

FIGHTING THE BUREAUCRACIES

AGENT BRENNAN AND HIS AUTOMOBILES

by

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On July 20, 1908, John R. Brennan, Indian Agent at the Pine Ridge, South Dakota, Reservation, addressed a letter to an acquaintance of some years. His correspondent was John Mohler Studebaker--"Wheelbarrow Johnny" as he had been called during his younger days at Hangtown, California, where he got his start as a businessman by making wheelbarrows for the forty-niners. Since those early days Studebaker had risen to become head of the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company of South Bend, Indiana, a firm which by the 1880s was the largest manufacturer of horse-drawn vehicles in the world. By the time of Brennan's letter, Studebaker Brothers was in the midst of a seventeen-year changeover from the manufacture of horse-drawn vehicles to that of automobiles.¹ Brennan's letter began with the banter common to business correspondence in a day when no one thought of retirement:

Although a little late, this is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 21st, last. Was very much pleased to hear from you and to learn that you are still in harness, and enjoying good health You say you are seventy-five. This reminds me that I have just turned sixty. Am enjoying good health and am working about as hard as I ever did in my life. . . . This is my eighth year here, and I hope to be able to take an active part in affairs even when I reach the seventy-five mark. The first time I am in Chicago and can spare the time, I will run out and see you and show up gray hairs and arrange for the foot race. If the distance is made long enough, think I can win. . . . Now for a little business.²

The "little business" involved Brennan's attempts to bring the automobile to Pine Ridge, attempts which began in October of 1906 and were to continue for six years until Brennan had succeeded in replacing his horse-drawn "official" vehicles with a fleet of four automobiles. It was an effort which brought Brennan into continual conflict with two rising American bureaucracies: that of the federal government, as personified by the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA), and that of the developing automobile industry. If the government bureaucracy was unresponsive to change, the automobile bureaucracy was often impossibly irresponsible. Brennan found to his sorrow that the increasing complexities of automobile manufacturing and distribution meant that he could no longer deal with the J.M. Studebakers; instead he had to conduct his business with impersonal underlings, both at the factory and among the industry's developing wholesale and retail organizations that were at the same time chaotic and increasingly jealous of their sales areas. Adding to Brennan's difficulties were the haphazard operating methods of the railroads on which he had to depend for vehicle and parts shipments;

the necessity of providing his own service despite his and his personnel's unfamiliarity with the unstandardized automobiles of the day; and the system of roads on the reservation, which, in spite of Brennan's claim that it was the best to be found anywhere on the Great Plains, would have tested the capabilities of a modern four-wheel-drive Jeep.

John R. Brennan had taken over as civilian agent of the Pine Ridge Indian Agency on November 1, 1900. His appointment ended a decade of military administration imposed on the reservation in the wake of the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890. His rule of seventeen years marked the close of a period when nervous Washington administrators feared renewed Indian uprisings on the Great Plains and spanned the transition between two eras in the administration of American Indian reservations. Gone now were the times when the primary worries of the agent were laying out his fiefdom and herding his charges within its borders. Going were the rough-and-ready days when the agent, serving as an instantly removable political appointee, considered himself fortunate if he could establish the rudiments of a system of education, regularize the ration-issuing system, hang onto a career with the OAI for more than a few years, and, if he were less than honest, maintain the ancient if not honorable methods of profiteering from the system of issuing commercially-purchased food and clothing rations for the Indians.

The Washington OIA of 1900 was not yet the organization of later years. The 1900 annual report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs tells of one "financial clerk" and one "chief of division" under the commissioner and assistant commissioner; the remainder of the other regular head office employees--118 in all, from the commissioner on down--are listed as clerks or such auxiliary staff as draftsmen, bookkeepers, laborers, a stenographer and a charlady. Supplementing this modest Washington staff were eight roving inspectors, ten supervisors of Indian schools (in the field), a number of commissioners appointed to resolve specific field problems (such as land appraisal on a particular reservation) and a superintendent of Indian schools (who seems to have spent the majority of her time actually inspecting reservation and off-reservation OIA schools). This modest contingent administered a field force of agents, subagents, teachers, policemen, physicians, tradesmen, laborers and various other employees that in 1900 numbered more than 4,300 full-time staff and a large force of part-time employees as well.³

By 1925, there were nine head office divisions in Washington administering such functions as finance, land, medicine, forestry, and irrigation, while a roving field force of 122 inspectors and special agents were available to enforce the edicts of the Washington administrators.⁴ By 1939, reservation implementation of Washington policy was supervised by a maze of regional field authorities consisting of ten district headquarters, each of which was fragmented into up to sixteen defined functions, each with a district official who kept an eye on such things as road construction, housing rehabilitation, health, Indian Civilian Conservation Corps work, and home extension functions, as well as a host of other activities.⁵

It is true that the empire-building federal bureaucrats of 1984 would no doubt find the comparatively meager staffing levels of even 1925 and 1939 unworthy of their ambitions. The 1925 Washington division chiefs each presided over only from one or two to a maximum of thirty-six employees;⁶ each 1939 official in charge of a field district function enjoyed only from one to twenty-seven (usually merely two or three) subordinates.⁷ Nevertheless, though staffing may have been spartan by today's standards, the framework of the modern Indian administration establishment was certainly being busily constructed between 1900 and 1939. As for the reservation agent, he had by the late nineteenth century become the classic colonial administrator, akin to the British regional commissioner in India or Africa in the power he wielded over his charges. But in the first years of the twentieth century, he became less and less the on-the-spot pacifier of a warlike people, freshly subdued and still physically dangerous, and more and more the administrative executor of policies and orders conjured up in Washington and filtered through the multiplying layers of national and regional bureaucracies.

Through 1901, most Indian agents were political appointees; John Brennan was the last of this old school to preside over Pine Ridge. Civil service reforms over the fifteen years after 1893 gradually removed OIA employees from the political arena and guaranteed them (honest or dishonest, competent or incompetent) protection from the arbitrary political firings that had plagued Government employees during most of the nineteenth century.⁸ The corruption that had colored the office of agent in the early days became so pervasive after the Civil War that after 1893 the administration of some reservations had been turned over to reservation school superintendents, officials normally subordinate to the agents. The word "agent" itself had, by the 1890s, become virtually synonymous with "corruption" in the mind of the public. Consequently, the first decade of the new century saw a wholesale shift from the title of "agent" to that of "superintendent" for the official administering a reservation. In line with this new OIA policy, Brennan's title was so changed in December, 1908.

John Brennan, then, was something rather new to the OIA's empire of reservations; as the first Pine Ridge Agent of the century he succeeded the last military officer to head the reservation. He soon received the civil service protection which allowed him to work out his career at the office in Pine Ridge town and, in spite of his hopes to continue in harness until he was 75, to retire quietly in 1917. He had made the transformation from nineteenth century agent to twentieth century superintendent; and with the rough-and-ready days of pacification over, he could devote all his energies to the civilizing of the Oglala Sioux and modernization of the reservation administration. His was a brave new bureaucratic world indeed.

