

SUMMARY NARRATIVE
OF AN
EXPLORATORY EXPEDITION



TO THE
SOURCES OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER,
IN 1820:

RESUMED AND COMPLETED,
BY THE
DISCOVERY OF ITS ORIGIN IN ITASCA LAKE, IN 1832

By Authority of the United States.

WITH APPENDICES,
COMPRISING THE
ORIGINAL REPORT ON THE COPPER MINES OF LAKE SUPERIOR, AND OBSERVATIONS
ON THE GEOLOGY OF THE LAKE BASINS, AND THE SUMMIT OF THE MISSISSIPPI;
TOGETHER WITH
ALL THE OFFICIAL REPORTS AND SCIENTIFIC PAPERS OF BOTH EXPEDITIONS.

By HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT.

PHILADELPHIA:
LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO, AND CO.
1855.

mates, to be 3,200 miles. In this distance there are numerous and arduous rapids, in which the total amount of ascent to be overcome is 173 feet.

Councils were held with the Indians at Fond du Lac, at Sandy Lake, Cass Lake, at the mouth of the Great De Corbeau River, &c.

In returning, I visited the military bands at Leech Lake; passing from thence to its source, and descending the whole length of the Crow-wing River, and thence to St. Anthony's Falls, I assembled the Sioux at the agency of St. Peter's, and at the Little Crow's village. The Chippewas of the St. Croix and Broule Rivers were particularly visited. Many thousands of the Chippewa and Sioux nations were seen and counselled with, including their most distinguished chiefs and warriors. Everywhere they disclaimed a connection with Black Hawk and his schemes. I left the Mississippi, about forty miles above the point where, in a few days, the Sauk chief was finally captured and his forces overthrown; and, reaching the waters of Lake Superior, at the mouth of the Brule, returned from that point to the agency at Sault de Ste. Marie.

The flag of the Union has secured respect from the tribes at every point; and I feel confident in declaring the Chippewas and Sioux, as tribes, unconnected with the Black Hawk movement.

I am, sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT,

U. S. Ind. Agent.

C. HERRING, ESQ., *Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* }

IV.

VACCINATION OF THE INDIANS.

A. Report of the number and position of the Indians vaccinated on the Exploratory Expedition to the Sources of the Mississippi, conducted by Mr. Schoolcraft, in 1832. By Dr. DOUGLASS HOUGHTON.

Sault Ste. Marie, Sept. 21, 1832.

SIR: In conformity with your instructions, I take the earliest opportunity to lay before you such facts as I have collected, touching the vaccination of the Chippewa Indians, during the

progress of the late expedition into their country: and also "of the prevalence, from time to time, of the smallpox" among them.

The accompanying table will serve to illustrate the "ages, sex, tribe, and local situation" of those Indians who have been vaccinated by me. With the view of illustrating more fully their local situation, I have arranged those bands residing upon the shores of Lake Superior; those residing in the Follé Avoine country (or that section of country lying between the highlands southwest from Lake Superior, and the Mississippi River); and those residing near the sources of the Mississippi River, separately.

Nearly all the Indians noticed in this table were vaccinated at their respective villages; yet I did not fail to vaccinate those whom we chanced to meet in their hunting or other excursions.

I have embraced, with the Indians of the frontier bands, those half-breeds, who, in consequence of having adopted more or less the habits of the Indian, may be identified with him.

But little difficulty has occurred in convincing the Indians of the efficacy of vaccination; and the universal dread in which they hold the appearance of the smallpox among them, rendered it an easy task to overcome their prejudices, whatever they chanced to be. The efficacy of the vaccine disease is well appreciated, even by the most interior of the Chippewa Indians; and so universal is this information, that only one instance occurred where the Indian had never heard of the disease.

In nearly every instance the opportunity which was presented for vaccination, was embraced with cheerfulness and apparent gratitude; at the same time manifesting great anxiety that, for the safety of the whole, each one of the band should undergo the operation. When objections were made to vaccination, they were not usually made because the Indian doubted the protective power of the disease, but because he supposed (never having seen its progress), that the remedy must nearly equal the disease which it was intended to counteract.

