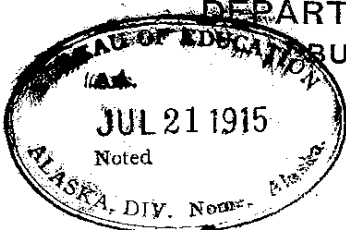


DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF EDUCATION
ALASKA SCHOOL SERVICEcopy sent
Seattle

SUBJECT,

Annual Report.

June 30, 1915.

The Commissioner of Education,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir,

I have the honor of making the following annual report of the school at Noatak, Alaska for the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1915.

We were very late in receiving our appointments so did not leave Seattle until August 23rd, 1914, aboard the Steamer "Victoria" enroute to Nome. We encountered many severe storms, and for eleven days we were aboard the "Victoria" sailing the high seas and at times wondering if we were to reach Nome safely. After reaching Nome we were delayed ten days on account of repairs being made to the United States mail boat "Silver Wave", so as to enable her to carry passengers to Kotzebue. Our trip through Bering Strait was most hazardous. After waiting in Kotzebue several days for the arrival of the freight steamer bringing

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our supplies for the year, we left here with our own freight and the Government freight, in a small gasoline launch with several native skin boats trailing along. After the second day we were compelled to abandon the launch and finish our journey up the river to Noatak by skin boats. It was extremely cold and we were in great danger of our boats being frozen in at any time, as the water was very low. However, after traveling three days we succeeded in making about fifty miles. One month from the date we left Seattle we reached our northern home. We were accompanied to Noatak by Dr. and Mrs. Nichols of Kotzebue. We found a population of 138 natives eagerly awaiting our arrival and wondering at our long delay.

There is no means of reaching our village after October 1st, as the river is too shallow for a boat at this time, until about the middle of November when there is sufficient

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snow and ice to make good trails for dogs and deer. From this time until April 1st the trails to and from the village are good, but soon after April 1st the snow is melting and the trails are soft.

After finishing opening and caring for the supplies for the Government and ourselves, we spent several days in repairing the school building and outbuildings. With the help of the natives the school yard and the entire village was cleaned of all rubbish, and all garbage, which could be, was burned and the other was disposed of on a common dumping ground to later be buried. This was our only method throughout the year of disposing of garbage which could not be burned. The wood which was scattered over the yard was stacked in nice ricks by the small boys and girls. Many village trails were also made. Some of the natives covered their houses with corrugated iron so as to keep out the spring rains and the melting snow.

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Most of the natives did not move into their cabins until after our arrival. This gave us a splendid opportunity to fumigate every home with sulphur and chloronaphtholium before they moved into them. Throughout the year they were often given chloronaphtholium to use in their scrub water.

On Saturday before the opening of school each child was inspected for vermin. Many cases were found which needed our immediate attention. We succeeded in freeing all but one from vermin.

Five new houses were built - one, two story house. All but one of our families have well built, well ventilated and well lighted log houses of one, two or three rooms. They are always striving to live more like white people and ask many questions about "white man's igloo. Eskimo wants all the same." Our natives are gradually achieving economic independence.

On Saturday night before the opening of school

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we gave a social at the school building for all the natives of the village. Music, games, the making of candy and popping corn were greatly enjoyed by the older people as well as the young. All of us felt better acquainted and more ready for our year's work.

The natives were very successful in fishing during the summer and fall. A great abundance of salmon was caught during the late fall. These they prepared for food for themselves and their dogs. Sufficient quantities were stored to supply them during the entire year. Many families succeeded in selling dog salmon to natives of neighboring villages on the coast. They are planning for a more extensive catch this coming fall than the one passed, as they are hoping to find a market for much of their salmon. I believe the dogs of this village are larger and stronger than any dogs in this section—partially because they never want for food as their owners always have an abundant

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supply the entire year. Our natives are grasping every opportunity to enable them to make a better living.

We used every possible means to have our natives depart from their much loved "ripe mucky salmon". Through our many efforts we succeeded in convincing many families that the fresh salmon trout which they are able to catch, either by traps or hooks, at any time are much better for them than the "mucky" salmon.

