

Nome, Alaska, Dec. 13, 1915

My dear Doctor Nichols :

The general report on the Wainwright coal is that the sacks of it that reached Kotzebue, Kivalina and Heervik are full of dust which goes through the grates. Will you please confirm this report for me.

I can hardly understand it as the Wainwright coal that I have seen has always been in good lumps. Also I can not understand that the natives would fill so many sacks with dust or that the Wainwright teacher would receive so many of them and pay for them.

Captain Backland had a lot of worthless coal on his ship. It was all dust and came from Seattle. This he was going to sell to a whaler. Now I do not mean to be suspicious, and I want this matter kept quiet, but I would like to know if the Captain loaded any coal at Kotzebue to be sold and if so what grade of coal it is. It might be possible that we got the wrong coal, at least a part of it by mistake. That could have happened.

Very truly yours,

*J. Smith*