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**Durfee & Peck. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, inclosing an account of Messrs. Durfee & Peck, for rent of agency buildings at Fort Berthold. February 11, 1871**

United States Congress

US House of Representatives

US Department of the Interior

US Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs

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DURFEE & PECK.

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LETTER

FROM THE

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

INCLOSING

*An account of Messrs. Durfee & Peck, for rent of agency buildings at Fort Berthold.*

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FEBRUARY 11, 1871.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and ordered to be printed.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C., February 9, 1871.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated to-day, inclosing an account of Messrs. Durfee & Peck, for rent of agency buildings at Fort Berthold, amounting to \$3,500, and a proposition of these gentlemen for the sale to the Government of all the property owned by them at that agency, for the sum of \$16,000.

Agreeably to the recommendation of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the subject is respectfully submitted to Congress for such action as may be deemed proper by that body.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. DELANO, *Secretary.*

Hon. JAMES G. BLAINE,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., February 9, 1871.*

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith duplicate copies of a letter from Hon. John A. Burbank, governor and (late) ex-officio superintendent Indian affairs, Dakota Territory, of November 17, 1870, inclosing an account of Messrs. Durfee & Peck, for rent of agency buildings at Fort Berthold Indian agency, from July 1, 1870, to July 1, 1871, amounting to \$3,500; also letter from same of same date, inclosing proposition of the above-mentioned gentlemen to sell all the property owned by them at Fort Berthold for the sum of \$16,000, giving description of

the same, with the recommendation of Agent Clifford that the same should be purchased.

I have the honor to say that there are no buildings at the agency owned by the Government, and that this Bureau is at present paying a yearly rental of thirty-five hundred dollars for the use of a portion of the building owned by Messrs. Durfee & Peck. In the opinion of this office, it would be more economical to purchase said buildings at the price for which they are offered than it would be to continue to pay a yearly rental for them, and I therefore respectfully recommend that the papers in the case be laid before Congress, in order that the necessary funds may be appropriated to purchase said buildings, should that body deem it advisable to do so.

As there is rent due Messrs. Durfee & Peck from the 1st of July, 1870, I have also to recommend that the sum of \$3,500, or so much thereof as may be necessary, be appropriated in order that this Bureau may have sufficient funds to pay the rent due on the buildings up to the time when the purchase shall be consummated.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. C. DELANO,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE,  
*Yankton, Dakota Territory, November 17, 1870.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith bill of Messrs. Durfee & Peck, for one year's rent of buildings occupied for the Indian agency at Fort Berthold, for the year beginning July 1, 1870, amounting to \$3,500, together with the indorsement of Agent Clifford thereon. In connection therewith, your attention is respectfully directed to office letter of this date, transmitting proposition of Messrs. Durfee & Peck for the sale to the Government of the buildings owned by them at Fort Berthold.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN A. BURBANK,  
*Governor and ex-officio Superintendent Indian Affairs.*

Hon. E. S. PARKER,  
*Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

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FORT BERTHOLD, D. T., *October 10, 1870.*

SIR: We have the honor to respectfully call your attention to bill of rent of buildings for use of agency, and request the payment thereof.

Very respectfully, your obedient servants,

DURFEE & PECK.  
D. W. MARSH, *Agent.*

Captain W. CLIFFORD,  
*United States Indian Agent, Upper Missouri Agency, Fort Berthold, D. T.*

FORT BERTHOLD, D. T., *October 10, 1870.*

UPPER MISSOURI AGENCY,

To DURFEE & PECK,

Dr.

For rent of buildings for use of agency from July 1, 1870, to July 1, 1871, at  
\$3,500 .....

\$3,500

Received payment.

[Indorsement.]

FORT BERTHOLD AGENCY,  
*Fort Berthold, D. T., October 27, 1870.*

Respectfully forwarded to Hon. J. A. Burbank, governor and *ex-officio* superintendent Indian affairs.

I think Messrs. Durfee & Peck would abate a part if not all of the within amount of rent if the buildings were purchased on or before the 1st January, 1871.

