

# “A Portion of



Little Crow,  
Washington,  
1858

*THROUGH THE YEARS* Minnesota History has published many articles on phases of the Sioux War, or Uprising, of 1862 in Minnesota. The September, 1962, issue, now out of print, was devoted entirely to the subject on the occasion of the centennial of the war. Now the quarterly again puts out a special issue on the Sioux War, with emphasis on its causes. The reason for this issue is to publish some of the continuing investigations of the war — a subject of apparently perpetual interest to researchers and authors. — Ed.

# the American People”

## *The Sioux Sign a Treaty in Washington in 1858*

Barbara T. Newcombe

IN THE BITTER COLD of February, 1858, Sioux Indian Agent Joseph Renshaw Brown set out in a sleigh from his home town of Henderson in Sibley County on a long trip westward. He was following instructions he had evidently received on February 17 from William J. Cullen, superintendent of Indian affairs of the northern superintendency in St. Paul. Cullen in turn had been given orders by Charles E. Mix, acting commissioner of Indian affairs in Washington. Brown was to select a deputation of chiefs and headmen of the Upper Sioux or Dakota (Wahpeton and Sisseton) and of the Lower Sioux (Mdewakanton and Wahpekute) and take them to Washington, D.C. The object was to sign treaties that would untangle the question of Indian title to their land and, though the Sioux did not know it yet, would see them give up half of the reservation left them by the

1851 treaties of Traverse des Sioux and Mendota — the rich, ten-mile-wide strip on the north side of the Minnesota River. The Lower Sioux, tempted by the prospect of increased annuity payments, had long wanted to visit Washington and find out what happened to funds promised them in earlier treaties.<sup>1</sup>

Brown crossed the snowy prairie to the Lower Sioux (Redwood) Agency on the south side of the Minnesota near present-day Redwood Falls and Morton. There he arranged for some eighteen chiefs and headmen to be selected and authorized to act for their people. They were to be ready in ten days when they would be joined by the Upper Sioux delegation.

Andrew Robertson, the agency's assistant interpreter, was to be in charge of conducting the Upper Sioux delegation of ten chiefs and headmen. He accompanied Brown up the Minnesota River Valley to Lac qui Parle where Wahpeton chiefs were selected from Yellow Medicine bands and instructed regarding the upcoming trip. Robertson stayed at Lac qui Parle while Brown continued on to Big Stone Lake to round up chiefs there. By the time he returned to the Lower Agency on Saturday, February 27, to meet Robertson, the assembled Indians, and others, Brown had driven an exhausting 430 miles since leaving Henderson.<sup>2</sup> Now the party was ready to leave for Washington. Robertson and most of the others would not return to the agency until July 15 — five months and 3,500 miles later. Brown would stay longer and travel farther carrying out instructions for Mix.

Brown must have felt at home on his trip to gather the Sioux delegation. His long, colorful career in Min-

<sup>1</sup>An account of "Major" Brown's winter trip appeared in the *Henderson Democrat*, March 3, 1858, [p. 2], and was reprinted in the *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*, March 9, 1858, [p. 2] (all citations to this paper are to the daily edition); Charles E. Mix to William J. Cullen, February 5, 1858, Office of Indian Affairs (hereafter cited OIA), letters sent, National Archives Record Group (NARG) 75, National Archives microfilm publication M21, roll 58, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup>*Henderson Democrat*, March 3, 1858, [p. 2].

BARBARA NEWCOMBE, a librarian for the Chicago Tribune, recently moved to the newspaper's headquarters in Chicago from its Washington, D.C., office. This article is an expansion and reworking of a seminar paper she wrote for a course she took from Herman J. Viola, director of the National Anthropological Archives, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

nesota had begun in 1819 as a fourteen-year-old drummer boy with troops assigned to build Fort Snelling. Out of the army at twenty, Brown became one of Minnesota's best-known pioneers as a leading trader among the Sioux, lumberman, founder of cities, land speculator, legislator, Democratic politician, inventor, editor, and Indian agent. He was second editor of Minnesota's first newspaper, the *Minnesota Pioneer* (St. Paul), and founded and edited the *Henderson Democrat*. He served in seven sessions of the Minnesota territorial legislature and was an important member of the constitutional convention in 1857.<sup>3</sup>

After he was replaced as agent in 1861 by a Republican politician, Thomas J. Galbraith, Brown built an imposing, nineteen-room mansion for his Sisseton wife and twelve children on the north side of the Minnesota some seven miles downriver from the Upper Sioux Agency. It became a social center in the sparsely settled region but was burned during the Sioux Uprising of 1862. At that time Brown was in New York on business regarding his most famous invention, a steam wagon. His wife and children were captured and held by the Indians until freed on September 26, 1862, by a relief army led by Colonel Henry H. Sibley. Meanwhile, Brown joined Sibley's force and after the war served as commander of scouts on the Minnesota-Dakota border. He died at Browns Valley in 1870. In all his enterprises Brown was an able, articulate, perceptive, and energetic man. He needed all these qualities to handle the Indian delegation he took to Washington and back in 1858.<sup>4</sup>

The role that gave him this task, of course, was that of Indian agent. He had been appointed to the job the previous September. His predecessor, Charles E. Flandrau, had suggested, as a means of accelerating the assimilation process, granting individual farms to the Lower Sioux. Flandrau perceived that the old tribal ways made some of the Indians uneasy. Why not take the older and more reliable ones to Washington where they would be free of the "influence of their young men" and could see for themselves the wealth and the might of the white man? Flandrau was appointed to the Minnesota Supreme Court, so his ideas were carried out by Brown. He, in fact, was a strong advocate of "civilizing" the Sioux and turning them into farmers. More than most agents, who were part of the political spoils system, Brown understood his charges and wanted to do right by them — according to his perceptions. He could speak their language and had married a woman of their tribe. This must have contributed to a feeling for her people. He would do the best he could in the circumstances in which he found himself.<sup>5</sup>

THE FULL DELEGATION, which arrived on March 9, 1858, at McGregor, Iowa, had some interesting members. Antoine J. ("Joe") Campbell, head interpreter, was

the son of a Sioux interpreter and grandson of an early trader who had married into the tribe. Joseph Brown's brother, Nathaniel, earned his way as assistant conductor of the Lower Sioux. Andrew Robertson was officially assistant conductor for the Upper Sioux. They lived with the Indians at the hotels, kept track of petty day-to-day expenses, and eventually conducted the Indians home. Among the ten Upper Sioux were three already involved with farming and closely identified with missionary stations. They were Little Paul, John Other Day, and Pa-pa. The sixteen to nineteen Lower Sioux (the number given varies) were nominally led by Wabasha, but Little Crow was the real leader and spokesman. His restless mind was open to new ideas. He was willing to try farming — or have his wives try it — and he preferred to live in a frame house during the winter months. His avid interest in the strange world of the whites convinced him that his people would have to adapt, but he could also sense the avaricious motives of the whites he knew best — the traders. At Washington he was to prove an able speaker and a formidable adversary even in a situation where he was illiterate in the working language.<sup>6</sup>

At McGregor, Brown found that his team of horses was too sick to undertake the return journey to Henderson. He thus paid off the teamster and entrusted the horses to a local farmer. After ferrying across the Mississippi, the entire group entrained at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, for Chicago. This new rail connection saved them twenty hours' travel time and also saved the government subsistence money for the entire delega-

<sup>3</sup>For sketches of Brown, see Daniel S. B. Johnston, "Minnesota Journalism in the Territorial Period," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 10, part 2:267 (1905); William W. Follwell, *A History of Minnesota*, vols. 1 (especially 231–238) and 2 (numerous references) (St. Paul, revised editions, 1956 and 1961); George S. Hage, *Newspapers on the Minnesota Frontier, 1849–1860*, 39–40, 155, 157 (St. Paul, 1967).

