

52171

OFFICE OF
Indian Affairs,
Rec. DEC 10

1897

50/164

51177-97

Capt. R. H. Pratt,
Carlisle, Pa.

Dec. 8, 1897

Reply to letter of
7th inst. rd. to Robert
Bonga.

2 inc

To Stansford Dec 28
" Carlisle " " 29

E. J. Hill

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52171
Department of the Interior,
INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE,

Carlisle, Pa., December 8th, 1897.

To the Honorable,

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

Replying to your letter of the 7th, marked "Education, 51177, '97" enclosing letter from Supt. Davis, of Flandreau, S. Dak., which letter I herewith return, I have to respectfully advise you that Robert Bonga represented to me that he had finished his term at Ft. Totten and desired to come here. I asked in regard to him, and while he was not highly-recommended, I was urged to take him and help him, and did so. Within a few days after his coming here, he came to me with a letter from his father, copy enclosed, and desired to return home. I then realized what his character was, and talked firmly to him, advising him that I should take his case under consideration and resort to some action, and that I thought the Commissioner of Indian Affairs should know about him. Within an hour after, he had left the school, and I have not heard from him since.

I agree with Supt. Davis, that in a case like this it would be well to have the culprit work out his expense at hard labor, and I would suggest that Flandreau School would be a good place, and Supt. Davis, because of his vim in the matter, a good man to carry out the sentence.

While we are bothered some by the so-called "tramp" business,

there are conditions in connection with it that ought to be considered before an added general rule is made. Until the Indians are controlled by Government in their own best interests, I can take care of all tramps that may accidentally land here.

There are some experiences Bonga will have between Carlisle and his home, if he goes home, or elsewhere, if he goes elsewhere, which are to my mind more beneficial than the working at hard labor under the direction of some school superintendent.

Very respectfully,



Capt. 10th Cav'y., Supt.

(Dictated) Mc

52171

Indian Office.

Incl. No.

1897



Park Rapids, Minn. Nov 1, 1897

Dear Son:

We are very sorry to say that you will come home at once. Of course we didn't know anything about you, what you were doing about the girls. I am very sorry to say that after 4 days you left our reservation a child was born which is belong to you.

We have no money to send to you. Please, my son be truthful about this letter to show to Supt. Do not be ashamed to do that and your brother William will take your place at Carlisle. I will send him as soon as you reach home.

Your Supt's presents are not finished yet Wm will take them along him. If you dont come home they going to port you at Washington D. C.

I will now close. Remember about this letter show your Supt at once.

From your father

Peter Bonga

51177

OFFICE OF
Indian Affairs.
Rec. DEC 6

1897

50/145

Flandreau Indian School,

FLANDREAU, S. D.

LESLIE D. DAVIS, Supt.

DEC 3 1897

Suggests that Robert Bonga, a young Indian man from Pine Point, White Earth Reservation, Minn., and who has deserted from Fort Totten, also from Flandreau, and now at Carlisle, Pa., -be required to work out, at hard labor, all the expense heretofore incurred in transporting him at Govt. expense to and from various schools from which he has deserted.

To Flandreau Dec 28/97

E. D. Davis

52171

Indian Office.
Incl. No. 2

1897

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Department of the Interior,
INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE,

U. S. INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL,
Rlandreau, S.D., Dec. 2, 1897.

Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington.

Sir:

On the 6th of last August, I brought a party of Indian children to this school from Pine Point, White Earth Reservation, Minn., Robert Bonga, 20 years of age, was one of the party. He claimed to me to have finished his term at Fort Totten school, N. D. After staying at this school about a month, Robert deserted; and I understand from Supt. Canfield, of Fort Totten, that he has since gone to the Carlisle school, Penna. At the same time, Mr. Canfield claims Robert did not complete the term at his school for which he voluntarily entered same, but was a deserter from Fort Totten.

In view of these facts, it seems to me an example should be made of this case. Robert is not an ignorant, irresponsible fellow, but an intelligent man--shrewd and "smooth" enough to take periodical excursions to various parts of the country at Government expense. Unaided, the superintendents of the different ~~xxx~~ schools cannot stop this "tramp" practice of a certain class of Indian boys; but with the vigorous cooperation of the Department, the habit may be made exceedingly unpopular; and a heavy drain upon the transportation funds of several schools will be greatly checked, if not altogether stopped. In the case of this said Rob-

ert Bonga, it cost this school \$15.00 for his necessary transportation and hotel expenses coming to this school, besides three or four dollars additional to try to apprehend and return him when he absconded.

I would respectfully suggest that Bonga be put at hard labor, under guard, at Carlisle, Fort Totten or elsewhere; and that he be compelled to work out, at a minimum rate of pay, every cent his various Government excursions have cost the schools he has attended. This, or similar, action by the Department, taken in a few representative cases, will do more to wipe out the "tramp" evil in the Indian school service than the combined, unaided efforts of all the superintendents in the field.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Luslie D. Davis
Superintendent.

L.D.D.