

Nome, Alaska. April 27, 1914

Mr. F.M. Sickler,

Shungnak. Alaska.

Dear Sir :

Your letters dated in February and March were received a few days ago. I have read your report of the separation of Jimmie's deer and I am very sorry that it turned out as it did. Of course you know how I feel about Jimmie and know that I have good reason to consider him a favorite of mine. But at the same time I am quite ready to accept all that you say as to his own responsibility and even if he were much less to blame the fact that they were his deer would place the responsibility on him. I also believe that the Kebuk boys did not die of grief when things turned out as they did.

There is absolutely no news as to the appropriation for the next year and it is likely that the Mexican war will occupy most of the attention of Congress for some time so things do not look very good. I cannot tell you what funds will be available for next year. There are none from this year's fund. Would it be possible to pay for the work with deer? If so you can go ahead on that supposition.

I will take up your request for permits for fox farming etc. with Mr. Lepp. I am of the impression, however, that it would be a surer way for you to apply for permits at once

for certain natives by name. If you make such application I will forward it at once and try to get action before the end of the summer. I rather expect that there will be special Game Wardens for this part of Alaska before very long. In that case the Wardens will have charge of such matters, of course.

Last December I got the fur quotations from Mr. Lopp by wire and had them with me. However, it was not necessary to quote them as in most cases the traders were paying the top price for average skins. I can't help feeling that some of them paid too much, at least when they paid cash. I have already taken up the matter with Mr. Lopp of his sending regular quotations. I do not know what he will do in the matter.

I will send you some of the blanks for vital statistics. I am surprised that the Commissioner did not send them to you. He is supposed to have them. I will take up the matter of the location of Riley Camp but do not expect to do anything with it. In what way does the Riley family use that place? Do they use it in the summer? Or is it their idea to get what they can out of Moran. It is nothing to me but I would like to know the motive. Please let me know what arrangement Mamma Riley made with Moran for her services. I remember hearing somewhere that Jim claimed an interest in the foxes. Is this so?

The only way for Jim to get the mail contract is to bid on it and unfortunately no one can do that for him. I will try to let you know as soon as bids are called for. Another way would be for someone to take the contract, as Mr. Lopp did, and then let Jim carry it. As far as I am concerned, I have had my fill of the mail work this winter and intend never to be caught again for anyone.

The main trouble is that the P.O. is so very slow with its payments and you have to wait at least six months and if a Postmaster, over whom you have no control, makes a little mistake, then the delay is still greater. It is not a pleasant business and I would assume the responsibility of a mail route again for all the natives in Alaska!! But if there is any chance for Jim to put in a bid I would try to help him all I could.

I had quite a hard trip b getting back to Nome, and am glad to be through with mushing for the winter. I will send you copies of my Shungnak films later. The ones of the baby were underexposed, Im sorry to say.

With best wishes to you both,  
Very truly yours,