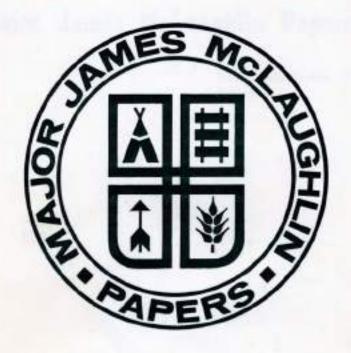
Guide to the Microfilm Edition of the





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Guide to the Microfilm Edition of the Major James McLaughlin Papers

Rev. Louis Pfaller, O.S.B. Editor

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Citations from Rolls 1-30 must credit Assumption College Archives as the repository. The National Archives is the repository of the contents of Rolls 31-37.

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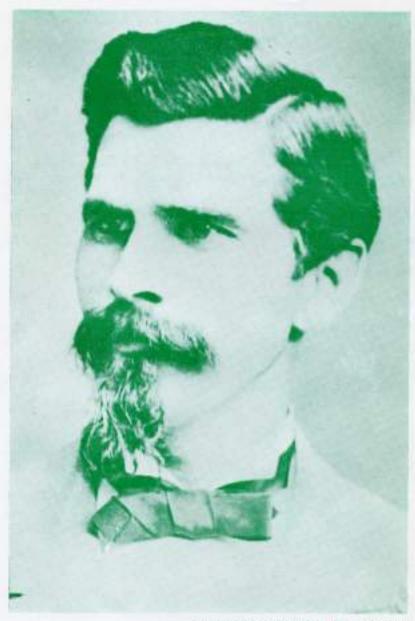


Photo Courteey of North Dakota Historical Society

MAJOR JAMES McLAUGHLIN as Agent at Devils Lake.

Major James McLaughlin Papers

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born on February 12, 1842, at Avonmore, Ontario, James McLaughlin moved to Minnesota in 1863, where the next year he married a Sioux mixed-blood, Marie Louise Buisson. He practiced his blacksmith trade and engaged in other business ventures until employed, July 1, 1871, by Major W. H. Forbes as the blacksmith and general overseer of the new Devils Lake Agency in Dakota.

In 1876 he became agent at Devils Lake and compiled such a record for progress and fairness that he was promoted, in 1881, to the larger Sioux Agency of Standing Rock. Here his record as one of the finest agents in the country won him re-appointments in an age of short-term political appointees.

Though he is most widely known for his conflict with Sitting Bull and the resulting death of the famous Indian on December 15, 1890, his best claim to fame rests on the great strides towards civilization made by the Indians under his guidance.

In 1895 he began his career as Inspector for the Indian Department and the Department of the Interior. Working continuously until his death on July 28, 1923, he became the greatest treaty-maker and trouble-shooter our government has ever employed. He negotiated scores of agreements on agencies spreading from New York to California and from Washington to Oklahoma.

He possibly knew more Indians than any man alive, and he was so well liked by Indians all over the United States that when he wrote his recollections he published them (1910) under the appropriate title of My Friend the Indian.

HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION

During most of his years as agent and inspector, Major McLaughlin was careful to keep copies of important correspondence. Until 1911 he preserved most of the letters in letterpress books and in the last twelve years he relied chiefly on carbon copies for his record.

At his death in 1923 his collection passed to his son, Rupert Sibley McLaughlin. The latter died a year later, and Rupert's wife fell heir to the collection. Over the years, historically minded people obtained portions of the collection. Usher L. Burdick obtained the bulk of the papers in the early 1930's, and he donated them to Assumption Abbey in the late 1940's.

In 1967 the Louis W. and Maud Hill Family Foundation granted Assumption College funds for the retrieval, cataloguing and microfilming of the missing portions as well as of the part owned by the college. For this purpose the editor has borrowed the copy-books and other material owned by several of McLaughlin's descendants—Robert C. and Robert S. McLaughlin (grandsons) and James M. Fenelon (great-grandson). It is apparent that a few items of the original collection have been lost, especially a letter-press book for the years 1876-1878.

Supplementary material has been collected by the editor from the National Archives and appears on Rolls 31 to 37. It covers the years 1870-1895.