Life on the reservation under the Brennan administration was distinguished by many as an example of the emerging new order. Stubbornly resisting for nearly two decades after the Dawes Act of 1887 made the destruction of tribal landholding government policy, the Oglala in 1904 finally succumbed to the

blandishments of the OIA and agreed to have the commonly-held lands carved up into individual allotments.⁹ The allotments were parcelled out to individual Indians, who, it was piously (or hypocritically) hoped, would seize the opportunity to settle into a sort of virtuous Jeffersonian yeomanship. This long advertized goal of generations of sincere white reformers faced two major and immediate difficulties. The first was loss of a considerable portion of reservation lands. South Dakotan white homesteaders, friends of the Oglala's lands if not of the Indians upon it, benefitted when "surplus" lands left from the allotment procedure were thrown open to homesteading in 1910. The next year proper county government, the hallmark of proper Anglo-American civilization, was established by the State of South Dakota for Bennett County, the southeastern quarter of the reservation.¹⁰ One quarter of what had been Oglala land was thus declared to be within the pale of white civilization. The second difficulty should have been obvious to even the most obtuse of observers: the dry and infertile Pine Ridge country was hardly the stuff of which a plowman's paradise is fashioned. Put succinctly, little will grow there. On the other hand, Pine Ridge is at least passable cattle country, and with the encouragement of Agent/Superintendent Brennan, the OIA began encouraging the Oglala to build up a commercially viable cattle population. Never mind that the 160 acre allotments were too small for successful ranches; never mind that the original allotments would shrink as they were divided among heirs of the original allottees; never mind that most Oglala, in debt, would lease or sell their allotments to white ranchers or large cattle companies; and never mind that the post-World War I agricultural depression would finish off whatever hope there may have been that the new generation of Oglala could become Americanized yeoman-on-the-range. In 1904 it must have seemed at least possible that the heirs of Crazy Horse would ride to civilization beside their cattle herds. Indeed, it must have seemed to John R. Brennan that cattle, allotted land, improved health, and education all pointed to a brighter future for the Oglala.

Brennan himself was an appropriate man to be cast in the role of transitional leader at Pine Ridge. A longtime denizen of the Dakotas, he was certainly familiar with the Sioux and the Pine Ridge country when he took over.¹¹ In his mid-fifties in 1900, he was flexible enough to look forward to new procedures and new techniques. Among those techniques were improvements in communication and transportation. The telegraph had come to the Pine Ridge office shortly after its establishment at its permanent site in 1878.¹² Upon his arrival Brennan continued the work of his predecessor of establishing telephone communication with the outside world and the distant regions of the reservation.¹³ And in 1906, convinced that the day of the horse was drawing to a close, he began agitating for the mechanization of Pine Ridge transportation. Before the reservation roads were little better than rough tracks, John Brennan wanted an automobile.

In October of that year of 1906, Brennan began his efforts to bring the automobile to Pine Ridge with a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs at Washington. He noted that he had been considering the advantages of an auto for his own use

for more than two years, and had now decided to seek the approval of the commissioner's office without further delay. He carefully laid out his case:

Situated as we are almost in the extreme southwestern corner of a reservation about 60 by 100 miles in area, with sub-stations 18 to 50 miles distant, schools 5 to 75 miles, working camps 5 to 80 miles or more, some rapid means of transportation is necessary for the best interests of the service, and as we have the best roads on the reservation, since the working system was inaugurated, and motor vehicles in the vicinity are giving the best satisfaction on roads that do not compare with ours, I have no hesitancy in recommending a good moderate priced machine.

If his request should be approved, Brennan suggested various methods of paying for the car, among them a proposal to sell off a team of horses, as well as a buggy and a spring wagon. This money, together with some funds he expected to have left over from his miscellaneous labor account, would allow him to purchase a car "in the open market in Denver or Chicago" for the amount "not exceeding \$1500." Ever mindful of working through channels, Brennan did not send his request directly to the commissioner. Instead he sent it to Robert G. Valentine, one of the commissioner's assistants who had recently visited him at Pine Ridge, and asked Valentine to forward it to the commissioner if he thought it appropriate.¹⁴

Valentine did forward the letter, but the commissioner's response was guarded to say the least. The idea of an automobile in so remote a locality was of dubious merit. "From all reports, the item of repairs is a very heavy one--so heavy in fact that it has been reported that many persons have disposed of their machines at great sacrifice." Nevertheless the commissioner would consider the matter if Brennan could find an appropriate machine for five or six hundred dollars.¹⁵ Brennan answered that two private cars had been operating on the reservation, one for four years and the other for one year, with practically no repair costs, especially in comparison with the expense of a team. "If you will look the matter up carefully I think you will find . . . excessive repair bills . . . are due to reckless driving or otherwise abusing the machine--such as overloading, too rapid driving, turning corners too fast thus causing the machine to skid, etc. etc." As for the matter of cost, he had carefully studied all the catalogues and decided that he could get a car with capacity of four persons "and with sufficient power to ascend all our hills" for \$1000, and this sum would include all the "extras."¹⁶ This time the commissioner did not even bother to reply.

Brennan was undeterred. In late March of 1907 he fired off another letter to Washington. Its lengthy first paragraph was an exact repeat of his letter of the previous October. To his earlier arguments of good roads and low upkeep costs he added a third: speed and its resulting efficiency. He began by assuming that an automobile could average 18 miles per hour on the reservation roads, while a team could at best

manage six; "hence it will be seen that an auto is as good as three teams." He then went on to calculate that three teams would cost \$900, three sets of harness \$150, and three buggies or wagons \$350; further, feed and care for the three teams for a year would amount to \$375, for a total of \$1775. On this confident note, he apparently was no longer willing to compromise on a thousand dollar car; with estimated fuel costs and repairs at only \$150 per year, he argued that a \$1500 auto would still be cheaper than the three teams it would replace.¹⁷ Even the casual observer may readily note that a single car would not really replace three teams, as the auto could be in use for only one purpose at a time, while three teams might carry three separate parties in very different directions. But having made what was to him an entirely convincing case, Brennan noted that he had the necessary cash on hand from money he had saved from one of his funds, and asked for the authority to purchase for \$1500 a Rambler automobile "or some other equally good car having the same horsepower."¹⁸ Again, there was apparently no reply from the commissioner.

Brennan waited fifteen months before making a third attempt. In a letter to the commissioner dated July 17, 1908, he complained that he now had on hand only "one old team for my use which cannot stand the long trips I am compelled to make." Two of his teams had recently been sold (reason unspecified), and he was in the position where he would either have to purchase two more or receive authority to buy an automobile. To add substance to his claim, he argued that the price of securing and keeping horses had risen substantially of late--a team of horses was now worth \$400 (compared to the \$300 he had cited the year earlier), and annual upkeep, which he had then estimated at \$375 for three teams, was now \$360 for two teams. While he did up the estimate for fuel and repairs to a car from \$150 to \$200 per year, he continued to argue that the cost of purchasing and maintaining an automobile would still be cheaper, at least in the long run, as compared to horses. Again he asked for authority to spend \$1500 on the purchase of an auto, the money to come from excess funds, the \$236.50 he had on hand from the sale of one of his teams, and the savings he expected to make on hay and oats.¹⁹

Three days after mailing this last letter to the commissioner, Brennan made his first approach to J.M. Studebaker, perhaps in the hope that as a supplier of wagons to the OIA, Studebaker might be the man to put enough pressure on Washington to get him final approval for the auto purchase.²⁰ In his letter to Studebaker, Brennan set forth the crux of his problem with the Washington bureaucracy:

Probably you could assist me, or bring some pressure to bear, inducing the Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Garfield, to grant authority to purchase a machine for use of this agency. Just before assuming his duties as Secretary, I took this matter up with him personally. He admitted that the Agent of a reservation of this size should be furnished with an automobile for the proper transaction of business and partially promised that I should have one. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs is in favor of the proposition and, I think, would recommend the pur-

chase of a machine but the principal objection, I believe, comes from the finance department of the Indian Office, on the ground that there are no funds available for an expenditure of this sort.

