

Office Supt. Ind. Affairs

Dayton. O. T. Feby. 12. 1856

Sir:

By the mail which leaves for Washington the 20th instant I have transmitted to your Office, in packages numbers one and two, my account current and abstracts and vouchers for the last two months of the Third Quarter of 1855. which ~~with~~ I trust will on their examination be found to contain fewer errors and imperfections than ~~those~~ ^{many} ~~of those~~ previously forwarded. A much longer time has passed on the rendition of these accounts than would under ordinary circumstances be allowable, or ~~even~~ excusable: but I must plead in extenuation ~~the fact~~ ^{that} the excited state in which everything has been the past four or five months owing to Indian difficulties, ^{and} the numbers of ^{my} troops I have been compelled to take into different parts of the Country, and leaving my superintendency and official papers and records ^{in the hands} ^{with my clerk,} of one whom I found to be quite incapable (or unwilling) to devote his ~~whole~~ ^{proper} time and attention to. of making up the accounts in a correct and proper manner, and apparently, unwilling to devote his proper time and attention to his official duties. I refer to my former clerk Mr. E. R. Gray, who was discharged by me on the 21st ult.

I have for the present engaged the services of an experienced clerk. Mr. C. D. B. formerly in the Dept. of the Interior, who will give his whole time and attention to the proper papers, accounts, papers and reports for the future, and ~~among~~ ^{and} the errors and inaccuracies, ~~formerly~~ ^{prevalent} in my accounts, will be avoided. - Some length of time must necessarily elapse before my accounts for the 4th Qr can be forwarded you, as I design to have a thorough and searching examination into all the accounts of my office, and endeavour to trace ^{out} and correct the imperfections in former accounts, and adjust the "Statements of Difference" yet pending in regard to them. No time however, will be lost in making up the accounts of the 4th Quarter, ~~and they will be made up and~~ ^{and will be} transmitted with the least possible delay consistent with a proper care to their accuracy. -

In the matter of rendering accounts, one of the greatest obstacles, with which I have to contend is the exceeding informal, vague and incorrect manner in which the Agents and Sub Agents render their statements and vouchers. Not a single ^{very few} Office of the Dept presents his ^{there} accounts here for examination and adjustment but that the vouchers have to be sent back - sometimes hundreds of miles - for corrections, and many items of expenditure thrown out ^{being} improper as a charge against the Govt. and in some instances, their whole accounts, abstracts and statements to be made out anew in this office. This is a serious evil, and one which time only, and instruction upon instruction, will remove. ~~It~~ Much of the time of the Clerk in the office is thus consumed in writing and examinations that do not properly belong to it.

I have recapitulated these matters to you so that you might not be aware of some of the difficulties to be encountered in rendering accounts and reports promptly and properly, yet I ~~trust~~ trust they will all soon be overcome and that for the future the Department at Washington shall not have cause to think this office ~~behind hand~~ less active in those matters than ~~any~~ other of the offices of the Dept.

In the rendition of formal accounts I have seldom examined the returns and vouchers with the ^{scrutiny} ~~assiduity~~ requisite to detect errors in the amount of accounts, having relied upon the competency and accuracy of my clerks, and in several instances signed blank abstracts and accounts ~~which were filed up by the Genl during my absence on official duties.~~

The first report returned to the statement of property as per Abstract rendered for the month of July last. ~~It~~ In the examination of the returns prepared by the Genl for the months of August & September last, very many errors were found to exist suggesting the necessity of rearranging the statement of the formal accounts as a number of papers one found in the office both of purchase and distribution not copied to the proper quarters or accounted for in any manner.

16/ Feb 12.