<sup>4</sup>June D. Holmquist and Jean A. Brookins, *Minnesota's Major Historic Sites: A Guide*, 130–132 (St. Paul, 1972).

<sup>5</sup>Mix to Brown, September 11, 1857, OIA, letters sent, NARC 75, M21, roll 57, p. 366–367; *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*, September 15, 1857, [p. 2]; Charles E. Flandrau to Cullen, September 24, 1857, in *Indian Office Reports, 1857*, p. 60. Reverend Thomas S. Williamson wrote of his relief and hope because of Brown's appointment as Sioux agent: "whatever faults he may have, I believe that his sympathies are such that his feelings will incite him to labor for their welfare, and to allay or prevent any unkind feelings between them and their white neighbors." See *New York Times*, August 24, 1857, p. 5 (reprint of letter to *St. Paul Times*, August 13, 1857).

<sup>6</sup>For various views of Little Crow, see Dr. Asa W. Daniels, "Reminiscences of Little Crow," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 12:513–530 (1908); Thomas Hughes, *Indian Chiefs of Southern Minnesota*, 52–58 (Mankato, 1927; revised edition, Minneapolis, 1969); Isaac V. D. Heard, *History of the Sioux War and Massacres of 1862 and 1863*, 146, other pages (New York, 1863); Daniel Buck, *Indian Outbreaks*, 42–56 (Mankato, 1904; reprint edition, Minneapolis, 1965).

tion, which amounted to \$2.50 per day per person. Already Andrew Robertson had had to purchase buffalo robes at \$7.00 each for the Upper Sioux and other necessities such as "mockinsans" for \$2.00 a pair, innumerable pairs of socks and "mitts," one comb each, blankets, and shawls. A pair of spectacles cost one dollar. After arriving in Washington he purchased each Indian a coat, two shirts, a handkerchief, and cloth for leggings.<sup>7</sup>

The Lower Sioux had begun to agitate for permission to visit Washington in 1853 and put money aside for the trip. Little Crow had been in Washington in 1854 to try to iron out unclear aspects of the treaties of 1851 and realized that the 1858 delegation would need fine hunting shirts, decent leggings, money for the hotel, candles, fires, and food. The Lower Sioux had the foresight to prepare for an expensive trip and so were able to lend \$1,240 to the Upper Sioux. Payment of this loan was demanded by Little Crow before he consented to sign the treaty in June.<sup>8</sup>

The train took the delegation through an ever more heavily settled land where thorny problems affected everyday life. Economic depression gripped the East and Midwest and sent unemployed people marching in Buffalo, New York, and other cities. Congressional debate daily grew more bitter on the question of whether Kansas would become a free or slaveholding state. Statehood for Minnesota was tied to the Kansas issue. Mormons in Utah tied down elements of the United States

cavalry sent to force them to obey federal laws. British cruisers stopped and searched American vessels suspected of engaging in the African slave trade. In 1858 the affairs of the nation were complicated enough for a brilliant statesman, which President James Buchanan was not.

In addition to the official delegation, there were at least seven others who felt it to their interest to make the trip from Minnesota to Washington. This meant paying for twelve days' travel and approximately 100 days in the capital. Their motives varied. One came with a benign, if ulterior, design. He was the Reverend Thomas S. Williamson, who was intent on saving souls and securing the future of his tiny mission (Pajutazee) and school near the Yellow Medicine (Upper Sioux) Agency. There also was Charles R. Crawford, Brown's brother-in-law and a son of Akepa, a Wahpeton chief who was a delegation member. On hand, too, were traders like Andrew J. Myrick, William H. Forbes, Friedrich Schmidt, and Madison Sweetser with fortunes to gain or lose from the negotiations. Superintendent Cullen and his wife also traveled to Washington.<sup>9</sup>

Many of the Indians on the train had already proved willing to try farming IF they could depend on protection from unsympathetic "blanket" Indians, IF they were furnished equipment and help, IF the money due them was not siphoned off to traders and others, and IF white settlers were kept off their land. Past experience in these matters did little to encourage them. It was not easy to ignore the taunts of other Indians who jeered at them for wearing breeches instead of blankets and cutting their hair, who stole and killed their stock, who trampled their crops, and who threatened the children they sent to the missionary schools. Then, too, their warlike cousins to the West, the Yankton, developed the annoying habit of showing up at annuity time and downgrading the Santee (Upper and Lower Sioux) for signing treaties with the white man.<sup>10</sup>

In many ways Joseph Brown and Little Crow were poles apart in spite of being in the same group on the same train bound for the same destination. But they shared some personal characteristics. Both were proud, lively, inquiring, and ambitious. Brown needed to succeed for the greater glory of Minnesota and himself. Little Crow needed to succeed for survival, both his own and that of his people. The Santee Sioux must not again give up much for little or nothing.

At Baltimore the entourage had to change to a Baltimore and Ohio train for Washington. Already there had been some illness, for which medicines were purchased in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. After arriving in Washington on Saturday, March 13, 1858, the "26 [sic] fine and stalwart Santee" felt more like twenty-six worn and wasted men, objects of curiosity and some ridicule. Hard enough to bear under the best of circumstances, the

<sup>7</sup>General Accounting Office, Second Auditor's Accounts, Joseph R. Brown, account no. 8499 (hereafter all cited GAO). James H. Brisbois, March 9, 1858, D. W. Freeman, July 17, 1858, Andrew Robertson, voucher 9, abstract B, July 21, 1858, and voucher 7, abstract B, July 20, 1858; railroad advertisement in *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*, September 3, 1857.

<sup>8</sup>In his excellent *History of the Santee Sioux* (Lincoln, 1967), Roy W. Meyer states on page 94 that Governor Willis A. Gorman and Little Crow "went to Washington in the spring of 1855. . . . This is unlikely since Little Crow was definitely there in 1854. For instance, Gorman wrote Indian Commissioner George W. Manypenny on March 27, 1855: "I am requested by Henri Belland [,] the person who accompanied 'Little Crow' to Washington last year, to forward the enclosed claim for \$200 against the Sioux," OIA, letters received, NARG 75, microfilm publication M234, roll 762.

<sup>9</sup>Williamson to S. B. Treat, February 22, 1858, in Grace Lee Nute, comp., *Manuscripts Relating to Northwest Missions, in the Minnesota Historical Society*. For information on Crawford and Akepa, see Hughes, *Indian Chiefs*, 87-92.

<sup>10</sup>Brown to Cullen, December 4, 1857, enclosed in Cullen to Mix, December 24, 1857, OIA, letters received, NARG 75, microfilm publication M234, roll 762; *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*, August 28, 1858, [p. 2]. Williamson said that "the Sioux have had to wait a month in a state of starvation for their annuities. The goods furnished them — \$5,000 worth a year, being a little of everything and not enough of anything for general distribution — have caused much ill-will among themselves, and an opinion almost amounting to belief that they are cheated out of three-fourths of the goods due them." See *New York Times*, August 24, 1857, p. 5.

situation called for the greatest exercise of dignity and restraint when their spirits were low. Only a small fraction of their trip was over. Little did they know they had to endure 125 more days away from home.<sup>11</sup>

The Indians, interpreter Campbell, and assistants Robertson and Nathaniel Brown were sorted into W. P. Chandler's coaches and conveyed to Mrs. Maher's Union Hotel. The cost of transportation, including baggage, was fifty cents each. Brown lodged at the National Hotel, several blocks away from the others.<sup>12</sup>

On Monday, March 15, at 2:00 P.M., the full delegation with a large and mixed supporting cast met with Acting Commissioner Charles E. Mix in his office. Each delegate was introduced by a dramatized personal story. Mix in turn warned his "red children" against fire water, promised visits with Secretary of the Interior Jacob Thompson and President Buchanan, and reminded them that they should not conduct tribal warfare with the Pawnee who were also in town for treaty making.

