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LETTERS OF
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Letters of
Esther Carson Winans

Missionary to the Aguaruna Indians

Compiled and Edited by

CAROL GISH

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Foreword

The name of Esther Carson Winans is almost legendary in the missionary annals of the Church of the Nazarene. This gifted but unassuming woman possessed remarkable linguistic ability, and is credited with having reduced to writing the language of the Aguaruna Indians of the upper Amazon jungles of Peru, and translating the first scriptures into that tongue. She died among these primitive people at the comparatively young age of thirty-seven, after having been among them only five years.

In the course of gathering biographical material on this great missionary, Mrs. Carol Gish was given access to a store of letters which had been written home by Mrs. Winans during her ten years of service in Peru. These letters, as no other writing could do, reveal the throb of her missionary heart. In 1951, Mrs. Gish compiled a selected group of these letters for publication along with other pertinent material concerning Mrs. Winans. The letters appearing in this volume were chosen from this earlier (and larger) edition, and are published in response to a continuing demand for these interesting and heartwarming profiles.

J. FRED PARKER
Book Editor

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1

Autobiographical Sketch of Esther Carson Winans

(Written in 1921)

Two letters . . . have come with the request that I write a short story of my life for . . . the many whose interest and love for their missionaries make them want to know us more personally . . .

Not to begin too far back, will say as to birth and parentage, it happened by God's providence on September 11, 1891, in Big Prairie, Ohio; in the parsonage of my grandfather, one of the early holiness preachers of the Wesleyan Methodist church, in which he was an elder and evangelist—Rev. Hiram Ackers. English, Irish, Scotch, German, Dutch, and Welsh make ordinary American blood like mine, I suppose, all with its full share of Adam's. In addition to that I am glad to say God's grace abounded to give me an inheritance from himself by Christ Jesus, praise His name forever!

Earliest memories—swinging in a hammock in Florida, playing in Florida sand by the Indian River—an

arm of the ocean (from whose waters twice my father saved me)—and singing "Who killed Cock Robin?" in a funeral my cousins and I held for a little dead bird. Other memories of life after the return to the little parsonage—the flower garden where I believed God walked with me "in the cool of the day"—the Blue Room, where Mama used to go for her "quiet hour" and where the visiting ministers and evangelists were given their "prophet's chamber"—the door of Grandpa's study which had to be kicked hard or a four-year-old could not open it—these are a few things out of many.

Across the road was the little brick church. My mother and father, in whom I had the most absolute confidence, took me to church and Sunday school there ever since I can remember. After one childish tantrum I well remember, Mama had one of her serious talks with me and went to the Blue Room to pray. I fell asleep, and dreamed of an angel telling me that all Mama had said about being made a new creature, and broken hearts where Jesus' way was not chosen, was true. That week I thought a great deal and finally determined that in Sunday school, where God was not angry and Jesus loved little children, I would give myself to Him and obey God and Papa and Mama forever after. While the superintendent prayed, and I at Papa's side knelt with all the rest of the congregation, one little prayer went up to God as fast as my heart could utter it: "Dear God, please forgive my sins and make me a new creature, for Jesus' sake. Amen!" It did not occur to me as the least possibility that God was not doing it as fast as I could ask Him, and intense joy filled me at the thought. As soon as possible, I told Papa, then Mama (she played the organ), and then Grandpa and Grandma; and before the week was over, even Grandpa was convinced that the event was real, for there were no more "tantrums" nor kicks at his door again.

About two weeks after that, as I was playing on the

floor with my blocks, there came a new conviction to my heart. I told Mama: "God says for Essie to go across the ocean and tell the people there about Jesus!" and I wanted to pack up at once and go. My mother gently showed me how I needed to learn to read His Book, and know much more about Him, so that I could truly teach and preach the good news. From that day on, that was my strongest motive to study. I was then about four and a half years old. Some time afterwards Mama told me how she had wanted to be a missionary when she was a little girl; that through circumstances beyond her control she had not been allowed; but that she and my father had vowed jointly that their firstborn should be God's missionary, if He would accept the offering by himself giving the call.

After nearly finishing the third year of high school work in Shelby, Ohio, we moved to Washington, and lived on a ranch near the town of White Salmon. For two years I was "my father's boy." Together we plied mattock and axe, crosscut saw and handspike and blasting fuse, the plow and harrow and hoe and spray pump and pruning shears, hayrake and pitchfork; for there were apple orchards to plant and care for, crops to harvest from the old trees, alfalfa to cut for the horses and cows, and new land to clear and "grub" till the last trace of timber and brush was gone from the new field. The change was a great blessing to me, physically and spiritually; for somewhere in the eighth grade or first year of high school I had lost Jesus from my heart without knowing it, and had become bitterly discouraged trying to live righteously in my own strength; though I told no one—for "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" So I went on "professing" not only conversion but the sanctification I had earnestly sought and obtained when eight years old. Now I was separated from my old schoolmates with whom I used to exercise my wits in the perverse

pranks and foolishness that is "bound up in the heart of a child," and in the stillness of those Washington forests God had a better chance to speak again to my heart. His own Spirit rebuked my hypocrisy and revealed to me something of the utter wrongness of my life. I was overwhelmed with it, and completely brokenhearted. It seemed impossible to make the confessions necessary, especially to Papa and Mama; and still more impossible to be disowned of God, and cease to work toward my lifelong goal. So I wrote my confession, for I could not speak for tears, and once more my sky was clear and bright with God's smile upon me.

