

\*\*\* Date: March 14, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Author: Mrs. Narcissa Whitman \*\*\*

\*\*\* Recipient: Mrs. Clarissa Prentiss

Honorable Stephen Prentiss \*\*\*

\*\*\* Source for this document: Transactions – 19th reunion, 1891, p. 97 \*\*\*

\*\*\* The original document starts below this line \*\*\*

Wioletpoo, Walla Walla River, Oregon Territory,

March 14, 1838.

*Very, Very Dear Parents:* – More than two years have passed since I left my father's home and not a single word has been wafted hence, or, perhaps I should say, has greeted my ears to afford consolation in a desponding hour. This *long*, long silence makes me feel the truth of our situation, that we are far, very far removed from the land of our birth and Christian privileges. I am weary of writing so much about ourselves without receiving a response, and yet I am anxious that father and mother should know all about us. Our opportunities of sending are so very favorable that I cannot well deny myself the privilege of writing, although it is exceedingly difficult for me to write much. We send this by our excellent friend and kind benefactor, Dr. John McLoughlin, chief factor of the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company. He starts in a few days for England, crosses the mountains with the express on the northern route to Canada, from thence he goes to New York. He had written us a few days since saying that he will try and make it convenient to call at the missionary rooms, Boston. We shall be very happy to have him do so.

Probably he will be unable to make any further calls as his business requires haste. We expect him to pay us a visit as he passes, although we are twenty-five miles out of the way. We wrote several letters last fall and sent them to the Sandwich Islands in the ship Neriede, but our last letters from Vancouver inform us that she only sailed the very last of February from Fort George (once called Astoria). She was detained longer than usual in consequence of the melancholy death of Captain Home. He with four seamen were drowned in crossing the river from the ship Neriede to Fort George by the oversetting of the long boat, which was at the time under a crowd of sail. They were expecting to sail for Oahu in a few days and only thought to take a ride of pleasure in the new boat before they started to try her proof in the time of danger, little thinking that death was near. Suddenly a squall of wind and snow came upon them and before they could lay their hands on the rigging to lower the sails she filled and sank to the bottom. The people on shore saw her coming before the storm, but as she disappeared thought she must have returned to the ship as they were not expecting her, and it was not until a day or two after that they discovered their loss. The boat is still to be seen at the bottom of the river with her rigging untouched and the mast-top standing out of the water, after an unsuccessful attempt of the ship to take her up. O, the dangers of that river! Scarcely a year passes without the loss of several lives. We have just been told that the company have lost upwards of three hundred men in the Columbia.

Our last letters leave us in a state of preparation to make a journey to Brother Spalding's. We left our home November 8th about noon, and it rained considerably until nearly sunset. The next day was clear and we made a long day of it, and got very tired. Felt obliged to make all possible speed because we had been detained at home longer

than was expected. It commenced raining that night and continued until near night the next day, and we only made a short move. The next morning the ground was covered with snow, but it was clear through the day and the snow nearly disappeared. But Saturday it commenced raining just as we got our horses up to start, after raining all night. We rode all day in the wind and rain and came to the Snake river about the middle of the afternoon and thought to stop, but it cleared away, and after making a fire and warming a little, we started again and came to the crossing place, and when the sun went down it found me sitting by the root of a large tree on stones with my babe in my arms, watching by moonlight the movements in crossing our baggage and horses. This was the only piece of wood in sight and with a few bunches of wild sage a fire was made against it to warm me while waiting to cross. Soon I was seated in a canoe with my babe and landed across safely. At a little distance from the shore we found lodges and were supplied by them with fire-wood and lodge poles. Just before reaching this place we received a line from Mr. Spalding wishing us to make all possible speed. This was Saturday night and for some time we were on the point of proceeding in the night as there was a good moon and we wished to reach there before the Sabbath. We had about twelve miles and perhaps more, but I felt too much fatigued to undertake it, for we had already a tedious day for us both, and concluded to remain and ride in the morning, leaving the baggage and men to come on Monday. We found Sister Spalding very comfortable and were not a little rejoiced to meet them after a separation of a year. On the morn of the 15<sup>th</sup> she became the mother of a fine, healthy daughter. We stayed with them three weeks and had the pleasure of seeing her up about the house before we left. Mr. Pambrun, of Walla Walla, and Mr. Ewing made them a visit while we were there. Mr. Ewing

remained with them a short time after we left. Had much cold and snow while we were there and in returning. We left on the 2d of December; took a log canoe and came down the waters of the Clearwater and Snake rivers to Walla Walla; thought this would be a more comfortable way than to go over the hills on horseback. It was Saturday when we started. We spent the Sabbath at the junction of Clearwater with the Snake river, where Mr. Parker was when he wrote his last letter to us when we were coming to this country, and where we were the Saturday night before we reached Mr. Spalding's. We had a tedious journey home; almost every night we were obliged to clear away the snow to find a place to camp upon, and sometimes we sailed until it was quite late to find wood, fearing we should be under the necessity of spending the night without. But in these things and in other dangers the Lord brought us safely through and we arrived at our habitation in peace, after spending a day at Walla Walla, on the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup>, Saturday, just one year to day from my first removal to this place.

Mother will see from the date of this letter and remember with interest the events of it, thirty years previous, as I do but one year ago to-day. Our little daughter is just a year old. Have felt to make an unreserved consecration of her to God to-day and to seek for wisdom and grace to train her up for His glory. She has enjoyed unremitting health, for which I desire to be thankful. Her journey to Brother Spalding's, notwithstanding the severity of the weather, did her no injury. She enjoyed it very much, particularly riding on horseback. She rode with her father all the way from Walla Walla (twenty-five miles) and we only stopped once to nurse and change her, which she did not relish quite so well as to be moving. It snowed quite fast nearly all day, particularly towards night, and our stopping place was by the first stream we crossed, about half way from Walla Walla;

built a fire, threw down a blanket and sat upon the ground to rest and warm a few minutes. It was some time after dark before we reached home and were not a little rejoiced to see it again.

