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Letter to Father and Mother (#2)

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Deering, Alaska.

Feb. 3rd 1903.

My Dear Father and Mother,

It has been some time since I wrote to you and I suppose it seems some time since you heard from us. I wish you could see little Gladys as she sits on the bed and plays and talks. She is trying to get hold of the kitten but it keeps just out of her to reach. Whenever I look towards her she laughs and hollers. She is a fat happy little girl with large blue eyes and Edward says her hair is that golden shade which is so "costly". Edward says he wishes you were here to take a ride behind the reindeer. It was 41° below zero this morning but is up to 30 now and I think you would prefer

a side behind your own horse.
Gladys went to sleep and I took Vivian
out for a little walk a while ago.
I am afraid to take both children
on the remainder sled because
the remainder is likely to make a
sudden leap and run sideways
upsetting his load. The sled is so
low that the fall does not hurt but
with all our furs one of the babies
might get caught. The winter is
passing quickly and we keep too
busy to get lonesome.

Edward has a school of 27 pupils.
~~We wrote to~~ Vivian says she
wants to tell you "to come home
and bring me a baby doll and
that's nice talk" I cut Vivian's
hair because it hurt her to have
it combed. She is getting to be quite
a womanly little girl but is still
full of mischief. We are having
a great deal of cold weather
this winter. The coldest was 59 below

We have a Japanese boy stopping with us now. He says he has no money and very little food at his cabin so we are trying to help him out. He is quite a good carpenter and has been doing a little work inside. We are expecting Mrs. Dearborn to spend a few days visiting us. She is living 25-miles up the river and Mr. Dearborn says she is very lonesome to see some other woman. I met her last fall and we have stored their freight here and they seem like very nice yankees. On account of dogs we sawed off the horns of our reindeer and have them up ^{on the wall} and keep him inside a shed at night. The horns ^(antlers) are very pretty, measure about $5\frac{1}{2}$ ft. He is a very gentle well trained deer. He got away last year about this time and was not heard of again until he arrived at the herd at Cape

Prince of Wales in August, and
the mission boys brought him
over to us a few weeks ago.
Edward asked me just now who
I am writing to and Vivian
said "Mamma is writing to Jesse and
May Papa, - you du sharu, May?"
She is now holding service,
She has sung "Throw out the Lifeline"
and is repeating the Lord's prayer.
She knows a great many of the words
of songs we sing. She is quite particular
that nothing shall keep us from
having family prayer. She never
fails to repeat every slang phrase
that she hears but after once
corrected for it she never repeats
it and if she hears it again she
always says "Don't say that word"
She reproved me every time I said
"scat" at the pitten for a while.
She heard someone say "you bet" and was
saying it to the song books. I said
O Vivian that's not a nice word at all.
She looked at me a second and

burst out-crying. Several of our natives are over at Kotzebue Mission now holding a dance. I don't-know what-kind of a welcome they will receive or what-steps the missionaries will take in regard to it. Their dance is something like on a series of athletic exercises combined with an auction. Sometimes the young children "dance" as using arm movements and body movements while others sing and beat the drum. Sometimes they trade as they dance, - Someone offers something for trade then all sing and swing then some body makes an offer. This is an old custom with them it-takes much wisdom to know how to talk to them or how much of their life long customs to discountenance. Loapp of Cape Pr. of Wales told us that he looked upon their dances as athletic exercises and never tried to stop them.

The mail came day before
yesterday but there were only two
letters in the sack; But we
expect something next time
as 400 lbs is reported just a day
behind the carrier.

Edward sends love and
Vivian sends a kiss

Your loving daughter
Anna D. Foster.

P.S. I had a letter from Mattie Hadley
a little while ago and all were
well.

We had a letter from Dr. Jackson
and he spoke of meeting you at
Whittier

The dolls are bought and will soon be travelling, Mother says.

Please send this to Whittier when thee reads it: often enough.