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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

WASHINGTON,

August 21, 1877.

Circular to U.S. Indian Agents:

Your attention is again especially directed to the rule of this Office which requires Indian Agents to make a special report in each case upon which they desire official action. Monthly reports are only designed to keep the Office informed of the current history of the agency, <sup>and</sup> as such, should contain a reference to all such special as well as general matters; but official action on monthly reports must not be expected.

Agents are also directed to refer in their correspondence to the initial letters - "A." "C." "E." "I." or "L." - upon the Office communications to which they make reply.

In connection with the above, your attention is particularly invited to the inclosed circular dated August 1, 1876, relating to official correspondence.

Respectfully

J. L. Smith  
Commissioner



## INSTRUCTIONS RELATING TO OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE BY MAIL AND TELEGRAPH.

### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

WASHINGTON, D. C., AUGUST 1, 1876.

To effect greater uniformity in the details of official correspondence, the following directions will be observed by Superintendents and Agents in the Indian Service:

1. Official communications to this Office must be written upon white paper of the letter-sheet size (quartopost) whenever practicable, and not upon commercial note nor foolscap. [Statistical and other returns upon blank forms from this Office are exceptions.]

2. They are to be folded in three equal folds parallel with the lines of writing, and indorsed upon the middle fold, or enfolded in suitable *jackets* with indorsement thereon. When jackets are not used, about one inch of space must be left at the top, and at least two inches at the bottom of the fold, for memoranda in this Office.

3. The indorsement should state, first, the official name of the Superintendency or Agency, with its location, and the date; second, the name of the writer, with the designation of his official position; and third, an analysis or brief of the contents of the communication. [See indorsement on this circular.]

4. This brief should be short, but sufficiently explicit to convey a clear general idea of the intent of the communication. In cases where sufficient room is not allotted on the middle fold, the brief can be continued upon subsequent folds.

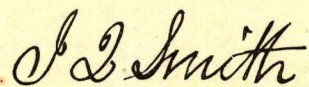
5. Replies to special communications from this Office should not only refer to the date of the office communication, but also to the letters which will be found in the upper left-hand corner.

6. Only black ink should be used, and pale ink of any kind should especially be discarded. Care should also be used, in taking impressions of letters, to prevent blurring, which results generally from the use of too much moisture.

7. Only one subject will be embraced or referred to in any one communication, every different matter being made the subject of a separate letter; but when several such communications are forwarded in one mail they should, so far as practicable and convenient, be inclosed in one envelope.

8. The use of the telegraph should be restricted to cases of great urgency, and telegrams should always be prepared with the utmost brevity. In all Government telegrams the address and signature are charged for at the same rate as words in the body of the message; hence these also should be condensed. In addressing this Office it will be sufficient to say simply "Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C." The name of the Commissioner or any honorary title is unnecessary. So in the signature: instead of "John Z. Jones, U. S. Indian Agent," it will be entirely sufficient to sign "Jones, Agent." This Office will infer no disrespect from such brevity in telegrams.

Very respectfully,



Commissioner.



Com. Ind Affs.

Recd. Sept. 12/77

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

WASHINGTON, D. C., August 1, 1876.

JOHN Q. SMITH,

Commissioner.

Circular letter, giving instructions relating to official  
correspondence by mail and telegraph. *also*

Monthly reports not to be  
set aside on for action in any  
case - & the letter in reply  
up to the corner to be referred  
to in answering official  
letters &c -

1874

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