

Spanish, Ont.,
15 November, 1938.

Reverend and Dear Father;

P.C.

Congratulations if such are
in order for your new honor and responsibility.

I do not wish to trouble you
with complaints so soon, but I feel I should say something about
our need of brothers.

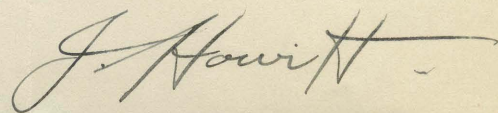
Brother Grubb is discontented.
He is always talking about farming, wishing he were back at
Wikwemikong. He says that he is no longer afraid of his heart,
that his trouble was only gas on the stomach. He dislikes his
present work in the shoe-shop and has no use for the boys. He
is really making no progress for the length of time he has been
there. Again he has little or no control over the boys. At table
he appears gloomy doubtless because he does not understand what
others are talking about. He is such a good brother that it
is too bad to see him unhappy. I think too it is time wasted
to keep him in the shoe-shop. Father Belanger wanted to have
him back at Wikwemikong and I hear that Bro McLaren is not very
happy there. He would learn shoemaking quickly from Mr. Albo.

Mr. Albo knows the trade so
well that he does not permit anyone else's work to pass before
he tears it apart and does it over himself. The result is that
several large baskets of girls' shoes have been in the shop for
many weeks and the sisters threaten to give their trade to a
shoemaker in Massey which would be a serious loss for us. I am
praying for the day when we can get Bro McLaren or any bright
brother who could learn the trade, from Mr. Albo.

We need another brother capable
of overseeing the various works here that are carried on by
brothers and laymen. The most important position is now held by
a layman, Mr. Labelle who naturally cannot give orders to brothers.
He is our mechanic and handyman but is hopelessly slow and incap-
able of giving proper training to boys. If you could see fit to
give us brother Reischman, McLean, or Wolke I would pay you
Mr. Labelle's wages, \$25. per month and perhaps he could consent
to replace one of the above mentioned brothers.

Father Keane said the honor
of our society is at stake and I admit that at present our so-called
industrial school is a disgrace, but we cannot carry on the work
properly without brothers, and brothers who are trained for the
work.

Servus in Xt.,



21/39

Spanish, Ont.,
19 April, 1939.

Reverend and Dear Father:

I would like permission to do a certain amount of building and repairing. We wish to put up a shop to house our lighting plant consisting of three gas engines and battery room. There would also be accommodation for pumping engine and work-shop. The building would be about 45'x 45'x10' and made of cement blocks. The Indian Department will pay for everything except perhaps things which we can more easily get ourselves.

We want to build an outside stairs leading to the boys' dormitory. It will be of cement and the cost borne by the Department except for minor articles

The expense to the house may run a little over ~~\$2000~~ \$200.

I have consulted about this and nothing remains to be done except get permission before ordering the cement etc from the Department. I would like to get the order off as soon as possible.

Servus in Xto.

J. Howitt.

alright

Spanish, Ont.,
27 April, 1939.

Reverend and Dear Father;
P.C.

Mr. VanLangen has been asking to re-enter the novitiate. He seems to me to be alright and of course he leads an exemplary life, always following the brothers' routine.

As we intend to do much repairing and building this summer Father Hynes suggests that I ask for Father Hawkins until he goes to Wikwemikong in September if he is going there. He knows so much about mechanics and cement etc that he would be a real help. He could give the brothers' and sisters' retreat while he is here. Of course there will be plenty of work here for Father Hynes also. Father Comte asked for him to preach a mission in June but I refused pending an order to send him. It would make it very awkward here without him. Much work must be rushed before boys go home.

Servus in Xto.,

J. Hewitt

St. Peter Claver
School
SPANISH, Ont.

11 May 1939

Reverend & Dear Father

P.C.

Could I have
permission to spend \$280. for pine logs
It is a good buy according consultants of
the house. White pine is hard to get.
These logs at \$1.25 each could not be
gotten out by us for less
Sincerely in X^{to}
J. Hewitt.

Spanish, Ont.,
17 August, 1939.

Rev. and Dear Father:

P.C.

Father Dwyer has not yet arrived and I am living in hopes that he has found another berth.

add
↓
While quite ready to carry out your wishes in regard to his coming I think I had better two reasons to those already given for his staying away from Spanish. One is this. One of the Kelly girls was in the party last year when Fr. D. made such a fool of himself. *ue.* Mrs Kelly has long been a terror here on account of her tongue. If she decides to talk about that scandal it will do the society no good. She dislikes Fr. D. and if he comes it may set her going.

Another reason is that he will certainly cause friction in this house especially with Fr Hawkins who has charge of works. Fr. D. will be bound to work i.e. building etc and he is notorious for seeing his own views, plans etc only. However "fiat" if he comes.