In the work of cataloguing and indexing the large collection, Brother Philip Kress, OSB, and Mrs. Janice Knopik rendered valuable assistance.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPERS

The Major James McLaughlin Papers measure eighteen linear feet and number 30,000 pages. Nearly 11,000 pages consist of letter-press books (Rolls 19-29), covering the years 1878-1913. The books are, in general, in good condition, though about ten percent of the pages are badly faded or water-damaged.

Rolls 1-13 contain the loose letters and papers between the years 1855 and 1937, including many original letters written to McLaughlin. Rolls 1 and 2 deal mostly with the Sioux Indians of Devils Lake and Standing Rock Agencies. Rolls 3 and 4 comprise the letters of his early years as Indian Inspector and deal mostly with his treaty-making and inspections, but contain also much of his personal business correspondence, such as his investments in land and mines.

Rolls 5-13 contain voluminous material on allotments and citizenship work, including thousands of carbon copies of individual Indians' applications for citizenship. These contain good geneological information.

Rolls 14-18 are "catch alls"—undated, oversized, clippings, pamphlets, brochures, printed reports, notebooks and checkbooks. They are described below.

Roll 30 is McLaughlin's report on the Rodman Wanamaker Expedition of 1913. The expedition visited 99 reservations throughout the country.

Rolls 31-37 comprise documents microfilmed for the editor at the National Archives. They cover the period of 1870-1895 and deal with affairs on Devils Lake and Standing Rock Agencies, and have much material on Sitting Bull and the Messiah Craze of 1890.

By far the most important rolls, as far as research goes, are the two Index Rolls, which required a year to prepare. These rolls contain 15,675 cross-reference cards, which give the exact frame numbers on the rolls, thereby pinpointing information on individual persons and Indian agencies. The cards on the individual agencies give a short, descriptive phrase to indicate the contents of each document, e.g., "Indian Troubles," "Schools," "Employee List," "Complaints," etc. Here is a sample card:

State or Person	Washi	ngton		7-3-1900 Date
Agency or Town	Colvi	lle Agency		
Category_	Trans	fer of Ind	ians	
Roll	24	Frames	120	-126
Book or Fo	lder 1	900-1901	Pages	120-126

Except for James McLaughlin and Sitting Bull, the cards for persons and places other than agencies do not give an indication of the document's contents, but only its roll and frame numbers.

All of the cards on a particular agency, person or place are arranged in the order in which they appear on the 37 rolls.

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

James McLaughlin's autobiography, My Friend the Indian, published in 1910, is the best reference work for studying this collection. The best short biography is that by Flora Warren Seymour in Indian Agents of the Old Frontier (1941), pp. 297-317. The early years of his career are treated by the editor of the microfilm in an article, "The Forging of an Indian Agent," in North Dakota History, vol. 34, pp. 62-76.

The part played by McLaughlin in the Messiah Craze of 1890 has been treated in several books, such as Usher L. Burdick's The Last Days of Sitting Bull (1941), Robert Utley's The Last Days of the Sioux Nation (1963) and David H. Miller's Ghost Dance (1959). The editor is planning to write a

full-length biography of McLaughlin.

ROLL NOTES

Roll 1: Letters, 1855-1880

There are only fifty pages before 1876, the year McLaughlin became U.S. Indian Agent at Devils Lake Agency, Dakota Territory. The correspondence deals chiefly with affairs of the Devils Lake Agency (818 frames). Other agencies receiving mention are Fort Berthold (38 frames), Standing Rock (32), Sisseton (27) and a scattering for other places in Dakota, Minnesota and Montana.

Roll 2: Letters, 1881-1900

Loose correspondence, supplementary to the documents in the letter-books which appear on Rolls 19-23. It deals with McLaughlin's last months as agent at Devils Lake Agency (87 frames), his incumbency at Standing Rock Agency (222) and the first five years he spent as U.S. Indian Inspector. In the last section there is correspondence dealing with his work in fourteen states, the highest counters being South Dakota (67) and Oklahoma (60). There is considerable correspondence on McLaughlin's investments in a Black Hills mine.

Roll 3: Letters, 1901-1909

Loose papers paralleling the letter-books on Rolls 24-28. This was the high tide of McLaughlin's treaty-making and trouble-shooting on thirty-six agencies in fourteen states. The leading states are Oklahoma (236 frames), South Dakota (65), Minnesota (57), Montana (48), Utah (46), North Dakota (45), Idaho (25), and a scattering in Arizona, California, Iowa, Nebraska, New York and Oregon. There is also a good deal on McLaughlin's investments in Utah and Black Hills mines and on the townsite of McLaughlin, South Dakota.

