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Bonanza of materials

Local History

Experts begin appraisal

By LOU McDERMOTT

Two historical scholars and a Pacific Northwest history specialist felt pulses quicken Friday as they began the first official evaluation and classification of the historical materials in the Click Relander Gift Collection in Yakima Valley Regional Library.

Immediately added to the library's microfilm collection were about 20 rolls of valuable microfilm from the collection, said Mrs. Hazel E. Mills, Washington State Library's Northwest history librarian, Olympia. She said the film rolls were on early Indian affairs in Eastern Washington and were utilized by the late Click Relander for his book, "Drummers and Dreamers."

"Relander also transcribed in manuscript form the material on a microfilm roll of the Archer Papers in Washington Archives," she said. Dates of the Indian Affairs Bureau rolls were from 1856-1874.

Only a historical scholar can know he has come upon something rare when he opens an ancient ledger to find it is an 1885 tax assessment roll for Kittitas County.

Dr. Earl Glauert, history professor at Central Washington State College, Ellensburg, and his assistant, Larry Nickel, graduate student in Pacific Northwest history, said the "duplicate 1885 tax rolls" aren't available presently in Ellensburg. They anticipate microfilming the rolls for the Ellensburg library.

"This was only two years after Kittitas County was formed," said Nickel, who for a year has been assisting Dr. Glauert in a CWSC local history project to preserve and record all primary and secondary historical resources pertaining to a large Eastern Washington area.

"Kittitas County, you know, was part of Yakima County before 1883," he said.

Mrs. June Thurston, regional librarian, said Mrs. Mills will continue as consultant as the evaluating and cataloging of Relander materials proceeds. She said Dr. Glauert



LEDGERS AND LEDGERS — Three history experts, from left, Dr. Earl Glauert, Mrs. Hazel E. Mills and Larry Nickel, considered assorted ledgers in the Click Relander Collection in Yakima Valley Regional Library a "bonanza of original source material."

periodically will continue here working with the documents and books emerging from about 400 cartons.

The Relander collection, gift of anonymous donors, arrived without inventory at the library basement dock last April. Only a sampling of the many cartons has been possible until the three specialists arrived Friday, said Mrs. Thurston.

Dr. Glauert has offered to bring parts of his CWSC field seminar history class to assist with unpacking and roughly classifying the original materials.

Since August, 1970, CWSC history students under Dr.

Glauert have made classrooms of the resource areas of Kittitas County — such as musty courthouse records, newspaper files and library resources. Now under Dr. Glauert's supervision they will move to the basement of the Yakima library headquarters to help sort, preserve and classify the various historical books, papers, maps and photographs.

Among the ledgers considered a "bonanza in primary source materials" by Dr. Glauert and Mrs. Mills was a May 1935 Pioneer Days Celebration registration of

"native born residents" of Yakima County.

"Someone has then classified all those registering by date of birth," Mrs. Mills said.

Some of the other old ledgers include four journals, dated about 1887, of an Ellensburg merchant, J. B. Fogarty, and several ledgers of the 1889 firm of Chappell and Cox.

The specialists worked about 20 of the cartons in an eight-hour day — and considered the Relander gift a major attraction to the Yakima library for historical scholars.

"The materials are endlessly valuable," said Dr. Glauert. "And we've only begun—"