Little Crow said he had come a long way and intended "while in your village, to walk your streets as a proud man." He pointed out that the Sioux were obedient to the Great Father even to the point of hunting down renegade Indians — a dangerous and frustrating errand for which they had never been paid. He was referring to the unwelcome job of trying to capture Inkpaduta (Scarlet Point), an outlawed Wahpekute chief who led the so-called "Spirit Lake Massacre" in 1857 in which more than thirty settlers were killed. When the Indian office in Washington notified the Sioux that they would be held responsible for apprehending Inkpaduta, and that annuities would be withheld until they did, Little Crow, John Other Day, and others volunteered to go after the renegade. He eluded them as he had military pursuers earlier, but some women captives were eventually freed. The pressure put upon the Indians to capture Inkpaduta caused bad feelings not only toward the whites but between various factions of the Sioux themselves. The March 15 interview ended, and the delegation left for the hotel. A reporter noticed that one of the Indians shook hands "with a handsome young lady that he selected . . . for her beauty." She blushed properly, and the others laughed.<sup>13</sup>

The second interview with Commissioner Mix took place on March 27 and was again attended by both Upper and Lower Sioux members of the delegation. They were splendidly dressed; some wore feathers and paint. Little Crow had added a circle of blue paint around one eye. Mix asked an interpreter if Little Crow spoke for all. The answer was, "Yes, for all," and that situation continued throughout the negotiations. Little Crow came right to the point. He reminded the commissioner that, because of the treaties of 1851 in which the Sioux gave up vast lands for monetary and other considerations, "our people ought never be poor." He added

that "our Great Father has plenty of funds belonging to us in his hands, and it takes plenty to enable a person to act like a man and not like a beggar." This was his way of bringing up the question of what happened to the money. Mix said a decision would soon be made in this regard and provisions sent for "their comfort and support."<sup>14</sup>

Mix insisted on knowing how the Indians planned to spend the money given them while in Washington. Little Crow pointed out: "My Father, a great many of the white people have money in their pockets, and you never ask them what they are going to do with it, and they spend it as they please." Mix understandably was still nervous about the problem of whisky. Little Crow rose and shook hands with the commissioner — his way of making a particular point — and said: "My Father, I speak for all the men present. They are all men of sense, and not fools, and when they say anything they intend to do it. You have mentioned that [*whisky*] to us two or three times, and I hope you will never mention it again. We don't want to hear it."

Superintendent Cullen broke in. He tried to smooth over the awkward situation by asking interpreter Campbell to explain about perverse Indians who *would* go begging for money on the streets. Of course, such was not and never would be the case with the dependable Santee. "They are too proud for that," said Campbell.

On March 29 the Sioux were taken on an outing that had an ulterior motive. They rode in the ubiquitous Mr. Chandler's carriages to see the new extension for the United States Arsenal being built at Greenleaf's Point. Undoubtedly the commissioner hoped to impress his "red children" with the military might of the United States. The new works, situated at present-day Fort McNair, were very much in the news in Washington in 1858. Visiting the arsenal at the same time as the Indians were some officials of the Turkish navy. After all had

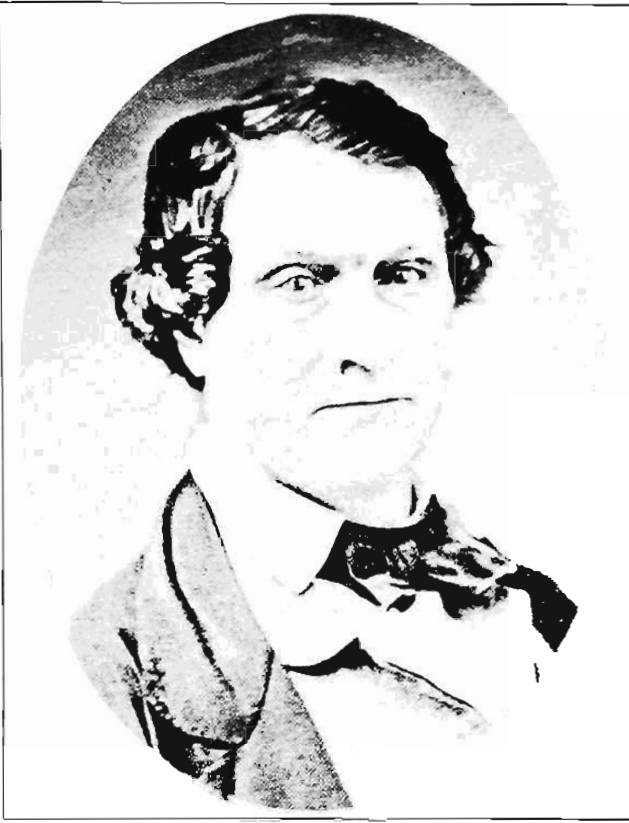
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<sup>11</sup>GAO, Robertson, voucher 7; *Washington Evening Star*, March 15, 1858, [p. 2]. The *National Intelligencer* (Washington) carried the same story of the Indians' arrival on the same date. There is no way to account for the discrepancies in numbers in the various sources.

<sup>12</sup>GAO, W. P. Chandler, June 21, 1858. This same voucher includes all official trips of the Sioux delegation which always made use of Chandler's carriage service in Washington. All other references to use of Chandler's carriages are based on this source.

<sup>13</sup>"Sioux Delegation from Minnesota in the Indian Office," March 15, 1858, in Documents Relating to the Negotiations of Ratified and Unratified Treaties with Various Indian Tribes, 1801-1869 (hereafter cited DRN). OIA, NARG 75, microfilm publication T494, roll 6, frames 0214-0220. All references to this meeting are from the same source.

<sup>14</sup>"The Sioux Indians from Brown County, Minnesota, 2d. Interview," March 27, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0233-0236. All references to this meeting are from the same source.



JOSEPH R. BROWN was photographed by J. Byerly of Frederick, Maryland, in 1858. Like the Indian pictures, this one was probably made during the Washington trip.

watched the firing of various types of guns, the Sioux entertained the other guests with songs and a war dance, "brandishing their pipes and tomahawks, and giving the war-whoop." Little Crow then gave a speech, translated by Major Brown, about the Inkpaduta chase of 1857 and the rescue of some of the prisoners. The visitors from Turkey "expressed themselves highly pleased with what they had witnessed."<sup>15</sup>

The next day the Sioux were part of a "long and striking funeral procession" for a Pawnee brave that went to the Congressional Cemetery. The Pawnee was Tuck-

a-lix-tah, who had been staying at the same rooming house as the Sioux and had died after a long illness. He was buried with his buffalo robe, tomahawk, war club, moccasins, and trinkets. Reverend Williamson translated into Dakota the simple speech made by the Loup Pawnee, Sword Chief, who said that the Indians were tired now and wanted to go home. "We hope our Great Father will settle our business and let us go to our villages," Sword Chief said.<sup>16</sup>

Little Crow echoed these thoughts on April 9 when the Lower Sioux met Mix for another interview: "I hope you will not keep us long, because if you do we will be too late to attend our planting, and our people will suffer again from the same cause." (He was referring to the fact that having to chase Inkpaduta in 1857 had forced the Sioux to neglect their corn crop.) He then listed some sixteen separate and precise complaints of promises not kept, naming names and citing sums of money due. It was a source of great dissatisfaction to the Sioux that one year the government withheld money if they fought their traditional enemies, the Chippewa, and the following year threatened to withhold annuities if they did not fight Inkpaduta, one of their own tribe.<sup>17</sup>

Mix replied with the usual soothing words — their Great Father will redress every wrong, the money is to be used for their benefit or is stored in the treasury, the matter will be looked into, and so forth — but Little Crow would not be put off. He again shook hands with Mix. Then he pointed to the reporter, John Dowling, and said: "Four years ago you had also writing taken down. . . You then told me that \$20,000 would be sent up to us the next payment. That money probably went down the current before it was received, for it never reached us. . . If I were to give you an account of all the money that was spilled — of all that you sent but which never reached us — it would take all night to tell it."

