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Letter from Eugene Burdick to A. F. Rath Regarding Beaded Moccasins, February 25, 1941

Eugene Burdick

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Mr. A. F. Rath
1318 West Willetts
Phoenix, Arizona

Dear Mr. Rath:

Your letter under date of February 20, 1941 was received today.

I do not believe we are able to supply you with Indian tan buckskin moccasins with rawhide soles, sewn with sinew. We have a very large supply of moccasins, most all of which are fully beaded and are regular "wacipi hampa", or ceremonial moccasins. Our stock of genuine Indian handicraft is on exhibit in the State Historical Society show-rooms in the State Capitol at Bismarck. Surplus stock is also stored there. I do not have any appreciable supply of artifacts and handwork here in Williston. Occasionally I go to Bismarck on business and could select a good pair of sinew sewn, fully beaded, Indian tan, cowhide moccasins with rawhide soles. Of course, we have a few historical items of Indian tan buckskin moccasins with rawhide soles, sewn with sinew and fully beaded which are not for sale, but even many of the historical items are made of Indian tan cowhide instead of Indian tan buckskin. If you are in no particular hurry for a pair of moccasins I shall be glad to select a pair for you upon my next visit to Bismarck. It goes without saying, that I would select a choice pair and it would have to meet with your approval. All of our Indian handiwork, with few exceptions, is made by the Sioux Indians, who were experts of the geometrical designs in their beadwork.

I enclose a catalog of items which we prepared when we were in the book business in Minneapolis and sold and displayed much of the Indian handiwork at that time. This was the only catalog which we issued and will still

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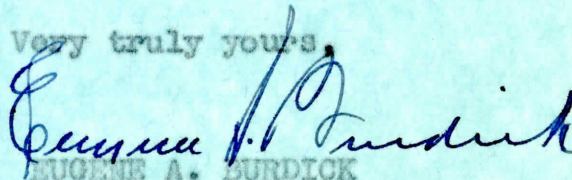
give you some idea of the items contained in our collection and approximation of prices. Many of the items listed in the catalog have been withdrawn from sale and, accordingly, the listings and prices cannot be construed as an offer. If you are interested in any of the items listed, I shall be glad to communicate further with you concerning their possible sale.

We have sold many hundreds of items of genuine Sioux Indian handiwork and are very familiar with this material. We have made an effort to reduce our stock so as to ultimately retain only museum pieces. However, many of the items which we could consider surplus items are excellent items for collectors.

One of the outstanding points of information concerning Sioux Indian beadwork is that it is being made less frequently as time goes on. Very few of the younger Indians have followed in the footsteps of their predecessors in making these various items. Whatever items are made are usually made for personal use and are not made for commercial purposes. Consequently, there is no wholesale exploitation of the talent of these Indians. It would seem to follow that such items are more desirable from a collector's standpoint than those which are prepared on a commercial basis.

Should you desire me to select a pair of fully beaded moccasins which I think might be desirable from your standpoint, I shall appreciate hearing from you and I will make an effort to obtain a suitable selection for you and will send them c.o.d. in a price range from \$6.00 to \$13.00, depending on their quality. If you are not satisfied with the selection made, you may return it and your purchase price would be refunded.

Very truly yours,


EUGENE A. BURDICK

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cc Hon. Usher L. Burdick, N. C.
Washington, D. C.