Not long after that, by a series of peculiar divine providences, we found ourselves loose from the ranch and placed in Lompoc, California, where I had my last year of high school and was one of a little group of charter members of the . . . church organized there by Dr. Bresee and Brother Goodwin, whom we met for the first time. Our pastor during vacation after I graduated was Rev. Fred Shields, then a young student in Pasadena University. There didn't seem any earthly possibility of entering that school, as I longed to do the next fall; so I reentered high school, to take up any and every study they offered which I had not had in the classical course. That, however, was interrupted by a letter from Dr. Bresee, one of God's complete surprises in my life—for as a result of that letter it was less than a week before I was on my way to Pasadena. God had undertaken for me.

Dr. Wiley, then dean of the college, was on the lookout for new students arriving; and we met in the little Star Grocery Store that all Pasadena students will remember. A new epoch in my life was begun. No one but God knows what those four years have meant in my life . . .

After graduating there in Pasadena, with my diploma and my renewed license to preach I went home, wonder-

ing, What next? and, How long? Some asked me why I did not put in my application to the Missionary Board. Well—I knew they had more applicants than they could send, and besides, what experience could I offer? To what field should I go? I had studied Spanish, because they had not then been able to give French; I had gone with Miss Eugenia Phillips regularly into the Mexican camps for want of other “home-foreign” missionary work, and because (this principally) she and the Lord compelled me; my heart rather inclined to India (I was Myrtlebelle Walter’s roommate). But only two things were well-nigh settled in my being. One was, Let me do whatever is the will of the Lord; and, Oh, that He would permit me to translate part or all of the Scripture for some tribe who has it not. It was with that hope in my heart that I had studied some Hebrew in Pasadena, and continued it at Olivet University, when God (again unexpectedly) opened the way for me to go there both as student and teacher the following fall.

From there, I came home sick in body, and strangely weary in mind and soul. The goal of my life seemed as far away as when four years old I counted the years of grammar school and high school as the price of my heart’s desire—an eternity to wait, but with a definite end to it!

The Lord healed my body; and my soul felt fresh again. I would go to Berkeley, the state university, where I could study Hebrew for that translation, doctors notwithstanding. In Olivet, I had taught elementary Spanish; now I thought, I am done with Spanish. To my surprise, I was obliged to take advanced courses in the language and “make good” in order to gain their approval of the college credits I presented there! On top of that, I learned from Dr. Wiley (then pastor at Berkeley) and Brother Anderson (who made a brief visit there) that there were two calls, urgent, for a Spanish-speaking missionary, and so far only Miss Phillips was

found a suitable candidate. Brother Wiley put the application blanks in my hands. I was more deeply stirred than I cared for anyone to know. I had come to be considerably more attached to my parents, friends, and native land, than I was at four years of age. For a while, in my leisure moments, I read everything I could find on Peru. The one thing that impressed me (aside from the strange way God had obliged me so long to study Spanish) as a deciding unit in the prayerful decision that had to be made was that in Peru were tribes of Indians who had no Bible in their language, not even a written speech. I signed and sent the application.

The Board accepted me; but where were passage, support, and equipment? Well! God had "seen me through school," and this was perhaps the only point where I did not suffer severe temptation, though outwardly there was nothing to offer me any hope of ever "getting there." My friends laughed at me when I crossed the bay one day to get information regarding the securing of passports. . . .

Next June I was to have received my master's degree. But the second semester hardly began when there came a telegram from Dr. Wiley calling me to Nampa. There was no time to write home. I was not used to making great decisions without consulting Papa and Mama. Thank God, there was time to pray. I saw clearly that for me the "pillar of cloud and fire" was moving. If I didn't want to be left behind in the woods without the Lord, I should have to move too. So I packed my trunk that night.

One stopover I made on the way to Nampa. In the little town of White Salmon, I found a pony to carry me through the forests up over the mountains, where we spent those two years that God had called me aside from the book-school training until He could get my attention back to himself again. How straight and sure had His leadings and preparations been all the years! How in-

finitely kind and gentle! Few of the old friends and neighbors were left; but that ride was like a little pausing with God, just before an end should come, that should be another new beginning. . . .

Sometimes I wonder if my friends would think me the same Esther were I ever to return to the homeland. I remember the meetings in many churches and the last two weeks at home with Papa and Mama before setting sail with Miss Mable Park—the long weeks on board ship—the arrival at Pacasmayo at sunset—the late landing—the dirty, dark, uneven streets, narrow and monotonous with their houses like two continuous gray walls on either side, peculiarly like Romanism . . . The two and a half years since that tenth of August have been crowded with incidents totally new and different, except that here and now, as everywhere and always on earth, our warfare has been not with flesh and blood, “but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. . . .”

2

Appointment

"To live my thankfulness"

BERNELEY, CAL., NOVEMBER 1, 1917

REV. E. G. ANDERSON
FOREIGN MISSIONS SECRETARY

DEAR BROTHER ANDERSON:

Praise the Lord! Perhaps this is not the time nor the way for me even to try to tell you the feelings of my heart in regard to this appointment: as God shall help me I hope to live my thankfulness to Him for this new relationship. . . .

Yes, sir, I have read & studied a few books on Peru (just recently) which describe as well as they dared the dark aspects & the difficulties of all missionary work in that country, as well as the hopeful & bright side; & I cannot expect that our own mission station has less difficulties & hardships than others. I am sure you would tell me that all that is simply to be faced in the strength of the Lord, with constant prayer & persistent,

unconquerable faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob . . .

I am praying in dead earnest, with a growing conviction that He will answer our prayers for the needed passage money & support to be secured, that I may sail not later than Nov. 1918. If you think I should pray definitely for a nearer date of departure I shall certainly do so with might & main. . . . Naturally my solicitations for help can be only to God. He will send, either to you or to me, or to both, all that is necessary, of this I am sure, as I pray more & more over the matter.

Expect to graduate May 15th & be ordained in the coming Dis't Assembly within the same month; then I could be ready to go by the first day of June . . .

