

Indian Reserve Commission

British Columbia

In Camp near Skowahatch

5 December 1878.

Sir

I have omitted mentioning to you the reception which the Indians of the Lower Fraser gave me at Hope, on undertaking work amongst them after my late campaigns among the Metla Kapa muls.

These matters are generally too unimportant to be mentioned in correspondence but as on this occasion of beginning work among a new group of Indians, the people made a considerable effort to receive me well, and I find are desirous

The Hon.

The Superintendent General
of Indian Affairs Ottawa

that their action should be known
to you. I feel bound to mention
what they did.

In the interior, the Indian
chiefs ride up with standard beavers
and perhaps 100 horsemen, and
the chief begins speaking in loud
tones when he is perhaps 200
yards from my tent.

The practice on the Lower Fraser,
where the people have few or no
horses, is necessarily different.

They copied the ways of the white
men in receiving me.

The chief's house was swept
and cleaned, and nothing left in
it but the stove! Seats from

the Church were placed round three
sides of it. At the remaining
end were a table and chair for
me, covered with ~~a~~ elaborately
ornamented covers made of mountain
goat's hair. My chair was under
a very pretty arch made of
green boughs, flowers and flags
which must have cost the Indians
some time to make. The room
itself was decorated with flags.
Outside, a covered walk of boughs
terminated in a handsome arch of
wood decorated with boughs and
flags. Here 15 Indians dressed
in uniforms which they had picked
up somewhere, stood and fired
a salute as I approached. They
then formed on one side of the

covered way in obedience to the
military command of a fat
Indian in a red coat and wearing
a sword. When I entered, instead
of the military salute of presenting
arms, they pulled off their caps
and bowed gravely. I found 60
or 70 chiefs and delegates in the
room, who all rose in seeing me
and as soon as I was seated
the "troops" filed into the room and
took up a position on one side
where they remained immovable
during the two hours of the
interview. Before I left they
resumed their position in the
covered way, and went through

the same ceremony as on my
entering.

The whole reception, of
course, had its ludicrous side
to critical eyes, particularly
the military demonstration which
might be considered to
partake of the burlesque, but
outside of that, nothing could ^{have} been
in better taste.

The principal chief explained
that they wished to show
their good feeling to the
government of Canada, and they
thought they could not do
so in a better way than by
copying what the white people
did when Lord Dufferin came.

to British Columbia.

The Indians were all well dressed - better dressed than I was - for they had not informed me of their intended ceremony, and they evidently were very proud of the success of their demonstration.

These people are very observant and acute and shrewd, and far indeed from being savages.

The fat man in the red coat gave his orders in English

"eyes front" and "dress up" in

the most approved style.

The whole ceremony could not

have been more faultlessly
conducted by white men, except
that the men as above said, did
not salute with their guns.

I was successful in maintaining
a grave demeanour throughout.

I have the honor to be,

Sir, Your obedient Servant.
Silvestre Mulinder Sprout
Indian Reserve Commr.