

page 21 Sessional papers (No. 4 )

Assistant Commissioner Irvine, who conveyed the message to the Indians, reports that Her Majesty's expressions of approval were received by them with the liveliest feelings of satisfaction and gratitude. They expressed their unaltered loyalty to the British Crown, and repeated their willingness to fight in its defence if they were ever required to do so.

At the time of these expressions of loyalty from the Blackfeet, the United States newspapers were announcing the probability of the Northern Indians, who were represented as being ready for revolt, joining Sitting Bull and other hostilities in a devastating Indian war.

An escort, consisting of 108 policemen 119 horses and two 9-pounder guns, was detailed to accompany the Lieut.-Governor of the North-West Territories during the making of the Treaty in September with the Blackfeet and other Indians, known as Treaty No. 7. The Commissioner, Lieut.-Col. Macleod, had previously sent out messengers to warn the Indians of the time and place of meeting. A detachment of police was on the ground in advance of the arrival of the Indians to mark out the camping ground to be occupied by the various tribes. The officers of the force also paid the Indians after the treaty had been completed. The treaty was made at the Blackfoot crossing of the Bow River, about 90 miles from Fort Macleod. Not a single casualty occurred, nor was there disturbance of any kind amongst the Indians or traders, which was very remarkable when the large number of Indians of different tribes camped so close together is taken into consideration.

It is estimated that the Indians had not less than 15,000 horses and ponies with them.

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Fort Walsh, North-West Territory,  
August 18th, 1876.

Canada,  
N.W. Territory, } To Wit.

I, Gabriel Solomon, make oath and say:-That a Half-breed, dressed as an Indian, from Long Lake, far away on the south side of the Missouri, who said he was a Canadian Half-breed; his name Laframboise; he left Long Lake on the 15th April; he said he had been at "Sitting Bull's" camp on his way up; he said Sitting Bull himself told him, at a Council of Chiefs, that he did not intend making war on the people of the North or Canadians; he (Sitting Bull) further said that he found himself surrounded in his own words-"like an island in the middle of the sea;" there were only two ways of escape-one to the ~~USA~~ country of the Great Mother, the other to the Spaniards. He told the Half-breed that he had already had a battle with the Americans, meaning ~~Custer's~~ General Custer's battle. Sitting Bull's scouts had found out that the Americans were advancing, and Sitting Bull ~~was~~ told the Half-breed that he was going to fight the Americans again. Sitting Bull was undecided whether he would go to the Spanish country (meaning, I suppose, Mexico) or to Canada. Sitting Bull calls a council every day to talk about which way they will go. In a speech at the council, the other day, he said: "We can go nowhere without seeing the head of an American. Our land is small, it is like an island. We have two ways to go-to the land of the Great Mother, or to the land of the Spaniards. Since spring we have killed 1,000 Americans. We are done counting, let us ~~strike~~ strike."

I was camped on one of the forks of "Old Wide's Lake" when this Half-breed mentioned above came into the country and gave me this information, He has gone back to the place he came from.

Sitting Bull told the Half-breed that as soon as he put his foot across the line on the Canadian soil he would bury the hatchet.