Before leaving home last Aug. I began to get ready to go to Peru. I have a typewriter, a kodak, plenty of clothes, nearly all the books that I ought to take with me, & the assurance of \$5 a mo. to start on; & am getting everything in order as fast as I can . . .

If you know of anything else I could do to help in making the necessary arrangements, please let me know; for I am in deed & in truth,

Yours & God's for Peru,

3

The Making of a Missionary

"Exceedingly happy doing His will"

PACASMAYO, PERU, S.A., August 19, 1918

DEAR ONES!

Your letter of July 15 reached me today. I was 5 weeks exactly getting here, and had a fine trip, not a bit seasick. Four days delay in Panama.—My, but I was glad for your letters! . . .

Bro. Winans is gone—will be back Sat.—I have the meetings to conduct in his absence and much work besides, as Mrs. Winans is sick and I have her two children and housework and horse to attend to as much as possible and even more. However Miss Park and I are exceedingly happy doing *His* will. God has been with us in the meetings and all. . . . In haste but in much love and prayer from

YOUR ESTHER

"Passing through those waters"

PACASMAYO, PERU, S.A., Sept. 18, 1918

DEAR FRIENDS IN THE HOMELAND:

Our circular letter this time will be short, I am afraid, and I know you will forgive us when you know the reason. We have just passed through a great trial—may say rather are yet passing through those waters that, however deep, God promises, "I will be with thee." His word never fails us; they have not overflowed us; nor has the flame kindled upon us.

Our dear Sister Winans [Mary Hunt Winans] has gone to be with Jesus. She lived for Him in Pacasmayo & in other parts of Peru, & not without fruit for the Master . . . This trying climate & the accompanying malaria were too much for her. Two weeks after giving birth to another missionary baby, a complication of diseases, mostly due to the malaria that had left her in a greatly weakened condition, took her away from a home & a mission that needed her sorely. We can only trust God in this, & go ahead in His work.

On account of the strenuous days & nights of the last 2 weeks we were obliged to discontinue our Eng. classes of Tues. & Fri. nights, but are now taking them up again. Th. eve. prayer meetings & Sun. services were kept up. The renewed interest (due in part to the novelty of the new missionaries, & the music of the folding organ & guitar) continues, & the ave. attendance has increased . . .

Pray for the Sunday schools & preaching services that we are engaged in for Jesus' dear name, & for an awakening among this sin-darkened people.

Yours & God's for Peru,

"I have to unspoil him gradually"

PACASMAYO, PERU, S.A., Nov. 9, 1918

DEAR AUNT MARY, UNCLE JOHN AND COUSIN RUTH:

It was so good of you to answer so soon. . . . Surely God is good to me to give me folks with such loving hearts and so kind to write to me and pray for me. I must do all in my power to give freely, as I have so freely received, love in unbounded measure from God and from His people! . . .

If you look on the map perhaps you can find the places that most interest us here.—We have a work at Monsefu just taken over by our Missionary Board, where is a native congregation, church and Sunday school, and property worth maybe \$12,000. We have our mission hall rented in Pacasmayo, and teach English classes, Sunday school, and hold regular services. At Faclo Grande there is a Sunday school; I visited it once with Bro. Winans, on horseback, and found the leader of the Sunday school a good and interesting man indeed. He lives on that big ranch (Faclo Grande) or hacienda, as they call them here—as schoolmaster for the boys; and holds his Sunday school on Monday! Has about a dozen children in it, nice well-behaved little fellows.—The scenery is much the same as in the desert part of Southern California, except where the haciendas are, where a river runs; and there are trees, bananas, acacias, willows, poplars, cane thickets, and other trees and shrubs whose names I do not know. Then of course on the cultivated parts of the haciendas are fields of sugar cane, rice, yucas, alfalfa, and truck gardens. There are the big huts of the day laborers, and the big mansion—big in extent, not height—of the ranch owner or hacendado.

This writing is terrible, for I am at the same time keeping baby's go-cart on the move. He is just over the influenza and I have to unspoil him gradually now, I guess . . .

Yours gratefully and lovingly—

"A little child shall lead them"

17 de Octubre, 1918, PACASMAYO, PERU, S.A.

That was Spanish for October, dear Folks of the Homeland.—I just forgot for the moment that I was to think and write in English for a while.—The fact is I can't get my wits collected for a real "conventional" missionary circular letter, and have given up in despair, that is, I'll substitute common thinking on paper to you, my loved American folks. My, how your faces do come up before me and my heart beats faster.—For the moment I even forget the baby behind me.—And in my rambling thought-train of this afternoon he is almost a constant figure—I guess he's really there all the time, unconsciously if not the central thought in the passing moment—my "borrowed baby"—the baby missionary who goes in my arms into many a Peruvian home and gives a starting point for the conversations that we are praying so fervently may count for God! "A little child shall lead them"—even when only six weeks old! The Peruvian women and really the men too are very affectionate-natured and love babies.—So Pablito (Spanish for little Paul) is already doing his part: helping overcome the shyness and embarrassment that hinder one so much in first visits to homes, almost without exception.

. . . And there are the [Winans] children—Johnny and Joel and the precious baby that I'm having sole care of to my great delight. I only wish he was a stronger baby. For the first month he was so delicate that he gained almost nothing, but he's doing well now,

and I thank God every day! . . . —I've had him in a go-cart with his bottle propped up against my chair back: he finished, and wailed, and must needs be comforted, and we'll go calling now—I was waiting for him. —“Hasta luego.” [See you later.] . . .

