



July, 1, 1915.

Annual Report of the U. S. Public School at Deering, Alaska.

The School:-

In review of the work done in the past year, it is necessary first to state that every thing has been in rather an unsettled condition through-out the entire year.

First, the Move:- The committee appointed by the village to investigate and decide upon a suitable location for our New Village, attended to their work very promptly; the entire committee going to Kotzebue early in July of 1914 and examined the suitable places on both the Noatak and the Kobuk rivers as far as 100 miles from the mouth of the river. They finally settled on a site on each river with a choice of the Noatak, but the matter was left with Mr. Shields, our Dist. Supt. to state which place would be most suitable to the Government. His decision was the Kobuk as the Noatak river was already provided with a suitable school. The request was then sent in for a reservation 15 miles square which was to be for all natives who wished to join the colony.

Mr. Shields came to us on the Revenue Cutter Bear, and together he, one native and I went to Kotzebue where with Mr. White and Dr. Nichols proceeded up the Kobuk to the site chosen by the committee.

A village and reservation site was located at about 60 miles in land, in the midst of a beautiful belt of timber. At a vote taken in Deering this place was named Noorvik, which means "Transplanted".

Since that time every thing in Deering has been moving toward the one hope, that is when we shall get moved into better quarters.

On the return from the reservation we began the delayed work on the Deering Cold Storage plant which has been completed at a cost of \$500 fully paid. The entire construction was done with native labor. This fully occupied the month of Sept. and we did not attempt to begin the school sessions until that was accomplished.

School began on Oct. 3, and continued unbroken until the Christmas Holidays. The scholars were just getting into good line and advancing rapidly, when the orders came to attend the Reindeer Fair.

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The school was continued through January by Mrs. Replogle, the Asst. teacher, with commendable success.

The children made more rapid progress in their studies than was made last year, as we better understood them and the methods most comprehensible to their minds. We taught along the lines of English sanitation, Hygiene, mathematics, History and Writing. Their minds can only take a limited amount of teaching, before they must have a change or a rest, as almost every thing is abstract to them.

On account of the unsettled condition relative to the coming move and the necessary preparation for it, the school was discontinued the last of March. The time since then has been given to getting the herds to the new fields, and in preparing the buildings and other things for the move.

Much improvement was noticeable this year in cleanliness and in dress, the old time greasy Parka was seldom worn to school except by the smaller children and a few girls who ^{insisted} on wearing them in concession to old ways of the people, but that is slowly fading from their minds. No parka being worn in the school room at any time.

Programs:- This year the first program was given at Thanksgiving time and instead of the usual feast at the school-house, we had services and the people invited their friends to their own homes and ate their dinner privately, seeming to enjoy it much more thoroughly than in the former manner. Also, a beautiful Christmas Tree and program was give on Christmas Eve by the native children and all the white people were present. The children showed much improvement over last year, both in ability and rendition. The class of gifts on the tree also had a characteristic revision. No store goods were bought, but presents which betoken time and labor to produce, useful things of every sort.

Many presents came from the white people to the natives in token of the friendliness between them. The tree was furnished by Henry Coffin, a white miner and then it was used by the white people for their entertainment which followed on Christmas Night. The natives were all present at the white people's program which consisted of a missionary Drama "The Christmas Box", prepared by the white people themselves.

Both entertainments were fully attended and enjoyed by all. Five of the native children assisted in the Christmas Night Program. Many of the miners from up river points came into town to attend the programs and the native program was better attended by white men than the other

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other, as by the time the day was over some of the men who had been out the evening before were in no condition to travel; as the "saloon" had done its customary work and they were out.

By the time that we came to the close of the school the opposition to the move had so strongly developed that we had no closing program, but just quietly closed, or rather discontinued the school to resume again in Noorvik.

INDUSTRIAL WORK.

Carpentry:-

Not having room for shop work at the school, Mr. D.W. Wentworth an experienced carpenter, gave us room in his building for our carpenter bench and blacksmith work. The space donated was 14x26 in the carpentry room and 16 x 16 for the blacksmith room.

The natives secured roofing paper from the village funds, and covered the building over the parts used. They also bought lumber and made the needed workbenches and working outfits at a cost of \$14.60. This space was often taxed to its limit, so many wishing to work at the same time.

In the carpentry shop were builded 47 sleds for use and 8 for sale all of which were bought by white men at \$35 and \$40 each.