Alice Clarissa enjoyed the visit equally as well as her parents. Sister Spalding was the only white woman she had ever seen besides her mother, and at times she appeared to realize no difference between them. She would play with her and kiss her with the same ardor of expression she would her mother, and when the little Eliza was born it appeared for a time as if she would devour her in her eager grasp with her hands and her mouth in her great joy to welcome her.

I am certain if she could see her grandmother and grandfather she would have many kisses to bestow on them as well as upon her aunts and uncles. She is beginning to talk considerably – says “Papa,” “Mamma,” “Sarah,” “Trim,” “pussy,” and when we are engaged in school she will take her book or a piece of paper and a little stick to point with and say her “A, B, C, I, J, K’s” very distinctly. When we sing she shows her interest in it by beating time with her hand with the other children and trying to sing. I have kept her entirely off the floor this winter until within a fortnight past, and now she begins to think of using her feet in trying to walk. We have had a school ever since we returned from Brother Spalding’s, and my kitchen has been filled with children morn and eve, which has made my floor very dirty, besides it is open and cold. She is as large and larger than some of the native children of two years old. Her strength, size and activity surprises the Indians very much. They think it is owing to theirs being laced in their te-cashes (as they call the board they use for them), motionless night and day, that makes their children so weak and small compared with her. It is doubtless owing to this with many other causes.

Soon after I commenced this letter husband, self and baby walked about a mile to see a pair of twins born in the night of the 12th. They were both boys and appeared very well. We found the mother with them in a small lodge made of a single mat, about half as high as a man, and scarcely room enough for three persons to sit in it comfortably, and without a fire. She had a plenty of dried grass for her bed with a few old skins. Both of her babies were laced to a board, as small as they were. Their comforts at such a time would be death to us. They usually go from the main lodge and build a temporary hut for their lying-in hospitals. Many infants die because their mothers have not milk for them, and they know not how to prepare food to feed them or have no means to do it. They usually nurse them until they are three or more years old. In January a child died about a year and a half old, and a few moments after its mother had another one born, and we afterwards found the death of the other child to be caused by starvation. Its mother had no milk for it and it was too young to eat their roots. Sister Spalding was obliged to feed her babe considerably. Little Alice Clarissa has been very much favored; she has had enough to spare most of the time.

On the last Sabbath before we left Brother Spalding's we had the unspeakable satisfaction of giving away our dear babes to God in baptism and having the seal of that blessed covenant placed upon their foreheads. Surely, dear mother, if this is a comfort to mothers in a Christian land, it is doubly so in the midst of heathen. We also had the privilege of commemorating the dying love of the Saviour, a blessing which we have not enjoyed since we sat at the table with our beloved friends in Angelica on the eve of our marriage. O, ye privileged ones who can sit together in heavenly places and mount upon wings as eagles, little do you realize the feelings of the solitary missionary in the land of

darkness, as Egyptian darkness itself. Truly God is with us; were it not for this we could not live. We could not endure the responsibilities resting upon us. We cannot tell you how much we want *help to pray* for ourselves and for these perishing souls.

28th. – *My Dear Parents:* – I have but a moment to write left me. We have been expecting Doctor McLoughlin to pay us a visit but yesterday he sent us word that he was behind his time and should not be able to, but wished to have the pleasure of seeing us at Walla Walla. To-day we got ready and started, but it commenced raining so hard we were obliged to return – that is Alice and her mother. Husband will go notwithstanding the rain and is waiting for this; therefore I am in haste. I expect to write soon by another opportunity by the way of Rendezvous. We are all well. We want very much to hear from our dear parents and hope soon to have the privilege. Please accept our love and give a portion to any who are interested in our welfare and the cause they and we love. Farewell.

As ever your affectionate daughter,

Narcissa Whitman.

\*\*\* End of the original document from March 14, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Date: April 11, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Author: Mrs. Narcissa Whitman \*\*\*

\*\*\* Recipient: Mrs. Clarissa Prentiss

Honorable Stephen Prentiss \*\*\*

\*\*\* Source for this document: Transactions – 19th reunion, 1891, p. 101 \*\*\*

\*\*\* The original document starts below this line \*\*\*

Wioletpoo, Walla Walla River, Oregon Territory,

April 11, 1838.

*My Dear Parents:* – My last letter, of March 14<sup>th</sup>, I was obliged to close and send off before I had finished it. I sent it by Doctor John McLoughlin, Esq., Chief Factor, etc., etc., of the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company, who has been a resident of this country for fifteen years. I wish it were possible for some of our friends to see him. I did not see him as I passed, as I expected to. Husband did, and he asked of him letters of introduction to my friends. He takes the northern route across the mountains to Montreal, from there to New York and Boston, then across the Atlantic to England. Wm. McKay is expected to go to the States to complete a medical education, and we have given him letters of introduction and recommendation to the medical college of Fairfield, Herkimer county, N. Y. He is the son of Mr. Thomas McKay, clerk of the same company, the gentleman who rendered us so many kind attentions in our journey to this country. A daughter of his has been living with us this winter, and probably will for some time. She is a very good girl, for one who has had so few advantages, and renders me much

assistance in my domestic labors. The little girl of whom I wrote last fall is with me yet – Sarah Hall. She has been a great comfort to me so far, as well as the other one, but I am daily looking for trouble, and know not as we shall be able to keep her. Her father is a very wicked, troublesome man. How long he will be contented to have her stay, I know not. We do not wish to take children into our family as boarders, and dress them, for we do not think it the best way. We have many applications, but refuse all except one or two who are willing to labor. The Indians are not easily satisfied. They are so impressed with the idea that all who work are slaves and inferior persons, that the moment they hear of their children doing the least thing they are panic-stricken and make trouble. We have had a school for them for about four months past, and much of the time our kitchen has been crowded, and all seem very much attached. We shall soon commence teaching them to read their own language, for I have just finished copying a book of seventy-two pages, which Mr. Spalding intends to send to the Sandwich Islands, to get it printed, by the next ship that leaves Vancouver. We appear to have every encouragement missionaries could possibly expect, for the short time we have been here. We see a very great improvement in them, even in the short space of one year. That old chief, Umtippe, who threatened my husband's life last spring, is especially changed, particularly in his deportment to us, and about the house. And, besides, we are becoming familiar with their language, so that husband is able to give them a greater amount of truth with the satisfaction that they understand what is said to them; and we have every evidence to believe that they feel the force of divine truth upon their minds. For several Sabbaths past, our worship with them has been very interesting. All seem to manifest a deep interest in the instruction given them. Some feel almost to blame us for telling them