Seamus Xth J. Hawitt.

Spanish, Ont.,
20 August, 1939.

Reverend and Dear Father;

P.C.

About the congress, of course there is not as much room here during the school year as in the summer, but we could put up six fairly comfortably.

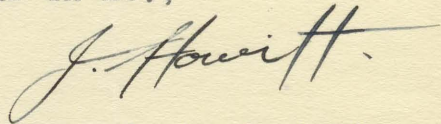
Brother Wall asks to remain two weeks until the boys return. He promises to take it easy. He is steadily losing weight and complains of the cold. It will help much if he remains in order to show Bro Wolke how to sew, cut shirts etc and run the knitting machine.

I do not know where Bro Gauthier should go- Montreal or West?

P.S.

Bro Gauthier finds it very hard to go. I was wondering if his provincial would consider taking Bro. Manseau instead. Bro M. says that he is a 100% French Canadian and that Spanish has changed and that he is made to feel his nationality-- in a word he is not quite happy. We could well afford to do without him as compared to Bro G.

Servus in Xt.,



Spanish, Ont.,
5 September, 1939.

Reverend and Dear Father;
P.C.

Father Moylan wrote me about
the proposed congress. I would be in favor of having it
27th September at Shrine.

Mr. Albo expressed a wish to take
vows of a *donne*. I believe he would like to take them for
a year only or two at a time. Would you give permission
for that? He is in no particular hurry.

Servus in Xt.,

J. Hewitt

Spanish, Ont.,

4 Oct. 1939.

Reverend and Dear Father;

I shall take the 1st Friday mass in the village chapel instead of Fr. Vandriessche. It has not been the custom to give them mass there except on 1st Fridays and I should not like to start Sunday mass there unless I saw clear to continue it. If one of us said mass there it would mean that Fr. Vandriessche would have to say it in the convent where there is a greater congregation and greater scandal by Fr. Vandriessche's antics.

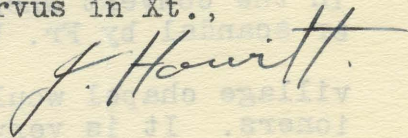
A Sunday mass, one mass, in the village chapel would serve only a small number of the parishioners. It is very small and there are over 90 children of school age 5 to 17. There is certainly need of a parish priest.

Since your letter I have not had Fr. Van preach. I am not certain whether or not it is your intention that he should not preach. He is the only one that

gives a bi-lingual sermon and I thought that pleased the French element.

The bishop has just sent out a circular naming me extraordinary for the Blind River sisters (Fr. Richard is ordinary there) and ordinary confessor for the sisters here. Father Hynes was ordinary here last year and I had counted on Fr. Hawkins carrying on the work. I can be ordinary confessor if you wish, but takes up a good deal of time.

Servus in Xt.,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. Hewitt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "t".

Spanish, Ont.
20 January, 1939.

Rev. and Dear Father;
P.C.

This is to fulfill my duty of writing.
I have nothing of importance to say.
The most interesting question at present is our separate school
difficulty and Father Hynes has told you about that. I think it
will be better for this school and for the parish when the two are
completely separated and a parish priest appointed.

I hope Father Hynes remains here
as minister. He is ideal for this school. Having been a successful
prefect he understands the boys and helps our present prefects
who perhaps have not all the qualities necessary for so important
a task. Physical strength is required to handle unruly boys at times.
The Indian has great respect for strong muscles. Then endurance is
necessary for it is a work that wears one out. Energy of boy and
mind are called for to keep the boys busy to say nothing of spiritual
qualities so necessary in a place where the power of Satan is
strong.

me at present.

There is nothing else that occurs to

*Received
by Mr. Hynes*

Servus in Xto.,

J. Hawitt

Spanish

10 May 1939

Rev. + Dear Father
P.C.

Yes it will be serious to lose Bro Gauthier. He holds an important job. All our work on the land is repaid only with the milk. He too is the gardener and if he does go I suppose he will not do so before putting in the garden. He has his seeds + plans made. To change before the end of seeding would mean a serious financial loss.

As for suggestions - of course what we need is a Manufacturer to take charge of works. I agree with Father Hynes that Bro Perschman would be best.

Bro Wolke I understand has had special training in dairy work. If an exchange for brother Manseau could be arranged it would suit us nicely.

Father Maylan is stopping over here + says that Bro Mc Loren cannot manage the farm, especially the horses + is discouraged. Father Maylan is quite willing to let him go for a farmer from Quelfh. Bro Mc Loren had charge of the cattle in Quelfh. I believe

Had it been last year I would have suggested that Bro Grubb return to Wickwemong but now he is contented ^{in his work} + will learn ^{in his work} it goes year by year. ^{negotiation appropriate terms and so forth} Mr. Mc tells him.
Serves in X^{to} J. Hewitt

25/39

Spanish, Ont.,
21 June, 1939.