Earlier in the letter, he had stressed to Studebaker that he would be keeping an accurate log of the operational expenditures of his proposed machine, "and upon my report will depend the introduction of machines on other reservations."²¹ It was a none too subtle hint of possible future business for Studebaker Brothers. Studebaker replied that he was turning the matter over to his automobile department.²²

Studebaker's laconic reply was an indication of things to come. Early in October, Brennan at last received the commissioner's permission to purchase the coveted automobile;²³ unfortunately, he was soon to find that he had cleared a major hurdle of the governmental bureaucracy only to fall victim to the vagaries of the automobile industry's manufacturing and sales process. But for the moment he proceeded with enthusiasm, not only with Studebaker Brothers, but with other automobile companies and dealers. In November, he invited The Bergers Automobile Company and Guy L. Smith, both Omaha dealers, to give him quotations on a Buick and a Franklin, respectively, and the Mason Motor Car Company of Des Moines to submit a bid for a car of unspecified make. At the same time he inquired about prices on a Corbin, a Knox, a Thomas, and a Maxwell, and rejected suggestions for purchasing an Adams-Fairwell and a Ford.²⁴ But his main hope was still some kind of Studebaker product. Unfortunately, he had heard nothing further from Studebaker Brothers since July, though he had made inquiry of the Studebaker dealer in Kansas City concerning the Company's new Everett-Metzger-Flanders products.²⁵ Once again he wrote to J.M. Studebaker, complaining that of all the companies he had written to, only Studebaker Brothers had failed to reply: "Before purchasing, would like to hear from your people. If not asking too much, would thank you to look the matter up and see what your people could do for us on a \$1500 machine." He also pointed out that as he was located on an Indian reservation, he was outside any of the Studebaker agents' territories, "and should not be charged an agent's commission." He went on to state that he had learned the EMF listed at \$1250, and "if we could buy this machine, including freight, top and extra tire or two and a few other extras for the \$1500, more than likely we would take it." Brennan closed on a note which may have been intended to influence Studebaker in giving him special consideration: "The 408 wagons you furnished for Indian allottees this year, came in good shape. We are issuing them today."²⁶

Brennan continued to hope for some sort of wholesale deal, but in the meantime he decided to make an approach to a Studebaker retailer. On December 9th he wrote the "Studebaker Automobile Agency" in Sioux City, Iowa, asking for their best price on a demi-tonneau, and inquiring when they could make delivery.²⁷ The agent, Pioneer Motor Car Company, replied three days later. The Company believed that the EMF "30" would fully meet Brennan's needs, "but unfortunately for us, you are a little west of our territory and we have been compelled to refer your inquiry to Chicago, as we do not know which

Studebaker Branch controls [sic] the territory in which you are located."²⁸

On December 16th Brennan received a letter from Ellsworth A. Bullock of Norfolk, Nebraska, whose principal business was retailing threshing machines, but who was also a Studebaker retail agent. It was couched in the jargon of present-day automobile advertising. The factory had at last given Bullock definite delivery dates for his allotment of EMF cars. "OVER HALF OF OUR ALLOTMENT HAS ALREADY BEEN SOLD. . . . We positively are booking these orders for shipment in the exact order in which they are received. We know that you want one of these wonderful machines--can't we have your order now?"²⁹ Brennan, obviously in the belief that he had found the Studebaker retailer for his area, fired back an immediate reply: "how soon could you make delivery?"³⁰ In those days of genuinely first class mail service, Bullock received the letter the next day and replied immediately. He had been promised a supply of cars soon after the first of January and certainly no later than January 10th. Brennan's order could be placed at the head of the list, "as some of our purchasers will not require their cars until spring." Further, if he could have Brennan's order immediately, the car could be equipped with the extras at the factory.³¹ As it was already late December, Bullock's claim that he could receive Brennan's order, forward it to the factory, have the car built to order, and guarantee delivery at Norfolk by January 10th was obviously no more than salesman's puffery, and may have raised Brennan's suspicions.

Brennan mulled over Bullock's letter for a week, and then cautiously wrote that the EMF was under consideration, but he needed more information. Exactly when could Bullock deliver the car, "providing order was placed with you by or before the 10th of January." The car would have to include a good odometer, a horn operated by the exhaust rather than a rubber bulb, and "ten gallons of the best cylinder oil." The model Brennan desired was the demi-tonneau.³² In contrast to his previous letter, Bullock now began to hedge. There was no further talk of special priority: orders would be filled strictly in the order received. But if Brennan would place his order in the next few days, Bullock would guarantee delivery by March 15, and possibly as much as two weeks to one month earlier. In regard to the requested demi-tonneau model, Bullock's letter contained something of what is known today as "bait and switch:"

Would ask if you are aware of the fact that the demi-tonneau [sic] is very much smaller than the regular tonneau [sic] and that it will not seat more than 2 passengers, and those not very comfortably. We consider the demi tonneau [sic] a freak construction and one not destined to last more than this season in its popularity Nearly all of the orders which are being placed now are for a touring car or run-about bodies.

But Bullock could supply the car for \$1250 plus freight from the factory to Rushville, Nebraska (the railway station nearest to Pine Ridge town), and for an additional \$70 could provide a "splendid" odometer and exhaust-operated horn. Of course if

Brennan wanted really superior quality for these two items, the cost would be double that amount. The total price for the car was the very best he could offer, "unless you buy in quantities of not less than three." Bullock's letter was mailed January 4, 1909. Its contents may have been more than Brennan could take. He did not reply.³³

If Brennan had had no success in dealing with a Studebaker dealer, he was equally disappointed in trying to purchase through the Studebaker wholesale organization. His letter of December 9th to Pioneer, the Studebaker retailer at Sioux City, had been referred to the Studebaker Brothers wholesale agency at Chicago. Brennan heard nothing from Chicago until late in December, when they wrote him that his letter to Pioneer had indeed come to them, but had been mislaid for several weeks. They went on to inform him that Rushville was in the Denver wholesale area, and they were referring the letter to the wholesale branch in that city.³⁴ Brennan finally heard from Denver early in January, a day or two before his last letter from Bullock. Denver could supply the car for the list price of \$1250, but the extras he asked for, including a "chime," would add more than two hundred dollars to the price, and with the freight of more than a hundred dollars, the total bill would be \$1559.40.³⁵ As late as January 5, 1909, Brennan wrote that he considered the EMF "30" a very good car, and was inclined to purchase it. But with the discouraging news about the demi-tonneau from Bullock, the uncertain date of delivery, and the word from Denver that the car would, with extra equipment, cost more than his \$1500 budget, he abandoned the EMF for other possibilities.³⁶

One of these was the Mitchell, which had been offered to Brennan by Dr. F.N. Emrick, the mayor of Rapid City. Brennan was willing to consider a Mitchell, but insisted that he had elsewhere secured the promise of a special price and demanded that Emrick meet it. Emrick wrote the Mitchell Company, and was told that the company doubted anyone had offered Brennan the claimed discount. Emrick thereupon asked Brennan for a copy of the letter offering the discount, but Brennan refused to provide it. Negotiations broke down in late January when Brennan wrote Emrick that "on account of your efforts the special price has been withdrawn," and he had therefore "made other arrangements."³⁷ In fact, he had at last found his car. It was a Reo, a make produced by the R.E. Olds Company of Lansing, Michigan.