Not long ago we made a visit to a ranch about three miles away close to a village called Getepeque. . . . They helped arrange for a meeting in the village next Sunday and will send horses again. It will be held in a public hall and I was cautioned not to talk about the difference between Catholicism and Protestantism. (I made no promise, but said I had no wish to arouse antagonism. That comes without wishing.) I do mean to preach Jesus: a living Christ who saves us from all sin now and fills us with His Holy Spirit if we only let Him. I don't mean to mention the words “Catholic” or “Protestant” and I expect to read that intensely interesting book to them, “La Biblia.”—They are fanatical priests, so loyal to the Pope they are—and I do pray I may get more than this one chance to give them the real gospel!

You should see my table.—It has on it such things as lamps, glasses, baby bottles, a clock, malted milk, an alcohol lamp, an alligator pear seed that has just sprouted, a thermos bottle, ink, pen, pencils, two Bibles (one Spanish, one English), some bound class lecture notes on the Wisdom Literature (I've been reading in Job lately), and my typewriter.—This room is large; it has my cot in it, and baby's cradle, swinging from the high ceiling.

Yours and God's for Peru—

Describing one of the pests of Peru, Roger Winans said that it was “a very small fly . . . whose bite is clear out of proportion to its size.”

Mabel Park Winans said of Esther: “She suffered terribly from little flies, stinging ants, and mosquitoes which caused malaria, but she considered them ‘light afflictions.’”

"Fleas . . . cockroaches . . . rats and mice . . . scorpions"

PACASMAYO, March, 1919

Our hottest mos., Jan. & Feb., are over now. The heat is not bad if one keeps in the shade, but there is something enervating in the atmosphere. I am feeling fine now that it is cooler. We have had a few showers of sprinkling rain; that is rare for Pacasmayo. The worst feature is lack of good H^2O . We get it from the "Sequia," a brook that flows down to us from the Andes, whose foothill ranges we see in the distance; and on its way it affords a nice washtub for many washer-women, a lovely bathtub for many Indians, burros & dogs, & when the rains wash the nitrate soil into it it is delectably (?) muddy & loaded with the rich germs of swamps & other doubtful places. So we filter & boil it with grave diligence. That is, when we have it at all. The "water-men" are very independent, & if they have too many calls, sometimes we have to carry it ourselves.

The town would look very queer to you perhaps, with its narrow cobble-paved streets walled on each side by what seems one single whitewashed mud-&-cane wall with doors every few feet, and they look about alike. If you look in you may see wandering in from the rear rooms the rest of the inhabitants:—geese, chickens, ducks, pigs & cats. Occasionally a rooster is seen tied in front, and he stalks outside the door looking as if he couldn't wait for Sunday's prize fight. There are always people standing in the doorways, or children sitting on the narrow sidewalk in front of them. Dogs abound. So do fleas. And cockroaches. And rats and mice. And scorpions . . .

4

"Earth Hath No Sorrow That Heaven Cannot Heal"

"God took His baby home"

PACASMAYO, PERU, March 22, 1919

MY OWN DEAR COUSIN RUTH, UNCLE JOHN AND FRIENDS:

Last month we girls moved, and now live in the rooms back of the mission hall . . . The first part of this month, I was just in the midst of the work—making carbon copies for fifty—and had finished and mailed about twenty, when the baby, whose doubtful health had made my progress in my other duties slower than usual, became suddenly worse and I simply dumped all my paper, carbons, and stamped envelopes in one of my drawers and took him to Talambo where lived the family in whom I had most confidence of all people this side of Eten or Monsefu. . . .

We had absolutely no thought of anything but that . . . he would get well, at once, as he did before with our simple remedies, for now he was nearly seven months

old and apparently so much stronger than the other times of serious illness. I don't know that I want you to imagine our shock of sorrow and disappointment when on the 12th of this month God took His baby home where the angels can care for him better than any earthly parents could, or one like me, who loved him almost as I love God himself . . .

Since March 12 I have been renewedly your missionary and God's, more than ever, more than I could possibly have ever become without the very experiences that God has sent into my life these seven months just past. . . .

This month is necessarily a month of adjustment—but for God's divine alchemy it would needs be more than a month—and I don't know just how much I ought to say, of the battles, and the depression to be conquered, and the physical weakness. God says it is out of that that His strength is made perfect. . . .

It is precisely His wisdom and His love that are my great refuge now. Have not been well, physically, for the last three weeks; the water even when boiled and filtered is not kind to me lately. But God has not allowed Satan to let the hindrance be great enough to make me miss school or meetings so far; and I fully expect to become completely adjusted to all these things shortly. "Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." On the other hand, there are moments and hours—when we are in meetings, or at worship, or with God and His Word in prayer, or in those times of peculiar consciousness of your love and prayers ascending to the Throne for your missionary, when one's spiritual ecstasy simply knows no bounds and cannot be told, it is so great. "The joy of the Lord is your strength."—Bro. Wiley told me of the purchase of the duplicator. It could not but mean sacrifice for you and God is witness of grateful love for you who have given so much for Him! . . .

Keep praying and encouraged in Him who hath promised us the victory! "He is worthy." Blessing and honor and glory and power unto the Lamb of God, our Redeemer, forever and ever! He is coming! Oh, if only all would prepare to meet Him! To be unashamed before Him at His appearing! What glory! Do you know, I know some from Peru will greet you then; and we will praise God together.

Yours and His for Peru,

"Sojourners and pilgrims in the earth"

CHEPEN, PERU, April 26, 1919

DEAREST RUTHIE AND UNCLE JOHN AND AUNT MARY AND ALL:

The clock is ticking its loudest. I hear a little terrior yapping in the street, and the roll of a passing cart, one of those heavy but only 2-wheeled vehicles that gather up garbage. Sometimes the voices of boys calling to each other, or a street vender of fruit or a man whistling—but the room itself where I find myself is very still. It is a big room, with . . . its floors of bricks, and its high whitewashed walls "interrupted" by three blue-painted, two-leaved doors of immense proportions, and two windows 10 feet from the floor. They have iron bars instead of glass, and I dreamed a funny dream the first night I slept here: that I waked up in prison, surprised at the size of my cell, and so happy because I should have plenty of time to read and pray in and plenty of room to walk! . . .