Mr. Wentworth gave constant instruction and much time to the boys while at work there, and we feel greatly indebted to him for his co-operation, without which we were seriously handicapped.

1 folding bed was built together with 5 cupboards and innumerable small articles and repairs accomplished of which no notation was made. Much more would have been done had we had the material with which to work.

Blacksmith work:-

The small forge, hammer and tongs sent have been of great use, but the stock and dies sent were for large iron, the smallest was 1/2 in and we find but little use for them unless we were bridge-builders or wagon makers. We should have had a set for light bolt work from 1/8 to 1/2 inch, and a "REAL" anvil with a good steel face.

12 knives and 54 sled break irons were forged this year. The press drill has made 1286 holes in sled irons and other drilling. It has been the most used tool of any.

"COOKING".

It has been a problem with us, to get the most practical method of teaching the art so as to get more immediate results.

Our experience has shown that "girls" who learn to cook in the school have very little initiative in their home life, and soon drop into

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the regular "eskimo" habit when left alone, so we have taken the married women and given them the instruction and required them to practice it at home; with the result that the mothers now teach the girls and "boys" as well, until a real demand is now coming from the men of the village to whom we have given lessons in "bread making" and "pastry" baking.

Attention has been given to the chemistry of food and the proper method of preparing which has met with general approval.

"SEWING".

12 girls have been under instruction and have produced 20 dresses, 10 aprons, 6 underskirts with waists, 8 jackets for babies, and many pairs of mittens knit outside of the classes. Other outside work done under unstruction, has been 4 reindeer harness, 7 boys jackets with kaki pants, 2 quilts pieced and finished, 9 needle books.

This year the girls have made many baskets and trays from the native grasses, for the first time departing from the "eskimo" patterns, and choosing designs of more modern ideas obtained from magazines.

Many patterns have been cut and fur coats made instead of the old fashioned parka. Much work and many lessons were give outside of school hours.

"Laundry".

The laundry work of the village was a vexing question again this year. The same old story, no wood, therefore no water in winter for more than mere drinking purposes. Even soap is at a premium. Some ironing was done as some families possess a single sad-iron and the gingham clothes are ironed after washing, the iron passing round to the different families. Some good work shirts are appearing and a neck tie is worn so that some ironing improves matters. We need a public Laundry and need it badly. The school has furnished fuel and soap to 14 families for laundry purposes during the year.

"AGRICULTURE".

Nothing has been attempted in this line at Deering.

The school-house garden last year produced the most excellent lettuce, from plants saved from the cold winds, the mice, and birds, some regular heads measuring 10 inches across and weighing 2 pounds; sweet to the last leaf. Onions and cals did well but turnips potatoes and cabbage did very poorly, as the temperature is to low so near the coast.

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"MINING".

Much mining is being done in this vicinity, and 14 men from the village have been engaged in it for wages, at some time during the year and 6 others have done freighting for them. So far no native of this village is directly interested in any mining proposition.

"PERSONAL CLEANLINESS".

Marked improvement is every where manifest this year.

Our Commissioner on Sanitation reports that bathing is much more indulged than ever before, and 5 house holds have a regular tri-monthly bathing time. This helps and is to be considered good under the prevailing conditions. The washing of underclothes has become a practice with most all of the people who wear them at all. Their houses are much cleaner than before. Inspection by the health officer has inspired many a delinquent woman on this matter.

The houses were all fumigated twice this year and ventilators installed where needed. The commissioner of public works has attended to the unsanitary dog, and that nuisance is minimized.

New Houses.

Only one new house was built but necessity compelled the repairing of 11 more last autumn. All but 4 are now torn down and the lumber removed to Noorvik.

Garbage.

All garbage is hauled far out on the ice and the spring disposes of it without our further help.

"GENERAL SANITATION".

Teaching on this subject has been given daily in the school. Many of the people in the village have attended that class only and much more care is exercised than ever before, in the selection of foods, and of their drinking water. No decayed salmon was used for food this year.

"NATIVE SUPPORT".

