

1374
Carlisle

Bring to attention of
Commissioner

FILE

Philadelphia, Penn.

FILE

December 14, 1907

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED
DEC 17 1907
FILE 98190-154

The Honorable Commissioner
of Indian Affairs -

Francis E. Seupp -

Dear Sir - Washington, D.C.

For two years I have re-
frained from placing my case in
your hands, because of lack
of support on my side. Recent
publicity of athletic scandals
at the Carlisle Indian School, how-
ever, strengthens my belief that
I have been forced out of Carlisle
unjustly.

About the middle of July in
1905 I was brought up before
St. G. Thompson, Athletic Director, charged
with having accused Thompson
of paying money to certain athletes

at Carlisle. As a result of hearing before Mr. Thompson I was compelled to leave the school. While I was not given notice to leave the school, my stay there was made almost unbearable. Evidently Mr. Thompson did not wish to punish me as would be the case if I went against the rules of the school - which of course I did not do. As a student - Senior at the Indian School and second year at Dickinson Preparatory School - I was forced to undergo indignities because I remarked that all athletes at the Indian School were either paid for their playing ability or were accorded more privileges than ordinary students - contrary to the rules of Government schools - and detrimental to Indian education. I left Carlisle one day and

walked to Philadelphia. Soon after I wrote to Maj. Mercer and received a reply that I was a deserter and would be treated as such, but that I would not be brought to Carlisle for fear of evil influence on other students.

The truth is out now. Practically every one of the Indian Football team is paid for his playing ability. Bowen, Subo and Eyendine are attending Preparatory school. Their tuition paid by Athletic association. Their scholastic standing - four years in Prej - with two to go - is an example of how much they have accomplished. Members of the "Team" are quartered separate from others - and in their quarters they come rise in the morning at any hour and are not subject to the same conditions as others in students quarters. Card

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games go on every night. I have personally knowledge of this - from my last visit - here at Christmas in 1905. They frequent pool rooms in town during hours when they should be at their studies; they draw money irregularly - and are given special privileges with respect to visits at the Divl. Quarters.

In January 1906, Mr. Mercer gave us to understand that Athletes should be given Preparatory privileges more as than we who were not athletes, though better qualified literarily, to enter College Preparatory School.

I have seen and heard all that is said of Caslick's Athletic scandal. I've handled Mr. Thompson's correspondence and I know glaring instances where he has used money in efforts to make a football team - I have proofs for all that I say. I have also been present at confidential talks wherein Mr. Thompson induced players like Mr. Thaxant. Exem-

dine and others to stay for succeeding season. To all this occurrences in Athletic circles - the students were alive and were loud in their denouncement of the managers. And because myself and several other students and at least five school employes - were openly opposed to such commercialism in Football we were stamped as dangerous to the welfare of Carlisle school.

I did not envy the athletes for their freedom - nor privileges given them at Preparatory. There was no personal feeling in the matter. But a matter of principle. To the public it seems the football team has given Carlisle a high standing. It is true - from athletic view point. The influence of paid athletes upon young students who are honestly toiling to secure education - is demoralizing.

For above reasons and facts - I have been forced out and deprived of an opportunity.

Pop 757 - 6.

of a life-time - college education. My ambitions have been stamped out. And last of all Maj: Mercer has refused to give me a transportation home - and I am forced to stay here and make out living the best I know how.

My record at Carlisle was excellent. Records will show that my monthly report-cards bore "excellent" for conduct - with very few exceptions "very good". For scholarship - not below "very good." I was a Cadet Captain - in charge of small boys' quarters.

In Philadelphia - I have always upheld the reputation of Carlisle and in every way tried to show the people that Indian Education was worth while. In this I am supported by my record at my employment at Stephen Greene Co - 16th and Arch Streets and American Baptist Publication Society; at Lombard and Juniper streets; and also Central G. M. P. O. at 15th & Chestnut Sts. and Arch Street

Presbyterian Church. My sympathy is with the Indian Education and I encourage my fellow-students to stick to school as long as possible and get out all they can. On the other hand I am strictly opposed to any underhand play - such as commercialism in playing football - its tendencies cannot be mistaken. And I am not afraid to speak against it. I am a victim of practices such as will teach and influence these students to bribe and defraud and forever-spoil their future.