It has been so long since I had any chance at all to settle down for a relaxation such as writing to you—my chances of that kind have been just few enough that as fast as they came I had to spend them with God, whose grace ever sustains, whose strength never fails, whose wisdom is equal to all the crises sudden or expected, tre-

mendous or secondary; and whose marvelous love and tenderness not only make life thoroughly livable but wonderfully sweet and glad! . . .

We have just come to live in Chepen a while, "Sojourners and pilgrims in the earth" "who have here no continuing city" . . .

Having been here only three days, there is not yet a great deal to tell. Some weeks ago we made arrangements for the rent of these two large rooms, which . . . were the only ones to be had that would at all answer the purpose, and having set up our folding chairs and blue-painted benches, cots, chests of drawers, table, and clock, and arranged a few other little articles of household use for two and spread out our Bibles and Testaments for sale, we had a sort of mixed initiation and farewell song service and departed to Pacasmayo to await Brother Razuri and family from San Pablo. (For he will be pastor at Pacasmayo now for a while.) But "be astonished, O ye heavens"—"the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon" that insecure bridge of the Railroad Company "and it fell." Whether the fall were great or not, *quien sabe?* the consequences to us were, the delay of Pacasmayo's new pastor, two weeks of special evangelistic labors on our part, and a first communion service with twelve native professing Christians. It was the quietest and most solemn meeting we ever had. A man standing outside remarked, "That is the true ceremony."

Finally, however, our Bro. Razuri arrived with his family, and after a week more in the dear little bad coast town we came here to open a new station for Jesus. We still get our mail at the post office we left, for we return every week to teach classes in English. Monday and Tuesday—four classes and private pupils—and, what is our chief concern, to keep in personal touch with our "evangelicos" there. Here we have begun English classes Thursday and Saturday nights, with preaching services

Sunday and Friday nights, and Sunday school Sunday afternoons. But perhaps the meeting that is to count most for God will be the half hour daily at the close of school, when the schoolboys throng into the hall, and we play and sing for them, teach them our songs, and tell them Bible stories. People are intensely curious about us, and that gives us a chance to make our message heard. So far there has been very little disturbance. There is no Protestant native that we know of here, except a teacher in the public school. The people we rent from are free-thinkers; so is most of the male population; the rest are so-called "fanatics," and would make living dangerous for you if they could!

It was funny to hear the boys and men outside our door, calling to a passing priest, "*Cura! Cura!* Come and learn English!" Wouldn't it be rich fun to teach him, though! It is not too much to hope, I wonder?

Once in a while the thought will cross my mind—Just think, you two girls alone pitted against this wicked city. But the swift warning comes, You keep your eyes on Jesus, and preach Him; the rest is His business. "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."

So it is that we go on, visiting, selling Bibles, singing, testifying, teaching, praying with folks and for folks, and preaching the Word. Until Jesus comes we are here, His and yours for Peru. With *much much* love and many thoughts and prayers!

"Cold waters to a thirsty soul"

CHEPEN, PERU, August 21, 1919

MY DEAR ETHEL:

Your letter—just like Solomon said of news from a far country—was surely like cold waters to a thirsty soul . . . Mabel has gastric fever, is lots better now—

up today for the first time after two weeks in bed . . . I've had a great time nursing her. Been reviewing memorized psalms, reviewing French grammar, reading Spanish Bible, etc., besides primarily nursing Mabel (who has been an ideal patient) and entertaining her callers, and killing her mosquito visitors, etc.—etc.

How I *did* enjoy your letter!—And I thank you ever so much for the money order too, of \$4.87. Reached me in perfect safety and will be used in *His* work. . . . Thank you, too, for that promise of another book: you know what an old bookworm I am.—Please pray for our friends who live in the house where we rent rooms: they have been so good to us, have done *everything* kind hands *could* do. Are Catholics still, but we are praying for their conversion.—We teach one of them English . . .

Must close my letter—but never my thoughts of you.

"Keep on living the present moment"

CHEPEN, PERU, S.A., Oct. 16, 1919

MY DEAR UNCLE AND AUNT AND COUSIN:

Wonder if I could give you some idea of how *these* two weeks of October have gone.—The first day found us arriving here, and with us Bro. Lucas who had come from Monsefu with a big gasoline lamp just landed . . . from the United States. My, how glad we were for that lamp! Its light is as good as electricity, and we put away the six kerosene "things" we used to have to do with, most gleefully.—We were glad to see Bro. Lucas too: and hear him preach, for he preaches like a man does who is filled with the Holy Spirit and loves God and souls. . . .

Oct. 3 we had a meeting.—I have a "Royal Scroll" with pictures from the dear Bible story from start to

finish. One can just talk and unfold God's way of salvation, the plan of redemption, from start to finish, and they seem never to get tired of it. When this way gets old to them (if it ever does) there'll be another in which to tell them the Good News, but so far the crowds never diminish though I go over and over it twice and even three times a week, you never saw the like. I'm not flattered by the name they call it—"the movies"! But for my part I never get tired either telling how God has been doing with us human folks He made. . . .

While the government has been unstable for several months now the friars have been threatening to burn all our Bibles, take us prisoners to Lima, torture and kill us there, if we won't "convert." It made our faces grow broad to think of it, and we began to daydream over buying shoes big enough to wear Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in, and double cuffs that we could put Psalms and Revelation in, and consider which of the surrounding hills we could dig into for a safety vault.