Dear Reverend Father;
P.C.

As you know the children and the staff of this school were examined and X-rayed for T.B. The staff were passed as sound except Bro Wall. I quote the letter I just received from the Indian Department.

Ottawa June 19, 1939.

Reverend Sir:

The recent tuberculosis survey shows that the Reverend Brother Joseph Wall is suffering from tuberculosis.

It is obviously impossible for the Department to sanction this member of you staff remaining in contact with pupils of the school.

It is hoped that you can make arrangements so that you can assure the Department at an early date that the Reverend Brother is no longer in contact with any pupils of the school.

Yours truly,

T.R.L. MacInnes, Secretary.

I must keep him until the boys go at the end of June, but then I guess he will have to move elsewhere. I would suppose he can take care of himself at Guelph where he saved others from T.B.? Of course we cannot carry on without an infirmarian. We are 30 miles away from the doctor who comes very rarely, - about twice since last December. On the other hand these Indian boys are very prone to infection and bloodpoisoning. Every scratch must be attended to and they receive many. They are continually being hurt. They are not hardy in the sense of resisting disease, perhaps due to their enclosed life in school. If anything happens to anyone a full investigation is called for. The doctor, Indian Agent, justice of peace are required to meet and draw up a report on the death. If negligence on the part of the school can be proved it would go hard with our order. Had Brother Manseau's action last year reached the ears of the government it would have caused trouble. He dismissed children before they were properly cured and spread disease outside. Brother Manseau would never do as infirmarian. Brother Quinn would be alright.

Thomas M. J. Hewitt

29/39

Spanish, Ont.,
26 June, 1939.

Dear Reverend Father;
P.C.

I would rather ~~not~~ commit myself with regard to Bro Laflamme. If he comes I prefer that it be done without encouragement on my part. I do not want to be responsible for him. I'll take what I get and say nothing.

I would ask you to ~~set~~ a convenient date for Father Dufresne's feast. Perhaps the 20th's? As soon as I get the date I'll write Mr. Rushman to have the cards ^uchanged if they are already printed.

I think it would be very good to have the missionary conference at that time if possible, i.e. if Fr Couture is available.

Brother Campbell prefers to go to Guelph and I do not know anyone else as yet who would go to Toronto.

Servus in Xt.,

J. Hawaii H.

6/34

Spanish, Ont.,
4 July, 1939.

Dear Reverend Father;
P.C.

This is not to trouble you during this - a Jesuit provincial's most troublesome month- but only to clear up the Spanish situation. I could by pressing the case get permission from the Department to have Bro Wall remain on the staff, but I am afraid that it would be signing his death warrant.

Dr. Gibbson, assistant to Dr. Harvie of Espanola who is physician for the school, says that the brother has not got a chance if he continues to work as he does. He must have rest and plenty of it. That is impossible here, not because of the press of work but on account of the noise. I have urged him to rest in the afternoons and he tries to do so, but complains of the engines running, thumping in the cellar(he is on 3rd floor) etc. So, as much as I would like to keep him I think it would be wrong to do so. However, that is not for me to decide. I am sending the clinic's report on his case, included in a letter ^{he} wrote to Dr. Shorey. The latter said in reply that he wrote or would write to the Indian Department and explain that Bro Wall could remain without harm to the boys.

As to his successor- beggars can't be choosers. I'll take what I can get and say nothing at least after I get him. I show no enthusiasm over Bro Laflamme because I know he is looked upon as a very valuable brother elsewhere and I know him for what he was here, not as good as he may be in some other house. I'll be glad to have him if he is the only choice, but I was thinking of Bro. Walke. I understand he trained in the Guelph hospital. He would like it here perhaps where he has two countrymen.

I have set 19th July as Father Dufresne's celebration. I hope that date will permit your coming. That was my motive in asking you to name a day. I am leaving the holy pictures bear the anniversary date of his entry i.e. 22 July.

Brother Campbell will go to Toronto for his retreat.

Father Hawkins finishes the first week of the brothers' retreat this evening and seems to be giving a very ^{good} one.

Servus in Xto.,

J. Hawitt.

St. Peter Claver School,
Spanish, Ont.,
8 Sept. 1939.

Reverend and Dear Father;
P.C.

This is to fulfill my obligation of writing as consultant of the Indian missions although I have nothing much to say apart from this school.

We need to put in a diesel engine for our lighting plant, the cost amounting to something over \$1200.00 being shared by the convent who bear half the expenses. It is proposed to take our share of the payment from the ordinary government grant, i.e. the amount they give per pupil for the maintenance of the school. But after paying for it together with food at the present high prices there may not be enough left for all of our so called salaries i.e.

money allowed Jesuits for personal expenses here and for paying off of debt to province.

