

MISS WASHBURN WRITES LETTER

Letter from Miss Orilla F. Washburn, Formerly an Alliance Girl, Full of Interest

The Herald has told before of Miss Orilla F. Washburn, the former Alliance girl who is now a missionary in the Philippine Islands.



Orilla F. Washburn

Orilla F. Washburn, daughter of Rev. A. M. Washburn and wife, for several years pastor at Lakeside and Alliance Circuit, was born in Wisconsin. When quite a young girl she came with her parents to N. W. Conference. Ambitious for an education she went to Crete making her home with a friend of her family during the school year, graduating from the high school. Then followed four years at Nebraska State University. While at this institution she presented herself to the Women's Foreign Missionary Society, and was accepted. The special training required was secured at the Chicago Bible Training School.

During all this time, except the three last years, she worked her way by domestic work. In her Junior year at Lincoln she was an assistant in laboratory; the money for her year at Chicago was provided by a good man—a friend of the cause at Broken Bow.

In 1912 she, with a party of missionaries, sailed from San Francisco for the Philippines, where by appointment she was placed in charge of the Bible Women's Training School at Lingayen.

Miss Washburn is supported by gifts from friends in the northwest Nebraska Conference.

The following letter, written to her friend, Mrs. Harmony, at Chadron, is full of interest:

Women's Bible Training School
Lingayen, Pangasinan, P. I.
Orilla F. Washburn, Principal
Feb. 14, 1914.

Dear Mrs. Harmony:—

Your lovely Christmas letter and package came some time ago. Thank you so much for everything; I would like to send personal letters to each one of the ladies who so kindly remembered me, but that is impossible for the present at least. Please give my thanks to each one. Everything was so lovely and "homey" it gave me a big warm feeling around my heart to be remembered that way, so far from my own folks and loved ones. Thank you again for the things you sent.

School closed in December with seven girls graduated; Bishop and Mrs. Eveland came for commencement and Bishop made the address. After that I made a little speech in Ilokano, and presented the diplomas. How proud I was I will leave you to guess. How much I am hoping from these girls! They are out at work now, and need prayers to help them stand against the temptations they meet. Because of social standards among the native people it is hard for a Filipino girl to stand alone and keep pure and true. Pray for God's blessing upon them as they work for Him.

We expect many more girls this year, at least forty have been accepted; but we cannot squeeze in more than thirty. Some of them will drop off the list before school begins so we will probably not have to send any home after they get here.

My greatest blessing of this year came in the form of a new fellow-worker, and a dear old friend. I cannot tell you the joy in my heart as I welcomed Mildred Blakely to the Philippines and to Lingayen. God has surely been very good to me. I thank Him for the strength He has given me to endure past burdens and I look forward to the coming year with trust and confidence in Him. Do not forget to pray for me, because I greatly need strength for my work among the people.

Conference came during January at Vigan, the second city of importance on Luzon. As it was so far from Manila the women were unable to leave their work, so the women's conference was very small. We

went to Vigan by boat. Left San Fernando at eleven o'clock at night, reached Vigan at five in the morning. The sea was very quiet and I enjoyed the trip immensely. The stars were so bright and just above the horizon hung the beautiful Southern Cross. The boat was so small we all had to sleep on deck, which added to our pleasure. At Vigan we were entertained at the mission house. The sessions of conference were very interesting. I wish you could have heard the reports of both the missionaries and the native pastors and deaconesses. There has been much persecution and unrest during the past year because the spirit of independence is so widely spread among the people. Our native pastors have held on manfully to keep their people together and to present a strong face to sin and unrighteousness. One of our deaconess girls told of the work in the Junior League and how the padre would give the children centavos if they would not attend the Protestant service. Once she was walking with a number of children to the service, when other children came up. These are her words: "The children spit at us, but their spit was not strong enough so it could reach us." I wish you could have heard her say it with her peculiar, broken English and emotional expression.

We had a procession thru the streets of all the missionaries and native Christians. On a vaca cart was placed a huge open Bible made from cloth and bamboo; behind this was a closed Bible with a church on top of it representing Catholicism. Bishop Eveland rode ahead distributing tracts. As we passed a Catholic church a group of children grabbed the tracts tearing them to pieces. The padre without doubt was paying them to do so.

There is much beautiful scenery near Vigan. One place where the Abra river cuts thru the mountains is called the gap. We visited it in the afternoon. A short distance away lay the China Sea bright and sparkling—a most exquisite blue. The mountains are very rugged, like the Rockies, and are covered with a deep brown velvety moss. The Abra is deep and swift where it cuts thru the rocks. As the sun sank its glow touched up mountain, river, sea and sky until we seemed very near the city celestial. One of the things which gives me courage for my work is the glimpse I get into heaven thru the beauties God has thrown around me.

Our ride home was most unusual. We came as far as San Fernando by automobile, fourteen of us in one big truck. We arose at three o'clock in the morning and left Vigan at five. That brought us to the Abra gap at sunrise. How beautiful it was! We crossed the river on a bamboo raft, which seemed very unsafe for so heavy a load; but the trip was safely made in half an hour. The trip from there to Narvican was beautiful. The mountains are close to the sea, making the coast very rocky. We passed many an imposing old church, a testimony to the builders of the past, but also of oppression and forced labor of the poor natives.