He complained of a government farmer who ignored Little Crow but did whatever the Indian women asked; he asked for stoves to put into their houses and for cattle and horses every four years; and he inquired why Dutchmen (Germans) settled on land promised the Indians. Little Crow pointed out that he could not speak, read, or write English and had to accept on faith that the commissioner was telling him the truth. The only possible interpretation for unkept promises was that the Great Father's words got weak before they reached his agents in the field.<sup>18</sup>

The Indian Office wanted the Santee Sioux to model themselves after the Choctaw and Chickasaw who had set up their own police force. Indians everywhere were urged endlessly to imitate the white man, too. Many of them, familiar with whites and their whisky, resisted these recommendations. The Sioux truly believed that, by giving President Buchanan a list of their needs and grievances, all problems would be solved as if by magic.

<sup>15</sup>*Henderson Democrat*, April 13, 1858, [p. 2], quoting a story on the arsenal visit from the *Washington Union*; *Washington Evening Star*, April 2, 1858, [p. 3].

<sup>16</sup>*Washington Evening Star*, March 30, 1858, [p. 3] (first quote), March 31, 1858, [p. 3] (second quote).

<sup>17</sup>"[Lower] Sioux from Brown County, Minnesota, in Indian Office," April 9, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0245-0261; Brown dispatch in *Henderson Democrat*, July 16, 1857, [p. 2], with parts reprinted in *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*, July 18, 1857, [p. 2].

<sup>18</sup>"[Lower] Sioux from Brown County, Minnesota, in Indian Office," April 9, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6. All references to this meeting are from the same source.



They could not understand why other Indian delegations were invited to the White House, but not they.

Just three days prior to the April 9 meeting of the Lower Sioux with Mix, the Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union gained title to George Washington's home. About this time the Pawnee Indians left town, followed later by a delegation of the Yankton Sioux who signed a treaty. Some shopkeepers and numerous ordinary citizens heaved a sigh of relief. Although there was repeated and serious trouble with street gangs and ruffians, some people liked to exaggerate an occasional confrontation with the Indians. Commissioner Mix, however, emphasized that the Indians "behaved with remarkable propriety. Their curiosity and unsophisticated ideas tend at times to make them somewhat indiscreet, but this . . . should not be . . . a ground of complaint. Their kindness towards each other of different tribes, and towards all with whom they have been brought into contact, [is] praiseworthy. It affords truly a most humiliating contrast with the outrageous proceedings of the civilized savages in our midst." <sup>19</sup>

The Sioux finally had their interview with the president on April 26 and, wrote Brown, "were much gratified with their kind reception. The president heard their 'little speeches' and replied in a tone of friendship and kindness highly pleasing and at the same time encouraging to the Indians." <sup>20</sup>

The Sioux delegation always met the commissioner at Seventeenth and Pennsylvania Avenue where the old Executive Office Building now stands. The Sioux stayed at Maher's boardinghouse, the Union Hotel, known in its palmier days as the Globe Hotel. It stood just behind the present United States Treasury Building. Jimmy Maher, the original owner, had quite a reputation as a hotelkeeper who could "talk to the Indians in their native language with his Irish brogue flavoring the whole conversation." He made them feel at least partially at home by encouraging them to sit on the porch, play drums, and sing songs. These harmless pastimes always attracted a crowd, which was good for business. Bed (such as it was) and board for each Indian cost \$2.00 a day. Fires, candles, and laundry were extra. Little Crow resented that they were treated like uncivilized aborigines. Having saved money to pay for the trip, he said, "we thought we would come here and live like white men, and sleep in beds, but we had to sleep on the floor." <sup>21</sup>

THE SPRING DAYS turned warmer, but little progress was made toward signing of a Sioux treaty because the debate over the admission of Kansas monopolized the time of Congress and the president. It also held back statehood for Minnesota. Like a virus the Kansas question invaded the national political body, and as temperatures rose, energy dissipated. As a newspaperman and

one of Minnesota's leading Democrats who took part in the convention to form a state constitution, Brown could not resist writing political dispatches from Washington for the *Henderson Democrat*. When Brown, frustrated over the delay in the Minnesota bill, blamed Senator Stephen A. Douglas for putting Kansas ahead of Minnesota, the *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat* took vigorous issue with Brown on this point. The *St. Paul* paper also turned on him for advocating the Lecompton (proslavery) constitution for Kansas. <sup>22</sup>

Joseph R. Brown was a complex man. Williamson had initially distrusted him: "I have known the agent ever since I first came to the [Minnesota] country in 1834, when he was engaged as he had been for several years previous, in selling whiskey to the Indians. He is a man of little education, handsome talents, much kind feeling, and very little principle; probably more thoroughly acquainted with the Dakotas than any other man living . . . he feels a strong sympathy for the people, though owing to his lack of principle they greatly dislike him." <sup>23</sup>

Impatient with the glacial progress made on the Sioux treaty, Williamson decided he might as well go home to Yellow Medicine and get some crops in the ground. He left on April 6, convinced it would be useless to oppose the cession of land by which too many men stood to profit. In two months his opinion of Brown had changed some: "They [Brown and Cullen] seem to take considerable interest in the welfare of the Indians and have pretty correct views of what is necessary thereto, but they are destitute of religious principle and so not fully reliable especially as they are here constantly in contact with men at least as wise or shrewd as themselves who think their pecuniary interests may be much advanced by measures detrimental to the Indians." <sup>24</sup>

Of course, Williamson and other Santee reserve missionaries were not entirely disinterested spectators. Current negotiation involved the education funds,

<sup>19</sup>*Washington Evening Star*, April 7, 1858, [p. 2] (quotes), April 27, 1858, [p. 2].

<sup>20</sup>*Henderson Democrat*, May 12, 1858, [p. 2].

<sup>21</sup>Clifford Lewis, "Hotels of Washington from Past and Present," in John Clagett Procter, ed., *Washington, Past and Present*, 2:782 (Maher quote); *Washington Evening Star*, May 3, 27, 1858, [both p. 3]; GAO, Maher, June 21, 1858; "Delegation of Lower Sioux: Final Meeting," June 21, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frame 323 (Little Crow quote).

<sup>22</sup>*Henderson Democrat*, April 13, July 21, 1858, [both p. 2]; *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*, April 22, July 17, 1858, [both p. 2].

<sup>23</sup>Williamson to S. B. Treat, January 18, 1858, in Grace Lee Nute, comp., *Manuscripts Relating to Northwest Missions*.

<sup>24</sup>Williamson to Treat, March 18, 1858 (quote), June 23, 1858, in Nute, comp., *Manuscripts Relating to Northwest Missions*.

which, if diverted to pay traders' debts or used for some other purpose, would be a blow to the missionaries. They had built schoolhouses, churches, and homes for themselves and the Christian Indians. It was important to them to have clear land title.