about eternal realities. One said it was good when they knew nothing but to hunt, eat, drink and sleep; now it was bad. We long to have them know of a Saviour's pardoning love. The most interesting exercise is the Sabbath School in which we assemble – the youth and children – at five o'clock P.M. The aged ones appear to be as much interested as the children. We have been teaching them the Ten Commandments, with which they are very much pleased. There are many very interesting children, both among the Nez Perces and Cayuses. We have generally given names to those that have attended school. One boy about ten years old we have given the name of Edward – a bright, active boy, and loves his book. He has a brother, a young man whom we call David, who is very promising; he has been to school steadily all winter, and is remarkably sedate and sober – very different from all other young men of the tribe. He, with his father, is making a large quantity of land ready for planting. He is the Indian Teloukike, that gave our baby the name of Cayuse tenni, spoken of in a former letter. His little daughter we call Jane. She attends school, also – all very good looking children, and quite handsome. Pa and Ma will see that I have my Jane, my Mary, and my Harriet too.

My Clarissa is my own little companion from day to day, and dear daughter. My Harriet is Mr. Pambrun's little daughter, the gentleman who has done us so many favors. She was born last August. She, like all the other children of this country, was doomed to be laced to a board for the first three months of her life, but, on being released for a short season, she learned the blessed privilege of liberty, and they could not tie her up again. I am expecting her, with her mother, to make me a visit this week. I hope Harriet will remember her namesake, for I am at a loss many times to repay them for their kindnesses, for they will set no prices for anything they do. They have recently sent me a rocking-

chair, and a little chair for Alice Clarissa. We are astonished, and can weep with gratitude to God for the innumerable kind favors we continually receive from the inhabitants of this country. In January we had a present of twelve fine pickled buffalo tongues, sent from Colville by Mrs. McDonald, 250 miles up the Columbia river, and the first of March we ate some apples sent us by Dr. McLoughlin. His daughter, Marian, was married this spring to Mr. Rae, a gentleman of the Company. She is the young lady that recited her lessons to me while I was at Vancouver.

We have recently had a settler near us – Mr. Compo, the man who came from the mountains with Mr. Parker. There is so much good land near us on these streams, it is probable we shall not be long without many neighbors, and, besides, the Indians are making farms all about us, which to us is a very favorable omen. We are anxious to give them the means of procuring their provisions in a more easy way, and in abundance, so that there may be less starving ones during the winter. Many come from a great distance to obtain seed for planting, and many of those who have passed us, back and forth, this winter, and to whom we have given a little corn to eat.

Flannel dresses for Alice Clarissa, shoes, etc. – in short, whatever of ready-made clothing for ourselves and babe you send us, will save so much of my time for teaching and writing, the latter of which I have a great deal to do, and, besides, my eyes suffer very much from weakness – more than formerly. Notwithstanding the winters here are mild, we find flannels very comfortable from the month of November to April. In the summer the heat is sometimes very great, and most of the time we require to wear very thin clothing. I mentioned in my letters last fall the articles of clothing most needed; probably you will not be able to send until you see this. In addition to what I then wrote,

I would request that strong iron-bound casks or barrels be used for packing, instead of boxes.

The books, etc., sent by the Board last summer, were injured very considerably by the salt water. The only piece of flannel sent was nearly destroyed. They should not exceed 100 pounds weight, for the convenience of the portages, and besides we shall find a few barrels very convenient in housekeeping. Clothing well packed, even with crockery in the center, would come safe. Besides the portages, we are obliged to convey our supplies on horses to our stations, and to be able to do this without unpacking will save much time, expense and trouble. I thank Sister Jane very much for those numbers of the *Mothers' Magazine*. I should have done so before. Nothing can be more acceptable than regular numbers of such valuable publications. I am much pleased with W. A. Alcott's publications, what few numbers I have seen, and think them very useful, especially for mothers. If mothers need help in training up their children in Christian lands, surely we do here, in the midst of heathen, without one savory example before our eyes.

Were it not for the indelible impressions made upon my own heart, the influence of dear mother's precepts, prayer and example, which still retain their force, I should often be lost in my treatment of our dear daughter. I never can be sufficiently thankful for my education, and may it continually stimulate me to unwearied diligence for the good of others.

May 10<sup>th</sup>. – Under date April 11<sup>th</sup>, I spoke of old Umtippe's appearance. He seems to be declining fast. Last Saturday he came here, he said on purpose to spend the Sabbath. Said he had had recently three fainting turns, and felt he should not live a great

while. He had been very wicked, and did not know where his soul would go when he died – was lost about it. Sabbath noon, after the morning worship (Mr. Lee was here and preached, and husband interpreted), he said “The truth never appeared so clear to him before. Always, when he had attended worship, his mind had been on those about him, but now it had been on what was said to him. Before he came to meeting would not eat but very little, so that his mind might be clear to hear good.” Never can a person manifest a greater change. That selfish, wicked, cunning and troublesome old chief, now so still and quiet, so attentive to the truth, and grateful for favors now given! Surely, naught but the spirit of God has done this. We are not yet satisfied how much he understands of the atonement, or whether he has any correct views of salvation through Jesus Christ. But this we do know, that God is able by his spirit to take what little truth we are able to give, and impress it upon the hearts and consciences of the most benighted minds.

Mr. Lee has spent much time with us, and we have been greatly refreshed with his prayers and conversations. I wish he could call, on his way to New York, and pay you a visit, but it will be very doubtful.

I have made two small kegs of butter, one for Mr. Lee, and one for Mr. McKay, to take to the mountains.

Our prospects are very flattering in every respect. The Indians have planted a good deal of land this spring, and nothing keeps them from settling about us but the want of the means of cultivation. If you wish to know more upon this subject, you can by obtaining husband’s letters to Brother A. Whitman and Squire Gray, of Wheeler.

