

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF EDUCATION
ALASKA SCHOOL SERVICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF EDUCATION
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Pt. Hope Alaska, Feb. 31, 1911

The U.S. Commissioner of Education
Washington D.C.

My Dear Sir;

At the beginning of the month I was at Kotzebue. Some of the Pt. Hope reindeer boys, who had been at Squirrel river, with about forty deer to sell to the miners, came down to ask me what they should do now. They had stayed at Squirrel river some two months and had sold only a little more than half of the number they brought.

I advised they to bring their deer away from that place and to return home, for, very little money was being mined at that camp and the boys were using up a large portion of what they got from the sale of meat in buying food for themselves.

The stampede into Squirrel river has been one of the much talked about events of the winter, but as far as I can learn there will be a big stampede out in the spring. There's little money as yet found.

On the 10 th, my boy, Jimmie Olegaluk, of Seliwik, and I started with four sled deer on the Northern trip to Barrow. I decided to take the same boy to all of the camps, in order that he might render the same services at them, that he did at Shungnek. He is the most resourceful deer man that I have found. His sleds are of a different style from the traditional Alaska deer sled and his harnesses and collars, of his own make, are also extra good. I wanted all of the Northern reindeer men to see and profit by the new.

I also wanted a man to go with me from one herd to another, that I knew. There is as much difference, perhaps more, in the men who drive deer than there is in the deer themselves. One man will not be able to get any speed at all out of some deer and another will take him and make excellent time.

I decided to go up the Noatak River with the deer. The River has the name of being a bad one. There are several open places that people, who know it well are afraid off and they sometimes break through. On the way up I found one family, a blonde man with a native wife and three children, where the English

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used by the children and mother. I speak of this in particular, because it is the first time I've seen it.

We made the trip in two and a half days to Noatak. And as it happened Jimmie broke through the ice, with his deer, three times, but was quick enough to avoid getting wet himself, though each time the deer went into it, all right enough. A dog team went ahead of us for the last day and we, in following ~~the~~ trail would break through where the ice seemed solid enough. About ten inches of snow had fallen and that made the whole surface of the river look all right.

Upon coming to the village we drove our deer close to the School House. Mr. Harnden came out to welcome us. His family consists of his wife and three children and a native girl, whom they call Rachel. Mr. Harnden is an easy going man. He enjoys company and likes to talk. He is much interested in his work, that is, in teaching and preaching, but his accounts are in awful shape. He, like his friend at Seliwik, seems to think that it is sufficient to do the work and let it pass at that, without bothering to work out the reports of his doings. For instance, in his issuing of reindeer goods, he does it at any time and at the end of the year, in making up the annual Summary to find out what he has issued to apprentices, he subtracts the amount on hand from the amount received for the year and that tells him what he has issued to apprentices. This is the shortest cut to a balance that I have found this year. He has no papers or receipts to show where any of the goods have gone. I talked him into seeing the absolute necessity of doing his government business in a business like way and I expect to find his methods considerably changed upon my return from Barrow.

It was Mr. Harnden's duty, given him by Mr. Evans to check the Government freight from the S.S. St. Pelens at Kotzebue last summer. He began the job but gave it up in favor of Mr. Sickles who went on with it and made out the vouchers. At Seliwik I found some vouchers in blank with Mr. Harnden's name signed to them. These, I learned, Mr. Harnden had ~~made out~~ signed and left for Mr. Sickles to fill in.

There is one thing I like about Mr. Harnden, he seems willing to learn. He is not a man of large calibre, but he seems willing to

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do what we ask him. The spirit of the place is good. I found no discords at all. The affair of last year did not seem to affect his work ~~at all~~.

Mrs. Harnden makes a fine helper for her husband at Noatak. She is all activity. Carries in wood, or teaches school or cooks as the occasion demands and does everything cheerfully. Both of them, however, seem to see no wrong in disposing of their extra supplies for cash. They "are not trading" so they tell me, and so all the teachers say of themselves, still I hear, and the Harndens admit, that the report is true, that when a native or white man comes to them with money and they can spare what the man wants they sell the goods. The price is one suited to the place - a little higher than the stores at Utebue charge.