Just as the Studebaker deal was falling through, Brown received a letter from R.M. Owen and Company, the Reo dealer in Lansing, concerning its Reo touring car models, the lowest price of which--the Model H--sold for only \$750. Brennan was ready to grasp at any straw, and particularly one with such a low price. He immediately wrote to Owen, stating that he thought he would prefer the more expensive Model D, which had two cylinders and seated five passengers. He also included a long list of desired accessories: the usual odometer (but no special horn) an extra tire and rim, twenty gallons of oil, fifty pounds of lamp carbide, tire chains for the rear wheels, a "good reliable tail lamp," and a "few extrae for the engine" which might be required "upon the road while touring." These engine extras included two valves and valve springs, two spark

plugs, bolts, nuts, and an extra chain for the sprocket.³⁸ Obviously Brennan was beginning to have a better idea of the difficulties of operating a car in an area where service was non-existent.

Owen immediately replied and offered to sell Brennan the Model D for the same price of \$750, plus accessories and freight, and guaranteed its delivery within ten days after his order was placed. Considering his troubles in attempting to purchase the EMF or the Mitchell, the news seemed almost too good to be true. On January 19th, he told Owen to ship the car to Rushville and even offered to pay 20% in advance.³⁹ Even so, it took two more exchanges of letters to get the order in proper shape--Owen had sent Brennan an instruction book so that his mechanic could drive the car from the railroad at Rushville to the reservation, but it had been lost in the mails, and a duplicate arrived in very poor condition with the envelope "all to pieces and just ready to drop off." But the Reo was shipped early in February, and on the 13th Brennan received the bill. It totalled a gratifying \$986.35.⁴⁰ Brennan, after nearly thirty months of effort, was about to have his car.

But his troubles were by no means over. Just two weeks later, on February 27th, Brennan wrote the first of a long series of complaint letters to the Owen Company. The car had arrived at Rushville without its spare tire; indeed, the accessory box which accompanied the vehicle was too small to contain it; obviously it had not been shipped though it had been paid for. The missing tire was not the only problem:

I also desire to state that the water cock on the forward cylinder is missing; also a plug or cock which goes into the first elbow from the water tank; also one rubber tube going from the copper pipe to the left hand acetylene lamp.

The railroad car had been searched for the missing parts at the time the auto was unloaded, but to no avail. Of course there was the possibility that the parts had been stolen in transit, as the boxcar door had not been sealed, "the door being in such condition that it was not sealable." Brennan did not mention the obvious: that the missing parts were hardly ones anybody would bother to steal. Instead he confined himself to a polite request: "Kindly send the small parts by mail, we cannot run the car very well without them." He went on to note, "with the exceptions noted above, the car appears to be in good condition, although not being familiar with same, we are not sure."⁴¹

Apparently Brennan received the tire and the small parts--at any rate he made no further complaint about them. But late in March he wrote the Owen Company again. Even in those early days, automobile companies were given to presenting customers with small bonuses. The automobile shipment included a card for the customer to send in to the company, and in return, the company would send him a monogrammed Reo watch fob. Brennan sent in the card, but no watch fob came back. By mistake the car had contained a second card. That too was sent in, and still no watch fob.⁴² Considering Brennan's persistence and the absence of any further mention of the watch fob, we may assume that he did receive his free gift.

Still Brennan's problems continued. On April 7th he wrote Owen that he was returning by mail two packages of parts they had sent him which he had not ordered. On April 10 he did order what he thought was a missing part for the steering gear, which seemed to have too much play. But upon receiving the shipment, he found that the original part was still in place, and apparently working. He could not believe it had worn out, "as little as the machine has been run--50 miles." Could Owen offer any suggestion? Owen replied on the 23rd of April, assuring that the play in the steering wheel should be of no concern. But now Brennan, obviously worried about operating his new possession in any way that might damage it, had further questions. Would Owen tell him how much oil was to be kept in the crankcase, what kind of oil it should be, and how often it should be renewed? He was also worried about the differential. Upon the advice of Owen, he had taken out the plug and looked into the differential and found it packed with "hard oil"--obviously grease. "We therefore thought it will be unnecessary to put any oil in there." But to be on the safe side, he had added oil to the differential. The day before he had written this letter of April 26th, he had made a fifteen mile run, and the radiator had boiled over. Perhaps he had run with the throttle and spark set wrong--he included a diagram to show how they had been positioned and asked for advice. "I regret to annoy you with so many questions, but believe you will prefer to have the car running nicely than to have us have any trouble."⁴³

For the next month Brennan staggered along, though he had to order two new innertubes, but by the end of May he was unwilling to accept the explanation of Owen about the extra steering wheel motion, and wrote to ask the company how to take it out, as they had told him it could be done. He also had another complaint: the front cylinder was leaking water from sand holes. The leak, in his opinion, did not amount to much, "perhaps one or two quarts in 24 hours," but could anything be done about it?⁴⁴ The solution to this problem, if there was one, is not recorded. In July, Brennan complained to Owen that the rear cylinder had not worked properly since the car's purchase, and it was now discovered that one of the two cylinder rings was broken. Would Owen ship him three rings--one to repair the immediate problem and the other two for spares?⁴⁵ He received the rings in due course.

Somewhat disillusioned with Owen's service, Brennan turned to another supplier for parts. His experience was no better. He asked the Excelsior Supply Company of Chicago to bid on some supplies for his car. Instead of a bid, he got a bill for the parts, though he had never received them. It turned out that the Kansas City Automobile Supply Company, from which Brennan did buy the parts and to whom he had sent payment, had purchased the parts from the Chicago company but had not paid for them. Excelsior continued to dun Brennan for the \$12.00 they claimed he owed, and he just as adamantly refused to pay. Finally in December, he learned that he had in fact received two shipments of the same order, one from Kansas City and the other from Chicago, and as he had used some of the Chicago parts, he finally agreed to pay up.⁴⁶ But he did no further business with either company, and returned to Owen with a parts order in October.⁴⁷

Through the first months of 1910, the Reo apparently performed in a satisfactory fashion--at least Brennan's correspondence is silent on the subject. But late that year the tires and some of the car's parts began to wear out. Brennan wrote to Owen, ordering the parts and complaining again about the steering gear. When the parts arrived, he was chagrined to find some were second-hand and damaged beyond repair, while others were missing. By now he was beginning to lose his temper. "I am sending the whole outfit back today by express and with request that you send me new parts in place of these old ones. . . . Will thank you to see that the parts and all nuts fit and to hurry the order along. Do not understand why this old stuff was sent to me." Owen sent out the new parts, but to Brennan's disgust, continued to bill him for both the used parts he had sent back and the new parts. Late in January of 1911, Brennan attempted to install the new parts he had received after sending the used parts back, and found them incomplete. This time he sent both the parts he had received and the worn-out parts from the car back to Owen "so that you may see what is lacking." His patience was nearly at an end:

It is not understood why we have so much trouble having a small order of this sort filled promptly and without so much trouble, annoyance and extra expense in express charges that we have to pay, because of your errors and mistakes.

