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April 8, 1964

Mr. D.E. Warren,
621 East Third St.,
Moscow, Idaho.

Dear Mr. Warren:

First, my apologies for the delay in answering, but we have been moving into our own home. Books, filing cabinets etc. have contributed to making it a gigantic effort and it will continue for some time, to really get organized.

In all fairness to you I think you would "progress" by locating someone capable of working out the mass of material you no doubt have. I have made "judicious" inquiries in two directions without mentioning names and drew "blanks." Two writers both have "Indian material" manuscripts they have been struggling with. Material of this type never, to my knowledge, has paid for the "expense of writing, typing etc." But that I fear gives you the wrong idea, because I have never approached a writing project "to make money" and consequently have not been disappointed. And I am well familiar with how publishers operate and have to operate.

I knew Mrs. Cornelison and in years past acquired several boxes of the Moorhouse negatives (most as you know are in the University of Washington). I spent considerable time on my field trips making notes etc. concerning her father and the Rev. was there at the house in Pendleton.

I agree with you there is potential material, as I agreed with her but there were so many drawbacks. Moorhouse, himself was a study of a "western photographer," and it is regrettable he limited himself to certain kinds of photographs and utilized his sources so little. His "Fishhawk" I believe is his masterpiece. The Indians who knew him knew him however as "Fishhook," and have given me many stories about this individual. (Maybe it's reversed, I'd have to check the Moorhouse negative-picture and my notes.

The outline shows the good possibilities and you won't agree now but eventually you will see the wisdom of determining just what is to be covered, the "theme!" The work as outlined would be in the class, as to size, of McWhorter's Hear Me, My Chiefs which had to be subsidized before the publisher would touch it and had to be sold at \$10, with the result large numbers of copies were left. Photographs also, which would be important to the proposed work scare the daylights out of most publishers because of the printing cost. This work would have to be, as outlined, around 110,000 words! Standard sized works run 65,000.

In other words, if you are going to tell the story of the Rev. you characterize him and tell his story. It is HIS work, his life, his biography. And a Presbyterian Publishing house should be interested.

If you are going to tell Maj. Moorhouse story it should be about him, the man, his life work, what he, like the Rev. C. left on earth.

If you are going to tell Indian legends you should tell Indian legends; anthropology, deal in anthropology; history, deal in it, etc. I know of one very good writing about Chief Moses, in which years of research have gone, two talented men have put their time and it is still battling around with possibility the U of O Press might take it on when it is revised, rewritten etc.

Now I don't mean to sound like I am throwing a wet blanket on the project. There is material there. There is work there and no one who is in the writing profession cares about work. They KNOW. They've been through it. For every 10,000 manuscripts written, two are published. And for every book published, one out of 10 clears more than \$500 for the author! I have lots of friends among authors and get a good side of the picture.

Had I thought I could have "hacked" it with all involved, I would have, as Mrs C wished me to do, taken the project on some years ago.

I learned long ago the most unkindest thing a critic could do for an author was to praise his work when it was not praiseworthy. Everyone can profit and only ones who have it made can ignore the facts.

I think, you yourself have a better chance to sit down and work it out, whacking away a chapter now and then and it will straighten around. You have an outline that is the basis for that. You need not worry about capability of writing it. No one who can write an intelligent letter, should. And there are certain fundamentals to follow, which if you decide to carry out, would help see you through and I'd be glad to pass them on at no detail, they are so simple. But they are things persons usually overlook and find out about after years of work. Don't be afraid to try and write. You know your story. You feel it. Get it clear cut in your mind and it comes out ok. Fancy words, emotions etc. are useless in works of this kind. You determine whether it is to be a "scholarly" work and footnoted or not. And as for being too busy, I've never known where the best work was produced, but it was produced under a kind of "pressure." All of my four writings, productions or whatever you call them were done "spare time." The fact I work on a newspaper was a greater handicap than anything else...stilted phrases, etc. And a manuscript I turned two years ago, was finally returned by my agent (in Southern California) to let simmer for a year or so before re-doing(). Then she bumps into a TV program for which she is advisor, remember it and sends for it. But Indian material, no, she's an Indian fan, a history fan etc. but just not interested nor can she find interest in any of many, many contacts, except for what I haven't tackled, "Juvenile material...with Indian flavor).

I'm sorry my hand is a little crippled up because of early gardening in cold weather, accounting for the messy job of typing. And I'm rushing this along now that I finally got to it in my stack of correspondence.

I certainly don't mean to discourage you ,because there is possibility in the production, but I think it wise to write frankly and honestly.

I know of big name writers who have to re-write their works eight and 10 times before they pass muster, then after a while, when their name is really big, they have to write it and correct it and type it out and that's about it. Most of my writings have been done three and four times and that 's "quick" to what many writers I know have to do. But that need not frighten you, either. You will find that when you write something, put it away a few weeks and look at it, you see it in its true light and can correct it to read properly.

I want to encourage you to write your own material, tell the story as you know it and have learned it from your interest in such things.

Another things you are close to your source and locale. Doing ~~xx~~ things by mail is far from satisfactory. I could sit down and explain these things and many more in one_half the time it has taken to write, and more clearly.

I'm returning the outline. Keep it on hand. Keep looking around if you don't feel like tying into it yourself. If you do, send me a few pages about anything and let me write some notes about it for you to explain what I'm driving at. By comparing your work then with works in print, you'll see what I mean.

So keep thinking about it and drop me a note as you give things a good going over in your mind. I do want to keep in touch with you whatever the result, and also the project. And if I really thought I could turn this for you so it would be acceptable to a publisher I would be most glad to do so but publishers have to have things all their own way, in these days of high cost of printing. Just for instance, Binford's might tell you one thing, but if you were to write them and say you would underwrite purchase of 500 books for say \$1,500 or \$2,000 they'd say they would have to see the manuscript first and leave it at that. Then when they saw the manuscript, if it passed muster, they'd publish say 4,000 copies at the most, give a royalty of about 20 cents a book and you'd come out about 300 behind and out all your work etc. I said Binford's, not meaning ~~anywhere~~ that firm especially, but any firm dealing in regional publications. It costs a publisher around \$7,500 to \$10,000 to turn a book. He has to sell around 3,500 copies before he gets his money back. These and many other pointers you can take as "generally standard," and of just hints at what to expect. But things like that never discouraged me although I've never had to agree to buy any books, and ones published are out of print and selling in some cases by rare book dealers for \$12 and \$22.50! I can't say I could have made a living on book writing except I had at least 10 books in publication at one time. And that is true of many of my author friends, including those whose publishers are big name publishers. When you hit them, they'll pay \$1,500 at outset, which is usually all, and is "advance royalty." The rest never materializes except what taken by movies, TV, Reader's Digest etc. (They'll pay \$2,000 for a digest of a book, if down their line which a publisher will pay only \$1,500 for) So it goes. Just rambling ideas. Again, don't be discouraged by my remarks, just trying to pass on some advice as I see it. I do hope you find someone, satisfactory, if you can't see your way clear to do it as you should.

Most Sincerely

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