Now I've been in the East six years and am unable to get home - my parents being unable to pay for my transportation and I am barely making enough to keep a live. I have written this explanation and I believe that I was ~~was~~ unjustly turned

J-

out from Carlisle. I will ask
if you could look into the matter
and see if you can bring me back to
my home in Idaho.

If you wish to find out the
truth of all that I've said - write to
Sporting Editor of "The Press" with whom
whom I went over some of these things
in 1905.

I trust you can do right for
me as I wish very much to get
home soon.

Awaiting your answer
I am

Yours Respectfully
J. M. Parsons.
P.O. Station "J."

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

Education
98190-1907
File 154

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

WASHINGTON. December 19, 1907.

SUBJECT:

The relief from Carlisle
School of J. M. Parsons, a
pupil.

Supt. Indian School,
Carlisle, Pa.

Sir:

I am informed by J. M. Parsons, a former pupil at Carlisle, that he was relieved from the school some time in 1905, but that you refuse to send him back to his home in the West.

Please make a prompt report showing when he was enrolled at your school, when he was relieved, and for what cause, and his record as a student. Also say why he was not returned home.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) F. E. Leupp.

Commissioner.

J.H.D.(F)

FILE

154.

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

Subject:
Report on
James M. Parsons.

Dec. 20, 1907.



FILE

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

Sir:

I am in receipt of your letter (Education 98190/07, File 154) dated the 19th instant, in regard to the relief of James M. Parsons as a pupil at this school and the alleged refusal to send him back to his home in the West.

Complying with your request for a report on this case I have to state that this young man was enrolled as a pupil at Carlisle from the Nez Perce Agency, Idaho, on October 14, 1901, for 5 years; that he was a member of the Nez Perce tribe, then aged 18 years; and that he deserted from the school on July 25, 1905 and was discharged, by reason of such desertion and his failure to return, on Nov. 25, 1905.

This young man was above the average of intelligence and ability as a student and was a member of the senior class at the time of his leaving the school. During the previous winter and spring he had been favored, in that arrangements were made for him to attend Dickinson Preparatory School in Carlisle, he having expressed a great desire to obtain a higher education. Although of good habits and, so far as we know, morally above reproach, he was somewhat vain and conceited and assumed to act as a leader among the boys. He was given to doing things which were, in a limited way, in violation of the school rules--things which, on account of his assumed super-

Handwritten initials or scribble in the bottom left corner.

iority and his going to school in town he presumed the right to do and which, the other boys could not be permitted to do. This of course had an injurious effect upon the discipline and the disciplinarian complained frequently of the young man's actions. He was also inclined to criticize his superiors at times and in fact was what would commonly be called a disturber.

Finally, during the summer of 1905, he had some trouble with Mr. W. G. Thompson, then superintendent of industries, and on July 25th of that year the young man left the school without permission. He never expressed a desire to return to the school and meet his obligations arising under the terms of his enrollment, and for reasons already above set forth, and feeling that the young man was thoroughly capable of taking care of himself and that his experience outside would be a wholesome one for him, we concluded to discharge him and did so, as above indicated, on November 11, 1905.

He has never made any request of the school to be sent back to his home in Idaho, nor has he asked, as already stated, to be re-admitted to the school, which would be a condition precedent to his being sent home at Government expense. He should not be readmitted to remain.

Very respectfully,

A. J. Mercer
Major 11th Cavalry,

Superintendent.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
WASHINGTON.

Education

98190 - 1907
99271 - 1907
File 154

January 9, 1908.

Subject:

Transportation home
for James M. Parsons,
former pupil at Carlisle.

J. M. Parsons,
P. O. Station "S",
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

My Friend :

Your letter of the 14th ultimo was received, requesting that you be allowed transportation to your home and giving your reasons for leaving the Carlisle Indian School before the expiration of your term of enrolment .

