

Report of Research Committee of Fort Simcoe at Mool Mool Restoration Society, presented to the Board of the Society, April 14, 1954, for transmittal, in duplicate.

The report of the research committee, as requested by the board secretary four days ago, will necessarily be fragmentary. But it will contain pertinent information to acquaint the board with a more than generalized idea of activities. Fundamentally it is a work that was under way years before creation of the Society, and will, in some form or other, continue for an extended time, being virtually never-ending.

This is obvious when it is realized that one repository in the nation's capital alone contains over three million letters and documents, any one of which could contain information on Fort Simcoe!

The committee is now over one year old. Its first activity was a field trip to the site of the State Parks and Recreation Commission project at Fort Simcoe. The purpose was to permit members to become personally acquainted and to place them in contact with persons who might have first hand information for preliminary interviews.

Since that time and due to the magnitude of the various interests, the research has proceeded along individual lines in conformance with the voluntary spirit of the committeemen.

During the year the committee utilized information gathered for an extensive sequence of stories. These would properly come under the classification of publicity. And these, in themselves, properly maintained in a scrapbook, would provide a record file of information.

Additionally, clippings of the stories have been provided, in duplicate possible, to the State Historian.

An attempt was made to secure a school typing project to preserve additional copies of clippings and personal records pertinent to the subject already on hand in personal files. Due to the proximity of school closing, this project was curtailed but carried out and provided a double record of some clippings. This has provided a service perhaps unique in a research committee's operations. Students writing term papers, have



utilized it; speakers have gained information from it and writers of magazine articles and short stories have been provided with copies. It has been provided to students and teachers. Inquiries for the material were not sent to the committee but usually to the Yakima newspapers. No inquiry for material was received from the society itself being a relayed inquiry if such existed.

After a year of experience and following a series of articles issuing various types of appeals to secure source information, knowledge of artifacts etc. the conclusion was reached that while considerable exists, those in possession were not desirous of providing, at their own expense, copies or full information. Notes and records of such repositories were made where possible for future reference. In no case was a request made for possession of such material, but it was pointed out that the time was coming, with development of a possible repository at the Simcoe "museum" where proper care would be given. They were interested in this.

The Yakima Valley Museum Inc. agreed to serve as a repository for any Fort Simcoe material, either written or in artifact form. This would be on loan pending time that a regional and proper repository were available. It was the unanimous opinion of everyone contacted that any such repository should be located in the area involved, in order that the material be made conveniently available to the greatest number of people.

To further the preservation of material gathered concerning Fort Simcoe, two members of the committee have published their writings, here again an example unique in committee activity.

The 29 p. pamphlet, wraps, Mool Mool the story of Fort Simcoe, was published by Mrs. Helga Anderson Travis, 1953.

A 26 p. pamphlet, The Fort Simcoe Story was published early in April, 1954, by Mrs. Thelma Kimmel of Toppenish.



These two pamphlets, while containing some inaccuracies due to lack of the information being checked and cross checked against the undisputable documents at hand, although such service were offered and is offered to any writer of a contemplated publication, have undoubtedly relieved the pressure of numerous requests from schools, libraries and individuals for Fort Simcoe material. They are the voluntary product of the two writers concerned, and both are to be commended for their enterprise in preserving, in such quantities the material that now cannot become lost. Between the two writings the general story of Fort Simcoe is easily and readily available.

The writers, like other committee members, have considerable material [not original documents] they are retaining in their possession in line with their further plans, but they are willing to share it or make it available to proper sources not in sharp conflict. It must be remembered that some of the persons involved have been interested in gathering Fort Simcoe material for a period of 25 years or longer, hence their attitude of making their material generally available is praiseworthy.

And more extensive publications are imminent.

Approximately 200 letters were written to follow out leads and in many cases, while some good resulted, the more customary result was that the person contacted sent for information. This required considerable personal time, numerous clippings, etc. But it was a service gladly done, feeling that eventually these contacts will repay the courtesy.

Hundreds of feet of microfilm--25 rolls specifically, were acquired at no expense to the society and this augmented additional microfilm made available. Much is productive of Fort Simcoe material. The work of this nature covers in months what it would take years to accomplish by personal visits and residence at Washington D.C. and other places where there are major repositories. And it is indicated on the bases of the rolls scanned, that many of the questions that have



been asked and are pertinent to Simcoe, can never be answered because no correspondence now exists that gives the ~~XXXX~~ answer. However, in research, that is never conclusive.

Records of the Yakima Indian Agency were searched and were found abundant with material, much of it in duplicate form in the National Archives. The discovery was made that in years past some of the government records were mutilated, like other records at Fort Vancouver and Fort Dalles, and that documents were removed. The government has a definite procedure for disposal of its records and any permission given in past years for removal, even by a government agent, was unauthorized. In this case it is emphasized that at no time during the tenure of the present agent have records been permitted to leave the Yakima Agency and that every precaution is taken to preserve them for historical purposes. Moreover the agent has been most helpful in his manner and most generous of his time in seeing that all records now available at the agency are made available.

A photo file and negative file has been inaugurated, supplementing a previously organized file. This will provide the Society at some future time with the opportunity of more easily obtaining picture copies and without backtracking over numerous letters of correspondence and to hunt out various clues.

Some of the most comprehensive material relating to Fort Simcoe at the Yakima Agency, commonly known as the Olaf T. Hagen report, prepared by Hagen, a representative of the National Park Service, was made available by the Agency to the State Historian. This report was too extensive to be transcribed during the year by the research committee with its facilities.

Satisfactory contacts have been established with personal friends in the research field, with libraries, universities etc. alerting them to the unique Fort Simcoe research project. And they are enabling the committee to expand its work, through their vigilance.

Respectfully submitted

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