

Manuscript Project
Transcription and Bibliography of Research for Letter 3, Folder 9 of
Charles Francis Xavier Goldsmith's Collected Papers
Box 1 of 1; Eau Claire MSS BS 6/3F

Intended Audience: Adults interested in Indian Affairs or the Goldsmith Collection

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English 713

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Dr. Jan Stirm

Introduction

The original, handwritten version of this letter fragment is from the UWEC Special Collections Department. The fragment is Letter 3 of Folder 9, found in the collected papers of Charles Francis Xavier Goldsmith (Box 1 of 1; Eau Claire MSS BS 6/3F).

I chose to transcribe and research this fragment because the content aroused my interest and it was fairly easy to read. It appears that the letter was written by someone (perhaps a priest or interpreter) on behalf of whichever band of the Chippewas of Lake Superior is making the inquiry, to someone who has the authority to change the situation and the knowledge to answer the questions. However, because it is a fragment from the miscellaneous folder, I encountered several problems in researching the text.

First, because this is the middle portion of the letter, there is no information about whom the letter is from and whom it is addressed to. I spent considerable time going through the collection and comparing handwriting, but could not make any definite conclusions about the author of the document. And, since there is no addressee, the intended reader of the letter remains a mystery.

Second, it has also been extremely difficult to estimate the date of the letter since it gives very little concrete historical or biographical detail. Operating under the assumption that W.I. Agent "Drew" is actually Cyrus K. Drew, I can guess that the letter was written about or after 1858, because he was appointed as a W.I. Agent in 1858.

Third, the lack of detailed information makes researching very difficult. For example, there are several bands of Chippewas, with territories ranging throughout Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin that C.K. Drew could have been involved with. There were also numerous Treaties between the Native Americans and whites that made provisions for blacksmiths, farms, lumber, and reservation lands, but the letter does not give enough information to determine which treaty is being referred to here.

I have included a bibliography of the sources I used to research the letter, in hopes that it will make further researching easier for anyone who decides to continue investigating this piece.

Notes on Transcription

- I transcribed the letter word for word, including line breaks. I did, however, add tabs to the new paragraphs.
- Since there were no misspellings that rendered the text unreadable, I left the spelling as it appeared in the letter and indicated the misspellings by following them with [sic].
- I corrected punctuation but not capitalization (since capitalization may be an important clue for anyone interested in further researching the letter).
- Words that are crossed out in the original letter are crossed out in the transcription.
- In place of words that are illegible (due to smudging or fading), I inserted explanations in {}'s.
- Words that have a few legible letters, but still cannot be clearly determined are crossed out with double lines and an explanation is given in []'s.
- Words that are inserted above the line are indicated by a ^ and followed by an explanation in []'s.
- On the original, the second sheet of paper was rotated 180 degrees and the word Washington was written on it twice. I have indicated the approximate placement of the repeated word by inserting a textured box in that area.

**Transcription of the letter fragment from Box 1 of 1; Eau Claire MSS BS 6/3F Folder 9,
Letter 3**

And further-more & ~~lastly~~, We wish to speak concerning a Saw Mill. While "Drew"¹ was acting as W.I. Agent, we were promised a Saw Mill & accordingly ~~then~~ was a Saw Mill built on the Reservation known to us as BapabeKang². The Mill was well built & it was understood by us that that Mill was to be given to us, the Chippewas of Lake Superior³, ~~as per an article of Treaty.~~

We do ~~get~~ occasionally ^get [inserted above the line] Lumber, the proceeds of that Mill, but not as much as it is necessary for our use, notwithstanding the Mill manufac-[hyphen not in original letter] tures more than we can consume.

We now ~~see that~~ think that the Mill does not belong to us the Chippewas as it is only used by the W.I. Agent at Present & therefore we ask instruction.

It is a {unintelligible word scratched out} ^query [inserted above unintelligible, scratched out word] to us to whom [sic] this Mill belongs to, whether to us the Chippewa Tribe of Indians of Lake Superior or to any other party.

The ~~mill~~ proceeds of the Mill appears to us to be enormous but still we do not participate therein. This Mill ^generally [inserted above line] turns out ~~daily~~ [smudged] per day ~~to~~ the

¹ Probably Cyrus K. Drew, a Wisconsin Indian Agent who was appointed to the Chippewa Agency on March 3, 1858 and transferred to the La Pointe Agency on July 19, 1858.

² I have been unable to determine the English name for this reservation. I did talk to Dr. Larry Martin, who speaks Ojibwa and he was unable to determine which reservation is being referred to here. In the language of the Chippewa the letters B and P as well as K and G can be used interchangeably.

³ It is unclear which band of Chippewas of Lake Superior is being referred to in this letter. When Drew worked with the Chippewa Agency, it was responsible for the Pillager and Lake Winnebigoishish bands of Chippewa of Lake Superior. In 1858, an agency associated with the La Pointe Agency was made responsible for the Chippewa of Lake Superior of Minnesota and Wisconsin.

amount of Eighty or Ninety Dollars worth of
lumber. Furthermore, ^there was a/also [inserted above the line] we were promised made a
Farm to be opened for us and in
accordance there was a large farm
opened for our use.

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And of the produce of that farm we were
given a few bushels of potatoes each.

In the next season we saw that the farm
was seeded down with grafs⁴ or hay.
Since then ~~we are not~~ {an unintelligible word} are not aware that
any one Indian has been given any of that
hay – We are not aware that any one Else but
the Person appointed as our Agent is any-way ben-
efited by that farm.

Furthermore we do not Know anything of the cost
of the Saw mill & Big farm. – Our “father” the
Agent does not tell us anything concerning those
things.

And furthermore, The Physician who is now with
us, appointer of the Department –We have no use for
{two unintelligible words} would like to have medicines to the amount
of ^about [inserted above the line] one hundred Dollars per year for our use –

Furthermore we were promised according to articles
of Treaty a black Smith – & further that any In-
dian or Mixed blood would act as such if cappable [sic].
We were promised a black smith to be located on our
reserve—but we do not see any blacksmith on

⁴ Probably grass

our Reserve—It is true that we are purported to have a blacksmith but he is located at a Viliage [sic] out of our Reservation on lands open & subject to Private Purchase⁵ from the United States & consequently it is very seldom he performs any work for us, the Indians. He mostly working for the white people around

⁵ Land that could be purchased from the government.

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