The children delighted in gathering berries for their mothers to preserve for winter use. We encouraged them to prepare an abundant supply as an entire meat and fish diet is not best for them.

On October 1st we opened school with an enrollment of 35 which increased to 45 by Christmas. Our average enrollment for the entire year was 33 and I believe our average attendance would have been perfect if the older children could have attended as regularly as the younger

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ones. But it was necessary for the older boys to help support their families as a great part of the time the fathers were away trapping.

This is the ambition of most everyone in our village to learn to speak English and live as white people do. Most of them are always glad to do what we think best for them. But a few of the older ones think it is entirely too much trouble to keep clean and continue in their dirty methods of living.

There is an excellent school spirit in this village. The interest shown by both pupils and parents tend to show that our natives take advantage of the school opportunities. On account of the pupils being in school such a short time a great amount of our teaching efforts were put into the teaching of English. It has been our aim to deal with the practical problems of life, as the school is the nucleus about which centers the welfare of the village. All of our school work has been carried on much the same as a primary school in the States. All the children

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were required to speak English in and about the school building. We were often much pleased to hear them speaking English at home, and we know of a few cases where they try to teach their parents.

I believe one of the things most needed in this school is a primer written for the Eskimo children. The books which they now use deal with subjects unknown to the Eskimo child. Many original stories were used with the children and they in turn reproduced them. In this way the children learned to speak English as well as read it. After being reproduced by the children, the stories were written on the board to be read and written by the children. We found that repetition in all work was necessary. Many little games and finger plays were used in the teaching of English. Kindergarten methods were used extensively.

In teaching arithmetic the books were used very little. Frequent drills in addition, subtraction,

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multiplication and division were given as these are the branches of arithmetic necessary in their business transactions. Original examples in buying, selling and trading were given. Problems such as occur in their every day life were given them.

Language work both oral and written was given much attention throughout the year. Language was taught by story, memory work, song and conversation. We found that most of the children were very timid in expressing themselves orally. So often games were played, during the language period, in which the children were required to speak English. Many times they would become so interested in their game they would forget their timidity.

All of the children were much better in spelling than the average American child. Words most common to them such as objects in the school room, their homes,

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names of fish, birds and animals which they use for food and clothing, and words used in their other lessons were given them. When the words were correctly spelled the children were required to use them in sentences - sometimes written - sometimes oral.

In writing much board work was done, especially with the smaller children as they were inclined to cramp their letters. Twice each week the advanced class used their writing blanks but in the writing of all lessons they were encouraged to be careful. Many letters were written to children of one of the Normal Training Schools of Missouri, thus giving them practice in writing, composition, and spelling.

In geography the children were given lessons concerning local geography as well as lessons on the globe and in the text books. Maps were made of the surrounding country thus giving the child a correct idea of distance in miles. They were

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taught something of the different races of people and their homes. They were taught something of the differences in climate and its effect on plant and animal life.

In history, the children used "Barnes Elementary History," and were also taught something of the United States Government.

In drawing, familiar objects such as they saw about the school and their homes were given them. Drawing was done in their manual training work, as the pattern was drawn before the work with tools was begun. The advanced class did some work with charcoal and they, as well as the younger children did much free hand cutting, tearing and folding. Much of the drawing by the younger children was done on the blackboard. Many times subjects were suggested to the children, sometimes they reproduced objects and often they drew objects which they thought of themselves. The advanced class was given work in painting once each week.

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Some of them did excellent work. Each one of the class stenciled a linen curtain for the school room windows. Much stencil work was done on boxes which were used in the school room. They were always eager for their drawing and painting work as they were happy in making things to brighten our school room and their homes.

Very little was accomplished in shop work as there was no material with which to work except packing boxes. However the shop was open to the free use of the community at all times except Sunday. Much repair work was done in the shop by the men of the village, and when it was necessary for any repair work to be done to the school building, the school boys were assisted by me in making them, as it was just as important that they learn the care of school property as that they learn the use of tools.

