

Publication Number: M-2039

Publication Title: Correspondence, Field Notes, and the Census Roll of All Members or Descendants of Members Who Were on the Roll of the Ottawa and the Chippewa Tribes of Michigan in 1870, and Living on March 4, 1907 (Durant Roll)

Date Published: 1996

CORRESPONDENCE, FIELD NOTES, AND THE CENSUS ROLL OF ALL
MEMBERS OR DESCENDANTS OF MEMBERS WHO WERE ON THE
ROLL OF THE OTTAWA AND THE CHIPPEWA TRIBES OF MICHIGAN IN
1870, AND LIVING ON MARCH 4, 1907 (DURANT ROLL)

Introduction

On the four rolls of this microfilm publication, M2039, are reproduced the 1908 census roll (known as the "Durant Roll" for its compiler, Horace B. Durant) of the Chippewa and Ottawa tribes of Michigan, with Durant's field notes, and related correspondence. The Durant Roll contains the names of all members or descendants of members enrolled with the Ottawa and Chippewa tribes of Michigan in 1870 who were living on March 4, 1907. The roll also serves as an index to Durant's field notes. The field notes provide the genealogical information used to determine if an individual was eligible to be listed on the census. The correspondence consists of letters received and sent by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and Horace B. Durant which concern the enrollment process, procedures, and policy. These records are part of the Special Agent Files, 1907-1948, in the Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group (RG) 75, and are housed at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC. This publication was prepared with the assistance of Mark O. Keller, Historical Consultant; Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University; Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library; Chippewa County Historical Society, Sault St. Marie, MI; and the National Archives Trust Fund.

Background

On March 3, 1905, Congress authorized the Chippewa and Ottawa tribes of Michigan to file a petition in the U.S. Court of Claims to settle questions surrounding monies held in trust for them by the Federal Government (33 Stat. 1081). On March 4, 1907, the court handed down a judgment amounting to \$131,188.94, including interest, for the tribes. This payment was for monies owed to these Indians based on the treaty of May 27, 1836 (7 Stat. 491). This amount was appropriated by an "Urgency Deficiency Bill" (35 Stat. 8-27), and was approved February 15, 1908. In addition to these funds, the Comptroller of the Treasury, in a decision of June 26, 1902, held that \$9,786.69 was owed to the tribes (35 Stat. 70). This money arose from the terms of the treaty of July 31, 1855 (11 Stat. 621), with the Chippewa and Ottawa Indians of Michigan and was erroneously included in the surplus funds of the Treasury.

On July 21, 1908, Horace B. Durant was instructed by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Francis Ellington Leupp, upon the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, Ethan A. Hitchcock, to compile a roll of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of the State of Michigan who were eligible to receive payments of

these monies. The funds were to be divided among the Sault St. Marie, Mackinac, Little Traverse, Grand Traverse, and Grand River bands. Durant was instructed to enroll these individuals "all of whom are members or descendants of members enrolled in 1870" who were still alive on March 4, 1907, when the judgment was rendered by the U.S. Court of Claims.

Durant submitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Robert G. Valentine, on October 27, 1909, a completed roll with the names of 7,396 persons entitled to be recipients. The Commissioner reviewed the roll, disallowed 1,952 names on the roll, and signed it on January 25, 1910. He forwarded the names of 5,444 persons entitled to payments to the Office of the Secretary of the Interior for approval.

Durant also prepared a supplemental roll to disperse the \$9,786.69 derived from the 1855 treaty. He forwarded the supplemental roll to Commissioner Valentine on October 28, 1909. This roll contained the names of 236 children who were born after March 4, 1907, and prior to August 1, 1908. Once again, the Commissioner reviewed the roll, disallowed 34 names, and signed it on January 25, 1910. He forwarded the names of 202 individuals to the Office of the Secretary of the Interior for approval. On February 18, 1910, Frank Pierce, First Assistant Secretary to the Secretary of the Interior, signed both rolls.

Records Description

Entries on the Durant roll are arranged alphabetically by the first letter of the surname and grouped thereunder by tribal bands. For example, the entries for the individuals whose surname begins with "A" are grouped in the following order: Sault Ste. Marie, Mackinac, Traverse, Grand River. The information included on the census is as follows: 1870 roll number (this number indexes field notes used by Durant), Durant roll number, Indian name, English name, relationship to head of the household, age, sex, tribal band, residence, and remarks. The following 1870 roll numbers were disallowed: 747, 1331, 2437, 3957, 4462, 4684, 6151, 6273, 6275, 6496, 6525, 7028, 7035, and 7168. Also disallowed were the Durant "present" roll numbers that are annotated with check marks.

The field notes consist of Durant's preprinted worksheets on which he recorded the following data for each family: head of the family on the 1870 roll; name of the wife or husband; name of the children and grandchildren; and any additional information concerning the family. Letters pertaining to various families are occasionally filed with the worksheets.

The field notes are arranged by page number 1 through 65. The cover sheets for each page number lists the tribal band, chief, and the area of Michigan where the data was collected. For example, the information on the coversheet for pages 1 & 2 is as follows: Sault Ste. Marie Band, Maw-Dosh (chief), Marquette (Dead River). The 1870 census enrollment number which indexes the worksheets is two-fold. The first number is the one assigned to a specific family; the second number is the page number. In 1870 the roll number for Daniel Cornstalk is 13-34 (Durant roll #1443). Worksheet 13 for page 34 provides genealogical data on the Cornstalk family. It should be noted that field notes are not found for all families listed on the Durant Roll.

The bulk of the related correspondence is filed in central classified files 45533--1908--053, parts 1-2, Special Agent. It is filed in reverse chronological order with the most recent document first. Correspondence subjects include complaints, questions, procedures for compiling the roll, reports, financial data, additional census material submitted by individuals, secretarial authorities, telegrams, and

the petition and correspondence from Chippewa and Ottawa Indians of Walpole Island, Canada, to be included on the Durant roll. Additional central classified files, peripherally related to the roll, are also included.

Related Records

Related material is located in *The Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of the State of Michigan v. The United States*, General Jurisdiction Case #27537, Records of the U.S. Court of Claims, RG 123, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

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