The time is at hand when I must bid you adieu once more for a season, but before writing again I hope I shall have received letters from some or all of you. May heaven's richest blessing rest upon you, my beloved parents, and the smiles of that adorable countenance be your joy continually. So prays your affectionate daughter,

Narcissa Whitman.

P. S. – I have one more request to make. That is, that the name of Alice Clarissa Whitman, born at Wioletpoo, O. Territory, March 14, 1837, be placed in father's family Bible. Also, that a copy of the family record be sent us when convenient.

N. W.

\*\*\* End of the original document from April 11, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Date: July 4, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Author: Mrs. Narcissa Whitman \*\*\*

\*\*\* Recipient: Mrs. Elvira Perkins \*\*\*

\*\*\* Source for this document: Transactions – 21st reunion, 1893, p. 110 \*\*\*

\*\*\* The original document starts below this line \*\*\*

Wieletpoo, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1838.

*My Dear Sister Perkins:* – Your letter was handed me on the 8<sup>th</sup> 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 principle 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 no 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 a 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 with the 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.

Walla Walla, 11<sup>th</sup>.

*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 the 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.

\*\*\* End of the original document from July 4, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Date: September 18, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Author: Mrs. Narcissa Whitman \*\*\*

\*\*\* Recipient: Ms. Jane Prentiss \*\*\*

\*\*\* Source for this document: Transactions – 19th reunion, 1891, p. 106 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Comments: There is one point in this letter that refers to a “Brother Roberts.” This may have been a reference to Cornelius Rogers. \*\*\*

\*\*\* The original document starts below this line \*\*\*

Wioletpoo, Walla Walla River, Oregon Territory,

September 18, 1838.

*My Dear Jane:* – You know not with what feelings of inexpressible joy I received your letter dated January and August, 1837, and sent from Leroy. It came to hand, together with one from Brother Judson, the 11th of July, and had I received it four days sooner I might have sent you the answer, which by this time you would have received, and learned what our circumstances are, down to that period. I wrote Sister Whitman at that time, by the express sent to Mr. Lee, occasioned by the death of his beloved wife and our dear sister, whose loss we all deeply deplore, although I never have seen her, but was an interested correspondent. It is nearly two years and five months since I left, and have not heard a lisp from you, except one from Brother Judson, while at Liberty.

It would, indeed, have been a consolation, very great, to have received your letter sent to St. Louis, containing the accounts of which you speak, in relation to Angelica, for it was what I expected and wished to hear about you. And can it be the Mr. Dryer has at

last heard and believed what Christ has been saying for so *long a time* to him? Well may he tremble and adore that grace and salvation that has snatched him from the jaws of the bottomless pit. I should, indeed, like to hear him pray, and to rejoice once more with that beloved sister that has so long wept and prayed over him; but to find him in heaven will be joy complete, unutterable. Of the thirty added to the church with him, I should like to know if Robert Waight was of the number. We have received no letters from Brother or Sister Hull or Bridgeman, and from all the letters received at that time, no one has informed us where Brother Rudd is. Your letter by Brother Gray is also received. He and his wife reached here the 14<sup>th</sup> of August. They left their company about 100 miles the other side of Snake Fort, and came on, with but one man to accompany them.

Letters received from Mr. Greene in July caused our hearts to sink, and we gave up all hopes of a reinforcement very soon joining us. But the Lord was better to us than our fear, and we feel to admire and adore his great kindness and love to us and these interesting heathen, that he has disposed the hearts of his dear people to send us helpers in this glorious work so soon. Yes, and all excellent ones, too. Mr. Walker and Mr. Eells are destined to form another station. Mr. Gray and Mr. Roberts go to assist Brother Spalding, and Mr. Smith remains with us. Mrs. Smith looks enough like sister Clarissa to be her, almost, except she is not quite as tall.

Yes, Jane, you cannot know how much of a comfort our little daughter, Alice Clarissa, is to her father and mother. O, how many melancholy hours she has saved me, while living here alone so long, especially when her father is gone for many days together. I wish most sincerely that her aunts could see her, for surely they would love her as well as her parents. She is now eighteen months old, very large, and remarkably

healthy. She is a great talker. Causes her mother many steps and much anxiety. She is just beginning to sing with us in our family worship. The moment singing commences, if she is not in her mother's arms, she comes to me immediately and wishes me to take her, especially if it is a Nez Perces hymn that we are singing. We have but three or four of them, and sing them every day, and Alice has become so familiar with them that she is repeating some part of them most of the time. Situated as I am, I know not how I shall succeed in training her as I ought. So many Indians and children are constantly in and about our house, and recently I discover her much inclined to imitate and talk with them, or they with her. It makes them very much pleased to think she is going to speak their language so readily. They appear to love her much. The old chief Cut Lip says "he does not expect to live long, and he has given all his land to her."

I regret you could not have seen Mr. Gray, on your own account as well as ours, and, besides, I should like to have seen those papers you wished to send. Recollect, I have seen no papers of any kind since I left the States, except a few numbers of the *New York Observer* for the year 1836. If any of you wish to do us an incalculable favor, please send our address to the editors and request them to send us the numbers regularly, by way of the Sandwich Islands, and pay for them. I requested, before I left home, that I might have the *New York Evangelist* sent me. I have not seen but one number since. This will be the cheapest way for us to know what is going on in our beloved native land – for to remain as ignorant as we now are is a great shame. I will leave you to select what papers are most interesting for us. I can think of no better way to learn the news of home, in the present manner of letter-writing – each of you careful to send us only one sheet at a time. I cannot say who are the most hungry – you, who are saturated daily with every

kind of intelligence, or us here, who can hear but little else than what passes in our little work, west of the Rocky Mountains, up and down the Columbia river.

So far as I can learn, you seem not to complain of the postage upon my letters, when I send sheets upon sheets even – for, really, I cannot find one large enough to contain all I wish to have you know about us. Now, what would be most cheering to us is to have you as liberal for our good, as for yourselves, and pay the postage on as many sheets to us as we sent you. You ought, in reality, to write much more, for you have more to write about, and far more time than a solitary missionary, overwhelmed with cares and labor, and ready to sink under them.

