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OFFICE OF
Indian Affairs
Rec. JUN 19

1903

73/99

Col. P. H. Pratt,

Carlisle School,

Jan. 22 '03

Enc. letter of Benj.

Caswell, rel. to his

mov'd as principal

teacher at Cross Lake

School.

3 in.

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Department of the Interior,
INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE,

Carlisle, Pa., Jan. 22, 1903.

Hon. W. A. Jones,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Commissioner :

I enclose you Ben Caswell's letter to me with copies of letters he forwarded. All indicate his sterling character. There are probably reasons why a change should be made. Allow me to suggest that the degrading of an employe from chief to a subordinate position and a lower salary and retain him in the same school is not at all likely to work well. For this reason alone I think it would be better if you could give him duties elsewhere.

I do not, of course, know the measure of success Ben has had at Cass Lake, but I remember distinctly that an intelligent Anglo-Saxon with his wife and daughter were a disappointment to you and to the Agent when we visited there a year ago last fall.

Yours truly,

R. H. Pratt

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Indian Office

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1903

In reply to:

Department of the Interior,
INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE,

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT,

Cass Lake, Minn

Jan 19, 1903

Col. R. H. Pratt,
Carlisle, Pa.

Dear Sir;

You will see by the enclosed communication that I am under the cloud and you can see yourself whether or not I deserve your help in time of need. I feel I have not been getting the support my superiors should give and it seems to me the more I work the less I satisfy them and the less help I get. And another thing, under these circumstances, there is none and never was and never will be in me to make a success of my school. I am not lazier nor less active, nor more dull than I was when I was at Carlisle. With this information you can say a word for me if there is any to say. If I am not a disgrace to your school I will come at any rate, if I am I will try to rise again. I do not exactly where I am inefficient.

Yours respectfully
Benjamin Caswell
Prin Teacher,

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Indian Office

Incl. No.

1903

In reply to:

Department of the Interior,
INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE,

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT,

Leech Lake, Minn.

Jan. 18, 1903.

The Hon.

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

Sir:

A letter, a copy of which is herewith enclosed which will explain itself, was received to day from G. L. Scott, Maj. 10th Cavalry, Acting Indian Agent at Leech Lake Agency, Minn. In this letter, if I am not mistaken, I am charged of inefficiency for which I am relieved as Principal Teacher at this school and that I was not given a chance to defend myself of such a charge before being relieved.

While I am not overly grieved of being thus relieved, yet I owe it to my family and to my friends to make a defense.

The difficulty of handling this school by me is due to the many duties of my position. I have no assistant teacher and this keeps me in school room both morning and after-noon sessions, freight to look after; in this, I have to go

six miles to attend to it and all the clerical work connected with it. and especially the last three or four months, it has been trying from the fact that the Industrial Teachers were hard to get and to keep. Several times I had to assume the duties of my Industrial Teacher, leaving me no other time for my papers except between the hours of 9 o'clock P. M. till 5 o'clock A. M. the following morning. Other schools of this class have two more employes than I am allowed here and it is not just that I be expected to give the same kind of satisfaction than they do when conditions are not equal.

I had a good Industrial Teacher here last summer and in a short time he was transferred to Luch Lake school without due notice to me in which it would have enabled me to secure one to take his place, in fact I had to inquire before I had an official notice of the change. Miss Nason, my Matron and Seamstress, was transferred almost the same way to Cross Lake school.

Again since this school year began, Maj. Scott, our Agent, visited this school twice (Sept 7 or 14 and on Nov 3), while our overseer Dr. J. F. Rodwell made his first official visit on Jan. 14, 1903, the first is 35 miles away and the latter six, and with their visits so few and far between I feel that my efforts can not be justly measured and the troubles I have to contend not fully known by them. and moreover much of their moral support is lost from this respect which tends to make my school more difficult to handle.

I have, to the best of my knowledge, been respectful to all my superiors, and at present have no ill-will whatsoever, only I do not understand why I was not made aware of the fact that I was weak. I am still susceptible to improvement and willing to learn. Therefore I respectfully ask and implore the Hon. Commissioner for a fair trial either here or else-where and I am sure I will not be found wanting if a fair chance is accorded me.

Yours respectfully,

Benjamin Farwell

Principal Teacher

Through,

Q. L. SCOTT.

Maj. 10th Cavalry,
Acting U. S. Indian Agent.

Leech Lake Agency, Minnesota

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Indian Office

Incl. No. 2

1903

Department of the Interior

INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE

Office of Indian Affairs

In reply to:

Department of the Interior,
INDIAN SCHOOL SERVICE,

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT,

Leech Lake Agency,

Onigum Minn. Jan. 17, 1903.

Mr Benjamin Caswell,
Cass Lake, Minn.

Sir:

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs has decided to send a Principal Teacher to take your place at the Cass Lake school, and the new man will probably arrive within a very short time.

For some time past I have felt that you had great difficulty in handling the school, but I also recognized ability in you as an employe in a different capacity. I have recommended you to The Indian Office as an Industrial Teacher and you may hold that position at the Cass Lake school if you so desire. The salary of course will be less, but it is likely the new Principal Teacher will give your wife a position there, if she desires to hold one.

Very respectfully,
G. L. Scott.

Maj. 10th Cavalry,
Acting U. S. Indian Agent.