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Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting report touching the necessity for additional buildings for the Chilocco School, Indian Territory

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LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

Report touching the necessity for additional buildings for the Chilocco school, Indian Territory.

MARCH 11, 1890.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, March 10, 1890.

SIR: On February 8th ultimo the Department transmitted to the honorable Secretary of the Treasury estimates for increased appropriations for Indian industrial schools, and I now have the honor to transmit herewith copy of a communication of 7th instant from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and accompanying papers, explanatory of the necessity for additional buildings and improvements at the Chilocco school, Indian Territory.

Very respectfully,

JOHN W. NOBLE,
Secretary.

The PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., March 7, 1890.

SIR: With reference to the appropriations asked for the Indian industrial school at Chilocco, near Arkansas City, Kans., I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of a letter addressed by me to Hon. W. H. Nelson, postmaster at Arkansas City, Kans., and the reply of Mr. Nelson and other prominent citizens of Arkansas City, together with a letter from Mr. William M. Sleeth, president of the First National Bank of Arkansas City, from which it will be observed that the Indian school at Chilocco is now in a fair way to become successful. These letters will also explain the necessities existing for additional buildings and other improvements at the Chilocco school.

I respectfully recommend that these copies be transmitted to the Senate and House of Representatives for appropriate action.

Very respectfully,

T. J. MORGAN,
Commissioner.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

2 ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS FOR CHILOCCO SCHOOL, IND. TER.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, February 6, 1890.

DEAR SIR: I am glad to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of February 3, relative to the Chilocco school. I am very much gratified to know that you are pleased with the efforts which this office is making to render the school in every way successful.

It has seemed to me that, considering the location, the amount and quality of the land, and the urgent necessity for such an institution, that the school should be, and can be made, one of the best in the whole service.

I would like to have its capacity increased to 300 and to make ample provision in the way of buildings, shops, etc., so that the children may be comfortable and in every way properly cared for.

I think the school can be developed so as to carry on pupils through grammar-school studies, thus fitting them while there for successful industry or for the prosecution of their studies in high schools if they show sufficient capacity and proper disposition.

I have been very greatly concerned in the matter of securing the most competent employes that can be secured. I lay great stress upon the moral character of these employes. I have necessarily labored under the great disadvantage of not knowing personally these employes, but I have reason to think that the present superintendent is a man wholly fitted for his position, and that in due time he will be able by process of sifting and testing to surround himself with those who are in every way qualified for their difficult and responsible duties.

I feel that the interests of the school are paramount to the interests of any individual or individuals, and I shall not hesitate to make any changes that may be required in the interests of the school.

It has seemed to me that the number of employes should be increased so that the work may be less burdensome and more efficient.

The school has suffered very much by reason of its unfortunate history, and I have found it very difficult on the one hand to secure pupils for it because of the great prejudice existing in the minds of the Indians against the institution, and on the other hand I have found that it would be difficult to secure the needed appropriations to carry on the school on such a scale as it ought to be carried on by reason of the prejudice of legislators against the school.

I have stated thus fully my plans, with the view of suggesting that you ask a half a dozen representative men and women of your place, including the superintendent of your schools, to accompany you on a visit of inspection to Chilocco. If you will make such a visit, and report the results to me fully and express your opinion as to the desirableness of the school, the possibility of its usefulness, the feasibility of its arrangement, the personal character of its employes, the spirit of its management, etc., I will make such use of your report as may seem for the best interests of the school. I would like your opinion as to the additional buildings required and regarding new industries to be established, and would be very glad to have any suggestions or criticisms that your visit may give rise to. I need not say that I shall welcome just as heartily any criticisms as I shall any recommendations. What I desire is not in any possible way an overstatement of the favorable features, but simply such an exposition of the facts as they now are, and such reasons for improvements and changes that you may suggest as will enable me to lay before the appropriate committees and others interested in the school the opinions of men and women wholly disinterested in the personnel of the school, and simply desirous of seeing a much-needed institution properly developed.

Thanking you for the kindly interest that you have taken in this great matter, I am,

Very sincerely, yours,

T. J. MORGAN,
Commissioner.

W. H. NELSON, Esq.,
Postmaster, Arkansas City, Kans.

ARKANSAS CITY, KANS., *February 21, 1890.*

DEAR SIR: We herewith inclose report of commission on condition and needs of "Chilocco Industrial School." We found great improvements, and Mr. Coppock seems to be the right man. There can be no question as to the importance of this school, with its location, its lands, and advantages. We wish you could only see for yourself as we saw—the corn, the oats, the hay, the stock, and the 230 acres of

growing wheat—and I think you, like myself, would feel that the institution could be almost if not quite self-supporting, and thereby get a solution of the great Indian problem; and why not, since the policy seems to be “division of land in severalty and work a living out of the soil.”

Very truly,

W. M. SLEETH.

General T. J. MORGAN,
Indian Commissioner, Washington, D. C.

ARKANSAS CITY, KANS., February 21, 1890.

DEAR SIR: In accordance with the suggestion in your letter of the 6th instant, to Postmaster Nelson, of our city, a delegation of citizens, including our school superintendent, Professor Boyd, visited the Chilocco Industrial School on the 15th instant, and beg to submit for consideration the following, as a report of its observations:

First. We found the superintendent, Mr. Coppock, earnestly and energetically enlisted in the work, and everything in and about the school showed improvement and progress.

Second. Considering the advantages of location, being in the Indian Territory, close to a good civilization and an advanced farming community, a healthy location, with wood and water, mild and equable climate, with 8,640 acres of fine farming and grazing land in the Territory, where Indians are expected to take their lands in severalty and get their living out of the land, there can be no question as to the desirability of the school.

Third. The possibility of its usefulness is wholly and solely dependent upon its support and management.

Fourth. The present building is entirely inadequate to the needs of the institution, very defective in arrangement. There is immediate need of a new building of sufficient capacity to accommodate 125 to 150 girls.

This building should also contain a large dining-room of sufficient capacity to accommodate the whole school.

The pupils are at present placed in dormitories in the fourth or attic story of the building; the sexes are separated; but they are crowded into the room, which is heated by an ordinary stove.

There is only one narrow stair-way for exit in case of fire, and there is no ventilation except from open windows.

The danger from fire is very serious. The new building would relieve all this pressure, make available more space for boys and for school-room, and make it possible to develop that individuality so necessary in the training of the Indian.

The heating and ventilation of the new building should have special attention, providing continuous warm-air ventilation and dry closets. We heartily concur in the recommendations of the present superintendent, Mr. Coppock, in regard to hospital and home for the farmer, thereby separating the children from other employés.

Sixth. We would call attention to and urge the importance and advantages of this school as an industrial institution, and especially as it relates to the farming industry and fitting the Indian to obtain a living out of the soil and become self-supporting.

This has all the advantages and conditions to enable the Indian to acquire this ability, on a soil and in a climate just where they will ultimately have to take their lands in severalty and become self-supporting citizens of the United States.

D. R. Boyd, superintendent of schools; F. P. Schiffbauer, mayor; Wm. M. Sleeth, president of First National Bank, Arkansas City; F. W. Farrar, cashier First National Bank, Arkansas City; F. M. Strong, president of Strong and Ross Banking Company; Howard Ross, of Strong and Ross Banking Company; T. H. McLaughlin; W. H. Nelson, postmaster; A. A. Newman, Newman Dry Goods Company.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C.

