

Item 166 -- "Three Journals Kept on the U. S. Ship of War Porpoise."

February 28, 1956

Memorandum to: Members of  
Publications Committee  
Washington State Historical Society

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Della Gould Emmons  
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cc: Chapin Foster

Dr. John Hussey of the National Parks Service has given his personal approval to publication of his monograph on Fort Vancouver. Official approval must come from someone in Washington D. C., but I am sure it will be forthcoming. Thus we have the tentative go-ahead signal on our initial project.

We will want to have Dr. Hussey make some revisions and on that point we need some suggestions. Mrs. Emmons has suggested that some more human interest might be added by including material about some of the prominent persons other than John McLaughlin whose names are associated with the fort. Also she suggests that some of the detailed description of the physical facilities might well be shortened. If anyone has not seen Dr. Hussey's monograph, and does not have access to one, I will be glad to lend mine.

Meanwhile I have been corresponding with various persons and firms about publication costs, qualified printers and related matters.

Frank Hjort, superintendent of the Fort Vancouver National Monument, is pleased that we are considering publication of Hussey's work. He says many of his visitors ask for a book about Fort Vancouver when they are on the scene, and he is quite sure that there will be a considerable demand for such a publication in connection with the monument's interpretive activities.

Now for a report on some of the items in the Yale University collection which are on our list of potential book material:

Item 34--(Withington)--Sixty-two letters by David and Kate Blaine. These turned out to be carbon copies of originals which must be already in our library or at the University of Washington. The letters begin with one dated Sept. 23, 1853 and end with one written in Oregon City on Aug. 9, 1858. They take up 244 typewritten pages, approximately 73,000 words.

Item 92--"Remarks on Board the Ship Vancouver, Captain Brown commanding." This item was interesting because Miss Withington referred to the "Vancouver" as a ship sent out to meet Lewis and Clark. It turned out that her authority for this statement was Bancroft, and Bancroft's authority in turn was Gray's "History of Oregon." Gray gives no source for this piece of information, and it may not be true. (Am checking with Peabody Museum in Salem, Mass.) In a rather hurried look through the log of the "Vancouver" I could find no reference to the Lewis and Clark Expedition nor any evidence that the vessel attempted to enter the Columbia to meet the explorers.



Item 166 -- "Three Journals Kept on the U. S. Sloop of War Peacock."

This includes the journal of Lt. Emmons, one of the senior officers of the Wilkes expedition, who kept a detailed journal, as did many of the Wilkes party, as a part of his required duties. The Emmons account begins with a well done description of the wreck of the Peacock. It includes the original of Wilkes' order to Emmons directing exploration of the Willamette Valley and a route to California. The journal is mainly concerned with an account of this journey which extends from July, 1841, to October. Many original letters are laid in. There are also good pencil sketches, including one of Fort Vancouver and one of the Peacock foundering. The Emmons journal runs to approximately 56,000 words.

Item 461 -- Letters of George Suckley, naturalist of the Stevens expedition.

The Suckley letters are typed and indexed, but are of such a miscellaneous nature that, in my opinion, they would be of interest to only a few.

Item 421 -- Journal of Cyrus Shepard.

Shepard came across the plains with the Wyeth expedition in 1834 to be a missionary. This manuscript was handled by Eberstadt, the New York book dealer, and includes a 23 page preface by Eberstadt interpreting the Shepard material. But the Shepard journal is a not unusual overland account and is heavily dosed with religious comment on virtually every page. It makes rather tiresome reading.

Item 271 -- Log of the Brigantine "Hope" of Boston to the Northwest Coast, 1790-1792. The original manuscript is in the Library of Congress, and a brief account of the voyage, based on the journal, was published by F. W. Howay in the Washington Historical Quarterly, 1920, Vol. XI.

Item 172 -- Winlock Miller Jr. collection of Elwood Evans' papers.

My chief interest in visiting the Yale Library was to see the Evans' collection. I had hoped to find some manuscript material which might be rather easily edited. But such was not the case, unless we should undertake to publish the last version of Evans' "History of the Northwest," and only Vol. I of that is complete.

As early as 1870 Evans had completed his "History of Oregon" which is in the Bancroft Library. Bancroft admits this was the basis of his history of Oregon and Washington.

Item 180--(Withington)--is Evans' first draft of his history published in 1889. This consists mostly of clippings of his writings published in newspapers.

Item 181--Is the published version with Evans' corrections written in the margins. The extent of these corrections indicates that the Evans' history, as published, is anything but a work that should be used for reference.



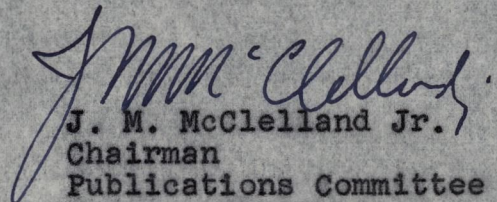
Item 183--is a revised typewritten manuscript of the 1889 history.

Item 184--appears to be the final revision of Volume 1, apparently all ready for the printer. Evans died before completing the revision of Volume II.

Item 172--is Evans' journal and notes kept while he was a member of the Stevens railroad exploration expedition. This handwriting (in pencil) would be most difficult to decipher.

Item 180--is a volunious scrapbook which contains clippings from newspapers and magazine articles that Evans wrote between 1862 and 1880. These are mostly from the Olympia Standard and Transcript and from the magazine "North Pacific." Winlock Miller Jr. commented: "These hacked fragments have interest as representing the intermediate steps in Elwood Evans' endeavors. They are the transitional point at which his 25 years of writing became the coherent whole that, altered and revised, finally was published in book form in 1889."

It seems to me that unless someone should undertake a biography of Evans, who was one of the founders and the first president of our Society, the best hope for compiling a book of Evans' material would be to select from his notebooks material which he wrote for contemporary newspapers and magazines, and piece them together in such a way that they constitute a story of Washington from its beginnings as a territory until it achieved statehood, written by a man who observed all that happened during this period and was a participant in the government of that period. This would be a tremendous job, but I believe that if we could find someone to undertake it, the result would be most interesting and valuable.

  
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