Bread making and the cooking of fish and meats which they were able to obtain were

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the principal things taught in cooking. They were also taught the necessity of cleanliness in the preparation of the food and the care of the dishes. Note books were kept in which were simple receipts. On Thanksgiving and Christmas a dinner was prepared for the entire village. Fish, rabbit, ptarmigan, reindeer meat, berries, beans, rice, bread, doughnuts, tea, etc. were prepared by them in the industrial room, in their own homes, and in our home.

I believe a good way to teach the native to help himself is to give instruction in the domestic and manual arts. If we teach them the use of tools they are able to build better homes; if we teach them the household arts they can keep cleaner and better homes. Most of the women and girls of our village are quite skillful with a needle. Almost every family has a sewing machine. The older girls made a dress for each girl and a shirt for each boy in the school, and they with the younger girls made handkerchiefs for every-

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one not enrolled in school. These dresses, shirts, and handkerchiefs were received at Christmas.

By insisting on cleanliness we have developed a pride among the children and most of the mothers. The workshop, which was also used as a laundry and bath room, was in use every Saturday. Each child enrolled in school bathed every Saturday and most every time they bathed they washed their clothes. Many of the parents took advantage of the bathing facilities on Saturday night, and I believe if we had a separate laundry and bath house most everyone in the village would take advantage of it. But as our industrial room is used as a work shop, cook room, laundry and bath room, few other than the school children can take advantage of it.

Once each week a lesson in barber work and the care of barber tools was given to the older boys. They were quite proud of the barber outfit which I gave them. As a result of this instruction, each boy had his hair cut once

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each month and many of the village men fell into the habit of coming to the workshop to have their hair cut and to be shaved.

Much attention was given to the subjects of hygiene, sanitation and personal cleanliness. A great improvement may be seen in the homes, the clothing and the care of themselves and their children. The pupils were carefully instructed about the effects of alcohol and tobacco on their bodies and minds. They were taught what cleanliness, fresh air, good cooking etc. would do for their bodies. The natives here do not use alcoholic drinks but some continue in the use of tobacco in spite of the fact we have tried to teach them it is bad for them both physically and economically. Many visits were made to the homes to instruct them in the care of their homes. There were but few who did not put forth an effort to excel her neighbor in cleanliness. The sanitary conditions in the village are good.

Every child, so far as could be, was given special

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duties, such as ringing the bell, sweeping, dusting, caring for library books, building fires, preparing wood and kindling, passing papers, handkerchiefs, etc. We found them willing at all times to perform their duties, and always eager to help so as to receive praise. During the last few months of school we had different pupils of the advanced grade teach the pupils of the first and second grades little lessons in reading, spelling and arithmetic. These lessons were previously prepared by us and instruction given to the pupil who was to conduct the class the following day. This plan worked admirably as it gave the pupils drill in the use of English and caused them to lose much of their timidity. It also gave us time to accomplish more work each day, as more than one class was being taught at one time.

A program was prepared and delivered by the school children Christmas. A large tree was decorated with candles and also paper chains and

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lanterns made by the children. The tree was loaded with many presents of all descriptions. Besides the tree it was necessary to stretch ropes across the room to receive other gifts as they included everything from a lead pencil to a load of wood—that is a written promise of one. Every one left the place happy wishing all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. New Year's Eve was celebrated by the firing of guns, singing songs both patriotic and religious, and playing games.

All the church work was done by us until the arrival of the missionary from the Friends Church late in November. We also conducted the church work while the natives were camping at Sealing Point. All the meetings while in Noatak were held in the church which the natives built themselves and is owned entirely by them.

As a means of support the natives must depend largely upon hunting, fishing, and trapping. There is an abundance of fish and

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game near them and if they are fortunate enough to have ammunition they never want for food. They were not so fortunate this year in their trapping but we believe it was because they did not put forth so much effort as they knew their catch would not bring much on account of the low price on skins. Only a few depend upon their reindeer for a living. This region furnishes an abundant supply of meat for the natives if they have ammunition. But ammunition is high and the traders refuse to give them credit so we fear a lack of food among them the coming year. If it were not for the supplies sent in by the Government to barter for wood many of the natives would find it hard to provide sufficient food for their families. However we believe our natives are more fortunate in regard to food, fuel and water supply than the coast natives.