The Reindeer is the natives' standby. Yet this greatest of blessings to them continues to be a problem and ways and means must be provided by which the native can market his surplus deer and secure such supplies as his new life demands. The plan as presented by our Dist. Supt. affords an opportunity, but the distance to Nome and the loss to the people of the skins and the meat of the heads is holding

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Local consumption is not great enough to be of much benefit and the curing of the meat is not solved. Our cold Storage has solve some difficulties and meat kept in an open house through the winter and placed in the cold storage while yet frozen hard will keep through all the summer. We placed our meat in storage early in the winter and it has moulded some this year. We then corned the surplus and will keep that and see what it will do in that line. However the storage plan has helped to untangle the trouble of one native supplying the entire market to the exclusion of other men in his own herd. Will report on the corned meat later.

Fish is the next important item of support. At Deering there is nothing to be said except that one year in four we have any salmon worth speaking about; then the run is scarcely enough to supply the village for the year. This year was our big run and the people have had to buy fish from Kotzebue and every available fish was taken last summer.

On other years the people have been reduced to Tom Cod, a poor fish small as a herring, and often the flesh is full of white worms about the size of a horse hair and an 1/8 of an inch long. With the numbers of dogs to feed the fish supply is a very important factor.

Seal are plentiful at certain seasons, particularly in the early spring and fall; but the people travel 60 to 80 miles for them. This spring the village has prepared 3 times as many seal as usual for food, for next fall they will be busy building the new village and will have no time to hunt seal. The seal furnishes the fat for their food and the skins furnish all the foot wear for the village.

"FREIGHTING".

This year 7 men have received \$384 for freighting and carrying passengers, the amount received about feed the dog teams used for the purpose during the winter months. The average cost of feeding one dog for one year is \$21, the cost of the 70 dogs in the freighters teams, not to mention the pups being fed to supply the necessary losses would mean an annual loss of support to the families of \$1470. This should not be. The sled deer is coming more into use and as soon as we can introduce a light wheel vehicle that can be used in the summer time the dog will slowly be supplanted.

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"HUNTING".

This year there has been an abundance of rabbits, both the small and the large Snow-shoe rabbit. Wild fowl have been scarce with a poor market for them, the Empress goose selling at 50¢ and the Sand-hill crane at 75¢ to \$1.00. Early markets are higher but our market is limited.

Less than 75 fox skins were taken this season by the entire village the average price realized has been \$4 for white and \$3.50 for red fox.

Dried fish sells at 4 and 5¢ per pound and with skins so scarce and sugar selling at 12¢ and other things on the same upward glide/ the eskimo economy was put to a severe test. However there was less suffering than the preceeding year.

"MEDICAL DEPARTMENT".

To this people this has been the most important department of work, aside from the reindeer. It provides them immediate relief when needed and imparts the practical instruction against the infraction of the laws of health.

There has been no contagious or infectious disease within the limits of the village. One case of scabies developed in a family of a white man with a native wife who lived up the river and the isolation prohibited the spreading.

There have been 4 deaths, and three still born children, during the year. First a 12 yr. old boy, while playing near the cliffs attempted to secure some young sea-gulls and loosing his footing fell about 150 ft. over the rocky cliff and was picked up dead.

Second;- A young man of about 31 yrs. died one night of heart disease, and then while away at the Igloo Reindeer Fair a middle aged man died of Bright's Disease, and soon after his wife gave birth to a 7 months child which lived 4 months and finally died. We did our best to save it but with the facilities and the poor food of the mother it seemed to be out of the question. Out of 5 babies born we lost but the one above mentioned. The causes of the still born are unknown.

Performed an operation for enlarged testes and have a doubtful case of dropsy in an elderly man.

The general physical condition of the village is having much more attention from the people themselves than before, and the children are getting so much better attention. Bad water this spring caused

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much bowel trouble but nothing serious.

I find that liquid

medicines produce the desired results in most cases more readily than the tablets and with smaller doses.

"LAW ENFORCEMENT".

The commission form of government as adopted by the village has met with deserved success, and is very enthusiastically sustained.

There has been but two cases of law breaking and these were remanded to the village judge, and his decision was accepted and the offender gracefully submitted to his fine.

Considerable drunkenness has occurred among the white men and the native women who have married white men; also a native woman who lives in a white man's cabin and has half breed children coming more or less regularly.

These we have no control over and they are not permitted to have the freedom of the village, nor can they live in Neorvik.

The commissioners have had complete control of all the affairs in the village, and their work is commendable. They give their services without compensation.

Moral conditions are good and more modesty is noticeable. Homes have been partitioned so that private beds are possible and the manner of dress has changed as has also the old time subjects of conversation which is giving place to more chaste language.

"THE REINDEER FAIR AT IGLOO".

