

A. Island

April 3

1967-68

Dear Rosa and Murray:

You may have seen the little story in the Trib last week to the effect that an account has been opened in the Bank of California to accept advance payments for Bessie Cammon's history and chronology of Anderson and McNeil Islands. Bessie is 81 now, a clear-headed and wonderful woman. She has worked at this account for more than half her lifetime. She was born on Anderson, at Johnson's Landing, lived for a bit of her married life at Still Harbor on McNeil and returned here. She knew all of the old timers on both islands and has made a chronology of early settlers, schools, social life, the steamers that stopped at her dad's woodyard etcetera. I drew heavily on this material.

Her manuscript consists of approximately 200 pages, typed on her old Oliver. Long before my book came out, I took her in to see Bruce LeRoy, with the manuscript. He was enthusiastic and hoped to find a donor to finance it into book form. Bessie wrote to him this January to ask whether the Historical Society could hold advance payment funds until enough accumulated to print the manuscript. He replied that he would ask his board and would let her know soon. She heard nothing further and so opened the account at the Bank of California with \$200.00 of her own savings. Bruce still has the manuscript.

I feel obligated to Bessie in many ways. I know this means much to her and that she has had numerous inquiries concerning the book, from early day people and their children and grands. I think some publicity concerning this might reach a good many potential buyers. Do you have any suggestions? I have written to the Daughters of the Pioneers and also to Steven Uthoff of University of Washington Manuscript Libraries, who wrote me last fall to ask whether I knew of any historical source materials in this area.

I know so little about this kind of publishing. Would Exposition or Vantage Presses be advisable or a possibility? Might some company such as Foss or Weyerhaeuser be interested in helping? Bessie's father was well known as the owner of Johnson's Landing, and her brothers, Gunnard, Ben, John, and Otto, were all boat men until death or retirement. Ben and Otto still live here. Of course much of this is statistical, names of teachers and the like. But much of it is lively writing by a woman of keen memory and with an appreciation of accuracy. Bessie taught school on the Cowlitz and also here on Island.