

Shurvell

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OFFICE OF
Indian Affairs
Rec OCT 25

1901

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Indian Industrial School,

Carlisle, Pa. *Oct. 24 1901.*

Pratt, R. H.,

Lt. Col. 15th Cav'y, Supt.

In reference to quality of
wagons made at this school
& criticisms of Supt. Cochran.
To Carlisle } *Oct 27/01*
" Rice Station }

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SPECIAL
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Department of the Interior,
INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE,

Carlisle, Pa., Oct. 24, 1901.

To The Honorable,

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

Sir :-

Replying to yours of the 23rd inst. marked "Finance, "57845"

I have to respectfully advise you that the general information coming to me in reference to our wagons does not corroborate the experience of Mr. Cochran as indicated in your quotation. Within a few months I have written everyone to whom we had furnished a wagon in the last five years, asking their frank criticisms on our wagons to the end that we might rectify any defects if possible. On the many wagons sent out there were only two serious criticisms. Quite a number did not respond, although we were certainly entitled to an answer.

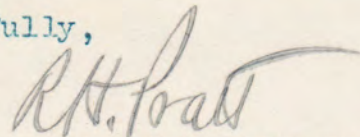
My assistant superintendent, Mr. Allen, who succeeded Mr. Cochran at Seneca, advises as follows :-

"My knowledge of the condition of conveyances used by Mr. Cochran leads me to believe that none could be made that would give him satisfactory service. He had a Racine carriage at the Seneca school that by overloading, fast driving and other reckless use was ruined in a few months. He was furnished at the same school a spring wagon from Haskell Institute that by unreasonable careless use had the top torn off, the dash board broken, both seats broken, and was seriously damaged in other ways, - all done in less than a year from the time of delivery of the vehicle. No conveyance can be manufactured that will stand usage unto which no intelligence is put. "

I may add that long experience in the army on the plains has shown me that no wagon made is free from criticism. At one time during my western service the Quartermaster's Department, in order to overcome the difficulties connected with the use of wagons in the intensely dry atmosphere and rough usage, had the running gear of the post wagons made of osage orange thoroughly dried, but even these failed to withstand the severe usage and action of the intense heat and dryness of that region.

We are doing the best we can and taking note of every criticism with a view to overcoming all difficulties, and if those using the wagons will give us the benefit of their judgment, we hope to be successful. The sweeping criticisms of Mr. Cochran and the fact that he sends them to the Office instead of to me when I had solicited them myself, indicate a temper not exactly judicial. The complete wreck of this wagon, as he reports it, is so curious that if the Department will instruct me to ship him ^{new} a wagon, and order that the old one be returned to me, my expense, I shall be very glad, in order that we may know by personal observation exactly what results from usage such as Mr. Cochran gives the public conveyances furnished him.

Very respectfully,



Lt. Col. 15th Cavalry, Supt.

Dictated(P)

*Carry out this suggestion
at once*
W.H. Jones