Roll 4: Letters, 1910-1912

Paralleling Roll 29, this roll deals with McLaughlin's inspections and negotiations on agencies in the following states: New York (79 frames), Oklahoma (77), Minnesota (62), Pennsylvania (Carlisle, 59), Utah (57), Washington (46), South Dakota (44), Nebraska (40), Colorado (21) and Wisconsin (19). There is also considerable material on McLaughlin's personal business: Utah mining, the sale of lots in the town of McLaughlin (South Dakota) and the publication and sale of his book, My Friend the Indian.

Roll 5: Letters, 1913-1914

This roll is supplementary to Roll 30 and contains much correspondence arranging for visits of the Rodman Wanamaker Expedition of 1913 to most of the Indian agencies. The frame count by states is South Dakota (170) mostly on Yankton Agency, New Mexico (68) mostly on trouble at Shiprock, North Dakota (61), Nebraska (47) Omaha Claims, Oklahoma (35), Minnesota (32), Washington (32), Montana (26), Arizona (24), and a few frames each for California, Idaho, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah and Wyoming.

Roll 6: Letters, 1915-April 1916

The roll begins with a considerable section on Indian troubles in Colorado (115 frames) and Utah (40). It then turns to the extensive citizenship program of Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior. Much of the roll is concerned with Mc-Laughlin's work determining the competence of Indians for citizenship in South Dakota, especially on the Yankton and Cheyenne River Agencies (265 and 185 frames). There is also material on the making of allotments to Indians in Montana (111), Nebraska (51), North Dakota (32) and Minnesota (15). Six other states have a few frames.

Roll 7: Letters, May-December 1916

Most of this roll continues the record of McLaughlin's work among the Indians to determine their competence for land allotments and managing their own businesses. It contains the individual applications for patents in fee for about two hundred Indians, mostly in South Dakota (374 frames), North Dakota (178), Wyoming (100), Montana (36) and Nebraska (21). There is a little correspondence on the agencies in each of these states: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon and Oklahoma.

Roll 8: Letters, January-September 1917

More than half of the roll comprises the applications for patents in fee for Sioux Indians in South Dakota, principally on the Cheyenne and Yankton Agencies (257 and 112 frames). About 200 frames give the family history of individual Chippewas, collected by McLaughlin in taking their census preparatory to setting up the Rocky Boy Agency in Montana. There is also correspondence (44 frames) on the renegade Utes of Colorado and Utah, and on the purchase of lands for the Mille Lac Chippewas in Minnesota (17 frames). A small amount of material on North Dakota, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

Roll 9: Letters, October 1917-June 1918

Applications of individual Indians for patents in fee and McLaughlin's competency work comprises the bulk of this roll. The applicants are mostly from Standing Rock Agency (441 frames) and Fort Berthold Agency (69) in North Dakota. Oklahoma ranks next (185), followed by Wisconsin (86) and Wyoming (27). The Oklahoma material also contains an investigation of Osage Agency. There is further correspondence on the Rocky Boy and Mille Lac Chippewa land, and a few items of McLaughlin's personal business. Roll 10: Letters, July 1918-June 1919

Nearly half (480 frames) of the roll deals with affairs in Oklahoma, principally allotment work among the Creek Indians. Investigation of affairs on Malki Agency in California comprises 188 frames. North Dakota ranks next (60 frames), followed by South Dakota (29) and Washington (24).

Roll 11: Letters, July 1919-July 5, 1920

Half of the roll is made up of individual applications for patents in fee by the Sioux of Standing Rock Agency (496 frames). Sizeable sections deal with the competence of Indians on the Winnebago Agency, Nebraska (155), the Cheyenne River Agency, South Dakota (110) and Kickapoo Agency, Kansas (74). The letters also contain information on the Wounded Knee investigation conducted by McLaughlin on the Standing Rock, Cheyenne River and Pine Ridge Agencies.

Roll 12: Letters, July 7-September 11, 1920

Almost the entire roll deals with the competence of the Sieux on Pine Ridge Reservation (781 frames). It contains much geneological information in the 370 applications. Only a small portion deals with other reservations and with Mc-Laughlin's personal business.

