

Nome, Alaska, Feb 5, 1916

My dear Mr. Forrest:

I am sorry to say that I missed the last mail that would connect with you so have not answered your letter of Nov. 1 and 4 until now. I am fairly swamped with work and will leave again in a few days for Igloo, Noorvik and probably Point Hope. I wish that Wainwright was nearer! Very likely I will see some of your boys at the Noorvik Fair. I hope so. Now I will have to write in haste and will take up matters in your letters as I come to them.

I note your requisition for sled material. I have recommended such supplies several times. Your boys ought to order wood etc themselves. You know, the Wainwright people have a grand opportunity to get ahead as the trapping is good and they have the work at the mine to help a great deal at times. Didn't you see my sled at Nome? For five years I have driven a dog sled. But 100 pounds is entirely too much for one to weight. I have one that weighed 90 and now I have two that each weight 80 and 70. These are what are known as racing sleds. About nine feet long, with runners that project behind sled about two feet. Then I have two flat sleds, with no handle bars, for trailing and carrying load that weight 60. I am in hopes some day to reduce the weight of my own sled to 60 but am not sure but what it will be hard to keep it strong enough. But I can assure you that my seventy pound sled is strong enough to haul all you want to put on it and to stand the very rough usage that

my sled gets. Your boys will see sleds of this type at Noorvik and they may remember the one I had the year I was at Barrow.

The men who can afford to sell the female deer and who need the whale boats that badly should be allowed to buy them. BUT as I told you this summer, I do not want to approve any more transfers of female deer to the children of white men. However, any cases of that kind that you wish to recommend for approval I will be willing to take up next summer. But it is understood that even with the contracts that the white men may be willing to sign, we are not anxious to have any more sales to their families. In all cases where the native owns considerable deer, or in cases where in your judgement the deer would do more good in other (native) hands, you may use your judgement as to transfers of female deer among the natives. If it is a good business proposition, always let them make the deal.

You and Mr. Richardson are at liberty to move men and their deer between your stations as you may deem best, but the same should be reported. It is of course best for Barrow men to keep their deer in Barrow herds.

You have taken the proper steps in having all old and barren females killed when they are in best condition, either for meat or for the skin. However, I find that it is necessary to keep personal hold on such cases as there are times when some of the boys will kill a female too quickly. The fact that a deer has not had a fawn one year does not always mean that it is barren, of course.

I have written you in a previous letter in regard to Theodore. Mr. VanValin, must have told him that there were no Govt.

reindeer supplies. And as I have already stated, he was employed to take care of the Government deer in that herd. The deer are gone, so I don't see just how he can expect very much, even if he claims he was not at fault. If there are any of the reindeer supplies left you can use your own judgement about letting Theodore have some. I don't want to be hard on him at all. Only I thought that he knew two years ago that the Government would have to give him extra deer, not supplies, just as we do at Kivalina, Selawik etc. You know, of course, that his time as an apprentice is up this coming August and as a rule the apprentices get no support the last year. The contract only provides for support for three years. We have been liberal and allowed something in the past.

You should regard the Government sled deer as for your use and I hope that you will make it a point to use them for every purpose possible. I realize very well that the time is soon coming when the Government will have no deer, and in fact there are few places in this district where we have even as many as we have at Wainwright. The policy has been to give them out to the natives just as fast as we could do so.

In accordance with the Rules and Stephen Shoudlas contract, on his death the deer reverted to the Government to be reassigned by us to his heirs. I would therefore request that you write me a report on the matter giving all the heirs and their status and make a recommendation as to the assignment of the deer.

If he left any children I will favor their going to them. You may use your judgement as to allowing any of the steers to be butchered, and if you do give such permission make a record of it and such deer will be taken into consideration when the herd is divided among the heirs.

You will be interested to know that here at Nome we keep sled deer in the barn a great deal. Moss is picked and stored here and they do very well on it. In addition we have blocks of salt (the same as are used for horses) and all the sled deer are wild to get it. Some of the deer have also eaten oatmeal with the moss. I find that the deer do much better if I have moss picked and keep them in a barn when I am travelling. I expect to do it very extensively this winter. I want you to have some kind of an enclosure made, if the natives can secure the materials. Ice blocks would do. And have the herders keep their sled deer in there when they come to the village. Have them pick some sled loads of moss and keep on hand.

I have sent Mr. Lopp a copy of your letter of Nov. 4 in regard to the business affairs of the Van Valins. You will know by this time that they certainly did not do the right thing at Wainwright. I now want to instruct you to send nothing to the Van Valins direct. If natives owe them skins pack the skins and send them to Mr. Lopp direct. I want a detailed statement of the amounts the natives claim to owe them, also your estimate of the real value of the articles the Vans sold them. I presume that Mr. Lopp will sell the skins as usual and pay the Van Valins what is proper and send the natives the rest. This will doubtless be a hard matter for us to straighten up. All I want from you is

the statements the natives will give, your estimated valuation of the things they received from the Vs and then get the skins, money etc that the natives say is due the Van Valins and hold the same until the BEAR comes and then send them to Mr.Lopp.

Van Valin stated down here that he believed that James would now be out of debt, through their efforts. And you state that he is mixed up worse than ever! I will know more when I hear the full details from Seattle. I believe, however, that there was some trouble between the Vans and Backland.

I am very glad that you wrote as you did, and what you wrote will be a great help to Mr.LOPP. The great trouble is that your station is so far away and cannot be visited during the winter except at great personal sacrifice as well as taking too much time. So we are never able to get hold of things and help out. While I feel very badly that the Van Valins did as they did yet I feel also that if they had been visited during the winter as all the other stations south of Wainwright are, things would have been different. It is not possible for me to get hold of things during a five hours visit from the BEAR. You know that.

I am much pleased to hear that you are enjoying your work so much and I can see that you are making a real interest. I wish most heartily that I could visit you in the winter. I hope that Mr.Lopp will be able to send Mrs. Forrester's sister in next summer and I will look forward myself to seeing you then.

With very best wishes,

Very sincerely yours