Seriously, though, everybody who really thinks about it in Peru and knows the trend of things sees that a clash between the Catholics and the Liberal Party which allies itself with Protestant interests is about certain: may happen any time and may not for years. Jesus may come any time too, so good-bye speculations . . . and let's just keep on living the present moment with Him in gladness, doing and praying and living intense. I do love to live! . . . It would be very nice to go to Lima and it might possibly come to pass that we might go free of charge.—Am memorizing songs and as much scripture as possible just in case.

The Word of God cannot be bound. Therein lies our freedom. Pray for its speedy arrival in every house and hut in *Peru* and *especially* for the evangelization of the Indians of the Interior who have had no Bible at all.

Yours lovingly exceedingly

"A dizzy five minutes"

PACASMAYO, PERU, Nov. 20, 1919

MY DEAREST SIXTY FOLKS:

. . . Last night I thought a letter to you that would take pages and pages to write. . . .—There are sixty of you and at 6 cents a stamp and two stamps on a letter and paper at two sheets for a cent you can figure up the cost if you care to. Personally for me the financial end of life is a nuisance that pops up to bother me at the end of every month . . . Wonder if you are ever curious to know how a missionary girl does with her salary. Well, there are board and rent of course; kerosene for the stove, and gasoline for the lamp; matches and stamps and paper and ink; and laundry and carfare and an occasional printing bill for tracts or advertisements and a few little things your left hand doesn't know about, and oh yes! You should have seen Genaro's delight over his new slate and copybook and second reader . . . And that reminds one of school.—

I can't keep out of teaching though learning is more interesting—maybe. The need for evangelistic work is so great that I half-follow, half-take the lead myself in what Mabel Park has felt and made me feel was the present greatest urgency—meetings and colportage work in all the homes, villages, towns and cities possible.—You're always in a dilemma here between following up your beginnings with people and making new beginnings where you are bound to feel keenly that nobody ought to be denied the chance to hear the gospel *once* at least before he dies . . . At first the children came to us in flocks; but, lo, our adversary Satan sent straightway some friars, who, by means of their influence over parents and teachers, simply boycotted that phase of our work—the

most valuable as it seemed to us. We begin to think the situation was even much harder than we had thought. But we didn't lose our adult congregations (which are mostly men and boys of the street) and so we preach and sing and testify and sell Bibles to them, with the result that there are number of them intellectually convinced, favorable, or interested, and this tends greatly to break down the prejudice of the community. But it is slow business. . . . Perhaps we do not average more than a seeker a month, but we do believe we are doing just what we would want to be found doing when He comes.—The best thing no doubt is to sow down the land here with Bibles and "Preach the Word": that is what preceded revivals in all times and places—not only prayer but Bible reading . . . Peru hasn't had many years of religious liberty yet, and very few missionaries, but the Catholics are *scared*. Strange!? No?—It seems to us often that we accomplish so very little: yet there do come to us reports from all sides of the fears, threats and rage of the priests and friars who seem to think the whole country is ready to turn Protestant. That there are many Nicodemuses who come by night and sneak in to hear us and even serve God in secret of course we know—but why must they be such cowards about it? . . . Some *do* get converted and sanctified, and anyhow God's Spirit and ours are working together—let the results be left to God . . .

. . . Say, I do sympathize with homesick folks. Used to be homesick when away from home myself. Have not been afflicted that way since being in Peru, with the possible exception of a dizzy five minutes when I had in my hands the first letters arrived from home the day after arriving: had not expected any so soon and so was taken rather off guard. . . .

The afternoon is gone; and I must be gone to finish the day with the necessary nuisance of helping get supper

and wash dishes—and the enjoyable work of study,
teaching, reading and prayer . . . Surely you do know
I love you all in Jesus dearly, dearly! and that in Him
I am yours forever and forever—

and for Peru especially,

5

A Glad, Wonderful Year

On December 19, 1919, Esther became Mrs. Roger S. Winans, inheriting Joel, six, and John, four, who had already come to love her dearly.

"You must forgive my shyness"

PACASMAYO, PERU, Jan. 3, 1920

MY DEAR AUNT AND UNCLE AND COUSIN:

You may be wondering how we fared here Christmas and New Year. Well we had a real good time . . .

My friends in Nampa and Boise sent me an immense Christmas box. . . . There was just about everything in that box! But I was certainly not less glad to see those dear missionaries. We really need two more: and are confidently expecting that God will send them.

God has certainly been good to us. Why He should have given me so many good friends I am sure I cannot tell. They have wonderfully remembered me with such loving gifts and letters and cards that I do not know what to say in return. But I mean to work and pray more earnestly than ever to be their ambassador and . . . not fail them nor God on this great and needy field . . .

All of my friends have been scolding me for not telling them about the event of Dec. 19. . . . You must forgive my shyness. I am very happy and contented and can hardly wait to get to Monsefu. We expect to go by the next steamer, which is said to sail the 9th. I have been very busy packing up, and writing letters. . . . Today Bro. Winans bought some Crezo and we swept the house thoroughly to rid it temporarily at least of the fleas. This room smells significantly yet.

This letter has been written in the midst of children playing. They interrupt sometimes; but I like to have them around, and would not miss Joel's and John's affection. They both call me "My Miss Mama" and seem to love me as their own. That is how I feel toward them, too.

Must stop now and put us all to bed. Pray for us earnestly that this year of 1920 will be a time of the saving of many.

Yours and God's for Peru.

Esther wrote a poem on insect pests in Peru. One stanza is in praise of Crezo, or kreso, a creosote formula used as cow dip, as well as for combating pests.