Not only did Williamson depart, but so did Superintendent and Mrs. Cullen, both of whom took sick and left in late April "to return to the pure air of Minnesota." The Cullens' illness, however, forced them to stay in Philadelphia for some time to recuperate. "This is a matter of regret," wrote Brown, "as his services would have been of great value in the negotiations between the department and the Indians. There are but few government appointees who stand fairer with the department with which they are connected than does Col. Cullen." This statement stands in marked contrast with Brown's estimate of Cullen the previous July when the superintendent, then a rank novice from Indiana, was attempting to deal with the Inkpaduta crisis. Brown doubted then that Cullen could "give a succinct, logical and intelligent description of the difference between the habits, manners, customs and peculiarities of a Sioux Indian and a snapping turtle."<sup>25</sup>

On May 11, 1858, Congress finally passed the Minnesota admission bill, and Buchanan signed it. Minnesota thus became the nation's thirty-second state. Its new constitution, actually adopted by an overwhelming vote of the people the previous October 13, required Indians and mixed-bloods to pass a court test in addition to adopting the language and customs of civilization in order to enjoy "the rights of citizenship within the State."<sup>26</sup>

The sights, sounds, and smells of Washington in May would inspire many people to leave — if they could. In fact, "the Indians are inclined to think that visits to Washington are not so desirable as they were formerly," Brown wrote in a dispatch to the *Henderson Democrat*. Streets were unpaved. There was no municipal water supply with which to wet them down. By day's end the air was heavily polluted with dust. "Washington is probably the dustiest city in the Union," a correspondent wrote for the *New York Times*. If heaven donated a



CHARLES E. MIX (seated, second from right), the Indian commissioner with whom the Sioux had to deal in 1858, was a clerk when Alexander Gardner took this picture of him with Sac and Fox Indians in Washington in 1867. Also shown is Lewis V. Bogy, then commissioner of Indian affairs.

natural supply of water, another kind of pollution developed: "The sewerage of the entire city, high and low, was fearfully and conspicuously defective."<sup>27</sup>

However, the Potomac was relatively clean, and the movement of air over the water lifted the Indians' sinking spirits on April 30. That day they rode on a steamer to Alexandria on an outing that was well worth the twenty-six cents each ticket cost. It was a pleasure for them to leave Washington's "ant heap" of lobbyists and office seekers behind. The Sioux liked floating down the river to the bustling, exciting port and even announced that they would put on a drum-and-dance performance at Arlington Spring a month later. As demonstrated at the arsenal earlier, they enjoyed playing for their own pleasure and loved to see others dance and sway to the drumbeat, too.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of all the shopping, attending theatrical performances, and visiting churches, office buildings, and other places, the Sioux were bored by long stretches of inactivity. Some of the more curious among them even

<sup>25</sup>*Henderson Democrat*, May 12, [p. 2] (first quotes), May 26, [p. 2], 1858; July 16, 1857, [p. 2] (last quote).

<sup>26</sup>For the story of Minnesota's admission to the Union, see Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:9-18, and Theodore C. Blegen, *Minnesota: A History of the State*, especially 228-230 (Minneapolis, 1963; second edition, 1975).

<sup>27</sup>*Henderson Democrat*, May 26, 1858, [p. 2]; *New York Times*, June 22, 1858, p. 1; John A. Porter, *The City of Washington*, in Herbert B. Adams, ed., *John Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, Third Series, XI-XII, 24-25 (last quote) (Baltimore, November and December, 1885).

<sup>28</sup>*Washington Evening Star*, March 27, May 29, 1858, [p. 3].



tried out elixirs and compounds advertised in the newspapers — anything to take their minds off their long wait and the bad news that began arriving from home.

At annuity time the year before, the Santees' relatives, the Yankton and Yanktonai, had traveled from Dakota Territory to protest the 1851 treaties by burning buildings and driving out some settlers. Now they reportedly were converging on Yellow Medicine, and it looked to be the same all over again. Brown sent Mix a letter along with a *Henderson Democrat* news clipping in which the Reverend Stephen R. Riggs reported the Yankton and Yanktonai threat. Joe Campbell also wrote a letter for the Lower Sioux, telling Mix: "We do not like so many strangers to be near our homes and feel anxious for the safety of our wives and children." Secretary of the Interior Jacob Thompson and Senator Henry M. Rice of Minnesota also received letters they forwarded to Mix.<sup>29</sup>

On May 24, 1858, the Upper Sioux conferred with Mix, who at once asked them to live on lands to be allotted in severalty to the heads of families on the south and west side of the Minnesota River and to give up their lands on the north and east side. This was about half of the reservation left them by the 1851 treaty. The amount the Indians would receive for the land would be determined by the "Great Council" (the United States Senate). The proposal shocked the Wahpeton and Sisseton leaders. Now they could see why they had been kept waiting for forty-six days. When they visited President Buchanan on April 26, he seemed to be sympathetic to their problems. Now, however, their "Great Father" ignored their demands for an accounting of their money and, instead, asked for their land. Their fields, woods, and river valleys suddenly appeared to be more than they needed. Counting on the Indians' fatigue and frustration, Mix and the other ubiquitous negotiators were hoping to grind down Sioux resistance.

For the Upper Sioux, like the Lower, it was to be a losing battle, but they did not give up easily in spite of their concern, too, about the possible threat to their families and homes posed by other Sioux tribes to the west and also by the Chippewa. Red Eagle Feather and Iron Walker said they would have to confer with their people about the matters the commissioner brought up. Shoots-Iron-as-He-Walks told Mix that the new proposals would deprive his people of prime timber north of the river, put whisky-selling whites closer to the Indians than before, and still not repay them for what they had yielded in 1851. Iron Walker spoke eloquently for the others, saying: "Since we made the treaty of 1851 with our Great Father we call ourselves American citizens and feel that we are a portion of the American people and therefore determined to do right towards them in our dealing. . . . Since we made the treaty . . . we have lost a good deal of money which we ought to have got; and when we came here to inquire about it, we did not think

we would have had to stay so long. We wanted to get through quick and go back and plant." The session ended without a decision.<sup>30</sup>

Forewarned by the Upper Sioux, the Lower Sioux met with Mix the next day, May 25, at "2½ P.M." in a stormy session. The general treaty terms that Mix laid out were much the same as for the Upper Sioux. The Mdewankanton and Wahpekute should relinquish their lands north of the Minnesota and farm on lands allotted to heads of families on the south side. Continuing to be spokesman, Little Crow tried to head off the inevitable with passionate and eloquent arguments. He again reminded Mix and others of broken promises in earlier treaties and then said:

"That is the way you all do. You use very good and pleasant language, but we never receive half what is promised or which we ought to get. I came here about the Reserve in 1854; I recollect you [*meaning the recorder*] very distinctly; and you were then writing at the table as you are now, surrounded by papers. You then promised us that we should have this same land forever; and yet, notwithstanding this, you now want to take half of it away. We ought, when we meet to do business, talk like men and not like children. . . . When we came here, I thought we would do business . . . at once . . . but it appears you are getting papers all around me, so that, after a while, I will have nothing left. I am going to see that paper which you gave the Agent, and if, after examining it, I shall find anything good in it, I will come and see you again; and when I do, you will hear me talk like a man, and not like a child."

At this juncture, Little Crow shook hands with Mix, and the Indians left for their hotel.<sup>31</sup>

Both groups of Sioux now tried to rescue something from the negotiations by preparing documents with suggested treaty provisions of their own. On June 1 the Upper Sioux presented theirs, drafted with Brown's help. It asked for a definite written sum of money for their lands — not a blank to be filled in by the Great

<sup>29</sup> Brown to Mix, May 23, 1858, enclosed in letter, Mix to Secretary of Interior, June 4, 1858, Report Books of OIA, 1838–1885, NARG 75, National Archives microfilm publication 348, roll 11, p. 3–6; Secretary of Interior to Mix, June 1, 1858, Secretary of Interior, Indian Division, letters sent, NARG 48, microfilm 606, roll 3; *Henderson Democrat*, May 12, 1858, [p. 2].

