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Montana, Territory, Fort Peck Agency, Blackfeet Reservation, 1877-1880

John the Baptist A. Brouillet
Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions

Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions

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MONTANA TERRITORY, FORT PECK AGENCY,
BLACKFEET RESERVATION

1877-1880

Montana, Fort Peck

ROBERT C. WALKER,
AGENT FOR CLAIMS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES,
AND DEALER IN
Real Estate, Mines and Mineral Lands,
PROPERTIES AND INVESTMENTS.

Helena, Montana, April 10, 1877

Dear Sir

Permit me to suggest
that it would be well to enquire
of the Com of Indian Affairs what
rights has Major Mitchell (U.S. Indian
Agent at Fort Peck) to engage & deliver
a cargo of "Indian Servant Girls" to
be employed as servants in Helena.

The result of this thing unless con-
fined to families of the same religion
as the Indian girls, they in a short time
will outgrow any other restraint than
that exercised by good Catholic families
and will be prostituted to the basest
uses. I send slip from yesterday's daily
Herald. Please look into this.

Very Respectfully
Yours &c
Robert C. Walker

VERSO OF PRECEDING DOCUMENT

Helena Mon -
April 10 1877.

Walter R. C.

Writes attention to
the fact of certain
Indian girls, being
brought to Helena as
servants -

Newman Catholic Indian Missions,
Washington, D.C., May 7, 1880.

Rev. R. E. Frowbridge,

Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

Sir:

I have the honor to ask
for a permit from your Bureau to locate upon and establish
a school at the Fort Belk Agency, Montana, subject to the
usual restrictions in such cases. In support of this
request I have to submit the following reasons:-

1st - The ^{Proctor} ~~Proctor~~ in charge of the Agency has never done any
thing towards the establishment of a school at said Agency,
though repeatedly requested by your office to do so.

2nd - The Indians have time and again requested us to live
among them for the instruction of their children.

3rd - The Agent, feeling the great necessity of such instruction
for the civilization of his Indians, has also requested us to
yield to their desires and establish for them the school they
ask for.

4th - The Whites at or around the Agency, who feel an interest
in the Indians, have made the same request.

Devereau Catholic Indian Mission,
Washington, D.C., May 7, 1880.

Hon. R. E. Frowbridge,

Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

Sir:

I have the honor to ask
you a permit from your Bureau to locate upon and establish
a school at the Ft. Belk Agency, Montana, subject to the
usual restrictions in such cases. In support of this
request I beg leave to submit the following reasons:-

1st - The ^{Providence} ~~Providence~~ in charge of the Agency has never done any
thing towards the establishment of a school at said Agency,
though repeatedly requested by your office to do so.

2nd - The Indians have time and again requested us to live
among them for the instruction of their children.

3rd - The Agent, feeling the great necessity of such instruction
for the civilization of his Indians, has also requested us to
yield to their desires and establish for them the school they
ask for.

4th - The whites at or around the Agency who feel an interest
in the Indians, have made the same request.

Devereau Catholic Indian Missions,
Washington, D.C., May 7. 1880.

Hon. R. E. Trowbridge,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Sir:

I have the honor to ask
you a permit from your Bureau to locate upon and establish
a school at the Flat Rock Agency, Montana, subject to the
usual restrictions in such cases. In support of this
request I have leave to submit the following reasons:-
1st - The ^{Providence} ~~Church~~ in charge of the Agency has never done any
thing towards the establishment of a school at said Agency,
though repeatedly requested by your office to do so.
2nd - The Indians have time and again requested us to live
among them for the instruction of their children.
3rd - The Agent, feeling the great necessity of such instruction
for the civilization of his Indians, has also requested us to
yield to their desires and establish for them the school they
ask for.
4th - The whites at or around the Agency, who feel an interest
in the Indians, have made the same request.

5- The Indian Peace Policy was ^{not} inaugurated in the interest of the churches but in the interest of the Indians themselves, and, therefore, if, after the assignment of an agency to any specific denomination, such denomination L. to L. fulfil the obligations it assumed under the assignment, public policy and the interest of the Indians demand that such assignment should not prevent other denominations locating on the reservation and taking steps to advance the educational and civilizing interests of the Indians; and more especially should this hold good when the Indians themselves encourage the establishment of such new denominations among them.

If your request is granted, I will cause such early action to be taken in the premises as will enable us to commence the school with the new scholastic year.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

J. H. Brouillet

Director of C. I. Schools

TYPESCRIPT OF PRECEDING DOCUMENT

Montana Ft. Peck School

1880

I have the honor to ask for a permit from your Bureau to locate upon and establish a school at the Fort Peck Agency, Montana, subject to the usual restrictions in such cases. In support of this request I beg leave to submit the following reasons: 1. The Methodist preacher in charge of the Agency has never done anything towards the establishment of a school at said Agency, though repeatedly requested by your office to do so. 2. The Indians have time and again requested ~~us~~ to live among them for the instruction of their children. 3. The Agent, feeling the great necessity of such instruction for the civilization of his Indians, has also requested us to yield to their desires and establish for them the school they ask for. 4. The whites at or around the Agency, who feel an interest in the Indian, have made the same request. 5. The Indian Peace Policy was not inaugurated in the interest of the churches but in the interest of the Indians themselves, and therefore, if, after the assignment of an Agency to any specific denomination, such denomination fails to fulfill the obligations it assumed under the assignment, public policy and the interest of the Indians demand that such assignment should not prevent other denominations locating on the reservation and taking steps to advance the educational and civilizing interests of the Indians; and more especially, should this hold good when the Indians themselves encourage the establishment of such new denominations among them.