Will you grant permission to infringe on our "salaries"? We may be able to make it up later. The Department may allow extra money next year. They never give money on short notice. The request must be made a year in advance. Our present engine however will not last a year. It is apt to give out anytime which would put us in a very awkward position.

As for the missions, the only thing that I would like to remark is that I have heard criticism about Father Moylan. They say he does much taking about the missions and is really not a missionary; that his judgment is erratic. For instance it is said that he does much taking among seculars about our giving up Little Current to the secular priest i.e. before that point has been decided.

Servus in Xt.,

J. Hewitt

Indian Residential School,
Spanish, Ont.,
2 July, 1939.

K. M. Shorey, M. D. Clinician,
Division of Tuberculosis Prevention,
Dear Dr. Shorey:

At doctor H.H. Harvie's suggestion I am sending a copy of a letter from the Indian Department regarding Bro. Wall of this school. Have they placed the right interpretation on the finding of the clinic with regard to this member of our staff?

Report of the clinic reads as follows,-

" Rev. Brother Joseph Wall, age 33-

There is a soft mottling in the outer part of the right first interspace with a suggestion of a little in the second interspace.

The shadowing appears more evident than in the film taken last year.

Diagnosis; * Pulmonary tuberculosis minimal.

Recommendations;- Brother Wall should be under very close observation, with (1) a temperature record, (2) sputum examinations (if any obtainable) and more rest than he has been taking, (4) a repeat of the film in 3 months.

The following are your own comments on the report, taken from a letter addressed to me June 9, 1939.

" We think that Brother Wall should take very good care of himself indeed, as there is definite x-ray evidence of minimal disease, though we cannot state that it is active."

In your opinion is it necessary or at least is it advisable that the brother should be out of contact with the boys?

Yours truly,

J. Howitt.

Spanish, Ont.,
9 th Nvo. 1939.

Reverend and Dear Father,

P. Q.

As to the savings from the proposed mill, I cannot say just how much they will be, but here is how I estimate it. The savings would come from making our own bread as that would be the purpose of getting the mill. We use approximately 2000 loaves $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs per month @ .7¢ which is \$140. Supposing that flour ~~bread~~ makes double its weight in bread it would take 15 bags. It requires $2\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of wheat to make bag of flour and figuring on present cost of Western wheat or cost of couple of months ago, delivered in less than carload lots to us at Spanish @ .80¢^{low}, a bag of flour would cost us \$2.00 not counting labor. (One man is needed to run midget flour mill.)

I would count on getting wheat from local farmers, especially from those on Manitoulin near Gore Bay about 20 miles by water from here. I would also get the bake oven from Wikwemikong or at least the iron fixtures. It is a brick one, still intact as it was when used by our brothers when the boarding school was there.

While desire to save money moves me to want the mill I also like it as a safe guard against the uncertain conditions resulting from war. Things may be dear, money scarce etc.

As to the second question I do not think the mill would be a constant source of trouble. It is a solid machine and looks comparatively simple. During the four years it was in operation 1915 - 1919 only one roller was renewed^{at 2.00}. I just received a catalogue from the Pollard Mfg. Co. Niagara Falls, and they can still supply parts if necessary.

I may answer the third question by saying that I have been sending only about 500 dollars per quarter due to necessary repairs and installations. ~~\$500 per quarter~~ A continuation of that practice for the next two quarters would leave us with ~~xxx~~ enough to buy mill etc, and next year I would not enter profits from mill in government books, but send them to Toronto.

Unless some such change is made in our system I do not see how we can ever hope to pay off the debt to the province or even the province's annual account. We are allowed to take \$1000 per quarter for "salaries" and personal expenses. If we make profits from chickens etc which are bought and maintained with government funds the profits must go to the government and we are still allowed only our \$1000. With~~out~~ a parish and missions to carry at a loss I do not see how the Province's \$4000 bi-annual account can be paid .

I do not wish to "urge this matter in any way", so please try to reach a decision on the merits of the case apart from my desire and opinion.

Servus in Xt.

J. Hawitt

Indian Residential School
Spanish, Ont.
Dec. 10th. 1939

Dear Father Provincial;

I received your letter and after due consideration I am ready to give you my answer. Let me state at first that Spragge is a deserted village at this time of the year and of the few who do remain there for the winter are not altogether the best "Church goers". However on this point Father Richard can give you plenty of information.

Most certainly I could go without any personal hardship to myself but I am sure that my work as Prefect of the boys would have to suffer as well as others at the convent. I say Mass there daily and hear confessions twice a week for the children. If I was absent for the week-end it would mean that the Sisters and children would have to come here for early Sunday morning Mass and communion. This would be no little inconvenience for them. We have tried out Father Vandresse and found out that he does not work in very well over there. I am very doubtful if Father Richard would be able to stand the strain of giving communion to the community and children. This is only one difficulty.

