

Dr. Harold Dean Cater

JAN 24 1949

Rever, S. D.

Director of Minnesota Historical Society, Jan 1949.

St. Paul, Minn.

Dear Dr. Cater:

Please allow me to write a letter to you.

As I believe you are very busy man.

I'm one of the three sons of Chief Gabriel Renville's that are living, and only one sister still living with us. I'm 70 years of old.

When I was 13 years of old my father was died, and my youngest sister (Jennie) was only 3 years than. So I've got to take care of her most of the time. So I'm not go to school on account of a bad birthmark on my face.

As the boys are abuse me most of the time, make's fun of me, and I was hated as I don't look good. Therefore, I cannot go to school.

And I don't have any education concerning of my birth mark. And that has cause me lot of hardships all in my life long.

Of course, The State Social Security has done me a favor to help me \$30.00 of old age assistant.

Of course, that helps me some, but as you know \$30.00 is just like nothing now days. Especially this kind of hard winter and sky high cost of living. A fellow cannot live on one dollar a day, even food alone. I have to buy a coal, and coal is \$20.00 a ton, hauling \$3.00. And I got to stay with somebody therefore, I've at last here with a niece of mine, wash and

Some other things she has done for me, and she's got no in Come, only in June she draws a lease money \$26.50 or \$27.00 and that was all she's get once in a year. And she's not very well either, her mother is dead last fall. And she's got no place to stay. The Social-Welfare worker of this Reservation has given her a little lift, \$15.00 a month relief, and she was very glad of that too, still it wasn't enough to two to live on yet.

What I was in my mind was this, I have heard that my father have had done lot of very important services to Minnesotans since the Minnesota Sioux outbreak in 1862.

I quote:

"Gen. Sibley, in a Communication to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated June 22, 1868, said:

"Mr. Renville was among the most trusted and reliable of the Mixed bloods employed by me.

While I was prosecuting the Campaigns against the hostile Sioux in 1864 and 1865:

Indeed, so well pleased was I with his fidelity, energy, and intelligence, that I appointed him Chief of the Scouts to whom the outer line of defence of the frontier of this State, and of Dakota Territory, was entrusted; and he signalized himself by unswerving and distinguished services, in that important position.

"Mr. Renville was instrumental in saving the lives of many white captives, taken by the Indians in 1862, by his influence and determined efforts

in their behalf; (was it ³269 lives been saved?)

And he lost a large amount of property, including horses appropriated by the hostile savages, or destroyed, in consequence of his opposition to their murderous course.

(16 horses, 30 head of cattle, buildings, pigs, chickens, etc.)

"In fact he was reduced from a position of comfort and comparative opulence, to depend upon what he could earn by his daily exertions, for the subsistence of himself and his family, And he was not included in the reward of the \$7,500 appropriated by Congress to be apportioned among those who had remained faithful to the government, by some strange and unaccountable omission.

"I have appealed many times to the Interior and War Department in behalf of the Indians and Mixed-bloods who exposed life and property in defending the Whites against the outrages and massacres to which so many were subjected, during the outbreak referred to. but no one individual is entitled to more consideration than Gabriel Renville, and I trust it will be in the power of your Bureau to make ample amends to him for the losses he has sustained,

and the sacrifices he has made, in maintaining the power of the government against the organized and almost universal disaffection and violence of his own kindred and people."

Major Brown, in a ⁴Communication to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated March 5, 1870, said:

"Those organized for an armed resistance to hostilities of the hostile bands were largely of the relations of the Chief, and were organized and operated under his exertions and authority. By the exertions of those Indians hundreds of Whites were saved, and many of the hostile bands were punished. During the month of May, 1865, thirteen men who were on their way to depredate upon the Whites were killed at different times by these friendly Indians, while acting as scouts for the protection of the frontier under the immediate command of Gabriel Renville, their Chief."

(16 hostile Indians were killed by these scouts). (and I got all their names.)

Senator Davis, in the course of a speech in the United States Senate, according to the Congressional Record of February 8, 1899, said:

"I know Gabriel Renville well. He first called my attention to this subject when I was Governor of Minnesota, in 1874 and 1875.

He was a great man in his way, and was a good man from any point of view. His men fought on our side in the Indian war. He rescued many white women and children

from the hands of Little Crow and his band, then waging war against us. He sent his young men into ~~into~~ the armies of the United States during the war of the rebellion."

I know these was all in "Historical Volume II." Mr. Renville organized Indian scout under Gen. Sibley, was camped seven ~~different~~ places from James River to Red River about 200 miles across the Dakota Territory 12 to 15 men each camp. And these was the one ceased the Indian war against the Whites from 1862 to 1865.

And Chief Renville and his peace party ^{went} ~~went~~ to Cheyenne River reservation ⁱⁿ 1876 and made peace with them on behalf of the U. S. government, when nearly all the Indians were mad and the younger Indians are wants to have war against the Whites again.

Again, Chief Renville with his party ^{went} ~~went~~ to White Earth, Minn. to make a peace with three Chippewa Indian reservations.

And one whole week they've talked of peace not only between the Chippewa Indians and the Sioux, but also no more war or trouble against the Whites, that was in the year of 1878.

In 1882 this same peace party went west to Rosebud Indian reservation to talk of peace. And to bury all their tomahawks deep into the

ground and don't make any ^{more} war against the whites.

And, they also travel farther to Pine Ridge Indian reservation, and they have done the same thing with them.

So, Chief Renville (my father) has done lot of important services for the United States government until his death.

Saves lives, troubles, and cost for his government, I just wonder, some of those who was saved from the hands of the hostile Indians are still living? or some ^{of their} children ^{are} grown up?

I was asked that ^{question} myself sometimes. I am, Gabriel Renville's son that living in misery on account of my bad birth mark, and uneducated, and old cannot work to earn any more. I don't know how long to live.

Still I have to walk to Sisseton, S. D., which was about 10 miles from here where I'm living. I'm a member of Tribal Council of the Sisseton Indians for about 5 years and nearly every month the held a meeting at the Agency office, in town of Sisseton, S. D. work without any salary for the Sisseton Tribe, as a slave.

Of course, I was getting old to see a good doctor in a city. only I wish I could have a car, from rich people of Minnesota in concerning of my father who works so hard for the Minnesota to be in peace, and grows in return's.

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When I was thinking of my father, It reminds me about Columbus. He works his brains so hard for the Nation of Spain. yet He died in poverty. In chain, He earned nothing but a Chain for his beloved and dear sons of his.

Chief Gabriel Renville was buried upon his big hill at his place with his children and some of his scouts. He was a forgotten man. even, his grave, There is only a small headstone put up by his wife and a few of his sons. Where the rich United States should put up a National Monument instead of Crazy Horse, and Sitting Bull which the Congress has proposed to put up for these two Sioux Chiefs who has wipe out entirely of General Custer's Company.

Well, please excuse my mistakes and broken language.

I am sure that this letter has many mistakes and broken. As, I'm lack of education, and sorry for using many of your time, too.

Sincerely yours

Gabriel Renville

P.S. Please send me a list of Minnesota Historical with a prices. And have you got 1907 Congressional Record at hand? I wish to get a copy of a pages of the Indian restriction debated in Senate. What will it cost?