

treaty Indians to make what they could of it. If only a small portion of it was edible, there was no reason why that small portion should not be eaten by somebody. But this flour was not given as any part of the regular supply.

Now, as to the inferior flour which undoubtedly was delivered: Inspector Wadsworth reported upon the subject on the 25th January, 1884. He said:

I was satisfied that the flour upon the Blood and Piegan reserves was of fair quality and filled the spirit of the contract, although I came upon an occasional sack that was inferior, but they would not amount to one per cent of the whole. * * * My opinion of this flour it is that is barely No. 1 superfine, and that there is some frozen wheat in it. I do not consider it unwholesome. The white men on the reserve were using it and did not complain. I ate some of it (bread made from it) and found it palatable. Compared with No. 1 superfine at \$2.25 per sack, I consider this worth \$2 10. * * * I do not think the flour has been the cause of the disease lately epidemic among the Indians of this district.

The Department was convinced that the flour was not equal to the quality which the contractors had agreed to deliver, and a deduction was made from the price paid. \$2,500 was taken from the price of 715 sacks. We see, then, that some inferior flour *was* delivered. The fact was promptly referred to the Government, and without any delay an inquiry was ordered. The flour was shown to be inferior, and a deduction of nearly \$3.50 was made from the price of each sack. The affair proves, not that the distribution of inferior supplies is common, or even frequent, but that when inferior food is supplied the fact is at once reported, examination is promptly made, the evil is corrected and the contractors are fined. An exceptional irregularity of this sort proves that watchful care is exercised in securing for the Indians all the supplies to which they are entitled, and supplies of good quality.

Still, if the flour really caused disease and death among the Indians on the Blood reserve, the fining of the contractors does not secure full justice. But it will be seen that Dr. Girard does not say the flour caused disease and death. He found disease and death, and he found inferior