But whither am I running? My sheet is full before I am aware, and I have not begun to tell you my story. You speak of these children singing sweetly, and of my hearing the voice of prayer more sweet; yes, dear Jane, it is true. The Lord has heard prayer for some immortal souls around us. One dear boy, who has been living with us little more than a year, gives pleasing evidence of a change of heart, and the lispings of his desires to God in prayer are like the first prattlings of an infant child – for all that he has learned of the English is since he has been here. His name is Mongo Mevway, his mother a native and father a Sandwich Islander. He has recently heard that his father is dead, which makes him feel very bad, and he cries; then he goes to Jesus and prays, and feels comforted. I should think he was about eleven years old. You see, Jane, Alice has come and laid her dirty hands on this letter, and given it a fine mark. I send it as it is, so that you may have some of her doings to look at, and realize, perhaps, there is such a child in existence.

For the remainder, see Sister Mary Ann's letter.

I hope you will all be particular in acknowledging our letters – when and where written – so that we may know what letters are received. Do, all of you, write often, and send to Boston, for opportunities frequently occur of sending to the Sandwich Islands, and we can always get them from there once or twice a year. I thank you for your proposed visit to come and take my children home. I wish very much to see you; hope you will be persuaded to come and spend your life here in the same work in which we are engaged, and not only you, but many others I know of. I hope to receive letters from each of them, especially Mr. and Mrs. Hull, Mr. and Mrs. Brigman, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick, etc., etc. How refreshing letters would be from them, as well as from all of my brothers and sisters. I cannot see, for my life, why you do not write. I am sorry my journal cost you so much. I would not have cut the sheets had I supposed it would have made any difference. I regret you should have it printed, or any of it, for it never was designed for the public eye. You mistake Alice's Indian name. Not Cayuse Jo, but Kayuse Ten-ni – accent on the last syllable.

Ever your affectionate sister,

Narcissa Whitman.

\*\*\* End of the original document from September 18, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Date: September 25, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Author: Mrs. Narcissa Whitman \*\*\*

\*\*\* Recipient: Mrs. Mary Ann Judson \*\*\*

\*\*\* Source for this document: Transactions – 19th reunion, 1891, p. 109 \*\*\*

\*\*\* The original document starts below this line \*\*\*

Wioletpoo, Walla Walla River, Oregon Territory,

September 25, 1838.

*My Dear Mary Ann:* – It gives me great satisfaction to have this opportunity of answering letters from beloved friends at home – a privilege I have not before enjoyed since I have been here. I am sorry you or sister Jane should hesitate so about writing me; true, it takes some time for your letters to reach me, but they are, nevertheless, interesting, and you must recollect that three years must elapse from the time of your writing, to receiving the answer, if sent by way of the Islands. You cannot be more anxious to hear from me than I am to hear from you. Dear father has written quite a long letter, and you know not how precious it is to us, and I fondly hoped dear mother would have said something, too; but she allowed her place to be filled by another hand.

When the contemplated railroad over the Isthmus of Darien shall have been opened, which is expected to take place within two or three years, I hope communications will be more frequent than they are at the present time. What you have written about the individual members of our family is much more particular than in any letters I have received, and therefore very acceptable. You cannot be too particular, for I am as

interested to know about your prosperity or adversity now as while with you, both spiritually and temporally, and hope you will never hesitate again. I regret to hear of Clarissa's ill health, and of the loss of her babe. Hope she and Brother Kinny will write us soon, for I should like to know something more about them.

You speak of coming very near crossing the Rocky Mountains this spring. My dear sister, I wish most sincerely that yourself and husband were here, and Jane, too, and her husband; for there is work enough for all to do. Seeing you came so near coming, I think it not best to give up looking for you until you do come, which I hope will be soon.

Our hearts are truly refreshed by the present reinforcement. They are truly worthy people. The ladies are all with us except Mrs. Gray, and will probably stay the winter. Mrs. Smith is sister to Mrs. Tracy, of Singapore. She and her husband are stationed with us for the present. I hope you will have the satisfaction of seeing Rev. Mr. Lee, who is now in the States. It will do you good to learn about us from him. Dear afflicted brother, he was not permitted to witness the sufferings his beloved wife was called to endure just before her death. She called Dr. White Thursday morning, June 21st, and lingered along until Saturday evening, at nine, her pains nearly all subsiding, which obliged him to introduce the forceps, and at half-past ten she was delivered of a living child – a son – much to the joy of all the anxious sisters present. She appeared quite well during the Sabbath, and no one doubted her recovery except the doctor, who had not been without his fears. Monday evening the babe died, and on Tuesday morning she awoke very happy and exclaimed, “I am going to my rest.” And, just as the sun was rising, she sweetly breathed out her soul, into the hands of her Saviour. We all mourn her loss greatly, and feel as if the Lord had come very near to us. And again have they afflicted

them, quite recently. Mrs. White, in paying a visit with Mr. Leslie to Mrs. Perkins, at the Dalles, who is expecting to be confined soon, in her return in an Indian canoe, with Indian pilots, got upset. She was taken up by the Indians, and hung to the canoe, which was bottom upwards. Mr. Leslie was taken up in the same way, but her little son, about eight months old, could not be rescued until life had become extinct. They floated for more than a mile, with their bodies in the water, before they were taken to land. Thus, you see, dangers stand thick on every side. Mrs. Lee was contemplating a visit to us, with Dr. and Mrs. White, this fall.

Now to come home. I have been to Walla Walla twice this summer, in company with my husband, to visit Mrs. Pambrun, who has been sick for a long time, and most of the time dangerously so. In the spring, when Mr. Spalding met Mr. Lee here, before he left he quite persuaded my husband to believe that he needed a house more than we did, and prevailed on him to go over and assist in building, notwithstanding he had more work on hand than he could possibly attend to, besides his own building. He left here the first of June, and was gone two weeks. I am a little before my story. Quite early in the spring, Charles Compo, Mr. Parker's interpreter, came here and put himself under our protection, and went to cultivating land here, and assisting my husband in his cares. He is an excellent man, and we feel as if the Lord had sent him here. Husband left him in charge when he went to Mr S.'s, having got all the crops in. Imagine, if you can, the care and constant watch necessary to preserve a farm exposed to every depredation, without a fence, and not only our own stock, but the Indians', too, far and near.