Roll 13: Letters, September 18, 1920-1937

Continuation of McLaughlin's inspection work on agencies in sixteen states, chiefly South Dakota (310 frames), North Dakota (226), Nebraska (83), Wyoming (33), Montana (14) and Nevada (10). The roll contains considerable personal business correspondence, felicitations occasioned by his completion of fifty years in the Indian Service, his last will and testament, and business papers created in the execution of his will.

- Roll 14: Undated Letters, Vouchers and Miscellaneous Papers There are four sections of this collection of miscellanea:
 - Undated letters, 1881-1922 (frames 1-45).
- Vouchers, 1876-1923 (frames 46-519). These are mostly oversized vouchers, employee lists, estimates of funds and other reports to the Indian Office. This is not a complete file of vouchers, and it covers chiefly the reports from Devils Lake and Standing Rock Agencies.
- General Directions, 1902-1923 (frames 520-636). Mimeographed instructions sent to employees by the President and by various officials in the Department of the Interior.
 - 4. Four newspapers (frames 638-658):

The Word Carrier, March 1888 The Indian Helper, November 30, 1888

The Winona Times (N. Dak.), March 3, 1898

The Tomahawk, April 9, 1903

Roll 15: Miscellaneous Reports and Publications

Newspaper clippings and magazine articles on Indians

(frames 1-290).

 Government publications dealing with agreements and negotiations with Indians in Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Washington (frames 291-680).

Manuscripts (frames 682-816).

- a. An outline of Land-Cession Treaties with the Shawnee, Chippewa, Sioux, Otoe, Missouria and other Indians.
- A section of the Court Record Book at Standing Rock Agency, 1885-1886.
- c. Memoirs and notes of Annie Goudreau McLaughlin.

Roll 16: Notebooks 1-21, 1870-1908

These are small pocket notebooks in which McLaughlin recorded miscellaneous information, such as addresses, field
notes, records of personal and official expenses and first drafts
of letters. The quality varies from book to book. Some are
very legible and contain valuable information; others are filled
with trivia and are blurred. Notebook 12 contains a list of
guns and horses taken from the hostiles after the death of Sitting Bull. Notebook 13 lists 777 Standing Rock Sioux to whom
payment in silver was made for confiscated ponies. Notebook
19 deals with his book, My Friend the Indian, while Notebook
20 treats of his investigation of frauds on the Osage Agency in
Oklahoma. Information by states is distributed as follows:
North Dakota (165 frames), Oklahoma (56), South Dakota and
Utah (19) each.

Roll 17: Notebooks 22-44, 1909-1924

As on Roll 16, these notebooks contain miscellaneous information, but some are devoted entirely to recording information on individual Indian allottees. The principal ones are Notebook 30 (1918), North and South Dakota; Notebook 31 (1917), Wisconsin; Notebook 32 (1918), Oklahoma; Notebook 33 (1918), Wyoming; Notebook 35 (1919), Nebraska; Notebook 36 and 37 (1919), Standing Rock Agency, North Dakota; Notebook 38 (1919), Cheyenne River Agency, South Dakota; and Notebook 40, which contains McLaughlin's notes on the Wounded Knee investigation of 1920.

Roll 18: Checkbooks, 1874-1923

These are the stubs from twenty-two of McLaughlin's official and personal checkbooks. Most of them are from the years 1874 to 1895 and give useful information on the employees and expenses on Devils Lake and Standing Rock Agencies. McLaughlin often wrote explanatory notes on the stubs, to be used later in making official reports. A total of 1200 checks

are contained on the 296 frames.

Roll 19: Letterbook 1878-1881

This is the first of the available letter-press books of the McLaughlin Collection. The book has 903 pages of correspondence, dealing principally (664 frames) with affairs of Devils Lake Agency in Dakota Territory. Transfer of Indians and depredations occasioned most of the correspondence with other reservations in Dakota—Standing Rock (46), Turtle Mountain (34), Fort Berthold (25) and Sisseton (11).

Roll 20: Letterbooks 1881-1886 and 1886-1890

The books contain 551 frames that deal directly with affairs of Standing Rock Agency. They trace much of Mc-Laughlin's correspondence on Sitting Bull (128 frames) and the Messiah Craze, including copies of the letters ordering the arrest of Sitting Bull and the report of his death. There are (78) on Hampton Institute in Virginia, (47) on Herbert Welsh and (57) on Bishop Martin Marty.

