

MEMORIAL
OF
OMAHA INDIANS

IN RELATION TO

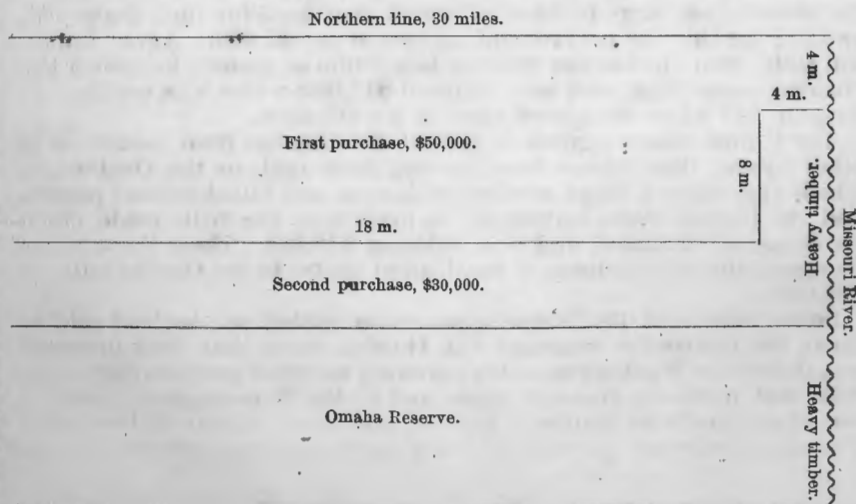
Lands sold by the United States to the Winnebagoes, and to certain accounts with the government.

APRIL 4, 1882.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

OMAHA RESERVE, NEBRASKA,
November 16, 1881.

To the honorable Senate of the United States:

Your petitioners, Omaha Indians, desire to present to your body the following facts: The Winnebago Indians some years since were located by the government far up the Missouri River, where they endured much suffering, and came near dying of starvation. In their distress they came to the Omaha tribe, who divided with them what they had during the winter, supposing they would be cared for or returned to their own land in the spring. When the spring came, propositions were made to us to sell them part of our land. The Omahas, considering the hard condition of the Winnebagoes, reluctantly consented to sell to them a piece of land lying along the northern line of their reserve, as indicated in the following diagram:



The distances in the above diagram may not be accurate, for it is hard for Indians to express distances in miles or rods in English terms.

From the above diagram it will be seen that one corner was not sold in the first purchase. The Omahas refused to sell that part, for it contained a large portion of all the timber they owned. The tract of land sold by the Omahas was for the consideration of \$50,000, to be paid to them by the United States. The Omahas consented to the sale of this first tract, and make no complaint that anything was done illegally in the transfer of that land to the Winnebagoes. They had no desire to part with any of their land, but consented to the sale because they pitied the Winnebagoes.

As we understand it, the account between the Omaha tribe and the United States in regard to this transaction stands as follows:

Due from the United States..... \$50,000

Received from the United States, as follows:

100 wagons (very bad) at \$50	\$50,000
100 blankets (some very small)	400
100 set of harness (second-hand)	500
100 shovel plows (good)	300
100 stirring plows (good)	1,200
5 breaking plows (good)	100
50 old-style rifles	600
100 sacks of flour	250
10 small barrels of sugar	240
50 cattle (very bad condition)	1,000
99 wagons (very good)	8,910
1 buggy for agent	150
100 set of harness (good)	3,000
60 stirring plows (good)	720
90 double-shovel plows	500
10 sacks of coffee	500
	<hr/> 23,370

Leaving a balance due of..... \$26,630

It is hard for us to remember dates, but there are \$30,000 more which were due us for claims which have been allowed by the United States. The winter the Winnebagoes staid on the Omaha Reserve they camped in the heavy timber (marked on the diagram) in the southeast part of the reservation, large portions of which they used for fuel, destroyed, or sold; for this the government agreed to pay \$7,000. Agent Robinson stole from the Omaha funds a large sum of money, for which the Omahas made claim and were allowed \$13,000, which was not the full amount, but which we agreed upon as a settlement.

