

NARCISSA OCTOBER 1836

by Crystal Calhoun



Oct. 18th.

The Montreal Express came this afternoon, and a general time of rejoicing it is to everyone. News from distant friends, both sad and pleasing.

Mr. Spalding has come with it and brought a letter from my husband, filled with pleasing information. The Lord has been with them since they left us, and has prospered them beyond all expectations. They have each selected a location. My husband remains there to build, while Mr. Spalding comes after us. Cheering thought this, to be able to make a beginning in our pleasing work so soon.

My Dear Sister Perkins: - Your letter was handed me on the 8th. inst., a little after noon, and I must say I was a little surprised to receive a return so soon. Surely, we are near each other. You will be likely to have known opportunities of sending to us, more frequently than I shall your way, which I hope you will not neglect because you have not received the answer to yours. I do not intend to be so long again in replying as I have this time. When I received yours, I was entirely alone. My husband had gone to brother Spalding's to assist him in putting up a house, and soon after, we had the privilege of preparing and entertaining Mr. and Mrs. McDonald and family of Colville. They came by the way of brother Spalding's, spent nearly a week with them and then came here. They left here last Thursday, and are still at Walla Walla. Had a very pleasant, agreeable visit with them. Find Mrs. McDonald quite an intelligent woman; speaks English very well, reads and is the principal instructor of their children. She is a correspondent, also, with myself and sister Spalding. She appears more thoughtful upon the subject of religion than any I have met with before, and has some consistent views. What her experimental knowledge is, I am unable to say. It would be a privilege to have her situated near us, so that we could have frequent intercourse; it would, no doubt be profitable.

You ask after my plan of proceedings with the Indians, etc. I wish I was able to give you satisfactory answers. I have no plan separate from my husband's, and besides you are mistaken about the language being at command, for nothing is more difficult than for me to attempt to convey religious truth in their language, especially when there are so few, or not terms expressive of the meaning. Husband succeeds much better than I, and we have good reason to feel that so far as understood, the truth affects the heart, and not little, too. We have done nothing for the females separately; indeed, our house is so small, and only one room to admit them, and that is the kitchen. It is the men only that frequent our house much. Doubtless you have been with the Indians long enough to discover this feature, that women are not allowed the same privileges as men. I scarcely see them except on the Sabbath in our assemblies. I have frequently desired to have more intercourse with them, and am waiting to have a room built for them and other purposes of instruction. Our principal effort is with the children now, and we find many very interesting ones. But more of this in future when I have more time.

Mr. Pambrun has sent a horse for me to ride to his place tomorrow. Mrs. Pambrun has been out of health for some time, and we have fears that she will not recover. As I have considerable

preparations to make for the visit, must defer writing more at present. In haste, I subscribe myself,

Your affectionate sister in Christ,

NARCISSA WHITMAN

P.S. - I long to hear from Mrs. Lee.

Dates unknown

WALLA WALLA, 11th.

My Dear Sister:

I am still here. The brigade arrived yesterday and having time and opportunity to send home for this letter, both are sent by return boats. We have just received three or four letters from our friends at home, they being the first news received since we bade them farewell. Find it good to know what is going on there, although all is not of a pleasing character. Our Sandwich Island friends give us pleasing intelligence of the glorious display of the power of God in converting that heathen people in such multitudes.

Ever yours,

N. WHITMAN.

Rev. Mrs. H.K.W. Perkins,

Wascopum,

La Dalls.

My Dear Sister Perkins:

I did not think when I received your good long letter that I should have delayed until this time before answering it. But so varied are the scenes that have passed before me, so much company and so many cares, etc., besides writing many letters home, that I beg you will excuse me. Notwithstanding all this, I have often, very often, thought of you and wished for the privilege of seeing you. I must confess I do not like quite so well to think of you where you now are as when you were nearer. Why did you go? Some of our sisters might just as well as not have spent a short season with you this fall (for they have nothing else to do, comparatively speaking) rather than to have you and your dear husband lose so much time from your interesting field of labor; and besides we fear the influence of the climate of the lower country upon your health. Our prayer is that the Lord will deal gently with you and bless and preserve you to be a rich and lasting good to the benighted ones for whom you have devoted your life.

How changed the scene now with us at Wioletpoo from what it has been in former days. Instead of husband and myself strolling about here like two solitary beings, we have the society of six of our brethren and sisters who eat at our table and expect to spend the winter with us. This is a privilege

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we highly praise, especially when we come to mingle our voices in prayer and praise together before the mercy seat, and hear the word of God preached in our own language from Sabbath to Sabbath, and to commune together around the table of our dear Son and Saviour Jesus Christ. Those favors, dear sister, almost make us forget we are on heathen ground. Since I last wrote to you we have enjoyed refreshing seasons from the hand of our Heavenly Father in the conviction and conversion of two or three individuals in our family. Doubtless Brother Lee has given you the particulars, yet I wish to speak of it for our encouragement who have been engaged in the concert of prayer on Tuesday evening for the year past. I verily believe we have not prayed in vain, for our revival seasons have been on that evening, and I seem to feel, too, that the whole atmosphere in all Oregon is effected by that meeting, for the wicked know far and near, that there are those here who pray. We have every reason to be assured that were there more faith and prayer and consecration to the work among ourselves, we should witness in the heathen around us many turning to the Lord. If I know my own heart I think I, too, desire to be freed from so many worldly cares and perplexities, and that my time may be spent in seeking the immediate conversion of these dear heathen to God. O, what a thought to think of meeting them among the blood-washed throng around the throne of God! Will not their songs be as sweet as any we can sing? What joy will then fill our souls to contemplate the privilege we now enjoy of spending and being spent for their good. If we were constantly to keep our eyes on the scenes that are before us, we should scarcely grow weary in well doing, or be disheartened by the few trials and privations through which we are called to pass.

Dear sister, I have written in great haste and hope you will excuse me. Wishing and expecting to hear from you soon, of your prosperity and happiness, with much love and sisterly affection to you and yours, believe me,

Ever yours in the best bonds,

NARCISSA WHITMAN