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McQueen Family Letters

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Letter from Annie Gordon to Catherine McQueen, 11 June 1894, Salmon Arm: electronic edition

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Salmon Arm, B.C.

June 11th 1894

My Dear Mother,

Our bridge has been swept away by the flood, and there has been no traffic on the C.P.R. for over ten days. Ten miles of track has been completely destroyed and as much more under water east of Sicamous, so we have had no mail for some time, and I hardly know when this will go. At Lulu Island, at the mouth of the Fraser River, the flood came on them suddenly, and the people could

not get out of their houses. A steamer was sent for them from Westminster. Here in Salmon Arm a great deal of damage has been done, several farmers' crops entirely destroyed,

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and several flooded out of their houses. The water came within a foot of our door and we expected that we would have to turn out too, but the weather turned cold, and the water fell.

We had a few potatoes in, which were flooded out, but that is the extent of our loss, excepting the bridge and Jim saved the stringers and most of the covering of that.

We have a garden planted with peas, beans, corn, beets, carrots, lettuce and parsnips & radishes. I have some cabbage plants set out too, but I see that the rabbits have gone off with the tops of several. We have nearly an acre of potatoes planted too, and we cleared all that since I came so you see we have been busy.

Until the flood took the bridge away there were visitors here every

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day, and on Sundays they came in droves. Honestly, I don't know what I would do if I lived any nearer to my neighbors. I am half a mile away from them as it is, and all the way is through the woods. For several days after the bridge did go, people would come to the bank and call over if there was any other way to cross, and I was scared to death they would find one, though I couldn't think of any, and I had ~~to~~ so much to do that I wanted a chance to do it. Our house is all one room yet, and the walls are rough logs, but we will have it fixed before Jessie gets here.

The whole valley is like a garden, our foothills at the back of the ranch, are covered with long bunch grass, and there are over fifty varieties of flowers, roses, lilies several kinds

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wild honeysuckle, a great big golden blossom, columbines, and acres of others which I never saw before. There are strawberries on the foothills too, and wild bush cranberries all around us, gooseberries too the children call them "goosegerries" There is an enormous raspberry patch about two miles from us where the whole Valley goes to pick. There also five or six acres of hazel nut bushes, part of it ours, and part Mr Wallace's. Jim has seen deer several times when he went to the foothills with the cow. We have a cow and a very fine calf, also a horse and a dog which is the whole of our live stock at present. The dog is as quiet as a sheep all day, but at night he is as savage as a meataxe, and woe betide anything that comes near June 24th. No mail since I began this, only the mail from Kamloops, had a letter from

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Jessie, she will be here before long. Jim has had a man working for him all week, and I have been more than busy. I have been at work from six in the morning until nine at night ever since I came here. I want to get things fixed up as well as I can before Jim goes away. I have set out a lot of big tomato plants, peppers, and cucumbers, and some beets too. Our calf is a beauty, the finest in the Valley, a thoroughbred Hereford. I haven't set eyes on a woman for weeks, but day before yesterday two of them came. We have a big log felled across the river now, and they came on that, and nearly tumbled in. I think we will have a very nice place here. The land is very rich, and there is not a stone on it, except up on the foothill. The pasturage is splendid too, long bunch grass, we are well situated. There is a meadow too, with about an acre and a half of

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grass on it, which we will cut for winter,

and Jim has enough turnip in to keep
the cow going most of the winter.
We have reason to be thankful that we
have got on so well. We had to fight a
bush fire one day, and got it put out
all right. Marshy Dan fell into
the water one day, and was nearly
drowned, we got a terrible fright.
Jim goes on a trip in July.
Love to all of you

Your Loving daughter
Annie

Envelope:

Mrs D. M^cQueen
Sutherland's River
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