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OFFICE OF
Indian Affairs
Rec. AUG '26

1902

Lt W. U. Mercer
Chickamauga Park

July 15, 02 Ga.

Rel: to reentering the
Indian Service

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Camp, Geo H. Thomas.
Chickamauga Park, Ga.
July 15, 1902.

My dear Commissioner:

Your favor of the 1st inst reached me here and I was glad to hear from you.

I went to Washington to see you but having got into touch with army matters, I feel as though I am losing time sitting about this camp and that I could possibly be of more service to the Government under you than here, but I found you were away and so gave up the matter for the time being, but happening to find the Secretary of the Interior disengaged, I called on him to pay my respects. He received me cordially, told me I was just the man he wanted to see, as he thought he would need my services soon (not at Lead Lake however) and asked me if I would come back or across to that effect, and told me confidentially of what he intended doing. I felt happy to know that he had confidence in me and I told him I would gladly serve him anywhere. He told me to call again. This was on

Monday and on Friday I called again. He then asked me how my Leech Lake matters were and I told him that my accounts were all closed and everything settled except the case against the Commercial Lumber Company. I asked him point blank if there were any charges against me he said he knew of none and asked me if I knew of any. I told him no. He took my address and I have expected to hear from ere this but have not, and the reason may be that he is not yet ready to act, or it may be due to the fact that, desiring to know if my agency matters were settled, he had sent to the Indian Office for the information and Larabee and Tomner had sent him a great bundle of papers composed of Harris' letters and reports - and I further learned that the Indian Office was notified that the Secretary did not want all that "stuff" but a statement as to the present status of my agency matters and then Larabee had prepared a brief statement along the lines I had told the Secretary of, myself.

I called on Larabee and told him that if Harris' stuff went to the Secy that my answers and my letters should go. He replied "I told the Indian Division that was only right - but they were" "not considered and in lieu of them only a brief"

statement was submitted and that there was nothing in it that reflected on me." I told him if there was I demanded the right to answer it:

I believe the Secretary is friendly to me and would like to have me back in the Indian Service and if he does and you feel the same way I would like to serve under you again. I am afraid that Tomner and Larabee are not friendly to me and may "queer" me during your absence. You see I am frank.

Now, Mr. Jones, a number of people want to get me back to Leech Lake, but as long as you have an army officer there I don't want the change considered. - in fact I do not believe I care to go back there under any circumstances, but I would like a chance at some other agency to prove beyond question by anyone, my loyalty to you and the Secretary. I really believe that no set of employees or outside schemers can ever again place the road over my eyes on Indian business. If you want one and will advise me when you will be in Washington, I will run up and have a talk with you and I am ready to go anywhere except Leech Lake. - Mrs. Mercer and Edith join me in regards to you, Mrs. Jones and Agnes. Sincerely yours, W.A. Mercer.

I am anxious to see you soon to determine whether
I am going back to the Indian Service or not, for
the reason that my colonel wants to make me
regimental adjutant - - which is the best compliment he
can pay me - but I have had him postpone the appointment
several times and again yesterday, as I felt that as
Adjutant it will be harder for me to get away
than if on duty with the troops. -

A. S. M.