<sup>30</sup> Report of Upper Sioux meeting, May 24, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0340–0349. Translations and spellings of Indian names vary in treaty negotiations, and so do identifications of who said what. The recorder of the May 24 meeting said that the eloquent speech was made by the Man Walking in Iron, who often is called Iron Walker, or Walking Iron.

<sup>31</sup> Report of Lower Sioux meeting, May 25, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0262–0267.

*SIOUX DELEGATION* photographs, taken in New York only four years before the 1862 uprising, were important by-products of the treaty trip in 1858. At right, some of them holding fans to try to beat the New York heat wave, are Lower Sioux leaders, mixed-bloods, and whites who accompanied them.

Standing, left to right: Joseph R. Brown, Antoine J. ("Joe") Campbell, Has a War Club, Andrew Robertson, Red Owl, Thomas A. Robertson, and Nathaniel R. Brown. Seated: Mankato, Wabasha, and Henry Belland (?).



*LOWER SIOUX* leaders in a second picture are (standing, left to right): Big Eagle, Traveling (or Passing) Hail, and Red Legs. Seated (from left): Medicine Light, The Thief, and Taconlipeiyo (?). Identifications of some of the Indians in the 1858 photographs are admittedly uncertain. Little Crow apparently had had enough of posing in Washington and is not included in the New York photographs.

Council (Senate). The money was to be paid to the chiefs, not the traders. The Indians also indicated they would no longer hunt down their own criminals, and they wanted their timberland to be protected from the whites.<sup>32</sup>

On June 4 the Lower Sioux, aided by Robertson, also gave Mix a paper in which one proposal was to donate to Minnesota some reserve land in return for tax exemption as a hedge against the ending of money payments. During this interview Little Crow was careful to let Wabasha take more of a part than earlier since he was the principal chief. But when it came to polemics, Little Crow continued to hold the stage. He had read, as he said he would, the proposed treaty Mix had handed the Indians at the previous meeting. The chief complained that the paper "made me ashamed" because it in effect said "the Sioux Indians own nothing." He added that "we were promised a great many things . . . but it now appears that the wind blows it all off and that we got good words and nothing else. The Great Spirit has made his red children on the land which they own and their Great Father, when he wants it, buys it of them." Later on, Little Crow said he thought the Sioux ought to have more land than the treaty offered — "in 1854, I was promised a large tract." Here was the crux of the difficulty. The promises of 1854, or any year, were not the realities of a few years later. When it became inconvenient or expensive (politically or financially) to fulfill an obligation, the United States saw no hindrance to taking the cheap way out.<sup>33</sup>

The matter of what the Indians owed traders also came up at the June 4 meeting. Little Crow said he wanted to do what was right. "Living in a country where game is scarce, and we can't hunt," he said, "We are compelled to go in debt for provisions; and I am willing

to give those who let us have them something by way of remuneration." When Mix pushed for an accounting, Little Crow indicated that the Lower Sioux owed a total of some \$40,000 to such traders as Myrick, Campbell, Brown (before he became agent), Forbes, and Louis Robert.

EVENTS NOW MOVED mercifully to a climax, and none too soon, for the weather was getting so warm that government officials and others were fleeing Washington. The last parties and "galas" were taking place. Harriet Lane, the president's niece and hostess, had left the capital for the fresher air of Wheatland, the Buchanan home in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. On oppressive nights Buchanan drove four miles up to the Soldiers Home where it was cool enough for a good night's sleep.<sup>34</sup>

As June dragged on, no real attempt was made to dignify the treaty farce being played by actually negotiating with the Indians. Mix, now a full commissioner, left no doubt that he expected a treaty to be signed when he summoned the upper bands to his office at 2:00 P.M. on June 19. First, though, the lengthy discussions resembled those of other meetings between Mix and both groups of Sioux. When Red Iron, head chief of the upper bands, tried to ask questions about the money, houses,

<sup>32</sup>"Upper Sioux Delegation at Indian Office," June 1, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0350-0354.

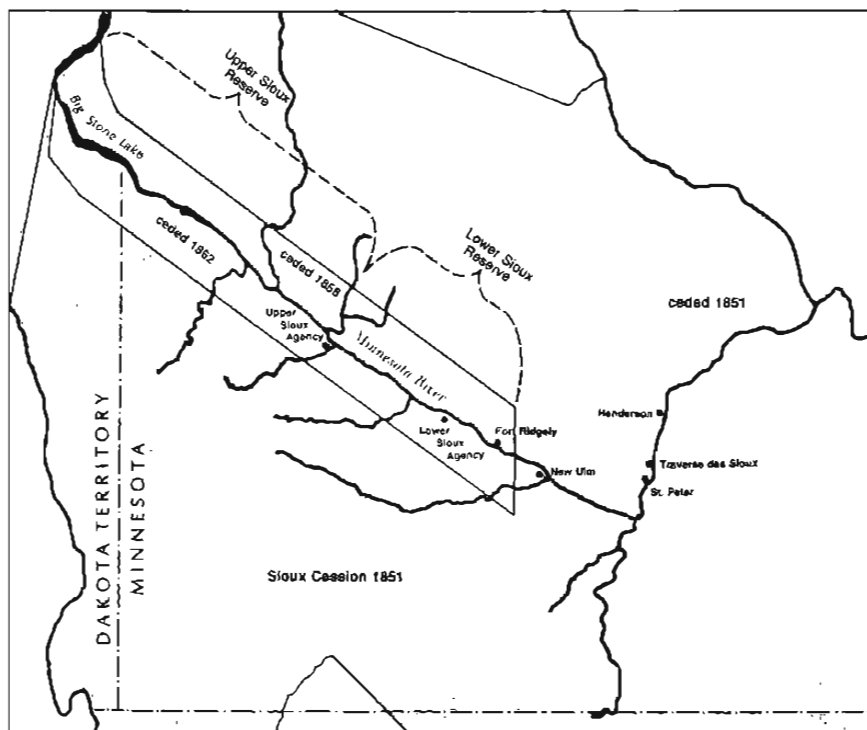
<sup>33</sup>"Lower Sioux Indians in the Indian Office," June 4, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0268-0280.

<sup>34</sup>James J. Buchanan to Harriet Lane, October 15, 1858, Buchanan Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.



*UPPER SIOUX members of the 1858 treaty delegation also held some fans, and most of them posed in stovepipe hats. Left to right, standing: Akepa, Scarlet Plume (or Red Eagle Feather), Red Iron (who kept to native costume), John Other Day, Little Paul, and Charles E. Crawford. Seated: Iron Walker (or Walking Iron), Stumpy Horn, Sweet Corn, and Extended Tail Feathers.*

THIS MAP shows the reservation for the Upper and Lower Sioux along the Minnesota River before and after the 1858 treaty was signed.



and other promises in the 1851 treaty, Mix put him off, as he did Little Crow, by calling him a child. The commissioner tired of arguments and threatened to let the Upper Sioux return home without a treaty. Then they could see what conditions they could get out of the new state of Minnesota.<sup>35</sup>

The question of Indian title to their holdings came up, and Brown indicated he thought the Sioux were secure on their lands south of the river. He was relying on the terms of the July, 1854, agreement, in which the president was authorized "to confirm to the Sioux of Minnesota, forever, the reserve on the Minnesota River now occupied by them, upon such conditions as he may deem just." The president never took formal action, thereby leaving it (in the words of one historian) "an open question whether they had anything better than a tenancy at will."<sup>36</sup>