His stay there was not as long as expected, in consequence of Mr. McDonald and family, from Colville, visiting them and us. Stayed a week at each station. Found them

very interesting people. They went to Walla Walla from this place, and stayed until the Brigade arrived from Vancouver, which brought our letters from you – the first we had received. I was there at the time of their arrival. Letters from the Board at this time gave us the first intelligence of its embarrassments, and little or no encouragement of Mr. Gray's return with more associates.

Soon after our return, Sarah Hull, my little Indian girl, that had been living with me for little more than a year, was taken sick with a lingering sickness, and died August 11th, much regretted by us all. For a week before she died, she was helpless and speechless. On Tuesday, the 7<sup>th</sup>, husband was sent for by an express from The Dalles, to visit Mrs. Perkins, who was in a critical situation, and did not return until Monday evening. She died on Saturday evening, and was buried on the Sabbath. If ever I felt the presence of my husband necessary to sustain me, it was while passing through such a scene. But the Lord sustained and comforted me, especially during the exercises of the Sabbath. Mrs. Pambrun came up to assist about the burial. Had a general attendance. Sung, prayed and tried to talk a little to them, and but a little, for I cannot do much more than stammer yet in their language. Dear Sarah, how we all loved her, especially little Alice. She used to play with her so prettily, and divert her for hours together, and watch her so carefully when out of my sight. I never expect her loss to be made up to me in this respect, for it is rare to find one so good as she was; and besides, she understood English so well that she seldom used any other language to my babe. She was one of the number who had begun to read at our family worship. We did not get that evidence of a change of heart in her case that would have been desirable. She appeared lamentably indifferent to the subject of religion, just before her sickness, and during the former part of it; but

toward the last she seemed be more sensible, and said she thought of Jesus, and prayed to him, but was afraid to die. These were the last words we understood her to say. Her disease centered in her head, and after this she appeared not to have her reason all the time. But she is gone, and a just God has done it, and although we cannot see the reason why she should be thus taken away, when light had just begun to dawn upon her soul, yet this we know and believe, that the Hand that dealt the blow does all things well, and blessed be His holy name. Two or three of the same family died while at Mr. Lee's school at the Willamette. She was named for Mrs. Hull by her request.

Dear sister, my sheet is full, and story only half told; but I must say a little to your dear husband, for I do not know that my husband will be able to write a single letter this fall. Please give my love to your father and mother Judson. Tell her I often think of her, and should like to receive a letter from her.

Little A. C. is quite sick – has a high fever, and her mother is full of anxiety about her – so much so that she cannot sleep, for her dear father is more than 300 miles from home – now at Vancouver, and will not be home in much less than four weeks.

Ah, dear sister, you know not what it is to be a mother in heathen lands, so full of anxiety and constant care, and no kind sister to lend a helping hand. But still it is a privilege, too. I should not know how to spare her, but the Lord knows what is for the best, and I desire always to say, “Pray for me and mine, my dear sisters and brothers.”

As ever, and for ever,

Your affectionate sister,

Narcissa Whitman.

Mrs. Mather has written me a very kind letter. I hope some of the sisters will write her. Brother J. G. has written me, and I intend to write him a long letter. Farewell, dear sister.

\*\*\* End of the original document from September 25, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Date: September 28, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Author: Mrs. Narcissa Whitman \*\*\*

\*\*\* Recipient: Honorable Stephen Prentiss \*\*\*

\*\*\* Source for this document: Transactions – 19th reunion, 1891, p. 113 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Comment: The transcriber for the “Transactions” used the phrase “etter” at one point. It could have been “letter” in the original or it may have been a typo in the original. In addition, the transcriber or printer for this document did not put the first few words of this letter in italics. \*\*\*

\*\*\* The original document starts below this line \*\*\*

Wioletpoo, Walla Walla River,

Oregon Territory, Sept. 28, 1838.

My Dear Father: – The reception and perusal of your kind etter made us exceedingly happy, as, also, to hear that our dear parents are still alive and in the enjoyment of health and other favours of a kind Providence.

Nothing we hear from our beloved native land is so cheering to us as the news of revivals, repeated and extended revivals of religion. I confidently expected Angelica would be blessed of the Lord when I left. “He that watereth shall be watered,” so saith the Lord, and if the sending forth of one was the means of such a blessed work, what would be the result if many of her sons and daughters were to go and preach to the heathen? Surely no one would refuse, from this consideration only, the happiness enjoyed in being thus engaged, were there no other inducement, so it seems to me. But

this is a difficult truth to believe when one is surrounded with all the comforts and splendour this earth affords. Home has no attraction for me, compared with the satisfaction and enjoyment every day affords in living here and extending a silent and gentle influence upon these benighted minds, aside from the more public labours of teaching, etc. O, that I could persuade my brothers and sisters thus to consecrate themselves to this heavenly work.

As we are situated we must till the land in order to live by the fruits thereof. We are very much in want of a farmer for ourselves and to teach the Indians to cultivate. This we have asked of the Board. If dear father and mother were here they would find plenty to do and as much pleasure in doing it as they now think they would have. I sometimes almost persuade myself to think that I shall some day enjoy the privilege of seeing them here.

The Lord only knows what he has for us to pass through in this world. Frequently I feel as if our stay would not be long here. The Lord has come near our Methodist friends with death. Mrs. Lee, the wife of Mr. Lee, now in the states, died in June under painful circumstances. About two days before she died, she became the mother of a living son. After a protracted labor the child was taken from her with forceps and lived but two days. Dr. White, physician. She was deeply lamented by all who knew her, and what rendered the case more trying, her husband was absent. An express was sent immediately to the states across the mountains, to inform him of his great loss. I do hope father will see him. He can give much information about us, for he was here three weeks before he left us in passing.

Recently Mrs. White lost her babe by drowning, in returning in an Indian canoe from Mr. Perkins'.

All of our number have been mercifully preserved so far, and so have the reinforcement we have been permitted to receive this fall, all arriving here in safety and in health, quite unexpectedly, but much to our joy.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith are stationed with us. Messrs. Walker and Eells go to Colville to form a station somewhere in the Flat Head language. Mr. Gray and wife and Mr. Rogers are with Mr. Spalding. Mrs. Walker finds a home with us this winter. We have had our house full of company most all summer, and shall probably always have considerable in the future.

