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OFFICE OF
Indian Affairs
Rec SEP 7

1900

6/36

Indian Industrial School,

Carlisle, Pa. Sept 6 1900.

Pratt, R. H.,

Major 10th Cav'y, Supt.

Advising that Mr. James E. Cabett
appointed wagonmaker by letter
of Aug. 23rd, reported for duty,
on the 5th. Returned to Colum-
bus immediately.

To Carlisle Sept. 8/1900

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Department of the Interior,
INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE,

Carlisle, Pa., Sept. 6, 1900.

To The Honorable,

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

Washington, D. C.

Sir :-

I have the honor to inform you that Mr. James E. Cabett of Columbus, O., by your letter of Aug. 23rd appointed wagonmaker here, reported yesterday.

I fully explained to Mr. Cabett the qualities needed in the position to which he was appointed, and which is now so satisfactorily filled by Mr. Ed. A. Lau. I went over with him his own experience and training for the place. As previously explained to the Department, this position requires a man who can do all parts of wagon and carriage making. He should be able to do not only the wood work, but the iron work, trimming, and painting. These several parts of the business have all been done by Mr. Harris, who has filled the place for more than twenty years. Mr. Harris is now past sixty-five and on the down grade, as I have explained, and so deaf that he is made unsatisfactory as an instructor. Mr. Lau forty-four years of age, has carried on the business of carriage and wagon making in the town of Carlisle for quite a number of years. I have purchased two carriages from ^{him} for my own personal use in the past ten years. Mr. Lau is a much more competent man than Mr. Harris ever was; is exceptionally good at wood work and trimming, but has done all parts including iron work and painting.

in his own shops. He is in the best of health; understands where supplies can be had, and is thoroughly up in the quality of supplies. It would be hard to find a better equipped man than he.

Mr. Cabett, as stated in your notification, took the examination for inspector, hoping to receive an appointment as inspector of wagons in the Quartermaster's Department at Jeffersonville, Ind. For the past year he has been working in an elevator factory in Columbus; the year prior to that he worked in a grocery; the four previous years he was in the repair shops of a street car company; prior to that he worked in two separate carriage factories for a short time. He learned his trade and worked with his father in making heavy wagons mostly, and carriages sometimes. I am thoroughly satisfied that Mr. Cabett is not the man we need for the place here. You are expecting us to make all kinds of carriages, buckboards, etc. and with the help we have had so far, we are fairly meeting the Department's expectations. Mr. Cabett himself said he could not fill the bill. It is self-evident that one who has spent the last six years in an elevator factory, a grocery store, street car repair shops, etc. would be a failure in attempting to make the class of carriages and wagons you ask me to make, and in instructing my boys, even had he ever been competent before. I note also that Mr. Cabett has lost the first two fingers on his right hand, and by his own confession to me has not the habits I want in an instructor. On learning the conditions he returned immediately to his home in Columbus.

I did not ask that a wagonmaker be sent here, nor was I asked to indicate the character of the employe required. Mr. Cabett him

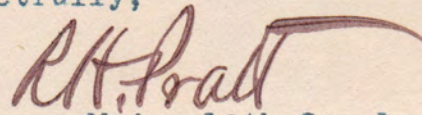
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self was not informed what the duties were. We two are unquestionably the persons most directly concerned and responsible. Had I known what I knew within twenty minutes after Mr. Cabett's arrival, I should have said he was not the man. Had he known what he knew within twenty minutes after his arrival, he would have declined the place. He gave up his situation and incurred unnecessary expense. The official at Washington guilty of this blunder should be made to pay Mr. Cabett's expenses and other losses. My time and energies are paid for by the government, but I object to having them consumed in this manner, and to such annoyance. I trust some method will be devised by which I can keep Mr. Lau or be provided with a person no less capable. I shall not expect to accept of any other.

Your attention is invited to that fact that this unrequested and abortive assignment was made during my temporary absence.

Very respectfully,



Major 10th Cavalry, Supt.

Dictated(P)