As our machine cannot be used until the spindle is returned, it is hoped that you will return it promptly.⁴⁸

Meanwhile, Brennan was concerned about the condition of his car's Michelin tires. In the hope that he could do better through Michelin itself, he wrote the company at Milltown, New Jersey, inquiring about prices.⁴⁹ It may also be that he merely wanted a Michelin price list for comparison purposes, for he again sent his order to Owen, and included a \$50 down payment, which he supposed would substantially cover the purchase cost. On December 27, 1910, he received the invoice for the two tires. It totalled \$99.80, a sum he found "exorbitant." He had purchased the tires from Owen because he thought the price would be about the same as buying direct from Michelin and the freight less. Nevertheless he paid up, deducting his down payment and some credits he had with Owen, as well as \$3.30 for freight because Owen had charged him for prepaid freight, but had shipped the tires freight collect. Owen refused to accept the payment because of the \$3.30 deduction, and the argument between Brennan and the company was on.⁵⁰ Finally in February, Brennan paid the \$3.30 and asked Owen to sign a corrected voucher including that amount so he could clear the amount with the OIA. Owen refused. Letters flew back and forth and it was not until March that Brennan finally got Owen to sign the corrected voucher. It had taken Brennan three patient and involved explanations to get his point across.⁵¹ Even this was not the end of the matter. When Owen finally signed the voucher, they neglected to date it, and the OIA refused to accept it. Brennan was forced to send a duplicate voucher to Owen for dating. Owen insisted that Brennan return the original voucher, but this he could not do because it had been forwarded with his accounts to Washington, and the OIA's policy was that once a document had been filed

with them, it could not be returned.⁵² The dispute over \$3.30 had gone on for five months; Brennan was trapped between the two bureaucracies.

Throughout the summer of 1911, Brennan continued to buy parts from Owen, usually without incident,⁵³ but in October there was further trouble. The Reo was badly in need of replacement parts for the front sprocket wheel, the clutch, the rear axle, and the exhaust system. Brennan ordered the parts from Owen, sending along a diagram of the clutch parts, and requesting information for removing the sprocket wheel, a task his engineer had not been able to accomplish. The parts arrived, but no information on removing the sprocket wheel. In exasperation, Brennan shipped the new sprocket wheel back to Owen, along with the car's crankshaft with the old sprocket wheel attached, and requested that Owen install the new part.⁵⁴

Brennan ordered his last parts from Owen in March 1912-- "two radiator sections." Most of this letter was a bill of complaint:

As there is no agent or any one representing your company in this part of South Dakota it seems to us you should allow a discount on repair parts. Your prices for repair parts seem to be very high.

There are half dozen makes of other cars [available] and it is a fact that the cost for repair parts for these machines is not half as much as you charge for corresponding parts. Besides this, the Flanders, E M F people and the International send experts on call to repair cars without cost to owners.

Your prices for repairs are discouraging and I know it has caused prejudice against the Reo in this section of the country.⁵⁵

Four months after he purchased the Reo in February of 1909, Brennan made his first automobile report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He had disposed of two teams the year before, and he estimated his saving in feed at \$395. Had he not purchased the car, he would have had to purchase two replacement teams, a set of harness, and "perhaps" one buggy, the total cost of which would have been \$750, for a grand total of \$1145, a somewhat higher amount than the cost of the car. He then went on to compare operating costs. The cost of hay and grain for two months for two teams would have been about \$50, whereas the cost of the car for a similar period had been only \$20.50--\$13.50 for 45 gallons of gasoline, \$2.00 for four gallons of oil, and \$5.00 for a new inner-tube.⁵⁶ He did not indicate that the car had been inoperable for part of the two months, nor did he ever advise the OIA of his later difficulties with the Reo. Washington might well have got wind of these through an examination of his accounts, but though the Reo caused Brennan considerable trouble, his actual outlay for repairs during the first two years was only \$141.06, including the "exorbitant" \$94.34 for tires.⁵⁷

Undaunted by his problems with the Reo, Brennan was still enthused about the use of the automobile for reservation business, and in April of 1911, he asked permission to purchase a

second car, this time for use of the Day School Inspector. He preferred a Flanders "20", but if this was considered too expensive, he would settle for a cheaper Hupmobile runabout.⁵⁸ With unwonted alacrity the OIA approved the purchase of the Hupmobile from an Omaha dealer, and it was delivered to the Omaha Indian Warehouse on May 12th. It arrived at the Reservation on May 17th.⁵⁹

Flushed with the ease of his success, Brennan immediately applied to the OIA for still a third car. On May 4th, he stated his case to the Commissioner:

The opening of Bennett County and the proposed opening of Washabaugh, with the incident complications and demands on the Superintendent's time in that territory, taken in connection with the sales of non-competent and inherited Indian land, now in progress on this reservation, will greatly increase the demand for transportation facilities. The automobile that we now have has given perfect satisfaction and has proved an unqualified success. From now on occasions will arise, with increasing frequency, when one automobile cannot answer the requirements.

There were times when his one auto would be laid up for repairs; at other times it would be away from the reservation office for several days, leaving the agency without proper transportation. What was needed was a good runabout costing in the neighborhood of \$800 to supplement the existing auto. "Such an arrangement would always have one automobile in good running condition for use in Government work by Agency employes and visiting officials." In view of the fact that he had funds available, he requested that he be allowed to purchase "an automobile runabout, similar to the two passenger Hupmobile, on which Supt. [R.C.] Jordan [of the Omaha Indian Warehouse] now has quotations. . . ."⁶⁰ It may be noted that in spite of the "perfect satisfaction" the Reo had given, he did not recommend, or even consider, the purchase of a second Reo.

To buttress his request, Brennan attached a three-page report on his experiences with the Reo. The total cost of the car, including extras added after purchase, had been \$1060.65. In addition to repair bills of \$141.06, operating costs, including gasoline, oil, dry batteries, and carbide, had come to \$172.00. The car had been driven 4500 miles, and he estimated it had saved 450 hours of employee time as compared to horse-drawn vehicles. There were now 300 miles of good automobile roads on the reservation, and 700 more than that were passable; "Practically any point on the reservation, excluding the bad lands, can be reached by automobile, with a wonderful saving of time." He and two clerks had recently made a trip to four outlying districts to make payments to the 5,000 Indians of those areas, and had accomplished the 160 mile trip in four days. The same trip by team would have required nine or ten days. "In this one instance, there was an actual saving in travel expenses of \$40.00. There was also the saving of five days time for the Superintendent and two clerks." As for the Reo's condition, it was "excellent. Apparently runs as well and as strong as when first purchased. In fact, runs better on account of added

experience." He estimated it would run at least another five to ten years. Brennan went on to compare the upkeep cost of the Reo with the upkeep cost he would have incurred from the two teams he had sold. He calculated that each horse would consume twelve pounds of oats and fourteen pounds of hay per day, and with hay at \$6.00 per ton and oats at \$1.60 (per unstated amount, but probably per hundredweight), the upkeep on the horses for the 26 months the car had been in service would have amounted to \$740.00--\$427.00 more than on the Reo.⁶¹ If we ignore the troubles with the Reo's supplier, clearly Brennan had made his case.

Three weeks later, on May 24th Brennan wrote to R.C. Jordan requesting him to ask the local EMF dealer to fill out a proposal for a Flanders "20" with "a flat deck behind, if made that way."⁶² The same day he asked J.C. Jordan, EMF Dealer at Gordon, Nebraska (which was only a few miles from Rushville) to submit a similar bid. He added that he needed the proposal within five days "as we will be down and out if the purchase is not granted by June 30."⁶³ Just how he would have been down and out was not explained; presumably he would have been laid low because at that time the new federal fiscal year began on July 1, killing off all of the previous year's purchases which had not already been approved by Washington.