To be a successful prefect for the boys and do any good for them I must be on the job at all times. Fr. Hynes complained last year that he could give his time to the boys because of other's work. I have tried to avoid all this this year. I am sticking to the job and only doing the work required of me in this parish, which means that I have to teach catechism to the children once a week, preach twice a month etc. Much more could be done but I have not got the time. Very much more needs to be done in our own little parish.

I could give you many more reasons why I should not take on the extra work at Spragge, but you did not ask me for this in your letter you merely asked to let you know what I thought of the idea. So I will stick to this point and say that I sincerely believe that I should not go to Spragge as I would only be defeating the end for which I was sent here.

But in this matter I merely wish to hold myself indifferent. You may send me or not and altho' I am taken up with the material work, yet I am getting my big share of the spiritual work. I have to preach twice a month, teach catechism, exhortations to the community (both) instructions and exhortations to the children of both schools etc. I do not think then that I can do very much more, along with the double job of Prefect and Minister, and do it well.

Father Howitt asked me to inform you that we have made arrangements to buy the Grist Mill at \$400.00. We only wait on your word to go ahead.

Yours sincerely in Christ

M. J. Hankins S.J.

Sheet
St. Peter Claver School,
Spanish, Ont.,
5 Dec. 1939.

Reverend and Dear Father;

P.C.

I would like to take advantage of an opportunity of getting a 25 barrel midget flour mill by which we could make our own flour and use bi-products for stock.

It would mean considerable saving and if war continues and flour and stock feeds rise it may relieve us from difficulties. Our bread went up in price last month as did feeds previously and will doubtless go higher by spring.

Bread costs us about \$1600 a year and feed about \$600. By getting wheat from local ^{farmers} or even from the West we could reduce this considerably and perhaps have feed for extra stock

The idea of buying this mill has not come suddenly or under pressure of salesmanship. The offer was made last spring and I have talked it over often. Father Hawkins, ^{the} outfit a couple of times and yesterday he and Mr. Tabbelle and ^{two} ~~of~~ went to Massey to look it over and we had a long talk with a man who used to run it for the owner.

It cost the owner \$4500 including an engine once worth \$585 but useless to us at present. One of our old Fords could do the work more economically. It would take perhaps \$200 to put the mill in condition, but we can have the mill, separator scales, warehouse trucks etc for \$500.

I would like to buy it with money from our so-called salaries and not ask the government for a special grant or even use the money allowed per capita, except as I say, that which is for our salaries. The government has just wrote that no more extra grant ~~money~~ will be given this fiscal, but that is not the reason why I wish to use only that money to ~~whhh~~ the society has a right for its own purposes. If government money is used and profits made profits will go to the government. If the Society's money buys the machine the society will take the profits and no account need be rendered to ^{the} government.

Purchase of the mill, I believe, will make no difference in the amount of money I have been sending to Toronto except to increase it next summer if all goes well.

I may add that the machine must be bought this fall as the building is to be demolished.

Servus in X to
J. Howitt.

Spanish, Ont.,
17 May, 1940.

Reverend and Dear Father,
P.C.

Bro Rowell says that the water and milk of this place is doing him so much good that I would not have the heart to send him away at present. Father Minister had to check him up for getting on the nerves of the cooks, but apart from that he has not caused trouble so far.

About a priest- I would prefer two scholastics for the summer to help our prefects. ~~It~~ is a great strain on prefects here during holidays when they must be with boys all the time. Fr. Hannin had not much help last year during the summer and it told on him. Their work during the school year has not been what it should be in the way of watching the boys, due in part at least to great difficulty of keeping an eye on them during summer.

The government has cut 20% off our grant and 50% off other expenses v.g. fares of children to and from home for vacations *etc.* Servus in Xt. *J. Howitt.*

Spanish, Ont.,
23 May, 1940.

Reverend and Dear Father,
P.C.

I am glad to hear about the two scholastics coming for summer. I believe I mentioned the adviseability of having two scholastics for next year so as to put one teaching?

About Mr. Battista-he has not changed since he can here except that some days he is worse than others. There has been a request that he stay away from benediction because he frightens parishioners. He doubles up, twistés his neck and makes terrible faces. He does a good deal of work in the barn and garden, but must be watched i.e. he tried to weed the hot-beds and pulled up all the cabbage.

Any hope of the bishop taking over this parish and perhaps Spragge? He has five more young priests. Spanish and Spragge could support a priest as well as Webbwood. The parish is a terrible headache.

Servus in Xt.,

J. Howitt

26/40

Spanish, Ont.,
25 June, 1940.

Reverend and Dear Father,
P.C.