If my request is granted, I will cause such early action to be had in the premises as will enable us to commence the school with the new scholastic year.

Brouillet, J.B.A. to Hon. R.E. Trowbridge, D.C. 5/7/1880.

B.C.I.M. Archives Montana Several 1880.

[JULY 28,
1880]

Bureau Catholic Indian Missions,
Washington, D.C., July 28, 1880.

Hon. R. E. Frobisher,
Commissioner Indian Affairs.

Sir,

Referring to my letter of May 10
last, requesting that you grant me a permit to teach and
establish a school at the Fort Rock Agency, I have to make
the following additional statement to wit:

The Methodist Church has not violated the condition upon
which the control of Agency was given - i.e., it has not
had a mission at Fort Rock, nor a school, which, according
to the spirit of the Act, Policy, is an indispensable necessity
of the Mission - though this was a formal condition of the land.

President Grant, in his Message of December 5, 1874, signed
up that he would give the Agency to such denomination
as had the Missionaries already at work among the Indians
and that for the Agency where there had been no missionaries
work, he would give them to such other denomination as
would establish and carry on such missionary work. This
policy has been followed.

has not been done by the Church in charge of the
Rock Agency. Therefore said Church has lost whatever
right or privilege the Person Policy would give it, and the
interest and welfare of the Indians demand that another
Church, but is willing to do the work which has been
neglected by the Church in charge, should not be
prevented from doing so.

Yours, very respectfully,
J. B. Brouillet

TYPESCRIPT OF PRECEDING DOCUMENT

Montana. Ft. Peck. Bureau asks school vs. Methodist

1880

Referring to my letter of May 7 last, requesting that you grant me a permit to locate and establish a school at the Fort Peck Agency, I desire to make the following additional statement to wit:

The Methodist Church has not fulfilled the condition upon which the control of agencies was given - i.e., it has never had a Mission at Fort Peck, nor a school, which, according to the spirit of the Peace Policy, is an indispensable accessory of the Mission - though this was a formal condition of the trust.

President Grant, in his Message of December 5, 1870, expressly says that he would give the agencies to such denominations as had their Missionaries already at work among the Indians, and that for the agencies where there had been no missionary work, he would give them to such other denominations as would establish and carry on such missionary work there. (See Foreign Relations, 1870, p. 17.)

This has not been done by the Church in charge of the Fort Peck Agency. Therefore said Church has lost whatever right or privilege the Peace Policy would give it, and the interest and welfare of the Indians demand that another Church, that is willing to do the work which has been neglected by the Church in charge, should not be prevented from doing so.

Brouillet, J.B.A. to Comr. R. E. Growbridge, Washington, D. C., 7/28/1880.
Indian Office Files Montana B 668, 1880.

Bureau Catholic Indian Missions,
Washington, D.C., August 2, 1880.

Wm. R. E. Frothingham,
Commissioner Indian Affairs.

Sir:

In addition to my letters of May 7 and July 28, relative to a request for a permit to locate a school on the Fort Peck Agency, I desire to submit for your consideration the following remarks.

The Methodist Church, in a conference of the different Protestant Churches with the Board of Indian Commissioners, held Jan'y. 11 1879, declared that: "In regard to these Agencies [i.e. the Agencies assigned to it in the distribution of Agencies under the Peace Policy] it so turned out in the allotment of Agencies that there was no Agency allotted to us, in which we had a missionary at all, and our Society hesitated for a while to ^{enter} into this plan, feeling that they were not prepared to take upon themselves any more missionary work, at present, of that class. In our intercourse with the Department of the Interior and the Indian Bureau we did not understand that the relation we were to sustain to the Government, in this matter,

involved the placing or establishment of schools, &c. We understood that we became responsible to the Government in the nomination of Agents for the Agencies assigned to us. (See Report Board Indian Commissioners for 1871, page 165.)

This Church, therefore, did not agree, nor does it hold itself bound to establish missions or schools upon Agencies assigned to it, but considers that its duty ends when it has nominated the Agents - consequently, the ^{only} right it claims in connection with the management of Indian Agencies is that of naming the Agents for the Agencies under its control.

This being fact, it follows, it submits, that this Church should have no choice in the determination of what schools shall be located on the Fort Peck Agency - that the decision of the Department should be made without reference to what said Church may have to say in the matter, and that even should said Church now offer to establish a school, it could have no claim that would give it precedence of others, but that any other Church that is willing to go there should have the right to establish its own schools supported by the Methodists; and further that, in the appointment of the Government school teacher the action of the Department should be based upon the merits of the person offering to take charge of the school, and upon the ^{best} supported, and not upon denominational grounds.