The United States agreed to protect the Omahas from incursions of other tribes. The Santee Sioux having made raids on the Omahas, in which they stole a large number of horses and killed several people, and the United States furnishing no protection, the tribe made claim for damages sustained, and were allowed \$10,000. These three items increased the indebtedness of the United States to the Omaha tribe to \$56,630.

Some time after the Winnebagoes were settled on the land sold to them, the interpreter informed the Omaha chiefs that their presence was desired in Washington. On inquiring for what purpose they were told that it was to transfer more land to the Winnebagoes. To this the chiefs made an emphatic protest, and every citizen of the tribe. The agent informed the chiefs that if they would not consent to go to

Washington to transfer the land that he would depose them and send other men who would. Knowing that they could not resist the Government of the United States, under the pressure of this threat they went to Washington and signed papers transferring another part of the Omaha Reserve to the Winnebagoes. These papers were so worded as to include the heavy timber which the Omahas refused to sell in the first instance (see diagram, second purchase). For this tract of land the government agreed to pay the Omahas \$30,000. Of that \$30,000 the Omahas received as follows:

80 wagons	\$3,760
100 set of harness	2,800
60 stirring plows	720
60 double-shovel plows	360
100 forks	75
6 mowers (old style)	900
1 threshing machine	400
10 breaking plows	100

9,115

Leaving the United States indebted to the Omaha tribe on this fund the sum of \$20,885.

The articles in the last list were all good (the mowers were good, but of an old style); but the articles in the first list, many of them, were almost useless, some entirely so. The first harness issued could not be used; of a pattern never known in this part of the country, entirely too large for our small horses; the traces were made of iron instead of leather. The parts of it that were made of leather were 5 or 6 inches wide. We could not use them at all as harness. Only half a set was given to each family. The only use the Omahas could make of them was to cut up the wide straps and use them for the soles of moccasins.

We are aware that in the instance where we state 50 head of cattle were issued to us, 100 were bought by the agent, but he kept them at the agency, where half of them starved to death, and the 50 which were actually issued were very poor and almost worthless.

Before the second sale of land was made to the Winnebagoes, the United States, in accordance with the treaty stipulation, had issued to the Omahas certificates of allotment for separate tracts of land on which they desired to make permanent homes. Several of these tracts of land, for which certificates of allotment had been issued in due form, were included in the last tract of land which the Omahas were forced to sell to the Winnebagoes. We claim that if these certificates of allotment give a title, these Omaha Indians holding them for tracts of land now included in the Winnebago Reservation should be put in immediate possession thereof. But if they give no title, we pray your honorable body to cause to be issued to us and them such papers as will give to each man a perfect and good title to a piece of land on which he may make a permanent home for himself and his children.

And we further pray that the sums due us, as shown forth in the former part of this writing, shall be paid to us, and that whenever anything be issued that lists be made out, either written or printed, which shall contain a full statement of the price and number of the articles purchased, and that these lists shall be distributed among the principal men of the tribe; so if we are not allowed to suggest or to direct how

our money shall be expended, we may at least have the satisfaction of knowing what became of it when it is all gone.

_____ x or Two Crows.
 Douba-Moni x or Harrison McCauley.
 Ta-oh-ka-hah x or Arthur Ramsey.
 Wah-ah-wah-re x or Richard Robinson.
 Mumba-Douba x or Levi Webster.
 Wa-loo-ta-tah x or Samuel Irving.
 Oih-ga-be-ta-gah x or Robert Morris.
 Tay-who-tom-bee x or Charles Robinson.
 Segro-numba x or George Grant.
 Fredrick Merrick.
 Me-hah-ta x or Henry Morris.
 En-tha-be x or George Milleo.
 John Pilcher.

These had their certificates taken away:

Ma-e-thing-a x No knife.
 Umpa-ska, White Elk.
 Ta-ha-ga-ka, William Lyndal.
 Ga da hootanthig, Jackson.
 Ba-tha-tee.
 Majan-hath-e.
 Mea-pee.
 Numba-wah-che.
 Numba-they trea x James Springer.
 Umpa tega x Big Elk.
 Don-a-ma.
 Wa naga ghinga x Little Soldier.
 Gish-ta tragoo.
 He-za zHINGA, Anslee D. C. White.
 Me ma ha sha.
 Me ma jsu gasha.
 Gosh ga wan ga they.