

## NEWS DEPARTMENT

---

### *Ranald Macdonald's Story*

The Eastern Washington State Historical Society is publishing the posthumous manuscript of Ranald Macdonald, one of the most remarkable characters of the Pacific Northwest. Mrs. Eva Emery Dye has saved his place in history by her valuable work, *Macdonald of Oregon*. Now comes the book by Macdonald himself. Upon the request of the Eastern Washington State Historical Society there is here reproduced an appreciative article from *The Spokesman-Review* of Spokane:

"The story of the Pacific Northwest, otherwise known as the Oregon country, is one of fascinating interest and deserves to be well known by every inhabitant of British Columbia, Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Western Montana. The record of the regime of the Northwest and Hudson's Bay Companies of Canada and of the surge of the tide of American immigration to the Pacific Coast forms an epic of the heroic age of Oregon and Washington. It abounds with heroes and heroines and with picturesque personalities.

"In acquainting our people with such personages the historical associations of these states render invaluable service. But it may fairly be questioned whether more valuable work has ever been done by any of them than has just been done by the Eastern Washington Historical Society in publishing Ranald Macdonald's own story of his life.

"This Macdonald was a son of a Hudson's Bay trader and a daughter of Chief Comcomly. He was born at Astoria on February 3, 1824, and died at Toroda, Wash., on August 5, 1894. The spirit of adventure was in him almost from the first, so that he could not settle down to business in civilized Canada or even to existence in the then wild west of the Oregon country. About the age of 21, accordingly, he ran away to sea and finally turned up as a seaman in the whale-fishery of the Pacific during 1845-8. But from boyhood he had been fascinated by the mysterious empire of Japan, which for two centuries had been a hermit among nations, jealously sealed against western civilization. He had longed to enter the forbidden country and do what he could to bring it into fellowship with Europe and the United States. In 1848 his chance came. He cast himself

single-handed on the Japanese coast and then enjoyed an honorable captivity of nearly two years in the Mikado's kingdom.

"Ranald's own story of his Japanese experiences constitutes the main bulk of his account of his career. It is doubly entertaining from the point of view of his personality and from that of his reflection of Japanese life and character in the last days of a dying era. There was a charm about him, a manliness, that won the esteem and affection of his jailers. He was quickwitted and appreciative of the fine features of the people among whom he had come. He gained the confidence of his Japanese associates, learned their language and taught his own. Among his pupils were the Japanese interpreters who met Commodore Perry when he opened Japan and who carried on the negotiations between him and the shogun. Thus the half-breed child of old Oregon and Washington was an instrument in bringing about the meeting of the furthest west and the remotest east.

"The style in which Macdonald told his story has an old-world leisureliness and quaintness that is refreshing in these times of rush and staccato. The original manuscript came into the possession of the Spokane society after the author's death, and has now been edited most painstakingly and with fine scholarliness by Corresponding Secretary Lewis, an attorney at Spokane, and Naojiro Murakami of the University of Tokyo, who is Japan's commissioner of historical compilation.

"It was my privilege to read this edition in manuscript, and it gives me pleasure to state that the notes of the editors, their bibliography of the subject and their appendix of contemporary records double and more than double the interest and value of the original narrative. Mr. Lewis and Professor Murakami have made a contribution of permanent worth to the history of Japan and that of the Pacific Northwest. No library, no student of our Northwestern history, can afford to be without this work. Dr. Griffis, the famous author of 'The Mikado's Empire,' values the volume very highly.

"The narrative by Macdonald is to be published by the Eastern Washington Historical Society, but the edition will be limited to 1000 copies and will not be reprinted. Publication will be effected through subscription, the price being set at \$6 a copy, the lowest amount possible, now that the costs of publishing have increased 100 per cent during the past seven years.

"Printing is to begin when two-thirds of the edition have been subscribed for. Subscriptions should be made to George W. Fuller,

librarian of the Spokane Public Library and recording secretary of the Eastern Washington Historical Society. Payments in advance will expedite early publication. F. P. N."

---

*The Records of a Pioneer Lumber Mill*

Through the gift of Mr. Clarence B. Bagley, a well known pioneer and a contributing editor of this *Quarterly*, the University of Washington Library has received the donation of valuable historical material relating to the Washington Mill Company, one of the large pioneer lumber mills of Washington Territory. This company was organized in San Francisco in 1856 by Captain Marshall Blinn and William J. Adams. Mr. Adams kept the San Francisco end of the business; Mr. Blinn was in charge on Puget Sound. The mill was erected at Seabeck, Kitsap County, and began cutting logs in 1857, incidentally opening a store, buying and building ships, acquiring timber lands, and operating most of the business of the community. Its work was continued in Seabeck until 1886, when the mill was destroyed by fire, and the establishment removed.

Mr. Bagley's gift consists of thirty-nine bound volumes of letter books, day books, journals, ledgers, time books, stock books, specifications and invoices. Altogether it forms a unique collection of source material relating to one phase of the economic development of Puget Sound.

---

*President Scholz*

Professor Richard F. Scholz leaves the history department of the University of Washington to become President of Reed College, Portland, Oregon. Mr. Scholz is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and was one of the first Rhodes scholars at Oxford from that state. He has had teaching experiences at the Universities of Wisconsin, California and Harvard before coming to the University of Washington. His colleagues in the guild of historians wish for him abundant success in the new field.

---

*Valuable Prosch Manuscripts*

Through the kindness of Miss Edith G. Prosch, the University of Washington Library has received from the Thomas W. Prosch estate a collection of important documents and other materials relating to the history of the Puget Sound region. Most valuable of all are three manuscripts of unpublished books prepared by Mr. Prosch. One of these, a "Dictionary of the Chinook Jargon" was