

Copy

Executive Department
Choctaw Nation Aug 9th 1865

General

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 2nd inst. stating that you had been directed by the Secretary of the Interior to inform me that Commissioners from Washington will meet the Delegates from all the Indian Tribes in Grand Council at Fort Smith on the 1st proximo.

In reply I have to state that for several important reasons I regret that any change of place should be made for the meeting of the Grand Council from the one agreed upon between myself and the U.S. Military Commissioners sent out here in June last.

I issued my Proclamation several weeks ago, calling an Extra Session of the General Council to be held at Armstrong Academy on the 1st of September next, and as the time has nearly arrived for that body to meet I cannot well make any other arrangements for the reason, that at that Council we will appoint Delegates on the part of the Choctaws to meet the Commissioners of the U.S.

Immediately after concluding the temporary Treaty entered into with the War Commissioners of the U.S. and agreeably to arrangements made with them, I issued my Proclamation calling upon all the Tribes of the Indian Confederation to send Delegates to meet the Commissioners of the U.S. at Armstrong Academy on the 1st of September next, for the purposes of entering into permanent Treaties of Peace and Friendship, which Proclamation they are

all acquainted with and will accordingly meet at the time and place appointed by me. The time is now so short that I find it impracticable to communicate to them the change proposed by the Sec of the Interior for holding the Grand Council at Fort Smith, Ark.

I have no doubt but that there will be at Armstrong Academy on the 1st of September next the greatest assemblage of Indian Chiefs and Warriors that ever met together in Council on the continent, and it is highly important, that the Commissioners should be there. If however the Government of the U.S. require that the Delegates from all the Indian Tribes shall meet in Grand Council at Fort Smith I shall use my utmost exertion to prevail on the Prairie Tribes to accompany me to that place at an early day as practicable. As it doubtless will be a great disappointment to the Prairie Tribes who may come to the Grand Council at Armstrong Academy not to meet the Commissioners of the U.S. there, I would respectfully request that some suitable person be sent to represent the wishes of the Government for us to meet the Commissioners at Fort Smith.

In conclusion I would state that as soon as I shall have appointed (in conjunction with the General Council the Choctaw Delegates, and which can ^{only} be done Constitutionally at the Capital (Armstrong Academy) I shall proceed at once with them to Fort Smith. But I cannot but express the wish that the Government of the U.S. will direct their Commissioners to meet us at Armstrong Academy where provisions can be procured in abundance, and the place is far

more suitable and healthful for an Indian Council than
Fort Smith and when the Commissioners can be accommodated
with several pleasant and commodious rooms in the Capitol
and see much of our people and the Wild Tribes of the Confeder-
ation.

With great respect and esteem
I am yr obt servt.

P. P. Welchman
Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation

Brig Genl Cyrus Bussey
Quincy 3rd Div 7th Army Corps
Fort Smith Arkansas