Mix, obviously trying to frighten the delegation into

signing, expressed no doubt on the point of title: "They have no right whatever to the land they now occupy, and, which is held by sufferance." The United States wanted the land north of the river, and the alternative to taking it by force was to perform a treaty charade. The traders, of course, would be protected in their entrenched position by having "just" debts deducted from payments. The army would receive permission to establish posts and build roads. As for the lands still being held by the Sioux on the south side of the Minnesota, eighty acres would be allotted in severalty to heads of families (and to minors when they became heads of families) and the remainder of the reserve would be held in common. The Indians would pay survey costs, forego annuities when drunk, hand over all lawbreakers, and trust to the Senate to arrive at a fair price for the land ceded on the north side. Even without foreknowledge of the Civil War, Brown was misguided in his trust of the Senate and his belief that he could influence later events and persons. In fairness to Brown, however, it should be underscored that he doubtless was the one who pushed for civilization clauses like the eighty-acre allotments and other provisions leading to Indians' cultivation of the soil. Late in the afternoon of June 19 the Upper Sioux at last signed the treaty.<sup>37</sup>

With one treaty out of the way, Mix probably was sorry he put off meeting with the Lower Sioux until 7:00 p.m. the same day. At any rate, the exhausting and bitter session dragged on until midnight, following the same script as the earlier one. Patience grew thin on both sides as fatigue set in. Little Crow again asked about past

<sup>35</sup>"Upper Sioux — Treaty Meeting," June 19, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0355-0367 (another copy in different handwriting, frames 0368-0388).

<sup>36</sup>United States, *Statutes at Large*, 10:326; Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:217.

<sup>37</sup>"Upper Sioux — Treaty Meeting," June 19, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6. Brown's evident self-confidence may have led him to some mistakes in judgment. The *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat* commented on June 25, 1858: "We are glad to learn from Washington, that on the 19th treaties were concluded with the Sioux under the charge of 'Major' Brown — as the Henderson magician is styled."

promises of payments never made. Mix threatened the lower bands as he had the upper and again referred to Little Crow as a child. This cut the chief, who answered: "You say I am a child! This time I am determined not to act as a child in signing a paper I do not understand."<sup>38</sup>

In frustration over Indian resistance, Mix warned against the "sinister councils of white men." Twice he appeared to question, openly, the validity of the translation being done by Joe Campbell. Mix's stock reply when asked about past promises was that everything was done for the good of the Great Father's red children. At last, depressed and unresponsive to the commissioner's tense questions, the Lower Sioux leaders also signed their "X's" to the paper. By then the reasons to sign appeared as great as those not to sign. Virtually nothing they wanted had been granted except a promise to keep whites out of the reserve and a chance, with the eighty-acre allotments, to farm individually. Any longer time away from home would be wasted, so the Lower Sioux signed.<sup>39</sup>

The treaties differed mainly in two respects. First, Little Crow insisted on deleting the article permitting tribal members to live off the reservation. He knew that "Our young men, if permitted to run about among the whites . . . will pull down fences, and do mischief, and create bad feeling." Second, Campbell was reimbursed for land and payments promised his father, Scott Campbell, in 1837 but negated by Senate action.<sup>40</sup>

A farewell interview on June 21 between Mix and the Upper Sioux went quietly. Each Indian leader was presented a medal of their Great Father and promised "a good northwest gun," a good conduct paper, and further presents of cloth and goods to be bought in New York City.<sup>41</sup>

At a later interview with Mix the same day, the Lower Sioux were deeply suspicious and only partly mollified by Brown's assurances that they would receive \$1.25 an acre for their lands north of the Minnesota. Little Crow refused to be put off so easily. He mentioned that he had wanted to go to Washington "a good many years ago." He added: ". . . there seemed to be a big fence around us, but Inkpaduta pulled it down[.] [I]f it had not been for that scrape, we would not be here." Little Crow realized that his previous efforts to keep settlers out of the reserve, account for the annuity payments, and regulate relations with the marauding Chipewewa had been hopeless. Only when the Spirit Lake

<sup>38</sup>"Lower Sioux — Treaty Meeting," June 19, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0281-0301; *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*, July 8, 1858, [p. 2] (Little Crow quote). The *St. Paul* paper published an account of the treaty signing from the *St. Louis Republican* because its own story was burned with the mail in a fire that destroyed the steamboat "Galena" at Red Wing landing on July 1, 1858.

<sup>39</sup>There is evidence that others, too, did not always accept Campbell's "official" translation. Trader Henry Forbes did some voluntary translating during the first two interviews of March 15 and March 27, and Williamson wrote Treat on January 18, 1858: ". . . and my presence would at least prevent the interpreter from willfully misinterpreting." (Nute, comp., *Manuscripts Relating to Northwest Missions*).

<sup>40</sup>For the treaty, see Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., *Indian Affairs. Laws and Treaties*, 2:785-789 (Washington, D.C., 1904) and *United States, Statutes at Large*, 12:1031-1041 (pagination differs in other bindings). The Little Crow quote is in "Lower Sioux — Treaty Meeting," June 19, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frame 0293.

<sup>41</sup>"Delegation, Upper Sioux — Final Interview," June 21, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0406-0408.

WASHINGTON was still a city of wide-open spaces and dusty streets at the time the Sioux visited it in 1858. Even when this picture was made in 1861, Pennsylvania Avenue was unpaved and alternately muddy or dusty depending on rainfall or lack of it. Off in the distance is the unfinished dome of the United States Capitol.





murders scared the settlers had he been in a position to pressure the Indian Office to allow the visit to Washington.

Now the submerged antagonism between Little Crow and Brown surfaced, apparently over the sum of money the Lower Sioux lent the upper bands at the beginning of the trip. "I have a great many things to say against my agent," Little Crow said rather cryptically, "but do not wish to say them now." Brown replied: "I am not afraid to have him say what he knows of my conduct. He has been a great drawback to a faithful discharge of my duties as Agent. That is all I have to say to him."

Mix told Little Crow that he did Brown an injustice, adding: "If he has any thing to say against his Agent, he must say it here to his face, or else hereafter hold his tongue." Then Mix asked who their chief was "and if he is a man why does he not speak out." He repeated the question. After a long pause, the delegation finally took leave of Mix "and retired in apparent bad humor without replying to the question." Words were worthless.<sup>42</sup>

Chandler's carriages waited to take the Indians directly to the train for Baltimore — the first stop on the way home to families and farms they had left too long ago. John Other Day had acquired a bride — or, more accurately, a white woman, a waitress at the Indians' hotel, who would become his wife. The Sioux all had new clothes, medals, and memories. They no longer had almost one million acres of prime Minnesota land and,

fortunately, did not yet know how little they would be paid for it.<sup>43</sup>

Brown joined the Indians at their Baltimore hotel, the Howard House, on June 23, having stayed behind to receive Mix's letter of instruction. While the Indians rode omnibuses on a sight-seeing tour of Baltimore, Brown went to Poltney's, hardware merchants, where he ordered \$5,000 worth of farm equipment for the Sioux, as Mix had directed. In spite of pestering crowds of war-whooping rowdies, the Indians ascended the Washington Monument for a look at Baltimore below. They also visited a ship, and, dressed in "war costume," took in the last show of the season, the comedy "Wild Oats," at the Holliday Street Theatre. They always liked the lights and bright costumes of the theater and were fully aware of the impact they had on women.<sup>44</sup>

Heading for New York on June 24, the group stopped overnight in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to receive their guns and powder horns at H. E. Leman's. The Amish and Mennonite farmers reportedly were less of a novelty to the Indians than vice versa, and it was a relief to be out of the crushing humidity of the coastal cities even for a few hours.

