

Some Try Emulating Native Writers

Several years ago the editor of this newspaper and the present editor of the All Alaska Weekly, had a rather fascinating experience in trying to decipher a letter supposedly written by a Native. The letter was written in a broken English manner. Somehow, the letter did not convince Tom Snapp and this editor that it was a genuine Native-written missive. We finally decided that the thing was written by a non-Native who had tried to emulate an under-educated Eskimo or Indian.

We have had quite a lot of experience in deciphering under-educated Native writers and it is not a too-difficult task to decide that a letter was written by a Native Eskimo or Indian. After living with such things for years, one learns to recognize the Native mannerisms in writing as well as thought patterns involved.

We may not be perfect at this but we are quite willing to stick our necks out that we can pretty well recognize a Native-written letter. The letters are not only charming but they get the thought across in a roundabout way.

— H.R.