I now have a report concerning your record at school in which it is said that you were discharged by reason of desertion and failure to return; that you were above the average of intelligence and ability as a student and a member of the senior class at the time you left the school; that you had been favored in that arrangements had been made for your attendance at Dickinson Preparatory School in Carlisle; that although your habits generally were good, you were somewhat vain and conceited and assumed to act as a leader among the boys; that in a limited way you were given in violation some of the minor rules of the school, and on account of your being allowed to attend school in town, you presumed the right to do things which the other boys could not be permitted to do; that your course in this

respect had an injurious effect and that the disciplinarian frequently complained of your actions ; that you were inclined to criticize your superiors at times ; that, in fact, you were what would commonly be called a disturber ; that in the summer of 1905 you had some trouble with Mr. Thompson, then Supt. of Industries, and that in July of that year you left the school without permission ; that you never expressed a desire to return to the school to meet your obligations arising under the terms of your enrolment; that you have never asked to be sent home to Idaho, or to be readmitted to the school, a condition precedent to your being sent home at Government expense; and that you should not be readmitted to remain at the school.

As outlined by yourself, your record is much the same as that set out above, allowing for the difference in viewpoint; but certain statements in your account indicate action on your part since leaving the school which would not be considered creditable in a man who is entirely responsible; and as a business man I myself should not consider trustworthy a person who through pique had voluntarily given information, obtained confidentially as it appears yours was, to those who would use it to the detriment of his friends .Your youth and inexperience , and your status as a student and beneficiary limited your range of judgment, so that your conclusions may have been faulty. It was, of course, intended that abuses, if there were any, should be corrected, but not by such means as, in your conceit, you used, and you should remember that you are not responsible for the acts of your superiors. However, I am willing that for the purpose

of furnishing you transportation to your home the Superintendent of the Carlisle School shall readmit you, if he is himself willing to do so. You must understand that the granting of your request does not indicate approval of your conduct, but only a charitable consideration of your present need.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) F. E. Leupp.
Commissioner.

F. I. P.

Compared. *P.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

WASHINGTON.

Education

98190 - 1907

99271 - 1907

File 154

January 11, 1908.

Subject:

Return home of
James M. Parsons.

Superintendent,
Indian Industrial School,
Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Sir :

Referring again to Office letter of the 19th ultimo and your answer of the 20th ultimo, concerning James M. Parsons, a former pupil of the Carlisle School, who writes from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, you are advised that I have written him that, if you are willing to do so, you may readmit him as a pupil for the purpose of sending him to his home in Idaho.

If, in your judgment, it seems advisable, you might have your Boys' Visiting Agent look him up in Philadelphia and arrange for his return without stopping at the school. From his letter it appears that he has had employment with the Stephen Greene Company, 16th & Arch Sts., and is known by the American Baptist Publication Society at Lombard & Juniper Streets. This action is suggested as probably in the interests of harmony and desirable on other grounds.

Please advise as to what action is taken.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) F. E. Leupp.

Compared.

Commissioner.

FILE

154
Carlisle



Station "S"
Philadelphia, Penna.
January 29, 1908.

Hon. F. E. Leupp,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Department of the Interior,
Washington, D. C.

My Friend:

I have received your letter of January 8, which, by its construction, calls for more explanation.

While I trusted you implicitly and still believe you were sincere in considering my case, you merely secured questionable reports from those with whom I had previously fallen out in July 1905, and your letter does not indicate any effort on your part to investigate the case and act upon the findings.

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CR.

In my first letter I explained to you the causes leading up to the final clash with W. G. Thompson, Superintendent of Industries and Athletic Director, and my subsequent departure from the Indian School. You seem to ignore these and you flay me for giving out what was considered confidential. However confidential, the case with W.G. Thompson is different and no man with any amount of business courtesy would have tolerated an undermining affect upon Indian Education which the work and influence of that man had. Confidentials such as are likely to create evil tendencies should be exposed without ceremony and some remedy applied at once. It is already known what havoc the athletic scandals at the Indian School have brought upon the good work. Furthermore, Mr. Thompson, whose influence dominated the School Administration, refused to affirm or deny accusations and would not have me answer for charges of insubordination, if there were any, as would be the case ordinarily. I would infer from their actions that they felt guilty of the charges

You do not explain how you secured information regarding my failure to return to the School and, also, refusal to ask for readmittance. Perhaps it was pure guess work. First, I was not bound to the School by any signed contract only, perhaps, through allowance of charitable privileges; but I did not take advantage

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of lack of binding contract. In 1904 I requested Maj. Mercer to send me home and explained to him my dissatisfaction with some work in connection with the athletics. The request was refused. Later, in 1905 and after I had left the School, I returned to Carlisle during the holidays and in a straightforward manner asked Mercer and Thompson to overlook my indiscretion and rashness and at the same time asked them for readmittance--which was refused point blank. I was made to understand that I would not expect help from the School, and ordered off the grounds after having stayed there only one day.

