

INFORMAL REPORT TO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF CURATORS

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So much of interest has occurred since the first letter to you in September that it seems in order to send a short report. This letter will detail the most important things in prospect.

Dr. Erna Gunther, foremost authority on the Indians of the Pacific Northwest, and director of the state museum at the University of Washington, spent half a day here recently. She went over the Indian exhibits with me and made many excellent suggestions. So excellent and so comprehensive, in fact, that she has agreed to give us all her Saturdays and holidays this Fall and Winter. With the help of her graduate students in anthropology and ethnology she will clean up, classify, and suggest arrangements of our Indian artifacts. This includes the vast amount of material we have in storage for lack of exhibit space.

Mr. Vic Hurley, author and authority on military history, the Philippines and the South Pacific, will work in similar fashion on the surprising amount of material we have in these areas.

Miss Mamie Engebretson, librarian at the College of Puget Sound, as a part of her work for a master's degree at the University of Washington, soon starts the enormous task of indexing the Curtis collection of negatives. Probably later this year she will also give us a month of work in the library working on any projects assigned to her. Certainly until we receive funds for employing a professional librarian Miss Engebretson's work will assist us in one major library problem - that of cataloguing.

For none of these fine projects will there be any cost to the Society.

Arrangements for bringing the Kibbe collection to Tacoma are nearly completed. When the big job of cataloguing this gets under way the need for a full-time professional librarian becomes imperative.

The Society is also acquiring several small but important manuscript collections. Later you will hear about these in detail but to give you a general idea of their importance: The papers of General H. M. Chittenden, author, fur-trade authority, scholar in such areas as the work of Father de Smet, reclamation of land, the Government Locks (now the Chittenden Locks in Seattle), the harbors of Puget Sound, and others. Robert Hitchman assisted greatly in conferences with the Chittenden family. Some of the papers have already arrived from a daughter in California, and next week the sons in Seattle will transmit the balance of the manuscripts to the Society. When this news is made public some excitement should be generated in historical circles.

The papers of the following families active in Pacific Northwest history: Whitfield (historian of Snohomish County); Ankeny (Nesmith Ankeny was son of Senator Ankeny of Washington, nephew of Senator Nesmith of Oregon, and interesting in his own right); Weller and Painter (early Walla Walla); D'Ablaing (grandson of a Governor General of the Dutch East Indies who married a Javanese princess on his father's side - on his mother's descended from Indian fighters and early Oregon and Washington Settlers). There are others - an interesting diary of the Nez Perce War by one of the first civilian victims. But this gives you an idea!

Fine suggestions were received from several members of the Board in the past month. Some have been implemented, others will be acted upon shortly. Further suggestions will be very welcome, and thank you all.

One personal note - the Le Roy family have now been Tacoma residents for nearly two weeks and are very happy in their new home at 10511 Sunnybrook Lane. After commuting 3000 miles plus from Seattle since September 1st, we are glad to be here!.

10/25/58
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