. The money to pay the traveling expenses is our own.

I hope that you may allow at least two men to come to speak of these things, and that you will summon them by telegraph.

III. Grandfather, on a former occasion the Ponka chiefs came to Washington, and the Commissioner of that day said thus to them: "You shall dwell in the land which you now occupy. Work for yourselves and make houses for yourselves. Cut logs and make houses. In that event you shall be paid. And you who have working horses, use them for breaking the prairie and for plowing. You shall receive two dollars an acre. If any one breaks ten acres, he shall have twenty dollars." Grandfather, I am strong, and I had two pair of horses. I was the first to finish a house. I made it 24 feet long by 16 feet in width. I was the first to break land, I cultivated 16 acres. And the agent liked me when he saw what I had done. He said that I was active and the work was good. Then the agent hired me to make a house for Little Warrior, saying, "When you finish it, you shall receive fifteen dollars." After this he said, "You shall break ten acres of land." I did so, and he paid me twenty dollars. Then the agent directed me to break ten acres for Macdonald. I finished this, and as the horses were not yet exhausted, I broke five acres for myself of my own accord. Grandfather, after finishing the fifteen acres, I went to see the agent. He said to me, "I have put up the rest of the money in an envelope, and it has been sent back to Washington."

12432

(3)

Then I went to the Penka, Macdonald, to get my pay; but each time that I did so, he said to me, "Ask the President and the agent for the pay due you." Grandfather, I lost one of my horses in consequence of that work, I killed it by work, therefore I have been sad all the time. So I tell you about it to-day.

Tu-tun-ga-miz-ze ^{his} X _{mark}

Translated from the original Penka MS. by

J. Owen Dorsey.

Witness

F. La Flesche

12432

INDIAN AFFAIRS
REC'D MAY 10

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La-tun-ga-may-ge.

MAY 16 1889

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City. May 10/89.

Rel. to condition of
affairs at Ponca
Agency Ind. T. Y.

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To Secty May 14/89

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P. S. M. M.