In 1899, the Lower Band of Chinook filed a land claim against the United States seeking compensation of $625,000 for their homelands. The 1851 treaties signed with the Lower Chinook, Wahkiakum, Clatsop, Willapa, and Cathlamet had remained in congressional limbo, neither ratified nor rejected. The McChesney Rolls included 115 affidavits that confirmed the descent of tribal members from signers and/or those present at the 1851 treaty negotiations. As a result, between 1912 and 1914, the government acknowledged the Chinook Indian Nation and the debts owed for lands illegally taken.

To date less than $100,000 has been paid to the Chinook Indian Nation for our vastly more valuable lands!

The interviews collected by McChesney continue to connect Chinook members directly to those who started the fight for recognition.

This gathering of Lower Columbia Rover Indians at the McChesney camp in 1913 included many important culture bearers who bridged the gap from aboriginal times to the modern Chinook Indian Nation.