Our situation, while travelling, did not allow me sufficient time to test the result of the vaccination in most instances; but an occasional return to bands where the operation had been performed, enabled me, in those bands, either to note the progress of the disease, or to judge from the cicatrices marking the original situation of the pustules, the cases in which the disease had proved successful.

CHIPPENAW INDIANS.	BANDS.	MALES.					FEMALES.					Total.				
		Under 10.	10 to 20.	20 to 40.	40 to 60.	60 to 80.	Over 80.	Under 10.	10 to 20.	20 to 40.	40 to 60.		60 to 80.	Over 80.	Males.	Females.
LAKE SUPERIOR	Sault Ste. Marie	92	22	12	8	2	1	75	28	21	10	3	1	145	128	283
	Grand Island	17	9	7	2	1	...	12	5	7	...	...	...	36	24	60
	Keweenaw Bay	23	11	10	6	1	...	20	12	17	5	2	1	61	57	108
	Ontonagon River	7	8	10	3	...	...	12	5	12	6	1	...	28	27	65
	La Pointe	87	82	40	6	2	1	88	25	23	12	3	...	118	103	224
FOLLE AVONNE COUNTRY	Fond du Lac	50	21	46	10	2	...	41	18	35	13	6	2	128	116	248
	Lac du Flambeau	6	2	3	1	1	...	2	3	4	2	2	...	16	15	29
	Ottawa Lake	11	4	8	1	...	...	10	7	3	2	...	...	24	22	46
	Yellow River	11	2	6	1	...	...	11	3	6	2	1	...	20	22	43
	Nama Kowagun of St. Croix River	4	1	2	1	...	...	4	...	3	2	...	...	8	9	17
SOURCES OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER	Sauke River	14	3	7	4	1	...	25	3	12	1	1	...	30	42	72
	Sandy Lake	75	21	47	10	2	...	86	19	43	23	6	2	155	134	339
	Lake Winnipeg	4	4	10	8	...	...	1	1	1	2	...	...	21	5	26
	Cass, or Upper Red Cedar Lake	18	5	11	6	...	1	18	3	8	5	1	1	41	36	77
	Leach Lake	73	43	73	16	4	1	66	41	61	25	2	1	213	220	439
FOLLE AVONNE COUNTRY	Lake Superior	227	103	131	35	7	2	139	92	120	46	14	5	505	477	982
	Folle Avonne Country	46	12	29	8	2	1	52	12	32	9	4	...	98	109	207
	Sources of the Mississippi	173	73	141	35	6	2	201	64	118	56	3	4	430	451	881
Total		446	188	301	78	15	5	452	163	270	110	27	9	1023	1037	2070

About one-fourth of the whole number were vaccinated directly from the pustules of patients laboring under the disease; while the remaining three-fourths were vaccinated from crusts, or from virus which had been several days on hand. I did not pass by a single opportunity for securing the crusts and virus from the arms of healthy patients; and to avoid, as far as possible, the chance of giving rise to a disease of a spurious kind, I invariably made use of those crusts and that virus, for the purposes of vaccination, which had been most recently obtained. To secure, as far as possible, against the chances of escaping the vaccine disease, I invariably vaccinated in each arm.

Of the whole number of Indians vaccinated, I have either watched the progress of the disease, or examined the cicatrices of about seven hundred. An average of one in three of those vaccinated from crusts has failed, while of those vaccinated directly from the arm of a person laboring under the disease, not more than one in twenty has failed to take effect—when the disease did not make its appearance after vaccination, I have invariably, as the cases came under my examination, revaccinated until a favorable result has been obtained.