*I thank the Lord for water;
I thank the Lord for air;
I thank the Lord for kreso,
And use it evrywhere.*

"Working in your stead"

PACASMAYO, PERU, Jan. 3, 1920

MY DEAREST ETHEL:

Your letters have taken a trip with me to the *Acequia* (brook) to get answered out in the open air. My little

fisherman Joel is also here, with his string and pinhook baited with banana peel . . . and runs up to me calling, "Mama! Mama!" every time there is anything new that happens to call his attention. Juancito (Johnny) I left at a Christian neighbor woman's house playing with her four-year-old son Luis, and the papa of my two boys I left at home sleeping off a cold that has tormented him lately. Your check (or money order rather) I also left at home, safe and sound, waiting to be cashed tomorrow, and do you imagine what it will do? Take me and my household goods to Monsefu and maybe something over for the printing press so we will have all the Spanish tracts we need for distribution.

Sometimes my heart smites me when I receive from you what I know is your offering as unto the Lord, for His gospel in this dark heathen land. Am I really making good! Am I really fulfilling my mission and representing you in this part of the world, winning souls for Jesus, working in your stead! Well, at any rate I know I am trying hard; I know *some* have been started on the King's highway and the seed sown in many homes . . .

. . . We may go to the interior within a year and a half—or even sooner—and *maybe* (I scarcely dare think of it for joy) maybe, oh, maybe, God may bring to pass both my two dearest dreams! Am reviewing my Hebrew and expect to begin on Greek N.T. review also before long. The Translation, dearest Ethel!—and—the Dream Child! Who knows whether they will both be!

You are a dear, good, sweet friend to me. Our friendship has ever been a priceless, undeserved blessing in my life. God bless you and keep you ever and always, my *dear* Ethel! . . . Yours lovingly,

"Once you love them"

MONSEFU, PERU, Feb. 5, 1920

MY DEAR UNCLE, AND AUNT, AND COUSIN RUTH:

Last month about this time I was getting ready to move to Monsefu. . . . It (the house in Monsefu) was clean, swept and garnished. However I saw plenty of room to put the things brought in my three trunks, three boxes, and three suitcases. There were shelves, pigeonholes, drawers galore. Outside, the garden was the same beautiful riot of color and fragrance as ever—things I'm glad no one knows how I missed at Pacasmayo. There was the pump and well, plenty of water, real genuine water, not muddy "Acequia" stuff.

The first Sunday with the folks was great. My fingers delighted to be on organ keys once more! (At Pacasmayo I used to play guitar and Miss Park the organ. We all seemed like a happy, reunited family, I thought, looking into the glad faces of that Christian congregation in a heathen land. The faces were foreign enough—Peruvian blood is a mixture of Negro, Chinese, Indian, and Spanish chiefly—but once you love them they are not strange at all and astonishingly dear, from the blind brother whom I patiently pester weekly until he is actually learning the Braille type of his Gospel of St. Mark, to the woolly-headed little pickaninnies of Don Valentine. Oh! sometime I will surely tell you about THEM . . .

. . . . The unpainted walls of our dwelling place are receiving a coat of paint, white, green, olive drab, in three of the rooms. Daily study of the Kechua Indian language progressing well; also Soila is learning to read her Bible. She's a jewel.

My duplicator arrived the 20th of last month. Praise the Lord, and thanks to His people greatly too!

Yours and God's for Peru,

"Enjoy taking his place"

MONSEFU, PERU, March 25, 1920

MY PRECIOUS FOLKS IN THE HOMELAND THAT IS ON
EARTH—

So many things have happened since I last wrote, and it has been harder than usual to get any letters written. Hadn't realized how fast the time had gone. . . .

There was about a week that we had a fight against the fever and with good success. Bro. Winans had it pretty high one afternoon when we were at Eten, but on getting home we commenced the quinine and bathing campaign with good results. When there was no more quinine I went to Chiclayo all by my lonesome for the first time, trusting the Lord to help me find my way to all the places I was to go . . .

On the 8th of this month God healed me instantly in answer to prayer; I seemed to be threatened with a repetition of what I had a year ago this month . . . Am feeling fine, and if Bro. Winans goes on his trips of "superintending his district," as he may soon, shall miss him, of course, much, but really enjoy taking his place in his absence. God is with us, nothing can dismay us.

Yours and His for Peru,

"As soon as possible!"

MONSEFU, Mar. 25, 1920

MY DEAR ETHEL:

That heading was written yesterday—I had been writing my circular letter and for the first time since my cook Soila went away I utterly forgot there was such a thing as supper to get! My watch said five minutes of five! We usually have supper at five-thirty; I am not often late with it, either, but the only comfort I could

get out of that moment was that Bro. Winans had gone to Chiclayo and would not be back till six. Still I was in the habit of making the bonfire I cook on, not later than four o'clock. So I raced out to the outdoor kitchen, grabbed up a little bucket of charcoal, a handful of dry juiceless sugar cane a friend sends me from the mill for kindling, a dry willow stick of firewood and in five minutes there was a roaring hot "candela" and a black iron pot of water on it and a smaller stewpan (likewise black) half full of soup broth. In another ten minutes I had rice looked over and washed and put in the broth, and potatoes with their jackets on, in the iron pot; and was fanning the coals good to keep in good humor for its job. Never made such rapid moves in my life in Peru, I guess. By five-thirty they were boiling merrily, and I took my breathing exercises, set the table, and by six was in the doorway waiting for "him."

. . . Roger is five years older than I and, if we had had no other things in common, the identity of interest we have both had for so many years in the work of the interior—that is, the translation of the Bible for some tribe who have not had the word of God in their language—would have drawn me to him almost irresistably. We are so happy together and while providences are not such that we can go this year I believe it will not be more than two until we can go to the interior Indians. Pray that God may open the way in His own time—but as soon as possible!