W. CLIFFORD,  
*Captain United States Army and Indian Agent.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,  
*Yankton, D. T., November 17, 1870.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith letter of Messrs. Durfee & Peck, dated October 20, containing a proposition to sell the property owned by them at Fort Berthold, together with the indorsement of Agent Clifford thereon. The subject is one deserving of special and immediate attention.

By a letter from this office of the 29th ultimo, forwarding one from Agent Clifford, dated September 21, the claims of the Indians at Fort Berthold concerning their reservation, and the importance of taking some action toward settling them quietly upon their lands, or a portion of them, and securing to them the benefits already made by them previous to the building of the Northern Pacific Railroad, was laid before you. If these Indians are to be permitted to remain there, as they desire to do, their improved lands, with such amount unimproved as may be necessary, should be secured to them. The purchase of the buildings which are now only rented for agency purposes would also go far toward securing this end, and in satisfying the Indians of a disposition to properly care for them.

The agent states that the buildings could not be put there for less than \$25,000, and it would seem from the enumeration of them, and the remote position of the post, that this estimate is none too large. They are, however, offered for the sum of \$16,000, and would answer all the purposes of an agency for several years to come. The Government is now paying a yearly rental of \$3,500, nearly one-fourth of the sum asked for a portion only of these buildings. The agent also states that if the purchase should be made previous to the 1st of January next, the proprietors would, he believes, remit a large part of the half year's rent which will have accrued at that time, if not the whole of it. From an economic point of view, therefore, as well as for the other considerations named, it is quite important that some action should be taken to secure this purchase if possible, unless it shall be determined to remove the Indians to some other point. In that event, of course, these reasons given for making the purchase would all fail.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN A. BURBANK,  
*Governor and ex-officio Superintendent Indian Affairs.*

Hon. J. S. PARKER,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

FORT BERTHOLD, DAKOTA TERRITORY,  
*October 20, 1870.*

SIR: Some months since we made to you a proposal for the sale of certain buildings to your agency. We again have the honor to submit to you another proposal, embracing all buildings in our possession at this point, consisting of the following described property:

One stockaded fort, 180 by 135 feet, comprising the following buildings:

## I.

1. One office, 20 by 16 feet, of hewn timber, 3 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
2. One dwelling, 20 by 16 feet, of hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
3. One dwelling, 20 by 16 feet, of hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
4. One dwelling, 20 by 12 feet, of hewn timber, 1 window and floor, sawn lumber.
5. One dwelling, 20 by 12 feet, of hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
6. One dwelling, 20 by 14 feet, of sawn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
7. One dwelling, 20 by 15 feet, of sawn timber, 3 windows and floor, sawn lumber.

8. One dwelling, 20 by 11 feet, of sawn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  9. Storehouse, 20 by 36 feet, of hewn timber, 3 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  10. One storehouse, 20 by 30 feet, of hewn timber, 3 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  11. One granary, 20 by 14 feet, sawn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  12. One stable, 20 by 36 feet, of sawn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  13. One warehouse, 20 by 20 feet, of hewn timber, 1 window and floor, sawn lumber, with cellar.
  14. One warehouse, 20 by 28 feet, of hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, hewn lumber.
  15. One warehouse, 20 by 23 feet, of hewn timber, 1 window and floor, sawn lumber.
  16. One kitchen, 22 by 13 feet, of hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  17. One mess-house, 22 by 10 feet, of hewn timber, 1 window and floor, sawn lumber, with cellar.
  18. One dwelling 22 by 26 feet, hewn timber, 3 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  19. One dwelling, 22 by 24 feet, hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  20. One dwelling, 22 by 24 feet, hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  21. One dwelling, 22 by 24 feet, hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  22. One carpenter shop, 18 by 24 feet, sawn timber, 3 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  23. One stable, 100 by 14 feet, hewn timber, 4 sky-light windows, no floor.
  24. One granary, 14 by 16 feet, hewn timber, 2 windows and floor, sawn lumber.
  25. One bastion, 14 by 14 feet, hewn timber, 2 stories, loop-holed, and 6-pound gun mounted, commanding south and east sides of stockade.
  26. One bastion, 14 by 14 feet, hewn timber, 2 stories, loop-holed, and 6-pound gun mounted, commanding north and east sides of stockade.
- The whole inclosed by a stockade of hewn timber, 14 feet high, with entrance from east and west by double gates 10 feet in width, also upon the south by wicket.