We have had some precious meetings with the natives the season past, and of some we are almost encouraged to hope they are Christian. We sent for Mr. S. and held meetings every day with them for a week. Hope some good was done. I have written the particulars to Brother Judson and the two sisters, which probably all will have an opportunity of seeing.

My dear husband is not at home now. He has gone to Vancouver, 300 miles from here, on business for our mission. He has already been gone nearly two weeks and will not return for two weeks more. I am feeling very anxious for his return on account of our dear babe; she has been sick ever since he left and continues to be more so – we have neither of us had a quiet night's rest for some time. I feel exceedingly anxious for her, perhaps more so than the case demands. She has always enjoyed such perfect health, probably I feel it more on that account. Her body is covered with a rash much resembling the one I had just before she was born; has considerable fever and coughs a good deal.

She is so large and heavy I find it just as much as I am able to do to take care of her, and need her father's help very much. She is so accustomed to see no other ones but her parents for so long a time that she is never contented out of my sight for a moment. Dear child, I fear I love her too well, she has always been such a comfort to us. The Lord only knows what trials he has for me to pass through and my only desire is to be submissive to his will. For this reason I shall not be able to write as much as I wished, and husband's absence will prevent his writing, also.

I am sorry dear mother did not write me. I wish very much to hear her say something to me again; it will be so precious, seeing I may never see her again. I hope no one will hesitate to tell me particulars about every member of the family, spiritually and temporally, adverse and prosperous, for I am still one of your number and desire to feel and sympathize with you in everything. How I should rejoice if dear brother's affliction should finally be the means of his becoming a missionary, as he knows he ought to be. Then would he not say "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word"?

O, how I am disappointed in not hearing that Edward, by this time, is prosecuting his studies for the ministry and missionary work. I shall never feel as if all was right at home until more of the dear ones are thus wholly given up to the work of the Lord. I cannot bear the idea that either of them are living for themselves in such a day as this. The Lord will not prosper them; they are the children of too many prayers and consecration to the work thus to live and be contented with this world's portion and applause.

How was I struck to hear of the death of Giles Cornish and rejoice to think that I was permitted to deal thus faithfully with his soul while with them. I long to hear more particulars about them.

Why do not Harriet and Edward write me? Could they not tell me, if they were to see me, many things about father and mother, themselves and friends, that would do me good to hear? Why not take their paper and sit down and write them to me? It would be just as acceptable. Now, if they wish me to write to them they must all write to me, for you have far more time to write than I have. You ought, all of you, to feel it your duty and privilege thus to comfort your solitary missionary sister and brother, and begin to say something to little Alice, for if she lives she will soon understand about her uncles, aunts and grand parents.

Farewell,

Narcissa.

Please remember me to all dear friends in Angelica. I shall try to write Sister Dryer, if I have time. While the sisters were all here we formed a Maternal Association and I am its corresponding secretary, and of course have more letters to write than usual.

It is a great satisfaction to know that we have an interest in your prayers. We hope you all will be encouraged to pray yet more and more for us, for we feel that the present is the harvest season for these perishing Indians. The Lord spares the old chief his life yet, for wise reasons we hope. He has been serious all summer and we are in hopes he will yet become a Christian.

With much love to father and mother, brothers and sisters, I am, dear parents, ever  
your affectionate daughter,

Narcissa Whitman.

Hon. Stephen Prentiss,

Angelica, Allegany Co., N. Y.

Does Sister Clarissa and her dear husband ever think of us here? Why do they not  
write often and send to Boston? It is just as easy for me to get your letters as for you to  
get mine, if you will only write. We receive letters twice a year at least and have the  
opportunity to just as often as you do from us. If you should all write, and write many  
letters, too, you would not begin to satisfy the inquiries I wish to make about you.

\*\*\* End of the original document from September 28, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Date: October 3, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Author: Mrs. Narcissa Whitman \*\*\*

\*\*\* Recipient: Mrs. Jerusha Parker \*\*\*

\*\*\* Source for this document: Transactions – 19th reunion, 1891, p. 116 \*\*\*

\*\*\* The original document starts below this line \*\*\*

Wioletpoo, Walla Walla River, Oregon Territory,

October 3, 1838.

*My Dear Mrs. Parker:* – Your truly welcome letter I received, at the hand of Mr. Gray, and sincerely thank you for it. The letters we have received from our beloved native land, although but few, as yet, have been exceedingly refreshing to us, especially when bearing such welcome news as repeated and extended revivals of religion. Oh! may we continue to be thus cheered, until the whole land is deluged with them, and not an impenitent sinner be left to go to the dark regions of despair from under the full blaze of gospel light and privileges, such as are enjoyed in the land of our birth. For truly these poor Indians will say of those who refuse, “Could we have known of the doom that awaits the incorrigible, and have been shown a crucified Saviour with outstretched arms and a bleeding heart, waiting to receive us, we never should have come to this place of torment.” The tearful eye, the solemn countenance, and the anxious heart bursting forth with the inquiry, “What must I do to be saved?” are scenes which my eyes loved to behold while in the home of my childhood. But, dear sister, to be permitted to witness the same scenes here, in this land of spiritual darkness and heathenism, causes feelings

indescribable, and emotions too big for utterance. This we have seen, although in but few instances yet. Our desire and earnest prayer to God is, that the cases may multiply in extent, until multitudes, both natives and the more privileged inhabitants of this country, shall become interested in the salvation which Jesus, the blessed Saviour, died to purchase.

Mr. Parker doubtless remembers his interpreter, Charles Compo. The good seed which he was permitted to sow in his heart has not been lost. He came here early last spring, took a piece of land near us to cultivate, and remained here for the summer, and assisted my husband essentially in his labors on the farm, etc. We have employed him to take charge of the farm, etc., and find him very faithful and trusty. His superior knowledge of the language makes him truly a helper in our work. He has been a regular attendant upon our family social and Sabbath worship, and given much attention to the study of the Holy Scriptures since living here. Some time in June, we observed him to be unusually solemn, and upon inquiry, found him in deep anxiety for the salvation of his soul. Most joyfully did we point him to the suffering risen Saviour as the only way of escape from impending ruin, and as joyfully did he embrace him as his all-sufficient Saviour, and now can say, "The pleasures of this world have no charms for me."

