

Excerpt from *Minutes of Conferences, Held with the Indians, at Easton, in the Months of July and August, 1757* (Philadelphia: B. Franklin, and D. Hall, 1757), 8-10.

At a Meeting in Easton, Thursday, July 28, 1757, P.M.

Present,

The Honourable William Denny, Esq; Governor, &c.

The Council. The same Members of Assembly.

The Provincial Commissioners.

A Number of Gentlemen from the City of Philadelphia, and others of the Inhabitants of the Province.

Captain Thomas McKee, Interpreter for the Crown.

Conrad Wiser, Esq; Interpreter for the Province.

Mr. John Pumpshire, Interpreter for Teedyuscung.

Teedyuscung, King of the Delawares,¹ attended by several Chiefs and Deputies of the Ten Nations he represents.

Teedyuscung addressing himself to the Governor, spoke as follows.

Brother,

I desire in a few Words to recollect what you told me the other Day, that the Great King, beyond the Water, had appointed a Man to oversee the Affairs of the Indians, viz. Sir William Johnson, who has nominated Mr. Croghan his Deputy. I am glad to hear this News, and to see the Man that is appointed. I hope, Brother, that it will be well accepted by both of us....

Gave a String.²

Brother,

....You may easily see the Reason of the gloomy and dark Days; they have proceeded from the Earth. Our Misunderstanding and Mismanagement has proceeded from the Earth, as well as our Differences and Grievances that have passed and repassed...

¹ The Delaware are also known as the Lenape or Leni Lenape. They lived in the region of modern-day New Jersey, Delaware, and eastern Pennsylvania.

² The Delaware gave the Pennsylvanian delegates strings and belts of wampum. (See glossary.)



Now it lies much in your Power to look strictly into your Hearts, as we always prefer and acknowledge you above us in Abilities, Strength and Knowledge...—Brother, now as we have met together Face to Face to speak with great Sincerity, I will endeavour to lay every Thing plain before you...that what may be proved to be Right and Due, may be established for every in a durable and lasting Peace.

Gave a Belt.

...Mr. John Pumpshire, being asked to explain what was meant by...this Speech, he said, the Meaning was this: The Land is the Cause of our Differences; that is, our being unhappily turned out of the Land, is the Cause: And though the first Settlers might purchase the Land fairly, yet they did not act well, nor do the Indians Justice; for they ought to have reserved some Place for the Indians. Had that been done, these Differences would not have happened.

Brother,

...I now put it into your Power to make a lasting Peace, and that I may have my reasonable Enjoyment from this Land; as we are sensible that this Land was made by that Almighty Power that has made all Things, and has given this Land to us... This I ask, that I may have some Place for a Settlement, and for other good Purposes, in which we may both agree; but as I am a free Agent as well as you, I must not be bound up, but have Liberty to settle where I please.

Gave a Belt of nine Rows.

Teedyuscung informed the Governor, that he had done for this Time, and left it to the Governor's Pleasure to appoint a Time to answer him.

As the Governor had by Letter informed me that Teedyuscung's Speech appeared to him dark and confused, and desired me to call a Meeting in private with the Indians, and know what they meant; I accordingly, on the 30th of July, at Five a Clock in the Morning, sent for the King, and some of his Counsellors, and desired them to call a Council...

John Pumpshire, Interpreter...explained his Speeches as follows.

The Complaints I made last Fall, I yet continue. I think some Lands have been bought by the Proprietary,³ or his Agents, from Indians who had not a Right to sell, and to whom the Lands did not belong. I think also, when some Lands have been sold to the Proprietary by Indians who had a Right to sell to a certain Place, whether that Purchase was to be measured by Miles or Hours Walk, that the Proprietaries have, contrary to Agreement or Bargain, taken in more Lands than they ought to have done,⁴ and Lands

³ The colony of Pennsylvania had a different kind of government than most other British provinces in America. It was governed by a Proprietor who held the governorship of the colony. Thomas and Richard Penn were the primary Proprietaries during this period.

⁴ This passage seems to refer to numerous instances of dishonest and spurious land dealings. The infamous Walking Purchase in the summer of 1737 stipulated that the Pennsylvania proprietors would receive a parcel of stretching from the Delaware River to as far west could walk in a day-and-a-half. The



that belonged to others. I therefore now desire that you will produce the Writings and Deeds by which you hold the Land, and let them be read in publick, and examined, that it may be fully known from what Indians you have bought the Lands you hold, and how far your Purchases extend, that Copies of the Whole may be laid before King George,⁵ and published to all the Provinces under his Government. What is fairly bought and paid for I make no further Demands about: But if any Lands have been bought of Indians to whom these Lands did not belong, and who had no Right to sell them, I expect a Satisfaction for these Lands....

With respect to our Settlement, we intend to settle at Wyoming, and we want to have certain Boundaries fixed between you and us; and a certain Tract of Land fixed, which it shall not be lawful for us or our Children ever to sell, nor for you, or any of your Children, ever to buy...

And as we intend to make a Settlement at Wyoming, and to build different Houses from what we have done heretofore, such as may last not only for a little Time, but for our Children after us; we desire you to assist us in making our Settlements, and send us Persons to instruct us in building Houses, and in making such Necessaries as shall be needful; and that Persons be sent to instruct us in the Christian Religion, which may be for our future Welfare, and to instruct our Children in Reading and Writing; and that a fair Trade be established between us

Discussion Questions:

1. **What does these documents suggest about alliances between American Indians and the British?*
2. *How did diplomacy between American Indians and the British function? What does the list of the people present at the meeting tell us about the proceedings?*
3. **What do the speeches reveal about American Indian and British strategies of negotiation? Describe the language that each respective group uses.*
4. *What was Teedyuscung trying to communicate to the British?*
5. *Should the British have been surprised when the Delaware joined Pontiac's War seven years later?*

**Questions included in the Collection Essay.*

Pennsylvania agent, desperate to gain claims to land that he had already sold to white settlers, compelled the sale through evidence of a duplicitous map and an unconfirmed land deed from the 1680s that promised a future land transfer. The "walk" (performed by hired runners who covered 60 miles) transferred far more land than the Delawares had anticipated; Pennsylvania gained 1,110 square miles of land, which was quickly settled by colonists. Additional controversial treaties were signed in 1749 and again in 1754, when the Iroquois sold lands to Pennsylvania claimed by the Delaware. See Steven C. Harper, "Making History: Documenting the 1737 Walking Purchase," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 77, no. 2 (Spring 2010), 217-233.

⁵ King George II