Our retreat will begin Wednesday evening July 3rd. It would help if the scholastic or scholastics who are to be here next year would make it, so they can help with prefecting later. You said that one could come for the retreat.

If Mr. Hannin is to leave this year he says that he would prefer to make his retreat here. That would work out well, as it would permit Mr. Rushman to have a break by going elsewhere for his retreat. It tells on a person if he spends two years here without a change. He would like to make the retreat with Regiopolis regents, so that he could visit his sister who is said to be very sick.

P.S. Our boat will go to Wikwemikong 1st July. It is considered a nice trip for new prefe

Servus in Xt., *J. Hewitt* cts.

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Servus in Xt., *J. Hawitt* cts.

11/41
Spanish, Ont.,
7 Jan. 1941.

Reverend and Dear Father;

P.C. This is to satisfy my obligation of writing for January.

In the instructions drawn up by Father Power and consultors for parish priests we are told to charge \$360. for services of a sacristan. I did so on last year's report to the bishop and received the following instruction.

"In the financial report, don't list items that the finances of the parish did not and cannot pay, such as sacristan \$360.00. We must trim our sails to suit the wind. That is, no parish can claim deficits beyond its resources. Just list the funds received and the funds actually expended."

I have not been actually expending ~~from~~ parish funds for heat and light in our big chapel which is much more expansive than would be required for our boys alone.

Just before Christmas Bro Manseau had an attack of heart-trouble. The doctor thought it might be thrombosis but called it angina and ordered him to bed for two weeks and since then has forbidden him to do hard work.

It is quite difficult if not impossible to get the brother to rest properly or take any directions that are not according to his way of thinking. He does not sleep at nights until quite late. I broke up a card game in his room the other night at 12:30. I believe it is a common occurrence. Father Barker and Bro Laflamme like to sit in to such.

It might be said that it is the minister's work to put people to bed, but I assure you that he is doing his duty conscientiously and that I should not like him to be checked up in this matter. Father Hawkins finds the work just about all he can stand and may himself require a rest.

As I often suggested before, it would be well if in due course, a place could be found for Bro Manseau in another house. I believe his soul's interest requires that, as he does not seem to lead a spiritual life here. It would be hard to replace him, but we would do our best to struggle along without his help.

Yours truly,

Howitt

March 8/41

St. Peter Claver School,
Spanish, Ont.,
3 March, 1941.

Reverend and Dear Father;
P.C.

This is my monthly letter. We have been very fortunate so far in having very little sickness. The boys take a good dose of cod liver oil which helps to keep them healthy.

Father Brennan of Espanola is in St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto and Father Vandriessche has been spending the week days in Espanola. A priest comes from Sudbury for the Sunday, but Father Brennan asked to have Father Vandriessche to be on hand during the week.

We have to pay a high amount in laymen's wages and will have to hire another man as soon as we begin to do our own baking i.e. sometime during this month. The present cook is a baker by trade, but he will have to have someone else in the kitchen beside the one layman who is there at present.

Mr. Van Langen left over a week ago to find work in Toronto. It will cost sometime to replace him.

The worst difficulty will occur at the end of March and I do not know what to do about it. Mr. Labelle, who took Bro Jacobi's place seven years ago, is leaving to accept a job in Montreal. His duties comprise overhauling the diesel engines and looking after the water and light system including the batteries, and doing the wiring etc well enough to pass periodic government inspection, welding i.e. acetylene, running the steam-engine and saw-mill. We have taken out quite a number of logs this winter. Repairing and building up our boats and engines. They were badly wrecked in the storm.

Even if I were able to get a suitable man by advertising I fancy I would have to pay a wage that would be prohibitive for this place.

Servus in Xt.,

J. Hawitt

Indian Residential School,
Spanish, Ont.,
12 March, 1941.

Reverend and Dear Father;

P.C.

I have been working on the difficulty about to confront us at the end of this month i.e. departure of Mr. Labelle and I cannot find a solution. Mechanics have been urged to accept such good jobs by the war department that few remain. A vague hope remains of getting a certain garage man (if he has not gone), but he wants about \$150 per month and that from our modest grant will leave little to live upon to say nothing of sending anything to Toronto

A possible solution may lie in these circumstances. The rector of Loyola remarked to Fr. Hawkins that he would be willing to hire a man to replace Bro Wolke in order to allow him to give greater service elsewhere, that at present he only served in the refectory and that it was too bad to keep one so talented at such a job while other houses had need of brothers.

While Bro. Wolke could not of course do the work required here, it occurred to me that perhaps he could replace Bro Jacoby. Bro Jacoby is one one man, apart from Bro Reishman, who could carry on the many different kinds of jobs that must be done here i.e. diesel engines, electric work, carpenter work, saw mill work, flour milling, plumbing etc.