The Report says I was favored with having arrangements made for my attendance in Dickinson Preparatory School. If any record exists, it will show that I had much difficulty in securing Maj. Mercer's consent and that after I had finally succeeded in persuading him to understand that Preparatory Course was more important to the studious than to the football boys whose sole reasons for attendance there were to remain near the foot ball field and take up light study as pastime. My behavior at that time could not have been questioned for I never stopped at any place in town outside of College grounds and Library. Other students incurred considerable bills ^{with} in town merchants and often frequented pool-rooms and indulged in prohibitive habits. They ~~were~~ "given to violating, in a limited way, some of the minor rules of the School." Prof. Hutchison, Headmaster, will substantiate my statement.

The Report further says I assumed to act as a leader among the boys. It will be found that I took a leading part in the literary affairs of the School and did everything possible to promote the interest in the matter. No instance can be cited where I tried to influence the students wrongfully.

It is needless to enter into the details of the Reports. It is natural to suppose that under the circumstances the Reports would be unfavorable to my side. However, I am willing to go before the board of inquiry if such be appointed and have the matter

Commissioner

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thrashed out thoroughly. The School authorities have robbed me of an opportunity to acquire high education and it is only fair that I should have justice and that my case should not be trifled with.

I did not appeal to you in 1905 for help because I was aware of powerful influence that would be used against me at that time. Lately, however, the press uncovered some of the scandals in the School athletics and I took the opportunity to present my case to you.

Through impatience and indiscretion I did wrong and that I should have stayed at School and undergone indignities until I had appealed to you and all wrongs righted.

Your charitable offer for a free transportation is all very nice, but I am afraid I shall go without it rather than go back to the School for it.

Respectfully,

J. M. Parsons

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

Education
6896 - 1908
File 154

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
WASHINGTON.

SUBJECT:

February 18, 1908.

Treatment as a
pupil at Carlisle,
and correspondence
since leaving.

Mr. J. M. Parsons,
Station S.,
Philadelphia, Pa.

My Friend :

I have your letter of the 29th ultimo, containing further explanation of your trouble at the Carlisle School; and for the reason that you seem earnest and frank in your statements to me I am willing to overlook certain passages in it the tone of which implies an assumption on your part that I am accountable to you for having reached conclusions which you are not willing to accept, regarding the matters which constitute your grievance and your dissatisfaction with the administration of the school.

When I answered your former letter I was under the impression that I had been appealed to to right, as far as I could, a wrong which you honestly thought you had suffered, but which was not brought to my attention until two years had elapsed and the parties whom you consider responsible for your difficulties had left the Service. But you cavil at my "findings", misunderstand my admonition, and, judged by your expressions, would direct my policy as Commissioner so as to bring about, in this instance, a decision which you could accept without humiliation. With the friendliest interest in your

future , which leads me to the belief that your presumptions are seeming only, and not intentional, I want to point out to you a few of your mistaken notions.

For instance : You say, "You merely secured questionable reports" ; "Your letter does not indicate any effort on your part to investigate the case and act upon the findings" ; "You do not explain how you secured information regarding my failure to return to the school", etc. ; "Perhaps it was mere guess work." Your letter evidences some ability and power of analysis ; therefore, having called your attention to the impropriety of such expressions in a communication of this sort, I leave it to your common-sense -- and trust that I am not overrating it -- whether or not your cause and your earnestness justify such language or such an assumed right of challenge of my sincerity. On your conclusions rests my own judgment as to whether I was wrong or right in listening patiently to your complaint and giving it the investigation which seemed to me at the time to be due you. If your actions are really to harmonize with the high standard which you profess to have (and I am not now questioning either your sincerity or your standard) this hint should start some self-questioning.