I have showed them what I consider a fair amount of goods to order from the outside and I hope that next year, if they stay at ^{Noatak} ~~Selvik~~, that they will not keep up the practice already begun. Our work is hindered and the progress of the natives slackened when the teacher buys the native furs. The entire school service in Alaska ought to be free from that charge - of being fur traders.

As a teacher Mr. Harnden is "alive" in the school room. I have noticed, in visiting the different schools, that a teacher who sits in his chair and does little or no blackboard work and does not move around with his children, in the room, as they come to class, has a sort of "dead" school. The progress made, by the Noatak children in the few years a school has been there, is good. The girl who works in the house, tried teaching when I was there and did pretty well at it. She talks very well, and not only puts English thought into Eskimo readily but, does that which is far more difficult, puts Eskimo into English, in a connected form.

At all of the new schools the first real interest seems to be that of writing a letter. The magic of making a few scratches on paper and sending it to another, and ~~the~~ having the one who receives it understand the mind of the writer, catches their fancy. All of Noatak school children are in this letter writing period.

One Noatak reindeer apprentice had some small grievance and left the herd. He seems to be a good worker is all the time doing something. His name is John Okinok. I had a talk with him and as he

regretted what he had done and wanted to go back, I thought it would be well to re-instate him. He had been away from the herd some two ~~month~~ months, so, to have it understood that a man who begins a thing is supposed to stay with it, I changed his apprentice^{contract} to read "four female deer" in place of five for the second year.

Negliik at the Fevrd is a real chief. The unity of action is fine. The boys look to him for direction and he gives it. It is the new herds that have pleased me most, so far this year. It is at the new herds of Seliwik and Noatak that I have found the boys making sleds and harnesses. They are the ones from which I have found my best sled deer.

At Noatak I staid longer than I intended, in order that Mr. Farnden might have time to get his Requisition into shape. I had to ~~to~~ take him out of school for one day in order to ^{get} it done. ~~then~~. It was when he was working on his requisition that I taught school there and had Rachel take some classes.

My aim has been and will continue, this winter, to be, - to see that each school requisition and inventory is complete before I leave the school house. The teachers, some of them, seem to feel that there is no need of mentioning the government property in detail, notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Evans has sent letters, with striking definiteness to that effect. If a teacher comes into the country and gets a few months of careless clerical work done it is very hard to have him ^{later on} take the care that the Department now requires.

Mr. Farnden, is fairly good with the sick. His cabins are near and he visits them and does the best he can for their troubles. The people appreciate this.

From the Noatak Herd we took four deer, in exchange for our deer from Seliwik, and started on the 20th of January for Kivalena. For the first part of the trip we had deep snow, but even though we ~~could~~ could only make a walking time for three hours we reached the coast that night and the Kivalena school house the next night. Neglik, the Noatak Head Herder, wanted to see Eliktona, so he came along with us. His sled deer was the first one I had seen that would respond to the word "gee".

At Noatak they had eleven fine Collie dogs. The mother dog, whom the boys call "Ton" and one of Neglik's and three of the pups we took with us. The Pups we left with the boys at Kivalina while we thought it best to take "Ton" on to the Northern herds and get them supplied with a good dog. Neglik was giving his to Ignoveen at Barrow so if "Ton" went along too they would work well together. Eliktoona has the dog, which used to be at Cape Prince of Wales, "Ruby," but from the Kivalina boys I learned that he wanted to sell the pups for twenty five dollars each and would not give the boys at Kivalina any. The pups from Noatak are fine. Soon there will be enough from "Ton" to supply all of the Northern herds. What we need now is to get some for Shungnek, for they only have one old Lapp dog for the whole camp.

At the Kivalina School House I found Mr. and Mrs. York. It was the first time I had met them. The living rooms of their house would well fit into the best quarters of "Spotless Town". Every thing was in spick and span order even to a pile of Church papers on the Sewing machine, which, by the way, was the only reading I could see around the place.