Record heat of nearly 100 degrees greeted the delegation when it reached New York. The Sioux were to have enjoyed a great shopping spree and rounds of sight-seeing and entertainment not possible in the limited resources of Washington. Mix instructed Brown to invest \$5,000 in dry goods at Cronin, Hurxthal and Sears and advised the secretaries of the army and navy to arrange a welcome for the Indians at their New York installations. But there was no strength or enthusiasm for the least movement outside Hungerford's Hotel other than for a gasp of less torrid air in the late evening.<sup>45</sup>

By June 28 Brown realized that health and tempers were deteriorating rapidly as each day set a new record for both thermometer and coroner. On June 30 nineteen persons died of sun stroke in New York. The Indians found a visit to see Wood's Minstrels slightly bearable because each was given a fan. The visitors were not slow to realize the power of the press and began giving reporters strictly personal and highly biased accounts of the Inkpaduta episode. Mix had asked Brown to stay over in order to obtain more medals but gave permission for the Sioux groups and their conductors to go on ahead. On July 2 the Sioux left for Niagara Falls and St. Paul. It was none too soon. In Minnesota on that same day the Lower Sioux broke into and plundered the government warehouses at both agencies. Among those arrested, while his father and other chiefs were returning home from Washington and New York, was the son of Shakopee.<sup>46</sup>

IT DID NOT take long for the effect of the well-meant phrases of the treaties to be all blown off, as Little Crow

<sup>42</sup>"Delegation of Lower Sioux — Final Interview," June 21, 1858, DRN, OIA, NARG 75, microfilm T494, roll 6, frames 0320-0324. On the title page of the record of this interview, someone wrote: "Little Crow is bluffed!"

<sup>43</sup>For Other Day's marriage, see Hughes, *Indian Chiefs*, 75, and Katharine C. Turner, *Red Men Calling on the Great White Father*, 151 (Norman, Oklahoma, 1951). Thomas A. Robertson said in his reminiscences, written in the winter of 1918-19 (the Minnesota Historical Society has a copy): "On our return from Washington he [Other Day] brought back with him a white woman that he took out of a house of ill-fame, whom he married after he got back to the reservation." Other Day, who later helped many whites escape during the Sioux Uprising, was "a desperate character among his own people," (said Robertson) before his conversion to Christianity. The author of this article found no record of the marriage at the District of Columbia Marriage Records Office.

<sup>44</sup>Mix to Brown, June 23, 1858, OIA, letters sent, M21, roll 59, p. 116; GAO, Howard House, Baltimore, June 24, 1858; *Baltimore Sun*, June 23, 24, 25, 1858, all p. 1.

<sup>45</sup>Mix to Brown, June 23, 1858, OIA, letters sent, M21, roll 59, p. 116; Mix to Thompson, June 21, 1858, Secretary of Interior, letters received, NARG 48.

<sup>46</sup>Mix to Brown, June 25, June 30, July 2, 1858, Mix to Cullen, July 3, 1858, OIA, letters sent, M21, roll 50, p. 126, 140, 147, 161-162, respectively. Brown to Mix, June 28, 1858, OIA, letters received, M234, roll 762; *New York Times*, June 29, 30, 1858; *New York Herald*, June 28, 1858; *New York Tribune*, June 29, 1858; *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*, June 30, 1858, [p. 1]. Mix expressed fear and anger to Cullen that the annuity goods due in St. Paul on May 23 had only just arrived.



put it. By August 24, 1858, Superintendent Cullen reported to Mix that the Indians gathered at Yellow Medicine were sullen, rebellious, and insulting, especially to Brown. Cullen suspected conspiracy "which is of an ominous character and will require extreme watchfulness." The missionaries were concerned that they might have to abandon their buildings, farms, schools, and churches without compensation if the treaty terms were strictly interpreted. By November one of the most faithful of the "breeches" Indians, Little Paul, was asking the Reverend Stephen Return Riggs to assist in preventing ratification of the treaties.<sup>47</sup>

Bitterness caused by the 1858 treaties, and especially by the way some of the provisions were implemented, helped bring on the Sioux Uprising in Minnesota in 1862. Senator Henry M. Rice reported both treaties on March 9, 1859, and the Senate ratified them without amendment. It took its time, however, settling the question of Indian title and of just compensation for the land. Meanwhile, in his 1859 report, Agent Brown claimed good progress in civilizing the Indians and getting them to farm and asked for fair treatment of "a deeply wronged portion of the human family." He thought the proceeds of the sale of one-half of each of their reservations should place the Lower and Upper Sioux "beyond the fear of future want." The excellent land being sold was worth \$5.00 an acre, he thought, but he preferred the plan of opening the lands to pre-emption at \$1.25 per acre, the established price. Allowing for proper deductions, he said the Indians should receive at least \$1.00 per acre. That appeared to be the feeling, too, of the Senate committee on Indian affairs during deliberations in the spring of 1860. But, inexplicably, the amount voted on June 27, 1860, as the session of Congress neared its end, was a mere thirty cents an acre. Asked historian Folwell: "Patient reader, do you wonder that Indian blood boiled?"<sup>48</sup>

An Indian appropriation bill was finally passed on March 2, 1861, that allowed the Lower Sioux \$96,000 for 320,000 acres of land and the Upper Sioux \$170,880 for 569,000 acres. Wrote Folwell: "The total of \$266,880 looks small beside the sum of \$889,600 which would have resulted from the price of one dollar per acre and still more insignificant when compared with the sum of \$4,448,000, the fair value of the land at five dollars per acre, in Brown's opinion."<sup>49</sup>

The disposition of these inadequate sums greatly heightened the Indians' exasperation. The traders got practically all of the \$96,000 paid the Lower Sioux for their land and almost half the sum allotted the upper bands. The Lower Sioux treaty had stipulated that no

more than \$70,000, minus the cost of purchases the delegation took home, could be used to pay debts acknowledged by the Indians in open council. The additional \$26,000, however, eventually went to pay debts after a meeting — hardly an "open council" — at the Episcopal mission school at the Lower Agency on December 3, 1860. Afterwards, Bishop Henry B. Whipple wrote: "What took place I do not know, but the following day Little Crow had a new wagon." The suspicion that the chief had been bribed to give in to the traders led to his being replaced by Traveling Hail as principal speaker of his people. However, when it came time in August, 1862, to name a military leader against the whites, the Lower Sioux turned again to Little Crow. He reluctantly agreed to lead what he knew would be futile attacks at least in part to restore his reputation.<sup>50</sup>

And so increased frustration accompanied the understanding among the Sioux that their hope of becoming a "portion of the American people" was encouraged in Washington in 1858 and denied in Minnesota in the months following. They understood the difference between a promise of \$1.00 an acre for their prime land and eventually receiving little or nothing for it. The 1862 war that cost hundreds of lives, untold property damage, and Indian banishment was telling testimony to the idiocy of Indian policy.

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<sup>47</sup>Cullen to Mix, August 24, 1858, enclosed with Mix to Thompson, September 24, 1858. Secretary of Interior, letters received, NARC 48; Riggs to Treat, November 2, 1858, and Williamson to Treat, August 24, 1858, in Nute, comp., *Manuscripts Relating to Northwest Missions*.

<sup>48</sup>Brown to Cullen, September 10, 1859, in Indian Office, *Reports*, 1859, 79–92 (quotes 82–83); Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:398. Folwell has an excellent short account of "The Treaties of 1858" in an appendix to his second volume.

<sup>49</sup>Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:398.

<sup>50</sup>Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:399–400; Henry B. Whipple, *Lights and Shadows of a Long Episcopate*, 138 (New York, 1900). For Little Crow's acceptance of leadership in the war, see Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:240–241, and Kenneth Carley, *The Sioux Uprising of 1862*, 10–12 (St. Paul, revised edition, 1976).

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