

Oct. 14, 1942

Mrs. C.M. Loveys,
299 Queen St. West,
Toronto 2,
Ont.

Dear Mrs. Loveys:

At the request of Mr. Jones I spent a few hours in the Portage Aschool yesterday afternoon to go over the books and the school generally before he left. He is now on his way to Prince Rupert. I think you will be satisfied with Mr. McNeill as acting principal. He lacks experience in the work but I believe he is a sound educationalist and he knows something of farming. I found his wife, whom I had not met previously, a very competent woman. She has personality and poise and I am sure will be very useful on the staff.

Mrs. Easton tells me she will not remain as matron. She does not look well and she says the work is beyond her strength. I can well believe it. If you have no one to replace her I think Mrs. McNeill could do the work.

Regarding the finances, the receipts to September 30th were \$14,611.19 and the expenditures \$14,690.15 leaving a debit balance of \$78.96, but the cheque for the grants for September quarter did not reach Mr. Jones until October. There was therefore a real balance at September 30th of \$1436.04.

In addition to this there are other cash assets for the December quarter as follows:

Animals sold, not paid for	\$150.	
Plow sold	"	65.
36 Hogs ready for market	432.	estimate
6 Cattle	"	600.
2 horses, 2 colts to be sold	250.	"
Potatoes & Vegetables	450.	
	<u>\$1947.</u>	

I think Mr. Jones's estimate of stock and vegetable^s to be sold is quite reasonable and the cash should all be received

Mrs. C.M.Loveys - 2

before December 31st. That would put the school in good shape for the winter. Mr. Jones's financing has turned out very much better than was anticipated seven years ago and I have no doubt that Mr. McNeill will give you satisfactory service as acting principal.

Yours very sincerely,

The Woman's Missionary Society

OF

The United Church of Canada

GENERAL OFFICES: 412-413 WESLEY BUILDINGS
TORONTO - CANADA

PRESIDENT

MRS. L. F. STEPHENS
52 MARKLAND ST., HAMILTON, ONT.

GENERAL SECRETARY
MISS WINNIFRED THOMAS

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MISS MYRTLE M. BUCK

October 17th - 1942.

HOME MISSION EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
MRS. C. MAXWELL LOVEYS

FOREIGN MISSION EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
MRS. HUGH D. TAYLOR

Dr. John A. Cormie,
441 Somerset Bldg.,
WINNIPEG - Man.

Dear Dr. Cormie :-

Your letter of October 14th is very welcome and we are more than pleased with the condition in which you found the Portage la Prairie school.

I do hope that Mr. McNeil sees the need of some repairs and if there is a balance in cash I hope they will consider doing some cleaning. I hope Mr. McNeil proves to be satisfactory.

We shall try and replace Mrs. Easton at an early a date as possible. We had hoped that she would find the work satisfactory but if it is too heavy we are quite willing to release her.

My kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

Isabel Mcintosh Loveys
Home Mission Executive Secretary.

IML:ms

Nov. 2, 1942

Mrs. L.J.Reycraft,
208 Kingsway,
Winnipeg.

Dear Mrs. Reycraft:

I spent a few hours on Saturday, October 31 in the Portage la Prairie School and I regret to report that the conditions in the school are not good.

The building: It is in a bad state of repair. Many of the walls need repairs, some replastering and all should be painted. There is at least one leak in the roof that has affected both plaster and paint.

The plumbing needs extensive overhauling. There are several leaks in the plumbing and I noticed in a few places that cans were hung under the leaks and here and there water was leaking on to the floor. Many of the taps were leaking.

The boys' toilet is in very bad condition. The tiling had fallen off the walls and some is off the floors. The floors were wet. The girls' toilet is in better condition but also has leaking taps.

Some of the electric installations are in poor condition. The fire inspector when he visited the school last week condemned some of the installations as being dangerous to life and property.

The question of responsibility for these extensive repairs arises. Who is responsible? the Indian Department or your Society? I believe the Department officials think that too much of the school revenue has been expended on the farm with its stock and equipment and too little on the school building. I believe the Department auditor has been asked to report on this point.

