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Indian School, Carlisle, Pa.,
July 7, 1906.

Maj. W. A. Mercer,
Supt.

Forwards report of Miss Angel De Cora, teacher of native Indian art.

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MAJOR W. A. MERCER, 11TH CAVALRY
SUPERINTENDENT

JOHN R. WISE
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

W. G. THOMPSON
SUPERINTENDENT OF INDUSTRIES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE
INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL
CARLISLE, PA.

J.R.W.

July 7, 1906.

The Honorable,

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

In cpmpliance with instructions contained in Office letter "Education", dated June 27, 1906, by the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, I have had Miss Angel De Cora, teacher of Native Indian Art, submit a report in detail concerning the work done by her for the fiscal year ending June 30th. Her said report, dated the 5th instant, is transmitted herewith.

Very respectfully,

W. A. Mercer

Major 11th Cavalry,

Superintendent.

JRW-S

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INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL

Carlisle, Pa.,

July 5, 1906

Angel DeCora,
Mechanical Drawing Teacher

Repprts on progress of pupils in Indian Art.

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Mechanical Drawing Teacher

Indian Industrial School,

Carlisle, Pa., July 5th 1906.

Major W. A. Mercer,

Supt. Indian School,

Carlisle, Pa.,

Sir:

I have the honor to submit herewith my report for the five months work under your supervision.

In the short time that I have worked with your students, the original work they have produced, in quantity and quality, has been much beyond my hopes and expectations.

Five months ago when I first introduced the subject-Indian Art to the Carlisle Indian Students, I experienced a discouraging sensation that I was addressing members of an alien race. I realized that I must have an Indian audience if the subject was to continue. For a week, each new class that came to me, I appealed to their race pride, calling on them in mass and individually for Indian history, not as the White historian has pictured him in words but as some of us have heard it from the Indian story tellers by the light of the camp fire: but there are those who have lost all their Indian lore and yet retain the characteristic traits of the race. To these I gave the advise to observe the few specimens of Indian work that were at hand. The reports of the Bureau of Ethnology have served to call our minds back to old customs and lore and in this short time these Indians' decorative instinct is greatly roused.

As the Indian Art runs in purely conventional lines I have been obliged to make it a school of design.

In a hurried review of Indian Art, I noted the three distinct styles of Indian designing, the Alaskan, the Southwestern, and the Plains Indian. The Students represent nearly the whole country in Indian tribes, so I attempted at first to get the different tribal styles of decoration. The Alaskans failed me in this effort. In their case it is the forgotten lore and all that goes to inspire the native decorative instinct.

The Pueblos of the southwest still retain their native art and it is from them that I have got some of the best designs. The Plains Indians have done some good work but are timid as yet. The Eastern Indians, who have long since lost their native arts, show an apptitude to learn from the others and in many cases they have borrowed and copied ideas until they have acquired an individual style of their own. Just as soon as the pupils began to originate designs by their own intelligence, their curiosity as to what his or her neighbor was doing caused them unconsciously to exchange decorative ideas with one another. I have had weekly exhibitions of the work that came in from day to day which has given them an interest and a feeling of competition. As yet I have not burdened their minds with any principle of designing or color but we would like to have a collection of good specimens of old Indian work as examples to guide them. The few articles loaned by the employees of the School were greatly appreciated. The Six hundred designs for borders and centres that I have seen fit to preserve are pure inspirations of the artists. As a collection of artistic work, they have delighted all who have seen them. From the start, the designs produced suggested weaving and it is to this end now that I hope to make all my endeavors. The Navajo blanket is still, to the world, a work of art, and we wish to work under the plan of the Navajo weavers and execute some of the interesting designs that we have made here.

I am about to look into the Persian method of weaving and later I hope to do the same with the Navajo method. I have submitted, along with the School's Application for supplies, my list of designer's material for next year. The material required for weaving I am obliged to delay till a later date, when I shall have the experience that I look forward to with Persian weavers. The work will be slow in this line as all hand labor is but I have faith in the Indian's skillful hand and infinite patience, to develope, in time, an industry all their own.

If I see that the work is going to be a success in a commercial way, I want the student artists and workers to realize something from it. Any design that is seen to be good and capable of being used

repeatedly should be copyrighted and the student should realize some gain from it.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Angel De Cora

Mechanical Drawing Teacher