

were issued. I declare that councillor Williams told William Asham and others in my presence, that the chief had received a present of a team of horses worth \$250 from William Frank, and that the councillors were promised \$100 each for helping Mr. Frank to secure the land from the Indians. In addition to this they were to receive \$2 per day for helping to get the land by bringing the Indians to the office and getting them to agree to dispose of their lands to Mr. Frank.

I heard Mr. Frank Pedley say to the Indians a short time before the vote was taken at St. Peter's, that he had \$5,000 in his bag, pointing to it at his side, and he also said if you vote for the surrender I will divide it among you at once. If you do not, I will take my bag and go home, and you will not get a cent. In my opinion this statement influenced many of the Indians to vote with the chief and councillors that day. Just as the vote was going to be taken, I heard Mr. John Semmons, Inspector of Indian Agencies, state loudly in the Cree language to the Indians present: All of you who want \$90 go to that side, indicating with his arm where the chief and councillors were standing. I am satisfied that these two statements, the one by Mr. Frank Pedley, and the other by Mr. John Semmons, influenced many to go on the side with the chief. The majority of the Indians did not know that they were voting to surrender their homes, as I am sure they did not wish to do. They were not asked the question: You that are in favour of surrendering the reserve, go to that side. Many did not realize that the vote was whether or not they should surrender the reserve. I am satisfied that if the question had been stated fairly, even in the face of the bribe offered, that is the dividing of the \$5,000 mentioned by Mr. Frank Pedley among the band, if they voted to surrender, and the further statement of Mr. John Semmons: All of you who want \$90, go to that side, the Indians would never have voted with the chief and councillors if they had understood that it meant the giving up of their lands and homes where they had been born and where this band had lived for generations.

I declare most solemnly that I understand the English language fairly well, and understood most of what I heard during the negotiations for the surrender. The band at no time was in favour of it. It was in my opinion secured by trickery, and the change in the chief's views, he having pledged himself again and again publicly against surrender of our lands. The terms of surrender were not even interpreted to the band. Fully one half could not hear what was taking place in the schoolhouse, as they could not get in, and of those who were in many did not understand, as the proceedings were not interpreted to them. I now feel that there was collusion between the officials and the land buyers to take our homes from us, and that the Indians have been badly cheated, first in the manner in which the surrender was secured, and again by the land buyers who have taken our lands at less than one-third of the amount we expected to receive for the same.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously, believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as

if made under oath and by virtue of the Canada Evidence Act, 1893.

JOHN FLETT.

Declared before me at the parish of St. Peter's, in the province of Manitoba, this 30th day of December, A.D. 1909.

ROBERT G. McDONALD,
Commissioner.

I have a declaration here which I think I should place on record, the testimony of Fred. Cameron. It reads:

Dominion of Canada, Province of Manitoba.
In the matter of St. Peter's Indian Reserve and the sale and disposal of the Indian lands in said reserve.

To Wit:

I, Fred Cameron, of the parish of St. Peter's in the province of Manitoba, Indian, do solemnly declare, that:

I am a member of St. Peter's band of Indians, and as such was entitled to 128 acres of land, 16 acres for myself, 16 acres for my wife and 16 acres each for my six children under the terms of surrender effected on September 24, 1907.

I never made a selection of my allotment of land, I never signed an application for my patent, but on or about the 20th day of December, 1908, while in Selkirk, Pete Sutherland met me and said, Fred, your patent is at the Indian office, and I went there, got it and signed a receipt for same. Prior to the time of the surrender there were public meetings held by the band, and at each meeting our chief and councillors with the exception of councillor W. H. Prince told the band over and over again that they would not surrender their reserve under any consideration. The chief went on to say that he was offered enough if he would surrender that he would be well off all the days of his life, and in fact I would be a gentleman if I were to accept it.

The band were left with the impression after these statements at the public meetings that their chief and councillors would never surrender our reserve. On the 23rd September, 1907, negotiations were begun with the band for the surrender, and the band then knew that their chief and councillors had changed their views and were in favour of surrendering our reserve.

On the 24th September, 1907, I heard Mr. Frank Pedley, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, tell the band that he had \$5,000 in his satchel, and if you surrender, the money will be distributed among the band, if not, I will take my bag and go home.

A few minutes before the vote for surrender, Mr. John Semmons, Inspector of Indian Agencies, Frank Pedley and Samuel J. Jackson, were standing together. Mr. Semmons beckoned to me and said, Come here, Fred. I went over to them, and Mr. Semmons then said, are you on our side? I said, no. He said, you had better surrender, Fred, and you will be well off. He then asked me what family I had. I told him I had eight of a family. He pulled out a small pass book from his pocket and commenced figuring, and after a little said, you will get \$34.40, and besides you will get your 16 acres per head. He