The staff: When Mrs. Easton arrived she was under a misunderstanding regarding the duties and responsibility of the matron which I believe has projected itself into the present situation.

There is a distinct lack of harmony between the principal and the matron and between the principal's wife, whose present position is senior teacher, and the matron which does not make for

Mrs. L.J.Reycraft -2

efficiency on the part of any of them. The duties of the matron and of the principal are not clear to either of them. This should be cleared up. I think it arises in part from the fact that Mrs. Easton had been matron of a school home where she was completely in charge and in part from the lack of experience of the present principal.

The matron feels that she and the other women members of the staff are overworked and underpaid. Two have asked for an increase in pay. I believe the staff is sufficient for the institution if there were a proper allocation of duties. The question of salaries in this and all other institutions will have to be reviewed in the light of the increased cost in living, though I think it is wiser to make the adjustment by means of a cost of living bonus than an increase in salary, which might be difficult to maintain if economic conditions deteriorate after the war.

Mrs. Easton wishes to be relieved of her office as soon as possible and I feel that in the interests of the school and all concerned, that would be the wise course to take. She wishes, however, other work and inquired if there were an appointment available with the Board of Home Missions. I had to say that I did not know of any. I think I should add that she has her fourteen year old granddaughter living with her in the school and I do not believe that that helps out the situation.

Finances: As far as I can make out the financial situation is fairly satisfactory. A balance was carried into October of \$1436.34. To this can be added

Proceeds of sale of animals	\$150.	already collected
Proceeds of sale of plow	65.	" "
36 hogs to be sold	432.	estimate
6 Cattle to be sold	450.	"
4 Horses to be sold	200.	"
Potatoes	800.	"

This makes a total revenue with which to begin the last quarter of the year of approximately \$3500. There may be slight variation from this amount depending on the actual price received for stock and vegetables not yet sold. This amount is slightly higher than what I reported to Mrs. Loveys after a visit to the school when I went over the books on October 19. Mr. McNeill's estimate is lower than that of Mr. Jones and I think, perhaps, more accurate. It is at least more conservative.

The salaries paid the staff run as follows:

	Principal	per month	\$100. and maintenance
Matron	"	66.66	"
Nurse	"	73.33	"
Senior Teacher	"	50.	
Junior Teacher	"	40.	
Farmer	"	55.	
Handy Man	"	50.	
Cook	"	45.	
Laundress	"	40.	

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Seamstress per month 40. and maintenance

Mr. McNeill is an experienced teacher and understands Manitoba farming but is not familiar with Residential School administration and will need some help for a few weeks. I am sure he will be satisfactory when he becomes more at home in his office.

If you have no one else in view and Mrs. Easton leaves, you would do well to consider Mrs. McNeill for the position of matron. She has poise and culture and, I think, good judgment. She is now senior teacher but being the Principal's wife her conduct is open to misunderstanding on the part of the other members of the staff. There is a good deal to be said for having the principal's wife matron of the institution if she is to live on the premises and be a member of the staff. I am sure you will easily see how the present arrangement lends itself to misunderstanding and lack of harmony.

If there is any way I can be of assistance in this connection I hope you will not hesitate to let me know.

Yours very sincerely,

The Woman's Missionary Society

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HOME MISSION EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
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FOREIGN MISSION EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
MRS. HUGH D. TAYLOR

November 27th - 1942.

Dr. J.A. Cormie,
Superintendent of Missions,
441 Somerset Avenue,
WINNIPEG - Man.

Dear Dr. Cormie :-

You wrote us on October 14th. after your visit to Portage La Prairie and while we regret very much that the Indian Residential School is in such poor shape we feel Mr. McNeill will do his best to have the repairs done which will make it more comfortable.

I am not at all surprised that the Inspectors gave us poor reports because Mr. Jones' interest was more in the outside than in the School building. However, we have sufficient money in our Estimate to do some repairs and I trust the Government will give us some assistance.

We have requested Mrs. Easton's release by the end of November and we are asking Mrs. McNeill to take over the Matronship.

Thank you very much for your interest and assistance in this matter.

With my kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,

Label Mcintosh Loveys
Home Mission Executive Secretary.

DL:S