You say, "You flay me", etc. ~~that~~ Charging you with ^{as} much more self-conceit than many a rash young man possesses - a fault which will decrease with increased experience - I consider you quite on the wrong track here. I would not have your standards lowered or your sense of

right blunted. I do not rebuke your straightforward presentation of matters as you see them, but the insolent tone which you may or may not be conscious of. I would have you cultivate, for your own improvement and the advantage which it will give you in affairs of more than personal import, a temperate, courteous consideration of both sides of any difficulty, and a due appreciation of what confidence means. My reproof, though applicable also to your publication of matters which you understood to be confidential, was intended primarily as a guide in your future conduct; for I should regret the omission of any warning word, when I knew its need, which might steer into a safer course any young man who has before him years of usefulness to his people or years of waste, according as he employs his talents and his better or worse inclinations.

You did not tell me in your former letter that you had returned to the school and asked for readmission, acknowledging your "indiscretion and rashness". Therefore I made no particular inquiry on that point. However, I directed the Superintendent as follows :

If you are willing to do so, you may readmit him as a pupil for the purpose of sending him to his home in Idaho.

If, in your judgment, it seems advisable, you might have your Boys' Visiting Agent look him up in Philadelphia and arrange for his return without stopping at the school.

I cite thus from my letter in view of your closing paragraphs, which are :

Through impatience and indiscretion I did wrong and that I should have stayed at school and undergone indignities until I had appealed to you and all wrongs righted.

Your charitable offer for a free transportation is all very nice, but I am afraid I shall go without it rather than go back to the school for it.

It should suffice you to know that I have in mind such remedies as are needful, and that you have had a hearing much fuller than strict discipline might justify; but I am reluctant to ignore the complaint of aggrieved Indian, young or old, if his assertions are plain and give information which may help me to correct or check pernicious tendencies.

Advise me, as soon as you have decided, whether or not you still wish transportation to your home. Until I hear from you I shall take no action contrary to that which I have indicated, unless you delay unreasonably.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) F. E. Leupp.

Commissioner.

F.I.P.

Compared.

FILE

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED
MAR 18 1908
File 154
19042

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,

Subject: Indian Industrial School,
Return to Carlisle, Pa., March 16, 1908.
Idaho of James
M. Parsons.

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

Sir:

I am in receipt of your Office letter (Education 98190, 99271--1907, and 6896, 17221/1908, File 154), dated the 14th instant relative to the return of James M. Parsons to his home in Idaho.

Reporting on this matter I have to say that on January 16, 1908, Major Mercer addressed the following letter to this young man:

"Mr. James M. Parsons,
c/o Stephen Green Co.,
16th & Arch Sts., Philadelphia.

James:

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs, under date of January 11th, has given me authority, in case I see fit to do so, to give you your transportation from Carlisle to your home. If you still desire it advise me at once and I will arrange to have a ticket placed at the Pennsylvania R.R. Station, Harrisburg, for you. State the railroad point in Idaho to which you wish to go and advise me the date you will call at Harrisburg for the ticket, allowing a few days in which to have the ticket placed there."

A few days later this letter was returned, marked "Party unknown", and it was then sent to the other address given in your letter of Jan. 11th, viz: c/o American Baptist Pub. Society, Lombard & Juniper Sts. It has not since been returned to the school.

The letterbook in this office also shows the following letter written to you by Major W. A. Mercer under date of January 16th:

19042

"Referring to your letter (Education 98190/1907, File 154), dated the 11th instant, I have to advise that I have today written James M. Parsons informing him that if he desires it transportation from Harrisburg to his home in Idaho will be furnished him.

Very respectfully,

W.A.MERCER,

Major 11th Cavalry,
Superintendent."

"As he will pass through Harrisburg, to place the transportation there will be a convenience to him and save him the trouble and expense of coming to Carlisle."

W.A.M.

On the above date, January 16th, the boys' field agent was on duty here at the school, and it was not thought advisable to incur the expense of sending him to Philadelphia to lock up James Parsons. As indicated above, since no letter was received from the young man, transportation to his home was not furnished by the school.

Very respectfully,



Supervisor in Charge.

AES