## II.

One stockade fort, 100 by 125 feet, comprising the following buildings:

1. One dwelling, 24 by 36 feet, divided into two apartments, with three windows, and floor of sawn lumber.
2. One dwelling, 22 by 36 feet, divided into two apartments, with 3 windows, and floor of sawn lumber.
3. One block dwelling-house, divided into 3 apartments, each 20 by 20 feet, 2 windows each, and floor sawn lumber.
4. One storehouse, 26 by 22 feet, with 2 windows, no floor.
5. One ice-house and ice-vault, 20 by 18 feet, with 1 window, floor sawn lumber.
6. One mess-house, 20 by 12 feet, with 1 window, floor sawn lumber.
7. One kitchen, 20 by 16 feet, with 2 windows, floor sawn lumber.
8. One dwelling, 20 by 16 feet, with 2 windows, floor sawn lumber.
9. One dwelling, 20 by 16 feet, with 2 windows, floor sawn lumber.
10. One store-house, 20 by 28 feet, with one window, floor sawn lumber.
11. One bastion, 12 by 12 feet, loop-holed, commanding north and east sides of stockade. Between each block of buildings is a stockade, 12 feet high, with entrance from south by double gates, 10 feet in width; also upon the east, entrance by a wicket.

## III.

One log building, divided as follows:

1. One warehouse, 22 by 60 feet, with three windows.
2. One warehouse, 22 by 14 feet, with two windows.

## IV.

One block of log buildings, divided as follows:

3. One blacksmith shop, 22 by 30 feet, two windows.
4. One tinnerns' shop, 22 by 12 feet, one window.
5. One storehouse, 22 by 16 feet, two windows.

## V.

6. Two ice-houses and vaults, 12 by 16 and 22 by 16 feet; floor, sawn lumber.

We are now desirous of disposing by sale of this our *entire* stock of buildings at this point. Our price for the complete list, as herein enumerated and described, is \$16,000.

Rent is now due from July 1, 1870, on buildings now occupied by agency, marked in foregoing abstract as second, third, and fourth. Terms of rent, \$3,500 a year. Should purchase be made of the property in accordance with terms herein set forth prior to January 1, 1871, the second quarter of the year's rent, viz, from October 1 to December 31, 1870, will be remitted.

We are, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servants,

DURFEE & PECK.  
D. W. MARSH, *Agent*.

Capt. W. CLIFFORD,

*United States Indian Agent, Upper Missouri Agency, Fort Berthold, Dakota Territory.*

[Indorsement.]

FORT BERTHOLD AGENCY,  
Fort Berthold, D. T., October 25, 1870.

Respectfully forwarded to Hon. J. A. Burbank, governor and *ex-officio* superintendent of Indian affairs, approved and urgently recommended. The description of the buildings given within is correct. From my own experience and a careful gathering of the opinions of those long resident in the county, I am convinced that the same amount of building could not be put here for less than \$25,000. The buildings are all that will be required for the use of the agency for every purpose (agents, physicians, and employés, quartermaster's store, and school-room) for a number of years. I am the more in favor of this purchase as, in all probability, the track of the Union Pacific Railroad will soon be laid in this vicinity, which I fear will deprive the Indians of all their lands unless they have some such claim. For a while a number of the Indians were in favor of moving away, but now they declare that they will not move. A great deal of work has been done here, and this land and all the improvements that are on the land should belong to these Indians, and to them alone. This they consider their land, and it should be made so in fact. The land is good, the only want being wood, and this they are learning to do without, using coal instead. Unless it is the design of the Department to move these Indians farther south, I am of the opinion that this purchase would be very greatly to their benefit. Another consideration is that Government is now paying a yearly rental of \$3,500 on a part of buildings mentioned in abstract, but which in four years' time alone would nearly pay the sum asked for the entire property. The point of land is one of the most defensible upon the river against attacks of hostile Sioux, from which the people suffer so much.

W. CLIFFORD,

Captain U. S. Army and Indian Agent.

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