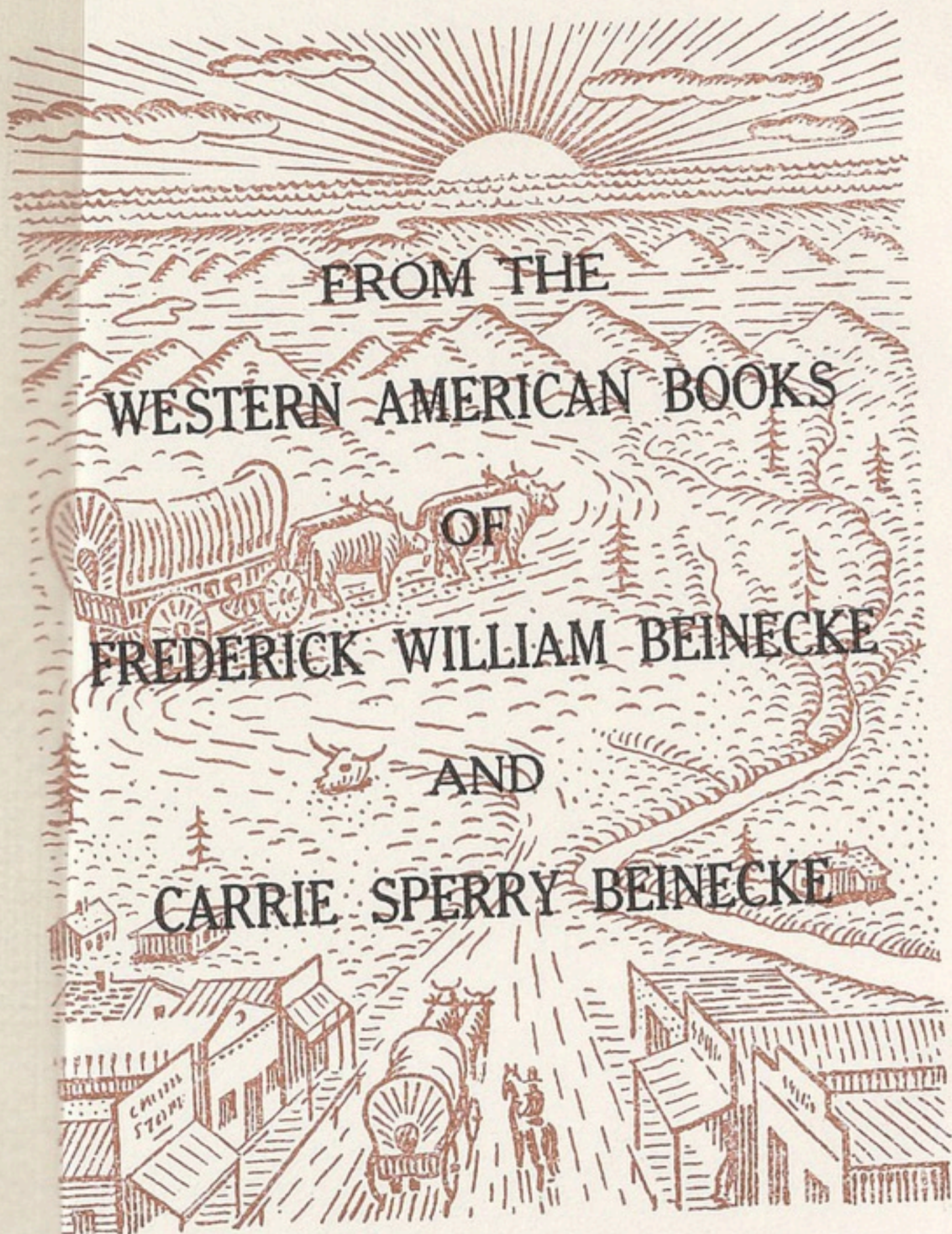


SPECIAL MESSAGE

OF THE

PRINCIPAL CHIEF.

1842



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M E S S A G E .

TO THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL,

IN NATIONAL COUNCIL CONVENED.