The greatest event in the annals of the Deering Eskimo.

The reindeer has come and his presence is unalloyed good. His service to the eskimo had been appreciated, but it was not until the Fair that the people began to comprehend the greatness of the possibility in the future reindeer business. Until then, enough reindeer to feed and clothe a man and his family was the limit of his hopes, beyond that he could not see; but now he begins to see the value of the future herd. His every wish may be realized through the proper handling of this great asset to native dependence.

We left Deering for the Fair on the 4 of Jan last, with 28 sled deer, 17 sleds, 9 eskimo men and one woman, (the wife of the chief here of the Goodhope herd), and my self. We had 11 double teams and 6 trailers. The distance was about 150 miles over mountain divides through unbroken trails, along rivers with many overflows to Igloo.

We arrived at Igloo on Jan. the 11 at 2 P.M. having been delayed

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by the severe illness of the herders wife enroute.

It was a great experience for me, as I had never been out on a winter trail like this and I drove my own team all the way there, and back home again.

Not once in all the hard trip did either of my deer quit although they had the heaviest load of any in the caravan.

We traveled by way of the Imnachuk river to the staked trail, then over the divide to the Good Hope river, then down the river half way to the coast where we made the divide over into the head of Taylor creek down the creek to the Road house, thence over the horse trail to near Davidson's Landing where we took a direct drive to Igloo, across the only hard snow found enroute. I can hardly describe my feelings as on driving up to the school house there came out to meet us, our Supt Mr. Shields, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Lewman, of Nome, who had arrived 10 min. ahead of us. Our return journey was via Taylor Creek roadhouse the Serpentine Hot Springs, Humboldt river the Good Hope, and the coast ice to Deering, accomplished in 6 days.

But the Fair:- By far the greatest item of it all was the fraternal spirit every where felt. It was in the air, even when the thermometer registered 46 degrees below zero, it was in the faces and in the voices of every one. Men who when at home had felt a slight superiority, ran up against men from other places, who were quite their equal, or more and were toned to a more considerate opinion of themselves.

Cordiality was abundant and the general tone of fairness was plainly visible.

There were more new ideas afloat than was to be expected among a people ossified by hundreds of years of life in the old time rut.

The men came to get something and were not disappointed. Our men carried home valuable information in slaughtering. No more deer are killed in the old way. We have adopted the method shown at the Fair.

Ideas of harness, of types of sleds, proper care of deer and relative number of males and females. Ideas of the strength and endurance of certain types of sled deer. These all called out the keenest investigation and are new lines of experiment for the men.

But the greatest Idea of all was the thought of the federation of the whole reindeer business, so as to conserve the reindeer product for the best good to the most people. It has been talked over very often and we are sending a delegate to visit all the reindeer men north of us,

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inviting them to meet us in Neorvik, in March 1916, to further the interests of the business. Our men have discovered that they are not the most efficient men in the business nor even the equals in some parts of the work, but they were able to carry home some of the many prizes from the Igloo Fair, and they are justly proud of them.

"SUGGESTIONS".

1st. Again I wish to emphasize the need of co-operation of governmental support in the establishment of native industries by which the present waste can be converted into useful material.

A tannery by which the skins taken from the beef deer can be made into leather and manufactured into articles of commerce. These skins taken at slaughtering time are useless except for heavy sleeping bags, and that market is very limited indeed. The hair is then too long for any other use, but if tanned would manufacture into mittens, gloves and coats etc.

2nd. Steps should be taken to establish a government experiment station at Neorvik, as the location is central and it would be the most practical way of teaching the native the art of cultivation.

Agriculture can be developed materially beyond its present state in this section.

3rd. The Government should put in a public Laundry and a system of baths in the Neorvik school building and let the village meet the cost of maintenance; this would be of untold educational value.

4th. There should be a special course of studies given in this school that would prepare the ambitious native boy or girl to fit himself for teaching in the Alaska schools.

5th. All tools and supplies should be of the best grade as any thing short of that will not stand the hard climate, and where we have to do every thing with very few tools to do it with it is a sore disappointment to find the few things we have give way before to work is done.

In conclusion let me say that never has there been a better light sent to the country than the ones sent to us last year. We have had to change the generators this year oftener as the Gasoline used was too low a test. Nothing lower than 66 should be sent. 68 is much better.

Respectfully submitted,

Chas. Replogle
teacher.