We accept a grant from the Indian Department on the understanding that we give boys a training in overhauling gasoline engines, carpentry, welding, etc. This is supposed to be an industrial school.

It might be argued that some brothers who are here could be taught the work. That has been tried. Bro McLaren, while he does very well in the shoe-shop i.e. fairly well although we have lost the convent trade, has no aptitude along mechanical lines. He calls in Mr. Labelle to repair his own machines.

I brought up the matter to Bro Laflamme, but he showed that he was not interested, that he knew nothing about wiring etc. It is possible that he could do Bro Jacoby's work in Toronto, but then we would have to have an infirmarian too.

The remaining brothers are out of the question.

Servus in Xt.,

J. A. Witt

Spanish, Ontt.,
18 March, 1941.

Reverend and Dear Father;
P.C.

I hope I am not bothering you too much with letters, but I like to speak of things that appear important in our small little world of Spanish, although they are trifling to outsiders.

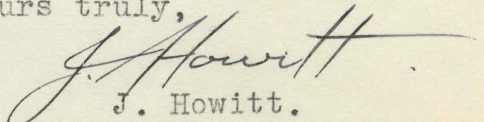
What I have in mind is not matter for provincial permission according to the tertian master in Cleveland. The question of buying a tractor has been discussed here for a few years and during the explanation of provincial permissions in the Cleveland tertianship that point came up i.e. about buying such a thing under the peculiar circumstances that exist at Spanish.

The tractor would be bought from the ordinary government grant. By spreading out payments I could get ~~continue~~ the machine and still continue to send to Toronto such amounts as I have been turning in.

This tractor will cost \$700.00, but it should pay for itself within a few years. Up in this country much can be gained or rather saved if seeding can be done on time. Often the season for ploughing ~~etc~~ is very short. We lost much last year on account of rain. On the other hand I read that some farmers were able to prepare the ground and seed within the short time allowed between rains and had good crops.

The farm we rented near Walford is on higher, drier land and can be worked a couple of weeks before the low blue clay on the school property. Last Fall I hired a man to plough a portion of it with his tractor, and to have him do the plough-in and ~~disking~~ for the two years I figured on renting the farm would amount to about \$400.00. Even at that we would be saving money if we can raise enough grain for the stock. I just counted the bills paid out for feed for cows, horses and chickens since last March and it amounts to \$1905.31. If we are able also to grow some wheat or rye for bread we may eventually pay the \$30,000 debt.

Yours truly,


J. Howitt.

July 8/41

Spanish, Ont.,
3 July, 1941.

Dear Reverend Father;

P.C.

I am writing this not in order to complain or to insist on any change, but just to keep you informed.

I said that I thought Bro Laflamme was lazy, untidy and bad-tempered. About the last defect I have difficulty in knowing just how much to take from him and how to check him. For instance, a few days ago when the boys were leaving school Bro Laflamme apparently was passing out some items of clothing to boys that did not belong to them. Father Hawkins, who at my request has been very careful in dealing with the brother, told him quietly to be sure to give back what the boys brought with them. At that Bro L- flew into a passion, said D- this and D- that, said we were so D- stingy here it would do us no good etc.

I went up then and told him not to go into the boot-room from which he was taking the goods and asked him to surrender the key. He said, "I'll give the key, but I'll tell you D* stingy so so's what I think of you." The next day I called him into the office and threatened to ~~give~~ give him a culpa if he used insulting language again.

I relate that not as a serious matter, but just that you may have an insight of our circumstances. What I do consider as rather serious is the fact that the brother is an agitator. When I was here eight or nine years ago I asked to have him changed on that account. He seemed to arouse discontent among other brothers. The present brothers do not appear to be influenced by him, but the lay help are.

A cookie used to keep the kitchen clean by scrubbing twice a week etc, but now does very little, due as I understand, to Bro L-'s remark that \$20. per month ~~was~~ is too low a wage. The boy is 16 years of age. I have a strong suspicion that the brother aroused Mr. Labelle's ambition for a higher wage elsewhere and that he has an influence on Mr. Eicheldinger.

I am not asking for a change. We must have an infirmarian and Bro L serves the purpose, although I would most willing accept a man with less talent in that line and fewer defects in others.

Sincerely in Xt.,

16/41

Indian Residential School,
Spanish, Ont.,
10 Sept. 1941.

Dear Reverend Father;
P.C.

A few words by way of a monthly letter.
Father Vandriessche is in Blind River hospital, but is expected home soon, not because he is well, but because he does not want to stay there. The doctor reported that he has a rather serious heart condition. He has four leaking valves.