Roll 21: Letterbook 1890 and Census Book 1891-1892

The letterbook covers a vital period in the history of Standing Rock Agency, May 5 to December 13, 1890. It traces much of the history of the Ghost Dance and the Messiah Craze. The volume contains an index of names. The census book contains a 300-page list of Standing Rock Indians, giving the Indian and English names, the ages and family relationship (father, daughter, widow, etc.). Much of the list is blurred and hard to read.

Roll 22: Letterbooks 1891-1895 and 1895-1897

The first volume covers McLaughlin's last four years as agent at Standing Rock, half of it is on the year 1891, still vibrating from the shock of the Messiah Craze and the death of Sitting Bull. The second volume contains a record of McLaughlin's first years as United States Indian Inspector. It deals principally with reservations in South Dakota (144 frames), North Dakota (51), Nebraska (47), Wisconsin (26), and less than (20) for Iowa, Minnesota, Oklahoma and Wyoming.

Roll 23: Letterbooks 1897-1899 and 1899-1900

These volumes record much of McLaughlin's troubleshooting, from November 1897 to March 1899. They contain extensive reports of his activities in settling land disputes between Indians and whites at Tuba City, Arizona (180 frames), on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, Montana (150), at Pipestone Quarry, Minnesota (90), and the Otoe and Missouria Claims (50) in Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma. McLaughlin also reports on his investigation of Indian schools in Oklahoma, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota. There is also considerable correspondence on the settling of the Lower Brule Sioux on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. There are 294 frames on South Dakota reservations.

Roll 24: Letterbooks 1900-1901 and 1901-1902

McLaughlin's school and agency investigations and land agreements from April 1900 to February 1902 form the bulk of this roll. The frame count by states is South Dakota (244), Washington (162), Montana (133), Oregon (94), North Dakota (90), Utah (74), California (73) and Arizona (61).

Roll 25: Letterbooks 1902-1902 and 1902-1903

This roll has several lengthy reports of McLaughlin's councils with Indians on land agreements and investigations of complaints, between February 1902 and May 1903. The frame count by states is Minnesota (321) at Red Lake and White Earth, South Dakota (245) mostly at Cheyenne River, North Dakota (108), Utah (84), Oklahoma (76), Washington (55), Arizona (36) and California (26).

Roll 26: Letterbooks 1903-1904 and 1904-1905

Investigations, councils for cession of land and enrollment of Indians for funds form most of this roll. The Loyal Creek Claims in Oklahoma and the Santee Claims in Nebraska account for 300 frames. Affairs in South Dakota total 142 frames, Wyoming (110), Washington (56), and lesser amounts in Arizona, California, Idaho, Iowa, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota and Utah. The time covered is from May 30, 1903 to December 31, 1905. Some material from September to December 1905 appears at the beginning of Roll 27. Many of the pages of these books have been water-stained and are blurred or faded.

Roll 27: Letterbooks 1905-1906 and 1906-1907

McLaughlin's correspondence and reports on the investigation of frauds on the Osage Agency in Oklahoma comprises about 350 frames of this roll. The minutes of councils with Indians and the terms of agreements made by McLaughlin in other states form another large portion of the roll. The states that rank highest in total frames are Minnesota (123), South Dakota (107) mostly Rosebud, Wyoming (73), Washington (71), New Mexico (34), Wisconsin (24), and less than 20 for Idaho, North Dakota and Utah. The time covered is September 18, 1905 to June 12, 1907.

Roll 28: Letterbooks 1907-1908 and 1908-1909

More than 300 frames are concerned with McLaughlin's enrolling the Sisseton and Wahpeton Sioux in the Dakotas, Montana, Minnesota and Nebraska. The negotiations and minutes of his council with the Kickapoos of Oklahoma and Old Mexico account for nearly 150 frames. Affairs on Montana agencies account for (165) more, while there is a small amount on affairs in Utah, Wyoming and Wisconsin. The time span of this roll is June 12, 1907 to May 1, 1909, though some letters from March 17 to May 1, 1909, appear at the beginning of Roll 29.