Of the different bands of Indians vaccinated, a large proportion of the following have, as an actual examination has shown, undergone thoroughly the effects of the disease; viz: Sault Ste. Marie, Keweenaw Bay, La Pointe, and Cass Lake, being seven hundred and fifty-one in number; while of the remaining thirteen hundred and seventy-eight, of other bands, I think it may safely be calculated that more than three-fourths have passed effectually under the influence of the vaccine disease: and as directions to revaccinate all those in whom the disease failed, together with instructions as to time and manner of vaccination, were given to the chiefs of the different bands, it is more than probable that, where the bands remained together a sufficient length of time, the operation of revaccination has been performed by themselves.

Upon our return to Lake Superior, I had reason to suspect, on examining several cicatrices, that two of the crusts furnished by the surgeon-general, in consequence of a partial decomposition, gave rise to a spurious disease, and these suspicions were confirmed when revaccinating with genuine vaccine matter, when the true disease was communicated. Nearly all those Indians

vaccinated with those two crusts, have been vaccinated, and passed regularly through the vaccine disease.

The answers to my repeated inquiries respecting the introduction, progress, and fatality of the smallpox, would lead me to infer that the disease has made its appearance at least five times, among the bands of Chippewa Indians noticed in the accompanying table of vaccination.

The smallpox appears to have been wholly unknown to the Chippewas of Lake Superior until about 1750; when a war-party, of more than one hundred young men, from the bands resident near the head of the lake, having visited Montreal for the purpose of assisting the French in their then existing troubles with the English, became infected with the disease, and but few of the party survived to reach their homes. It does not appear, although they made a precipitate retreat to their own country, that the disease was at this time communicated to any others of the tribe.

About the year 1770, the disease appeared a second time among the Chippewas, but, unlike that which preceded it, it was communicated to the more northern bands.

The circumstances connected with its introduction are related nearly as follows:—

Some time in the fall of 1767 or 8, a trader who had ascended the Mississippi, and established himself near Leech Lake, was robbed of his goods by the Indians residing at that lake; and, in consequence of his exertions in defending his property, he died soon after.

These facts became known to the directors of the Fur Company, at Mackinac; and, each successive year after, requests were sent to the Leech Lake Indians, that they should visit Mackinac, and make reparation for the goods they had taken, by a payment of furs, at the same time threatening punishment in case of a refusal. In the spring of 1770, the Indians saw fit to comply with this request; and a deputation from the band visited Mackinac, with a quantity of furs, which they considered an equivalent for the goods which had been taken. The deputation was received with politeness by the directors of the Company, and the difficulties readily adjusted. When this was effected, a cask of liquor and a flag closely rolled were presented to the Indians as a token of friendship. They were at the same time strictly enjoined

neither to break the seal of the cask nor to unroll the flag, until they had reached the heart of their own country. This they promised to observe; but while returning, and after having travelled many days, the chief of the deputation made a feast for the Indians of the band at Fond du Lac, Lake Superior, upon which occasion he unsealed the cask and unrolled the flag for the gratification of his guests. The Indians drank of the liquor, and remained in a state of inebriation during several days. The rioting was over, and they were fast recovering from its effects, when several of the party were seized with violent pain. This was attributed to the liquor they had drunk; but the pain increasing, they were induced to drink deeper of the poisonous drug, and in this inebriated state several of the party died, before the real cause was suspected. Other like cases occurred; and it was not long before one of the war-party who had visited Montreal in 1760, and who had narrowly escaped with his life, recognized the disease as the same which had attacked their party at that time. It proved to be so; and of those Indians then at Fond du Lac, about three hundred in number, nearly the whole were swept off by it. Nor did it stop here; for numbers of those at Fond du Lac, at the time the disease made its appearance, took refuge among the neighboring bands; and although it did not extend easterly on Lake Superior, it is believed that not a single band of Chippewas north or west from Fond du Lac escaped its ravages. Of a large band then resident at Cass Lake, near the source of the Mississippi River, only one person, a child, escaped. The others having been attacked by the disease, died before any opportunity for dispersing was offered. The Indians at this day are firmly of the opinion that the smallpox was at this time communicated through the articles presented to their brethren by the agent of the Fur Company at Mackinac; and that it was done for the purpose of punishing them more severely for their offences.