When the government auditor recently made his annual visit he remarked that in case of a fire here, question would arise as to whom the insurance belonged, as the premiums have hitherto been paid out of government funds i.e. not out of the four thousand we are permitted to deduct annually as "salaries." I have not been deducting the \$4000. in full because it did not leave enough money to run the house, but now I think it will solve the difficulty if I take the \$4000.00 and pay the insurance from it. Premiums amount to about \$650. annually.

I wish we had one of "ours" in the kitchen as cook or cookee. We are losing a deal of money there, not only through wages, \$60. cash for cook and \$20 for cookee with a raise coming at the end of this week, but also through waste. Much left-overs goes into slop-pails and more into the interior of ^{the}thieving boys. Remarks and admonitions have been made, but they do not seem to carry the same magic power that they do in the novitiate.

Question of buying a team of horse has been raised, to replace one of our teams that is not considered capable of hauling the winter's supply of wood. One of the horses is very old and without teeth. It can eat grass, but not hay, and in winter must be kept going on treated oats. The other is a mare and causes considerable trouble. It was thought to try to sell them for about \$150 and buy a good team that is offered for \$250. Would this have provincial approval?

Servus in Xt.,

J. Houritt

Spanish, Ont.,
18 August, 1941.

Reverend and Dear Father;

P.C.

However, the letter would not be too convenient

As far as convenience here is concerned October would be the better month for the consultation of missionaries. It is nice to hear that such meetings console some missionaries although the number to be so comforted this year will be rather small. Father Moylan thinks it rather silly. Fathers Flaherty and Primeau do not need it for the sake of companionship as they come here frequently. Perhaps if it is held annually consultants may run short of matter on which to consult.

I submitted my name as trustee and attended the election, but had the humiliation of being defeated. I was not even nominated. Hostility was

shown from the day I submitted my name and some, including members of the school board, said some very harsh things against the clergy. Antagonism takes an anticlerical and communistic turn rather than a bearing on languages.

The bishop wonders if any Jesuit priest is in need of hospitalization and says that the sisters in Blind River would gladly care for one in return for mass. They cannot afford to pay a chaplain, but would guarantee mass stipends.

Servus in Xt.,

J. Hewitt

16/4/41

Spanish, Ont.,
15 Sept. 1941.

Dear Rev. Father;
P.C.

Father Vandriessche returned last night from Blind River hospital via Garden River.

At Garden River he saw the bishop who expressed a wish that he should remain with the sisters in Blind River hospital to say mass for them. As the bishop said before, an invalid priest living in the hospital would not receive a salary, but would be provided with mass stipends.

Father Vandriessche says he would like to go, and we can get along without him.

Servus in Xt.,

J. Hewitt

Spanish Ont
16 Jan 1942

Dear Reverend Father;
P.C.

I know of no good reason for keeping Garden River if there is a chance of getting rid of it.

It does not seem very practical as a headquarters nowadays.

Servus in Xto
J. Howitt.

27/42

Spanish, Ont.,
26 January, 1942.

Dear Reverend Father;
P.C.

Father Hegarty arrived last week and says that he asked to come here to stay for a while. Are there any instructions concerning him?

The community has been rather ill-tempered for the past week or so. The cook, a sickly old man had to give up over a week ago, and we have been living on a few scraps that a white boy cookee and Indian boys can get together. We go to the refectory on time as usual, and wait in hopes of getting something from the kitchen. Disappointment and undernourishment do not help general morale.

I have been trying for months to get a cook without success.

Servus in Xt., J. Howitt.

301

Spanish, Ont.,
25 March, 1942.

Dear Reverend Father:
P.C.

I would like permission to spend about \$250.00, perhaps less, for a dough-mixer and loaf moulder. My reasons are that mixing by hand is proving too strenuous. Mr Albo, our baker, finds mixing a bag of flour too hard and has decreased the amount, thus increasing the time needed. Bro McLaren who is now learning, will not be strong enough for the work if called upon to do it continually. Next week he will take over the baking while Mr. Albo goes to Winnipeg for a holiday. I hope to get him back although it is uncertain whether or not he will return.

There is a good chance of buying the equipment in Blind River from a bakery going out of business. The mixer, new, costs \$450. and moulder \$300. They are in good condition I hope to get both for \$250.

The bakery proves very satisfactory and profitable. If the convent decides to get their bread here it will help still more. ~~xx~~ Mr. Albo, working for our society, sells the bread to the Indian School at the same price we used to pay an out-side baker, and the society reaps the profit. For that reason the Indian Department should not be asked to pay for the equipment I wish to buy.

Here is a problem on poverty on which I would like some light, although there is no need for an immediate solution. Some farmers like to have **Wheat** ground into flour at our mill. From what I can see in books, that would be alright provided lay brothers did the work, but it would be against poverty to hire a man to do the milling. What are we to do? Refuse work or encourage it? I am supposing that we will have to pay someone to run the mill.

Servus in Xt.,

J. Hewitt