The OIA, which had so readily agreed to the purchase of the Hupmobile, balked at this request for a third car, and suggested that if the roads at Pine Ridge were as good as Brennan claimed, he ought to consider the purchase of a much cheaper motorcycle. Brennan replied to their suggestion on June 5th, arguing that "it has been demonstrated that the use of motorcycles on this reservation is not practicable. The question has been fully tried and settled." Two of the agency's physicians and a brother of the Holy Rosary Mission had had motorcycles some two years past and had given them a thorough trial. All had given up on them and now had small runabouts. As for the use of motorcycles on reservation roads,

More than ninety per cent of the roads are prairie roads. These roads are very good wagon and automobile roads, but are almost impossible for a motorcycle, as the wagon tracks are worn down into ruts, sometimes ten or more inches deep. It is very difficult and dangerous to ride a motorcycle down these ruts, and it is too rough to ride in any other portion of the road. The three people, above mentioned, were bruised nearly all the time, until they disposed of their motorcycles and purchased runabouts.

He recommended the purchase of the Flanders "20" at a cost of \$859.90.⁶⁴ The OIA gave in once more, and on June 24th Brennan wrote R.C. Jordan at Omaha to proceed with the purchase of the Flanders.⁶⁵ Just a week later he asked Jordan to secure bids on a fourth car, a Ford runabout, for the use of the agency's physician, and on July 31st, he requested authorization for the car from the commissioner.⁶⁶

The commissioner's office conducted a rear guard action against the Ford purchase by requesting more information. Brennan obliged with a long letter on September 12th. Two physicians were now stationed at the agency, and their only means of transportation were a private car owned by one of them, Dr. James Walker, "and one team of old, broken down ponies." If the car was not authorized, it would be necessary to purchase another team, buggy, and set of harness for \$500. The Ford runabout could cost only \$275 more, and "in view of the economy in upkeep of the automobile as compared with the horses, I consider the purchase of an automobile would be the best business proposition, to say nothing of the difference in amount of ground covering capacity of the two."⁶⁷

Brennan's defense of the proposed Ford purchase went unanswered for two months. In mid-December, he wrote the commissioner's office again. The situation was becoming desperate. Dr. Walker's car had been purchased seven years earlier, and had been worn out in the Agency's service. "He now refuses to furnish the transportation any longer." This left the only transportation for the two doctors the "one team of broken down old ponies purchased ten years ago."⁶⁸ By March of 1912, Brennan's importunings had their effect. The Ford was authorized and delivered, and Brennan was now the master of a fleet of four automobiles.⁶⁹ Two of them, and especially the Flanders, brought him a continuous round of troubles from the day of delivery.

The Hupmobile for the use of the school inspector had been received on May 17, 1911. Less than two months later, Brennan was in correspondence with the Hupp Motor Car Company at Detroit with a list of troubles. He notified them that he was sending them via express four cogwheels from the transmission, a large brass washer, and the rear axle bar with gearings and bearings. As he put it:

The machine never worked right, the reverse speed would not work, though repeated efforts were made to get it to clutch. There is a flaw or crack in one of the bevel pinions on the rear gearings, and the balls in brass bearings are badly torn.

As the machine has been used so short, I trust you will see fit to furnish the necessary repairs.

The car had run less than 800 miles, and obviously was totally out of commission.⁷⁰

Hupp wrote back on July 15th that they had not received the damaged parts. By July 26th, Brennan had heard nothing further, so he wrote again, asking if the parts had been received and describing the large box in which they were sent. The letter was unnecessary. A day or two later, the parts arrived at Pine Ridge. But one of the gear wheels did not fit the casing, and Brennan was forced to send wheel and casing back to Hupp. This time he was careful to send the parts by registered mail so that he could be sure when Hupp received them. By August 3rd, he heard from Hupp that in spite of his care, the parts had not been received.⁷¹ The record of how all this came out is no longer extant, but Brennan's difficulties with the Hupmobile continued.

Perhaps to make the acquisition of the Hupmobile more palatable to the OIA, Brennan had ordered a stripped model which lacked speedometer, top, windscreen, and spare tire. Operating a car on the Pine Ridge Reservation without these items created both inconvenience and downright difficulty. Without the speedometer, distances could not be judged. As for the top and windscreen, the hot sun and rain were bad enough, but even more irksome were the wind and dust. Operating the car without a spare tire in areas fifteen or twenty miles from even the nearest habitation was unthinkable in an era when tires were notoriously unreliable. Late in August, Brennan asked Washington for permission to purchase the necessary extra equipment for the Hupmobile.⁷² It was mid-October before he received what was probably the most peculiar reply in all his automobile correspondence with the commissioner's office: the OIA had absolutely no evidence that Brennan's Pine Ridge Agency owned a Hupmobile. Brennan replied enclosing copies of the original car order, the voucher of payment from the Bureau itself, and the bill of lading, which had been forwarded to the OIA the previous May. "From the foregoing it is evident your Office purchased and paid for the machine and it has been used by the office day school inspector in the Service since it's [sic] receipt."⁷³ Brennan of course did not mention that the Hupmobile had been out of service on at least one occasion for several weeks. Whether Brennan received authorization to purchase his list of extras for the car is not recorded, but as he ceased to badger Washington on the matter, we may conclude that the extras were authorized by the OIA, perhaps out of embarrassment. In the long run, the Hupmobile proved one of the less troublesome units of his little fleet. The same could not be said for the Flanders "20", which caused almost as many difficulties as the unreliable Reo, even though Studebaker Brothers, which had now been reorganized as the Studebaker Corporation, usually made strenuous efforts to remedy Brennan's complaints.

The Flanders arrived by railroad at the Rushville station in mid-July of 1911 "with several of the small balls in the front wheel broken, no instruction book, dry cells run down, and in some manner the prestolite tank . . . tampered with."⁷⁴ Brennan immediately contacted Studebaker's Omaha Branch. Parts were shipped out to Brennan on the first train, and the Branch noted, "We do not understand how it [the car] could arrive in such condition, as we got a clear receipt from the railroad Co. when we delivered it to them which shows that it was in first-class condition. However, it was probably tampered with." The letter went on to note, "We trust you will have good luck with the car and that it will give you good service so that you will have no further cause for complaint."⁷⁵ It was an idle hope.

On August 3rd, Brennan wrote to Studebaker at Omaha, asking for a parts catalogue, noting that the steering gear worked only with the greatest difficulty, and asking for instructions for loosening it, "as general instructions forwarded do not tell how it can be done." On August 16th, he sent his first parts order--the brass thumb button from the top of the emergency brake had come unscrewed and was lost. The part was sent to him two days later, with the notation that Studebaker hoped it was the right part. But there was trouble over payment,

and Brennan had to write Studebaker's EMF headquarters at Detroit to straighten the matter out. Finally, on September 19, Detroit headquarters informed Brennan that "investigation shows that we received from you 22¢ on August 26th and that this matter may be closed in so far as you are concerned."⁷⁶

Less than three weeks later Brennan wrote the Studebaker EMF factory concerning two major complaints. The steering mechanism problem had now become so bad that when the car was turned to the left or right, the front wheels could not be returned to the straight ahead position. Further, the car was burning a gallon of oil every eighty miles. Both of these defects had been noted from the first run of the car up from Rushville and had become progressively worse. Brennan had "quit running the car for the present as it is not safe to do so on account of the defects mentioned." He requested that Studebaker send an expert to Pine Ridge to put the steering and oiling systems in proper working order.⁷⁷ This time Brennan received little satisfaction from Detroit. They sent him a book of general operating instructions that was of no help whatsoever in resolving the problems; Studebaker then referred the matter to their Omaha Branch.⁷⁸ The problem was still unresolved two months later. Finally, in December the branch promised to send a man to Pine Ridge in a week or ten days. The repairman, a Mr. Minzinger, arrived as promised with a box containing the new steering gear. When the box was opened, it was discovered that it was for a two-speed Flanders; Brennan's Flanders was a three-speed.⁷⁹