The most western bands of Chippewas relate a singular allegory of the introduction of the smallpox into their country by a war-party, returning from the plains of the Missouri, as nearly as information will enable me to judge, in the year 1784. It does not appear that, at this time, the disease extended to the bands east of Fond du Lac; but it is represented to have been extremely fatal to those bands north and west from there.

In 1802 or 3, the smallpox made its appearance among the Indians residing at the Sault Ste. Marie, but did not extend to the bands west from that place. The disease was introduced by a voyager, in the employ of the Northwest Fur Company, who had just returned from Montreal; and although all communication with him was prohibited, an Indian imprudently having made him a visit, was infected with and transmitted the disease to others of the band. When once communicated, it raged with great violence, and of a large band scarcely one of those then at the village survived, and the unburied bones still remain, marking the situation they occupied. From this band the infection was communicated to a band residing upon St. Joseph's Island, and many died of it; but the surgeon of the military post then there, succeeded, by judicious and early measures, in checking it before the infection became general.

In 1824, the smallpox again made its appearance among the Indians at the Sault Ste. Marie. It was communicated by a voyager to the Indians upon Drummond's Island, Lake Huron; and through them several families at Sault Ste. Marie became infected. Of those belonging to the latter place, more than twenty in number, only two escaped. The disease is represented to have been extremely fatal to the Indians at Drummond's Island.

Since 1824, the smallpox is not known to have appeared among the Indians at the Sault Ste. Marie, nor among the Chipewas north or west from that place. But the Indians of these bands still tremble at the bare name of a disease which (next to the compounds of alcohol) has been one of the greatest scourges that has ever overtaken them since their first communication with the whites. The disease, when once communicated to a band of Indians, rages with a violence wholly unknown to the civilized man. The Indian, guided by present feeling, adopts a course of treatment (if indeed it deserves that appellation) which not unfrequently arms the disease with new power. An attack is but a warning to the poor and helpless patient to prepare for death, which will almost assuredly soon follow. His situation under these circumstances is truly deplorable; for while in a state that even, with proper advice, he would of himself recover, he adds fresh fuel to the flame which is already consuming him, under the delusive hope of gaining relief. The intoxicating

draught (when it is within his reach) is not among the last remedies to which he resorts, to produce a lethargy from which he is never to recover. Were the friends of the sick man, even under these circumstances, enabled to attend him, his sufferings might be, at least, somewhat mitigated; but they too are, perhaps, in a similar situation, and themselves without even a single person to minister to their wants. Death comes to the poor invalid, and, perhaps, even as a welcome guest, to rid him of his suffering.

By a comparison of the number of Indians vaccinated upon the borders of Lake Superior with the actual population, it will be seen that the proportion who have passed through the vaccine disease is so great as to secure them against any general prevalence of the smallpox; and perhaps it is sufficient to prevent the introduction of the disease to the bands beyond, through this channel. But in the Folle Avoine country it is not so. Of the large bands of Indians residing in that section of country, only a small fraction have been vaccinated; while of other bands, not a single person has passed through the disease.

Their local situation undoubtedly renders it of the first importance that the benefits of vaccination should be extended to them. Their situation may be said to render them a connecting link between the southern and northwestern bands of Chippewas; and while on the south they are liable to receive the virus of the smallpox from the whites and Indians, the passage of the disease through them to their more northern brethren would only be prevented by their remaining, at that time, completely separated. Every motive of humanity towards the suffering Indian, would lead to extend to him this protection against a disease he holds in constant dread, and of which he knows, by sad experience, the fatal effects. The protection he will prize highly, and will give in return the only boon a destitute man is capable of giving; the deep-felt gratitude of an overflowing heart.

I have the honour to be,

Very respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servant,

DOUGLASS HOUGHTON.

HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT, ESQ.,

U. S. Ind. Agt., Sault de Ste. Marie.