Very respectfully,

E. J. A. Brinckerhoff

TYPESCRIPT OF PRECEDING DOCUMENT

Montana Ft. Peck School

In addition to my letters of May 7 and July 28, relative to a request for a permit to locate a school on the Fort Peck Agency, I desire to submit for your consideration the following remarks.

1880 The Methodist Church in a conference of the different protestant churches with the Board of Indian Commissioners, held Jan. 11, 1872, declared that "In regard to these Agencies [we the Agencies assigned to it in the distribution of Agencies under the Peace Policy] it so turned out in the allotment of Agencies that there was no agency allotted to us, in which we had a missionary at all, and our society hesitated for a while to enter into this plan, feeling that they were not prepared to take upon themselves any more missionary work, at present, of that class. In our intercourse with the Department of the Interior and the Indian Bureau we did not understand that the relation we were to sustain to the Government, in this matter, involved the placing or establishment of schools etc. We understood that we became responsible to the Government in the nomination of Agents for the Agencies assigned to us." (See Report Board Indian Commissioners for 1871, page 165.)

This church, therefore, did not agree, nor does it hold itself bound, to establish missions or schools upon Agencies assigned to it, but considers that its duty ends when it has nominated the Agents. Consequently the only right it claims in connection with the management of Indian Agencies is that of naming the Agents for the Agencies under its control.

This being fact, it follows, I submit, that this church should have no choice in the determination of what schools shall be located on the Fort Peck Agency, that the decision of the Department should be made without reference to what said church may have to say in the matter, and that even should said church now offer to establish a school, it would have no claim that would give it precedence of others, but that any other church that is willing to go there should have the right to establish its own schools unopposed by the Methodists; and further that, in the appointment of the Government school teachers the action of the Department should be based upon the merits of the parties offering to take charge of the schools, and upon the ~~and~~ and not upon denominational grounds.

[TERMS PROPOSED]

Brouillet, J.B.A. to Hon R.E. Trowbridge, D.C., 8/2/1880.
Indian Office Files Montana Ft. Peck 1880.

Bureau Catholic Indian Missions,
Washington, D.C., August 10, 1880.

Hon. N.E. Frowbridge,
Commissioner Indian Affairs,

Sir:

I have the honor to request a
copy of the correspondence between your office and the
Methodist Board relative to my application for a permit
to locate upon and establish a school at the Fort Peck
Agency.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant

J. B. A. Brownell

Russian Catholic Indian Missions,
Washington, D.C., August 10, 1880.

Hon. N.E. Trowbridge,
Commissioner Indian Affairs,

Sir:

I have the honor to request a
copy of the correspondence between your office and the
Methodist Board relative to my application for a permit
to locate upon and establish a school at the Fort Peck
Agency.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant

J. B. A. Brownell

[AUG. 12, 1880]

Bureau Catholic Indian Missions,
Washington, D.C. August 12, 1880.

Hon. R.E. Ironbridge,
Commissioner Indian Affairs,
Sir:

In support of my application
for a permit to establish a school at the Fort Rock Agency,
I beg leave to call your attention to two precedents of your
Office that favor the granting of the permit in question.

In 1873, the Catholic Commissioner applied for a permit
to put mission establishments on the Nez Perce and Yakima
Reservations. The former was under control of the Presbyterian
Church, which had a Mission there and teachers in charge
of the Agency schools; the latter was under the control of
the Methodist Church, which claimed to have a Church there
in charge of Indian preachers, and had teachers in charge
of the Agency schools.

Though in both these cases the Churches had apparently
fulfilled the conditions under which the said agencies were
assigned to their control, and had thereby secured whatever

[AUG. 12, 1880]

Bureau Catholic Indian Missions,
Washington, D.C. August 12, 1880.

Hon. R. E. Ironbridge,
Commissioner Indian Affairs,

Sir:

In support of my application
for a permit to establish a school at the Fort Rock Agency,
I beg leave to call your attention to two precedents of your
Office that favor the granting of the permit in question.

In 1873, the Catholic Commissioner applied for a permit
to put mission establishments on the Nez Perce and Yakima
Reservations. The former was under control of the Presbyterian
Church, which had a Mission there and teachers in charge
of the Agency Schools; the latter was under the control of
the Methodist Church, which claimed to have a Church there
in charge of Indian preachers, and had teachers in charge
of the Agency Schools.

Though in both these cases the Churches had apparently
fulfilled the conditions under which the said agencies were
assigned to their control, and had thereby secured whatever

privileges were due them under the Peace Policy, yet, on the 13th June, 1873, the Secretary of the Interior, with the concurrence of your office, granted the permit asked for.

Now, in the Fort Peck Agency Case, the Methodist Church, not having fulfilled the conditions relating to missions and schools upon which Agencies were assigned to Churches, as I have shown in my previous letter on this matter, has failed to ^{secure} mission or school privileges, under the Peace Policy, at said Agency. I hold, therefore, that your office can have no sound objection to granting my request for a permit, and that you have much better reasons to grant it in this case than you had in the two cases cited.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours obedient servant
J. M. Brannan