

No. 49.  
 Sir C. A. Fitz Roy  
 to  
 Lord Glenelg,  
 5th Oct. 1838.

Richmond and Goodwood Bays, called Lennox Island, the Property of Mr. David Stewart, which the Indians have long considered as their own, and on which they have built a Chapel, and where they have from a very early Period buried their Dead. I believe if they could have this Island secured to them, either by a voluntary Grant from the Proprietor, or by the Government purchasing it for their Use, it would not only meet their utmost Wishes, and render them perfectly contented, but, by offering them an Inducement to remain stationary, afford a fair Opportunity for any Efforts at improving their moral and social Condition. Any Attempt of this Nature in their present State, I am convinced, would be wholly thrown away. Mr. Stewart has, I understand, always expressed a Desire that the Indians may not be disturbed on Lennox Island; but a future Proprietor may have different Views, and I therefore think it very desirable that they should feel themselves secure in the Possession of it as their own Property. I am convinced they would prefer it to any other Spot that could be selected for them; and I believe it would even now be very difficult to induce them to leave it or to give it up, except by Force. Should Mr. Stewart object to making over this Island to the Indians gratuitously, I should apprehend he might be induced to part with it at a fair Valuation, which, as the Island is of no great Extent, and the Land not of a superior Quality, could not amount to more than an inconsiderable Sum.

In corroboration of my Views on this Subject, I beg to transmit to your Lordship a Copy of a Letter which I have received from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Charlotte Town, to whom, wishing to give your Lordship the best Information in my Power, I had applied for his Opinion.

Right Hon. Lord Glenelg,  
 &c. &c. &c.

I have the Honour, &c.  
 (Signed) Chs. A. Fitz Roy,  
 Lt. Gov.

Enclosure.

To His Excellency Sir Charles A. Fitz Roy, &c. &c. &c.

Sir,

Rustico, 5th October 1838.

I have the Honour to acknowledge the Receipt of your Excellency's Letter of the 1st instant, accompanied with a Copy of a Petition to Her Majesty from the Chief of the Indians resident in this Island, in which Letter Your Excellency is pleased to desire me to give my Opinion of the Prayer of said Petition, and also to suggest any Plan which I thought might possibly improve the Condition of the Petitioners. In order to comply with your Excellency's Request, I beg first to state that the Indians of this Island have often complained that they have been more unfavourably dealt with than their Brothers in the neighbouring Provinces, insomuch as they have never, like them, received Grants of Land whereon to settle themselves, and which those among them at least so inclined might cultivate and live by.

This Grievance they from Time to Time ineffectually represented to Her Majesty's Representatives. They applied some Years since to the House of Assembly, with similar Complaints; the then House seemed to take their Case into favourable Consideration, and made some Steps towards making a Purchase of Lennox Island for their Use and Benefit, but afterwards lost sight of it, for what I do not at this Moment recollect.

That some Place of Rest should be provided for the Indian Tribe of this Island, is, in my Opinion, no more than what Justice to the original Owners of the Soil imperatively dictates; and nothing also, in my Opinion, could tend more effectually in course of Time to redeem the Indians from their wandering Life than to locate them on Lands to the Culture of which Necessity will compel them to have recourse for their Subsistence, as the Means heretofore used by them are now failing.

What Quantity of Land should be given to them I cannot take upon myself to say; but as to its Situation, an insolated one would be, for many Reasons, the most preferable; and though I never set much Value on the purchasing of Lennox Island for their Use, on account of its having comparatively little good Land, yet I am aware that the Indians could not, without great Difficulty, be induced