Roll 29: Letterbooks 1909-1910 and 1911-1913

Nearly 400 frames of this roll record the minutes of councils with Dakota Indians relative to the opening of their surplus lands. McLaughlin's inspection reports for agencies in other states total Wisconsin (86), Oklahoma (63), Montana (31), New Mexico (28), Minnesota (22), and a showing for Arizona, Nebraska and New York. The first volume covers the period of March 17, 1909 to August 16, 1910. The other volume begins on March 28, 1911, and practically ends on December 11, 1911. The only other document is one for February 19, 1913. This was the last letter-press book kept by McLaughlin.

Roll 30: Rodman Wanamaker Expedition of 1913

This is McLaughlin's complete report of the Wanamaker Expedition conducted by Dr. Joseph K. Dixon in the interests of promoting Indian citizenship. The entourage visited 99 reservations in 17 states, and the report notes the conditions at the agencies and the councils held with the Indians. The number of pages on each state is Arizona 117, California 58, Colorado 43, Idaho 36, Minnesota 61, Nebraska 12, New Mexico 52, New York 80, North Dakota 34, Oklahoma 107, Oregon 67, South Dakota 61, Utah 48, Washington 100, Wisconsin 41 and Wyoming 8.

Roll 31: National Archives Documents, Fort Totten 1870-1884 and Fort Yates 1881-1891

These are 86 documents (181 pages) selected by the editor from Record Group 98. They relate to activities of the army at Devils Lake and Standing Rock Agencies during McLaughlin's term as agent at both places. There is considerable information on the surrender and death of Sitting Bull. Since this and the following rolls do not have frame numbers, a list of the documents in the order of their appearance introduces the documents.

Roll 32: National Archives Documents, 1881-1886

The 687 pages from Record Group 75 contain much on the surrender of Sitting Bull and the Sioux at Fort Buford in 1881. The majority of the 110 documents treat of affairs on Standing Rock Reservation, especially the policing of the reservation, and the controlling of squatters, squawmen and interloping buffalo hunters. It also contains letters and reports about schools and farming on the reservation. The roll is introduced by a special index and a list of document numbers in the order of their appearance.

Roll 33: National Archives Documents, 1887-1889

The 730 pages from Record Group 75 deal mostly with affairs on Standing Rock Reservation, treating of schools, missions, Wild West Shows and cession of lands. There is a small amount on other Sioux reservations—Crow Creek, Pine Ridge and Rosebud. A list of the 162 document numbers in the order of appearance introduces the roll.

Roll 34: National Archives Documents, 1890-1891 (Standing Rock)

This roll and Roll 35 cover the same period, but are from two separate files in Record Group 75. Roll 34 has 197 documents, of which 831 pages deal with Standing Rock, 89 with Pine Ridge, 81 with Cheyenne River and 47 with Rosebud. There are smaller amounts on Indian troubles on agencies in other states. A list of document numbers introduces the roll.

Roll 35: National Archives Documents, 1890-1891 (Messiah Craze)

The documents on this roll are from Record Group 75 and from Special Case 188 which was created by James Mooney when he wrote his history of the Ghost Dance and Messiah Craze. It comprises about three-fourths of Special Case 188, and is concerned mostly with the Indian troubles on Pine Ridge (294 pages), Cheyenne River (145 pages) and Standing Rock (222 pages) Agencies. There are some documents on the progress of the Messiah Craze on agencies in Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Wyoming and Oklahoma. A list of document numbers introduces the roll.

Roll 36: National Archives Documents, 1892-1895

The 142 documents on this roll are from Record Group 75 and deal with affairs on Standing Rock Agency from January 1892 to March 1895, when McLaughlin ceased to be agent there. They deal with reports on the schools and farming operations and the efforts to improve the Indians in general. There is also considerable material on the investigations of complaints against McLaughlin. A list of document numbers introduces the roll.

Roll 37: National Archives Documents, Appointments 1880-1895 and Reports, 1875, 1876, 1886, 1887

This is a short roll of some 200 pages from two sources. The first section is a series of 16 documents from Record Group 48. pertaining to applications and recommendations for the office of Agent at Standing Rock Agency, 1880-1895. The second section consists of 80 pages from the annual reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and deals with the Sioux Indians on Devils Lake and Standing Rock Agencies.

Index Rolls: An adequate description of these two important rolls is given above on page 9.

INDEX OF AGENCIES

For brevity, this index gives only the roll number (boldface type) followed by the number of pages on each roll. The exact frame numbers are given on the 15,675 cards on the two Index Rolls.

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