At Narvican we stopped for a service and then for a few minutes at each town we came to while Bishop Eveland spoke a few words to the people gathered at each place. At Candon the Bishop dedicated their new church—here a great crowd had assembled, both inside of church and outside crowds were gathered. The service was most impressive. After the service we had dinner, and then left for San Fernando. The sand was very deep, and many, many times it was necessary for all of us to get out, while the men helped lift the wheels out of the deep rut they had bored into. We crossed five rivers on "balsas" or bamboo rafts. At five o'clock we reached a very swift river; it was thought that the auto with all of us aboard would be too heavy to pull across, so four of us girls crossed on a small raft. In the meantime in trying to run the auto onto the balsa, they ran it into the river, and there it stuck. On the opposite side we girls waited for two hours. Crowds of children and grown people gathered around us. I talked to them in Ilokano (I forgot to tell you that I passed my conference examination with a grade of ninety-eight in Ilokano). It began to get dark so we sat down and began to sing. Two of us sat in the crowd; the other two some distance away. We were singing "Stand up for Jesus" when one of the girls came over to us saying, "You had better stand up right now." We followed their suggestion, going with them. They told us that a crowd of men had come up, one standing directly behind me holding something in his hand which looked like a bolo-knife, over my head. Did not know whether he meant to harm or only to keep the evil spirits—caused by the presence of Protestants—away from the children.

Soon the rest of the missionaries came across with the baggage leaving the auto behind. The men found vaca and carabao carts to carry the women and the baggage. A carabao cart is a box on two wheels without springs or seats. The carabao is so slow that the men walked ahead all the time. At nine o'clock the auto caught up with us; they had worked it out and it certainly looked like an old friend. We arrived at San Fernando at half past two. The United Brethren missionaries were looking for us, and insisted on our eating, altho we were so tired we would gladly have rolled up in our steamer rugs on the floor and gone to sleep. However, the food refreshed us and at four we were ready to retire. We had to rise at six to reach the train for home. It took some time to recover from that trip.

Next week I start out on an evangelistic trip thru the province; will keep up that work most of the time until July, which will afford some interesting experience, I am sure. Please send this letter around northwest Nebraska, as I cannot find time to write personal letters to all.

Orilla F. Washburn.

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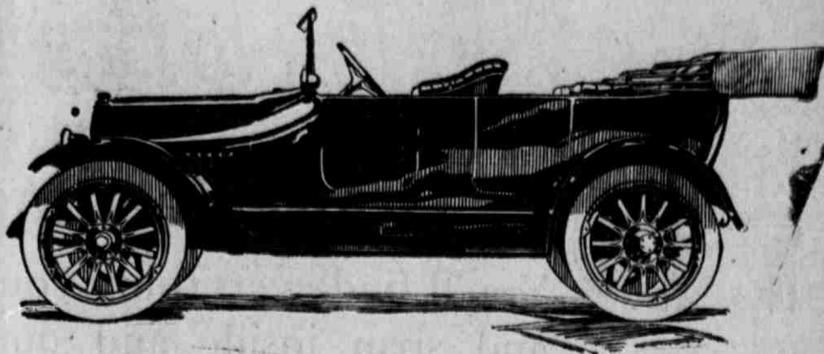
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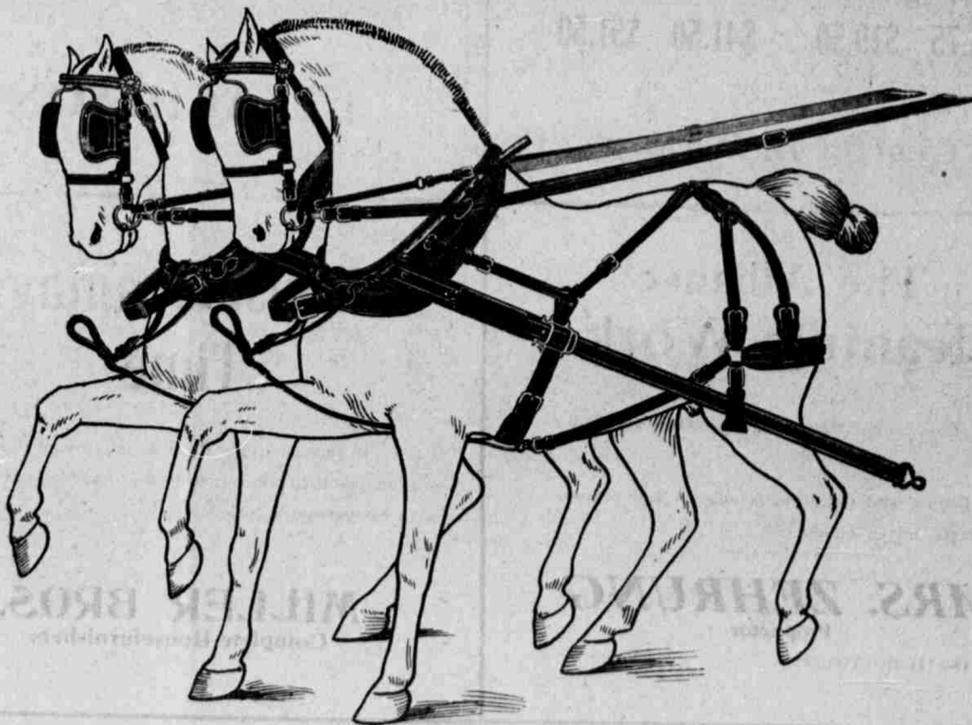
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