The women also are industrious. We often see them making baskets, moccasins, etc. for sale or trade. Each summer all the natives spend three

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months on the coast at Sealing Point hunting seal and sea lion which forms a great part of their food and clothing.

Our village contains a store, operated by one of the natives under the direction of a merchant in Kotzebue, in which imported food supplies and articles of clothing can be bought. However this was of little advantage to the natives as they had but little money and few skins with which to buy. The price of articles was somewhat higher than the Kotzebue market.

The water supply for the entire village people is taken from the river. The river is frozen over during the winter, and the natives are not in the village during the summer so there is little chance for sickness caused from the water. However we insisted on each family to boil their drinking water.

Our natives are very fortunate in regard to fuel as there is an abundant supply of fir and pine timber all around them. Of course we do not permit

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them to cut any trees on the Government reservation, but they have only a short way to haul all is needed.

The climatic conditions here are good considering the location. The temperature ranges from 55 degrees below zero to about 75 degrees above zero. We are greatly protected from the strong winds, so common on the coast, by the trees and mountains which are between the coast and our village.

The people of our village are as a rule very healthy, even though medical assistance was given many times. Much of this was due to colds, eye and stomach trouble. There were three deaths during the year; one was due to senile decay, one was from tuberculosis and the other was a child which died from croup. In this case the child was thought by the parents to be in no danger and did not call for our assistance. We have tried to teach the natives that cleanliness is the enemy of disease. They are beginning to learn that their method of using

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the little knife to bleed themselves to remedy all diseases most often fails, and they are more disposed to call for our assistance. We have tried to teach them that "Health is better than Wealth". Medicine such as bandages, antiseptics, cathartics, cough sirup were given to the natives who left the village to trap or go on a long journey. Instructions as to the use of these medicines were given them, also instructions as to what to do in case of serious accident. Medicine was also sent to the reindeer camp for the use of the reindeer boys and their families. We spent the summer at Sealing Point with our natives and was able to render assistance from the medicine chest many times.

Most of the natives are very much interested in the reindeer business. Some one of most every family owns deer. Many of those who own deer spend a great deal of their time with the herd. They know it is the coming

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industry for the Eskimo. Our people have not had an opportunity to market their spare deer meat this year, but they hope to soon be able to send it to the "Outside". Not many female deer were sold from our herd the past year. Many were eager to buy them but few were willing to dispose of them. We encourage the reindeer business all we can as we believe it is a profitable business and a healthy occupation. During the winter several trips were made to the herd and while at Sealing Point we visited the herd very often and inspected the herd, the work of the herders and the Government apprentice.

When the herders were marking the deer both of us were with the herd and I superintended the marking of the deer and fawns. An accurate count of the deer was also taken.

We had a most pleasant visit late in February from our District Superintendent.

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Mr. Shields and Dr. Nichols of Kotzebue. We were much encouraged by their many helpful suggestions and their appreciation of our efforts. We felt that our labor had not been spent in vain. Their lectures to the people were very helpful and much appreciated.

I have no recommendations to make other than those made in previous years. However I desire to state that there is a great necessity for better transportation facilities both for teachers and supplies. There is no competition among the owners of power boats in Kotzebue, thus making it necessary for the teacher to pay a fabulous price for the transportation of his supplies, as the owners of the boats know it is absolutely necessary that we get to our station. Then, too, it is often quite difficult to find a boat in Kotzebue, on which it is safe to load several tons of supplies for transportation. Each summer all our natives leave the village

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and come to the coast leaving the teachers alone to get to Kotzebue any way they can. It is absolutely necessary for the teachers to go to Kotzebue during the summer to receive the Government supplies and their own.

I think a power boat owned and operated by the Government would greatly facilitate matters regarding the transportation of teachers and freight to the different schools within the reach of Kotzebue. The Government has more than paid for such a boat by paying such enormous prices, for the transportation of the Government freight, to contractors. However if the Government would own a boat of its own it would more than pay for itself in a summer or two.

In conclusion I would recommend a larger and better school building at this station as the present one is entirely

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too small for present needs.

*Respectfully submitted,
Clarence Ausley*

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