Over the next several years, Brennan continued to have problems with his Flanders. On at least seven occasions between 1912 and 1916 he ordered parts from the Studebaker Omaha Branch. By 1915 he had become so adept at ordering that he was able to send the branch a long list of needed parts and specify each part by number. He was also able to cut through some of the usual red tape required by government regulations. His usual policy was to order the parts, await their receipt, then send the vendor a voucher for payment, and pay when the voucher was returned. By 1915, his relationship with the Studebaker Omaha Branch had reached the point where he felt able to send a blank voucher with his check, asking them to fill it in. Brennan found his Flanders had another advantage over the Rec: the parts were cheap. Of his last seven parts orders, the highest was \$7.10, and three were less than one dollar. On May 25, 1916, Brennan sent Omaha his last Flanders parts order. The final paragraph summed up the hazards of automobile operation at Pine Ridge: "Please send with the least possible delay, as the car is out in the country awaiting repairs to be brought home."⁸⁰

Of all his fleet of four automobiles, Brennan had the least trouble with his Ford, a make he had originally rejected as unsuited to Pine Ridge roads. The Ford's career did begin on the usual unhappy note. It was ordered through the Indian warehouse in Chicago and arrived at Rushville early in March, 1912. When the car was unloaded from the railroad boxcar, it was discovered that a box containing the full set of tools had been broken into, and all the tools stolen, except for a tire pump. As the railroad car was properly sealed, the theft was something of a mystery. Upon further examination, Brennan

concluded that another automobile had been shipped in the same boxcar, which had been opened somewhere between Detroit and Rushville for delivery of that vehicle, and the tools had been stolen at that time. But there is no record that Brennan ever had to complain about or order parts for the reservation's Ford.⁸¹

In spite of all his difficulties with the OIA, the various car companies and their dealers, and the railroads, Brennan continued to believe his automobiles had been both a transportation and a financial success. On November 8, 1911, he filed a full report on his cars with the commissioner's office. It covered the fiscal year ending July 1, 1911, and the three months ending September 30th of that year. For the fiscal year, the Reo, which he had for the entire year, and the Hupmobile, which he had received on May 7th, had required an expenditure of only \$88.25 for gasoline and oil. Brennan had been fortunate in that gas was only 20¢ per gallon, but he had had to purchase 38 gallons of oil. Repairs, including the purchase of three tires, had been \$113.74, and together with other miscellaneous expenses, the total upkeep had come to only \$237.49. His fleet had increased to three with the arrival of the Flanders about July 15, but still his operating and upkeep expenses for the July through September quarter amounted to only \$90.93. At "the established ration of 14 lbs. of hay and 12 lbs. of oats per day per horse," the upkeep of three teams for the same ninety day period would have come to \$152.28. As he put it, "It is evident from these figures that the expense and maintenance of three automobiles is less than it is for the same number of teams of horses. As a saving of time and traveling expenses the automobiles are infinitely superior."⁸²

NOTES

1. Edwin Corle, John Mohler Studebaker: An American Dream (New York: R.P. Dutton, 1948), passim. Brennan's acquaintance with Studebaker was most likely the result of the fact that Studebaker Brothers was a principal supplier of horse-drawn vehicles to the federal government.
2. Brennan to Studebaker, 20 July 1909, in Kansas City Federal Archives and Records Center; Group 75, Pine Ridge (hereafter FARC RG 75 PR). Copies of Miscellaneous Letters Sent (hereafter MLS), vol. 53.
3. "Indian Affairs: Report of the Commissioner & Appendixes," Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1900 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 417, 678-741.
4. OIA General Organization Chart, 1925, FARC RG 75 PR, Main Decimal File, Code 003.7.
5. OIA Field Districts and District Headquarters Chart, 1939, *ibid.*
6. OIA General Organization Chart, 1925, *ibid.*
7. OIA Field Districts and District Headquarters Chart, 1939, *ibid.*
8. Laurence F. Schmeckebier, The Office of Indian Affairs: Its History, Activities, and Organization (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1927), 84.

9. Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1904 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), part 1, 331; Annual Reports . . . for . . . 1905 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905), part 1, 338.

10. Annual Narrative Report, Pine Ridge (1911), section VIII; Annual Narrative Report, Pine Ridge (1913), section VII, both in National Archives Microfilm Publication M1011, roll 106.

11. Zachery T. Sutley, The Last Frontier (New York: MacMillan, 1930), 124.

12. Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1881 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881), 49.

13. Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1901 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 365.

14. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 October 1906, with cover letter to Valentine, same date, FARC RG 75 PR, Copies of Correspondence and Reports Sent to the Office of Indian Affairs, 1875-1914 (hereafter CROIA), vol. 37.

15. Commissioner to Brennan, 20 November 1906. Within the present organization of the Pine Ridge records, it is not often possible to locate incoming correspondence. The date, contents, and quotation from the commissioner's letter are contained in the letter from Brennan to the commissioner cited in n. 16, below.

16. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 December 1906, FARC RG 75 PR, CROIA, col. 37.

17. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 26 March 1907, *ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*

19. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 17 July 1908, *ibid.*, vol. 39.

20. On 9 September 1908, Brennan wrote to Valentine in Washington stating that he had received no answer to his letter of 17 July and asking Valentine if he could "do anything to hurry the matter." (*Ibid.*)

21. Brennan to Studebaker, 20 July 1908, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 53.

22. Studebaker's reply could not be located, but Brennan refers to it in a letter to Studebaker of 17 November 1980, *ibid.*, vol. 54.

23. The data is given as 6 October 1908 in Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 June 1909, *ibid.*, CROIA, vol. 40.

24. Brennan to Bergers Automobile Company, 5 November 1980; Brennan to Gny L. Smith, same date; Brennan to Mason Motor Car Company, same date; Brennan to Fletcher Cowherd, Jr. Automobile Company, Kansas City, Missouri, 12 November 1908 (Corbin); Brennan to Woodward Auto Company, Kansas City, Missouri, same date (Knox); Brennan to E.R. Thomas Motor Company, Buffalo, New York, 16 November 1908 (Thomas); Brennan to [W.L.] Mills, Gordon, Nebraska, same date (Maxwell); Brennan to Ben Turgeon, Bonasteel, Nebraska,

17 November 1908 (Adams-Fairwell); Brennan to Ford Motor Company, Denver, Colorado, 25 November 1908 (Ford), all in *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 54.

25. Brennan to Scudbaker Automobile Company, Kansas City, Missouri, 12 November 1908, *ibid.* Scudbaker had recently acquired the Everett-Merzger-Flanders Company of Detroit in one of the earliest of the auto mergers. Scudbaker Automobile Company was the sales subsidiary of Scudbaker Brothers Manufacturing Company.

26. Brennan to Scudbaker 17 November 1908, *ibid.*

27. Brennan to "Scudbaker Automobile Agency," Sioux City, Iowa, 9 December 1908, *ibid.*

28. Pioneer Motor Car Company, Sioux City, Iowa, to Brennan, 12 December 1908, *ibid.*, Box 105, Folder Scudbaker. "Chicago" referred to the wholesale agency which Scudbaker Brothers maintained in Wabash Avenue in that city.