The afternoon of my arrival we began to look over the school and Reindeer papers. Mr. York worked in a newspaper office in Everett Wash. before coming to Alaska, and there, I suppose, he learned to have his work up to date and his figures at hand. All of his Reindeer vouchers were well done, excepting the "Merchandise Issued" ones. On these he had made no entries as to the value of the goods received by the apprentices. At all of the schools, so far, I've found the teachers doing the same thing - letting the value of articles go without being filled. I asked the boys the value of their shirts, or their tea or cartridges and they do not know. At every place I have made it clear that the boys must be taught values. And when they sign for goods received to do it in business order. Mr. York had his requisition and Inventory all made out, so I would not have to wait for him, as I had others. The morning after my arrival I started for the two deer herds; those which Otpelle and Eliktoona are the head herders.

I found Otpelle a very genial host but a very poor reindeer man. He is a little child in mind with a man's size.

The Kivalina Reindeer herd lacks the spirit of unity. The Head Herder is a man the boys joke about. He does not know much about handling sled deer and making harnesses and sleds, therefore the boys do not make goods sleds and harnesses. I did not find ~~any of~~ the men at the camp taking any interest in their work with gear. The poorest sleds and harnesses that I have seen so far this year are ^{were} at this camp. And they are only two days drive from the timber and birch.

I asked for sled deer to take a run over to Eliktoona's. O'tob told me it would take about three hours to go between the herds. Instead of driving deer double, on this trip as we had been doing I thought we would do as the natives, and drive single. We started and one deer we had to send back and change at once. He was no use at all. The one Neglik had, travelled all right for two hours then he could get no more speed out of him. All sorts of trouble was ours that day, trying to get the deer along and in place of taking four hours to reach Eliktoona's we were seven.

At the herd headed by Eliktoona I found more unity of action. Eliktoona is a leader. He knows what he wants to do and does it. He had secured some birch wood in the summer, as Mr. Evans directed him and had made some sleds, which were fairly good. His harnesses were also fairly good, but the boys were not making sled deer. They had only four sled deer that were fit to drive and two of those were thin, and the other two were away for supplies. I had planned to get sled deer from that herd to take on to Icy Cape, for I had heard that there were fine sled deer in the Pt. Hope herd. I had to take one of Eliktoona's own deer back to O'tobelle's herd, because there was no government sled deer. It has been common at the old herds to find the boys making sled deer for themselves but none for the Government, and if there ~~were~~ any Government sled deer in the herd, ^{they} for any one of the boys to use them until they were worn thin and tired out. This, I have sought to change, with what success, next year will tell.

Upon returning to the Kivalina School House, I thought it best to go right along the next morning, without stopping to visit school on the way up, for only a few children were in the village, while when

I returned from Barrow there would be the full school.

We started for Pt. Hope the 27, Friday, and at the end of the first day out we had the beginning of our Winter's storms. It has been my policy to travel at all times if we could possibly stand it, for, I hate the delay for one thing and for another the wait, in a native cabin, without sufficient writing material, and little fuel is not the most interesting thing a man can do.

We had brought with us the Noatak sled deer and would have to use them to Icy Cape because there wasn't a fit deer in either of the two herds for us. I have not liked to loose any time with them, for I have noticed that the fat on them seems to disappear about as much when they are tied up as it does when they are travelling. For this reason when we came to Pt. Hope I concluded to go right on the next day and to look more into Pt. Hope conditions on my return.

At the school house were all the supplies sent in for making the teachers home life more complete. One of the finest outfits that one could wish for came for that School and all the things will be there for the teacher whom we hope will be there next year. The Eskimos and white men near the School building are very anxious to have school there this spring. I talked with the Yorks about going up, as they did last spring, during the whaling season, and, though they are not anxious to go, because of the hard time they had getting there before, yet I think they will start up on my return from Barrow. On the last day of the month I left Pt. Hope for Icy Cape. The weather was the good and the deer were travelling well.

Respectfully yours

Chas W. Hantsworth

Airt. Lt.

Warden Dist.