

COPY

Kotzebue Alaska Jan 12, 1916

Mr. Walter C. Shields
Nome, Alaska.

Dear Mr. Shields:

Your letter of Dec. 13 at hand. What is said relative to quality of Wainwright coal is noted.

I think, Mr. Shields, that there is no ground for suspicion at least I am ~~certain~~ satisfied that what was delivered to the B od E in Kotzebue came from Wainwright.

Now you know Mr. Shields that the Wainwright coal is of a low grade. When exposed to the elements it quickly crumbles. It does not stand shipping as well as outside Wellington. When in the firebox it crumbles before it has become red hot. If there are any unclogged holes in the grate it will rattle through. I see to it that the grate, when I was burning W. coal is clogged with ashes from W coal or with clinkers. By taking this precaution, which is no trouble at all, I can burn W. coal in coal stove Alaska #22 or Cascade #20 with satisfaction. I will make this exception however. When it is necessary to keep room temperature up for 8 to 10 hours without replenishing the fire it is necessary to use large lumps of Wellington.

I find an occasional sack of something else in the pile of W coal but they are so few and far between as to be negligible. These sacks are coal dust identical with a pile of coal, rubbish coal (this is Backlands description) that Backland landed at his store in Sept. and is holding for sale to some whaler next summer. This rubbish coal which was put on his schooner in Seattle, the Captain said is ~~rubbish~~ steamer coal. It is practically coal dust, and would go through any stove grate unless precaution were taken to prevent it.

The Wainwright received last Sept is not quite up to the standard of that received the year before, I think. ~~It~~ Many a sack contains more or less that has badly crumbled. This does not prevent its burning if the fire is properly handled.

A very few of the sacks of W delivered in Kotzebue had been filled with sand. This the Captain explained as being due to wave washing at Wainwright on account of the pile being placed too near the water up there. Most of the sacks filled with sand the Captain told me he had left at Kivalina.

Trusting that this will clear the doubt without implicating anyone, I remain as ever
Yours very truly

H.N.T. Nichols, M.D.

Original sent Mr. Lopp. Copy to Wainwright

COPY