IF the intention of the resolutions of your bodies of the 14th inst. (calling for a statement of all monies received, by me, from the United States' Government, since the year 1835, and how applied: and also the amount, if any in my hands, subject to legislation,) be, to seek information respecting the public monies of the Nation; I reply that the annuities were received by the Treasurer of the Nation, John Martin, and by him disbursed, under the laws of the Eastern Cherokees, up to the fall of 1837. And in 1841 the annuities and school funds were received by the present Treasurer, Mr. David Vann.

In the summer of 1838, (in the absence of the Delegation appointed to represent our wrongs to the Government of the United States, and to ask redress,) our people were captured by the troops of the United States, under pretext of carrying into effect the provisions of the Schermerhorn Treaty. Under these operations they were forced from their homes; some marched before the troops, through rivers and mud, to the forts and camps, in which they were confined, and some driven into boats at the point of the bayonet. Our people well remember the sufferings they endured, and it is afflictive to call to mind the frightful ravages, made among them, by sickness and death; and the ruinous loss of property they sustained, by this cruel treatment.

While these things were doing, the Delegation was pressing on the attention of the Government of the United States, the claims of the Nation. The result of which was, a special appropriation by Congress, of One Million, One Hundred and forty seven thousand Dollars. Had this appropriation not been made, the whole of the expenses of the emigration must have

been defrayed out of the funds provided by the Schermerhorn treaty, as was contemplated by the makers of it, as well as by the distinct stipulations of the instrument itself. This amount then is a clear gain to the Cherokee people. Out of this appropriation, a sum of money was received by the Delegation, which was disbursed by the National Committee, in discharge of the debts of the Nation. Soon after their return from Washington, in order to stop the transportation by water already in progress under the direction of the Officers of the United States; the same Delegation was authorized, by the National Committee and Council, and people of the Cherokee Nation in General Council assembled, to make arrangements with Major Gen. W. Scott for the removal of the people, through the agency of our own citizens.

This authority, is recognized and reaffirmed, by the Act of Union, as vesting in that Delegation, who it says "shall continue in charge of that business, with their present powers, until it shall be finally closed." Under this arrangement, advancements were made by Gen. Scott, out of the same appropriation, and applied to the purposes of the emigration. In 1841, the arrearages due on the emigration, so long withheld, were received agreeably to the resolutions of the National Council passed on the 11th day Nov. 1840. Out of which, as stated in my message, "since the adjournment of your extra session last year, the disbursements of the claims upon the emigration, under the arrangements with Gen. Scott, was resumed under my superintendency, and the payments continued about three months, up to the time of my departure for Washington. So soon as the papers appertaining to this business, can be arranged, and a full exhibit of disbursements prepared, and such claims as yet remain unadjusted be disposed of, the transactions of my superintendency will be reported to the Nation, through the special Agents charged with this duty." There are no monies, in my hands, subject to legislation.

The sentiments of the petition, from certain citizens of Delaware District, placed in my hands, by your direction, viewed in connection with your resolutions, imply that I have received all the monies paid, by the Government of the United States, on account of the Cherokees, since the year 1835, without having rendered any account of them. The combined tenor of the two papers, seem to embrace even the monies received and expended under the Schermerhorn compact, from which the people have been incited to expect per capita money. Now it is well known the Nation has always disclaimed that compact, and that I have disclaimed it also. How then could per capita money under its provisions come into my hands? Yet there can be no doubt but immense sums of money were expended under its provisions and charged to the Nation, which it would be very proper to examine into. I have no documents in my possession which furnish information respecting disbursements under that compact: but if the books and papers of the Committee of thirteen, who acted under it, together with those of the Commissioners, were laid before the Council and people, they would no doubt shed much light on the subject. It is known to the Cherokee People, that several points in controversy, as well as their public and private claims against the United States, remain open and unadjusted. And though the Delegation in their late negotiation with the Secretary of War failed to procure their settlement, we still hold, not only just and equitable claims on the United States' Government, but the unequivocal promise of the President that they shall be satisfied. And as you have been informed in my message, Commissioners have been appointed for the purpose of investigating these claims.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }
December 20th, 1842. }

JNO. ROSS.

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O H E O G A S,
iay, 20A, 1842. }

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