Husband sent for Mr. Spalding to come and hold a protracted meeting with the Indians at our station. At the close of it, we formed ourselves into a little church. We had two laborers sent from the Sandwich Islands – Joseph Mahi and wife, both members of Mr. Bingham's native church. These, with ourselves and Compo, made our number seven. He requested to become a member, and on Sabbath, in the presence of the people, was regularly married and received to our little number, and sat down to the table of the

Lord with us, for the first time celebrated at Wioletpoo. He was baptized and afterwards gave his little son to God in baptism. The season was a refreshing one to us. Mr. Pambrun was here and spent the Sabbath, and went away not a little affected with the scenes. We gain satisfactory evidence for one of the boys living in our family, as having found the pearl of great price. A young man living at Walla Walla, who was here during the meeting, expresses a hope likewise. And there are two or three of the Indians who appear to be unusually serious, and sometimes we almost feel as if they were of the number who have obtained mercy of the Lord.

A most important transaction during the meeting was the formation of a temperance society for the benefit of the Indians. All of the chiefs and principal men of the tribe who were here, readily agreed to the pledge, and gave in their names to become members of the society. I have recently been informed that two of them have been tempted to drink, but have refused and turned their backs upon it, saying they would never drink again. They are truly an interesting people. We love them most sincerely, and long to see them turning unto the Lord. It grieves us very much that you should think or hear that John is spoiled by your indulgence “or that we think so.” No, my dear sister, it is not so – far otherwise. John is the same unassuming, humble, obedient lad that he was while at Ithaca, possessing many excellent traits of character different from many of his countrymen. The last time we saw him (which was in the spring, when he made us a visit), husband, in conversation with him, thought he gave good evidence of a change of heart. But he is not long for this world, if he is still alive. Nearly one year ago he was taken with the most afflicting disease I ever saw – the swelling of the joints. He came here for medical attention. He was so disfigured it distressed us very much to see him.

The middle finger on each hand at the knuckles, and knee joints, were very much swollen. We urged him to stay with us – told him we would take good care of him and teach him, etc., but he was afraid to stay, fearing the Doctor would find it necessary to perform some surgical operation upon him. He left us, and I know not that we ever shall see him again in this world, and if we are permitted to meet him in heaven it will be, no doubt, in consequence of the prayers and instructions received while at Ithaca. He says he used to pray with Henry and others there, and no doubt their example was the means of his praying with and teaching his fellow-mates to pray and sing the praises of God most sweetly, as I used to hear them when I was on a visit to Mrs. S. last fall. And two of the number are already numbered with the dead, leaving satisfactory evidence that they had given their hearts to the Saviour, and were going to meet him in heaven. Bright, healthy, promising girls when I saw them last fall. They had received the names of Martha and Mary, and were baptized just before they died. Truly, these are choice mercy drops to cheer us in our toilsome work here, for which we would be unfeignedly grateful.

Really, my sheet is full nearly, and I have not said half yet. It is a matter of great joy to us that we are so soon and so bountifully reinforced, and so unexpectedly, too. Mr. and Mrs. Gray join Mr. S. in their work. We are much pleased with our acquaintance with Mrs. G. – think her a most excellent person, and will, no doubt, be a great blessing to our missions. Mr. and Mrs. Walker, Mr. and Mrs. Eells, locate somewhere in the range of the Flathead language.

John's father lives many miles from us, and several from Mr. Spalding's. Before he was taken sick he was very attentive to his book, and assisted Mr. S. in cultivating, and his father, also; since, he chooses to be with his parents all the time. It has a happy

effect upon his mind to remind him of his Ithaca friends, and when I asked him if he remembered the verse Mrs. Parker used to teach him, "For God so loved the world," etc., said he did, and brought me his Testament and wanted me to find it for him. I did. He took it and studied it a long time, very thoughtfully. It would be very desirable to have him near some of us, so that we might instruct him more, but this is denied us.

We were considerably disappointed not to receive letters from Mr. Parker. Hope he will not forget us. Please write, all of you. Miss McLoughlin is married to Mr. Rae. Her father has gone to England. As Mr. Lee is now in the States, you will probably hear all the news about Vancouver from him.

Messrs. W. and E. have gone to explore, and letters from them, recently received, say the Big Head's land, the chief of the Flatheads, situated near the Spokane Falls, is the place recommended by Mr. McDonald as the most favorable for a station – had not yet decided – intended to visit several other places. Their ladies will probably remain with us during the winter, particularly Mrs. Walker. My husband is now at Vancouver, in business for the mission, and probably will not be able to write as many letters to his friends as usual. With much love to you, dear husband, self and family, I am, dear sister, affectionately yours, in Christian love,

N. Whitman.

Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup>. – I have just heard from John. Richard has just come from his father's – says he is very sick and near dying, but he is praying and reading his testament all the time, and loves to think of Jesus. O, that I could see him once more! We love him tenderly, and always have, and Richard, too. He has come here well dressed, and wished

to stay and go to school; how long he will stay contented I know not, but feel inclined to keep him.

Narcissa Whitman.

Rev. Mrs. Samuel Parker,

Ithaca, Tompkins Co., New York.

\*\*\* End of the original document from October 3, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Date: November 5, 1838 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Author: Mrs. Narcissa Whitman \*\*\*

\*\*\* Recipient: Mrs. Elvira Perkins \*\*\*

\*\*\* Source for this document: Transactions – 21st reunion, 1893, p. 112 \*\*\*

\*\*\* Comment: The transcriber for the “Transactions” used the phrase “comparatively” at one point. It could have been “compartively” in the original or it may have been a typo in the original. \*\*\*

\*\*\* The original document starts below this line \*\*\*

Wioletpoo, Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1838.

*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 here 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 labour; 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 stalking 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 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 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 of bonds,

Narcissa Whitman.

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

Wallamette.

\*\*\* End of the original document from November 5, 1838 \*\*\*