29. Bullock to Brennan, 16 December 1908, *ibid.*, Box 113, Folder Autos.

30. Brennan to Bullock, 18 December 1908, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 54.

31. Bullock to Brennan, 19 December 1908, *ibid.*, Box 105, Folder Scudbaker.

32. Brennan to Bullock, 28 December 1908, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 54.

33. Bullock to Brennan, 4 January 1909, *ibid.*, Box 105, Folder Scudbaker.

34. Scudbaker Brothers Manufacturing Company, Chicago to Brennan, 26 December 1908, *ibid.*

35. Scudbaker Automobile Company, Denver, to Brennan, 2 January 1909, *ibid.*, Box 113, Folder Autos.

36. Brennan to F.N. Emrick, Rapid City, South Dakota, 5 January 1909; Brennan to James K. Reid, Hay Springs, Nebraska, 7 February 1909, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 54.

37. Brennan to Emrick, 23 August 1908 (the letter is misdated and was probably written on or about 23 December as it is with letters of that date), *ibid.*; Emrick to Brennan, 2 January 1909, *ibid.*, Box 113, Folder Autos; Brennan to Emrick, 5 January 1909, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 54; Emrick to Brennan, 11 January 1909, *ibid.*, Box 113, Folder Autos; Brennan to Emrick, 22 January 1909, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 54. No evidence could be located indicating that Brennan had in fact received an offer of a special price for a Mitchell.

38. Brennan to R.M. Owen & Company, Lansing, Michigan, 8 January 1909, *ibid.* Owen's letter of 2 January to Brennan (as well as later letters from Owen) could not be located, but its contents are indicated in Brennan's letters to Owen. Brennan had originally made inquiry to Owen on 28 December 1908--see same to same, that date, *ibid.*

39. Brennan to Owen & Company, 19 January 1909, *ibid.*

40. Brennan to Owen & Company, 1 February 1909; same to same, 7 February 1909; same to same, 13 February 1909, *ibid.*
41. Brennan to Owen & Company, 27 February 1909, *ibid.*
42. Brennan to Owen & Company, 20 March 1909, *ibid.*, vol. 55.
43. Brennan to Owen & Company, April 20, 1909; same to same, 26 April 1909, *ibid.*
44. Brennan to Owen & Company, 10 May 1909 (innertube); same to same, 24 May 1909, *ibid.*
45. Brennan to Owen & Company, 15 July 1909, *ibid.*
46. Brennan to Excelsior Supply Company, Chicago, Illinois, 24 August 1909; Brennan to Kansas City Automobile Supply Company, Kansas City, Missouri, 22 October 1909, *ibid.*, vol. 56; same to same, 14 December 1909; same to same, 29 December 1909, *ibid.*, vol. 57.
47. Brennan to Owen & Company, 20 October 1909, *ibid.*, vol. 56.
48. Brennan to Owen & Company, 24 September 1910; same to same, 5 October 1910; same to same, 21 November 1910, *ibid.*, vol. 59; same to same, 30 January 1911, *ibid.*, vol. 60.
49. Brennan to Michelin Tire Company, Milltown, New Jersey, 25 November 1910, *ibid.*, vol. 59.
50. Brennan to Owen & Company, 10 December 1910, *ibid.*; same to same, 27 December 1910; same to same, 11 January 1911, *ibid.*, vol. 60.
51. Brennan to Owen & Company, 6 February 1911; same to same, 18 February 1911; same to same, 1 March 1911, *ibid.*
52. Brennan to Owen & Company, 15 May 1911; same to same, 27 May 1911, *ibid.*, vol. 61. Whether the dispute was ever actually resolved is not recorded.
53. Brennan to Owen & Company, 8 July 1911; same to same, 11 July 1911, *ibid.*, vol. 62; same to same, 4 October 1911, *ibid.*, vol. 63.
54. Brennan to Reo Motor Car Company, Lansing, Michigan (actually to Owen & Company), 25 November 1911; Brennan to Owen & Company, 5 December 1911, *ibid.*
55. Brennan to Reo Motor Company (actually Owen & Company), 19 March 1912, *ibid.*, vol. 64.
56. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 June 1909, *ibid.*, CROIA, vol. 40.
57. Attachment to Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 4 May 1911, *ibid.*, vol. 43. The slightly lesser amount for the tires than listed earlier was the result of credits claimed by Brennan.
58. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 April 1911, *ibid.* The Flanders "20" was made by EMF division of Studebaker and was a cheaper model than the EMF "30", which Brennan had earlier tried to purchase.

59. For details of this transaction, see Brennan to Hupp Motor Company, Detroit, Michigan, 12 July 1911, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 62.
60. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 4 May 1911, *ibid.*, CROIA, vol. 43.
61. *ibid.*, attachment.
62. Brennan to R.C. Jordan, Omaha, Nebraska, 24 May 1911, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 61.
63. Brennan to J.C. Jordan, Gordon, Nebraska, 24 May, 1911, *ibid.*
64. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 5 June 1911, *ibid.*, CROIA, vol. 43.
65. Brennan to R.C. Jordan, 24 June 1911, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 62.
66. Brennan to R.C. Jordan, 1 July 1911, *ibid.* The letter of 31 July to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs could not be located, but it is mentioned in Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 12 September 1911, *ibid.*, CROIA, vol. 43.
67. *ibid.*
68. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 December 1911, *ibid.*, vol. 44.
69. Brennan to Ford Motor Company, Detroit, Michigan, 14 March 1912, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 64.
70. Brennan to Hupp Motor Car Company, Detroit, Michigan, 12 July 1911, *ibid.*, vol. 62.
71. Brennan to Hupp Motor Car Company, 26 July 1911; same to same, 28 July 1911; same to same, 3 August 1911, *ibid.*
72. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 28 August 1911, *ibid.*, CROIA, vol. 43.
73. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 16 October 1911, *ibid.* See also Hauke, 2nd Asst. Commissioner (Washington) to Indian School, Pine Ridge, 22 October 1911 (telegram); and Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 23 October 1911 (telegram), *ibid.*
74. Brennan's complaint is quoted in Studebaker Corporation, Omaha Branch to Brennan, 21 July 1911, *ibid.*, Box 105, Folder Studebaker.
75. *ibid.*
76. Brennan to EMF [Studebaker] Company, Omaha, 3 August 1911; same to same, 16 August 1911, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 62; Studebaker Corporation, Omaha Branch to Brennan, 21 August 1911; Studebaker Corporation, Detroit, Michigan, to Brennan, 19 September 1911, *ibid.*, Box 105, Folder Studebaker.
77. Brennan to Studebaker Automobile Company, Detroit, Michigan, 5 October 1911, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 63.
78. Brennan to EMF [Studebaker] Company, Omaha, Nebraska, 14 December 1911, *ibid.*

79. Studebaker Corporation, Omaha Branch to Brennan, 16 December 1911, *ibid.*, Box 105, Folder Studebaker; Brennan to EMF [Studebaker] Company, Omaha, Nebraska, undated, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 63.

80. C.M. King, Studebaker Corporation, Omaha Branch, to Brennan, 26 March 1912, H. Rethmeyer, Studebaker Corporation, Omaha Branch to same, 3 June 1912; Studebaker Corporation, Omaha Branch to same, 17 June 1912; same to same, 7 May 1913; Brennan to Studebaker Corporation, Omaha, 19 June 1913; same to same, 26 August 1913; same to same, 9 September 1913; same to same, 29 May 1915; same to same, 25 June 1915; same to same, 26 May 1915; all in *ibid.*, Box 105, Folder Studebaker.

81. Brennan to Frank Sorenson, Superintendent, Indian Warehouse, Chicago, Illinois, 9 March 1912; Brennan to Ford Motor Company, Detroit, Michigan, 14 March 1912, *ibid.*, MLS, vol. 64.

82. Brennan to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 8 November 1911, CROIA, vol. 44.