"To name your names to God"

MONSEFU, PERU, April 29, 1920

DEAR LOVED ONES:

Do you know just how much loved, I wonder? . . . Gratitude fills and overflows my heart as your faces come

to mind and soul. What a relief and gladness it is in these moments—stolen quickly and quietly from the demands of the people and work that surrounds one, pressing in—to name your names to God, and to know He hears and blesses you in answer to just one far-off child of yours and His! I am so happy in Him, and in His work but, oh, so busy! Satan is continually trying to crowd out even one's quiet hour with God, by making other calls seem more imperative.

A few minutes ago Lucas (native ass't pastor here) brought in a basketful of apples, quinces, and pomegranates to put away. This morning I spent in the schoolroom with the children (there are 15 now) and in the outdoor kitchen with dinner-getting and teaching at the same time and place. At present we are ten; from Sat. night till Wed., 12. It's quite new to me to play hostess to such a large family . . .

. . . In last Sunday night's service we had an especially glorious time. Three of our church members who have been seekers before really prayed thro, and were sanctified. Monday night following their testimonies were surely good to hear . . .

How good to us are God and His people! May God bless you precious people in the homeland. Keep praying we will all hold steady till He comes.

Yours and God's for Peru

"We miss the papa of our house"

MONSEFU, PERU, Sept. 22, 1920

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

The Catholic church bells are ringing to mass, the springtime winds are making the air chilly. If I look outdoors, I see a garden of roses in bloom, and big black-winged buzzards flying high overhead. My, but they are blessings, those birds.

When I'm in a nice, good mood to write letters, alas, I'm too busy. I haven't been quite so well either—that is how I missed writing to you last month. Am lots better now.—Bro. Winans hardly got well over his measles, until he went to make a round of the district; will probably not be back till the middle of next month . . .

"Nice good mood" did I say? That is, I mean to write a good letter, & tell things of consequence. Just now, could chatter away on paper to you a lot of things of no importance at all—could tell how Juancito nearly killed the pup, tried to plant one of the chairs in the garden, and nailed bread to the wall—how Lydia (one of my girls who comes here to play) carried off the steps with Joel's help & left them nearly in pieces, & threw mud on our nice white wall; and how Nicolas, who sweeps the chapel, found my broom that I have kept systematically hid from him these weeks & broke it. Just like days are different, so are months.—We miss the papa of our house considerably. For the first 2 days I think I never felt "balkier" in all my life—didn't want to do *anything*. But there were the faithful six to teach in English class; the regular services to conduct; the visits to make . . . Poor old Serrano has gone—we did our best for him but it seemed in vain. He comes back all too often, drunk. Came here once at dinnertime in that condition. For half an hour I kept my nerve (and the table) between us: then I began to pray the Lord for grace and calmness. Nicolasa, Lucas' little girl, came to borrow my skillet. I whispered, "*Que Lucas venga pronto*" ("Tell Lucas to come quickly") & wasn't I glad to see him come!

Bro. Winans had to take money with him for his trip, but left enough for me & the boys till his return. But I had so many to feed that finances ran pretty low. I didn't worry, but prayed; and God sent me a check sufficient, by mail, in good time! He is constantly with us, praise His name! Yours, happy in Him,

*"... all nice and fat and 'done'
except toenails and eyelashes ..."*

MONSEFU, PERU, S.A., Nov. 17, 1920

MY DEAR COUSIN RUTH, AUNT MARY AND UNCLE JOHN:

This may not be a long letter but at least I'm thinking it will tell you something you want to know.—You have a new cousin to love!

Our Baby came two weeks sooner than we were expecting but she was all nice and fat and "done" except toenails and eyelashes, and they're growing. Hasn't any great quantity of hair, and what is, is common brown.—Eyes, blue; very fair and white skin; 21 inches long; weight 7½ lbs. Doesn't cry much and is a good baby so far. Was born at 6 in the evening of Nov. 4. A week later, when her eighth day was well begun, we took her to prayer meeting in the chapel room and she was christened Nedra Ann Jedonne Winans and we gave her to God with all our hearts...

Lucas, the native ass't pastor here, wove a big basket cradle for me, and Jedonne's father hung it from the ceiling by ropes. It swings beautifully...

You may be sure we are very happy these days. We both were wanting a girl baby and it's been the next dearest dream of my life. "Jedonne" (pronounced Jedawn-na) is French; means "I give"; for if there was one thing more than all else that I sought and worked and prayed for in her prenatal culture it was that she be born a giver, as far unselfish as possible on earth...

There—she's really waking up I guess—no bluff—well, praise the Lord for our baby! Yours,

6

"Underneath Are the Everlasting Arms"

"We keep on obeying orders from above"

MONSEFU, PERU, S.A., Jan., 1921

DEAR COUSIN RUTH AND AUNT MARY AND UNCLE JOHN:

What wouldn't I give if I could only put our baby in your arms for a few minutes till you could see and feel the realness of the little new cousin? . . .

We all had a great time Christmas . . . We all hung up our stockings around the baby's swinging basket, even her own tiny stockings. In hers I put the little booties you sent, and they came just at the right time, too, for she had just outgrown her first pair. The dainty dress goods with trimming and the embroidery hoops were just the thing too. I do thank you so much . . .

There are continually marks of God's presence among us and His loving answers to your prayers and ours. Since we began in Chiclayo three have been saved and others are under conviction. Here in Monsefu God's Spirit is working too; last night a little girl was con-

verted, and a week before that two were saved and one reclaimed. A man who has been coming regularly said that he was already half-converted, and next Sunday he was determined to let God finish the work.

For a while we slept on mats upon the mission benches whenever we went to Chiclayo, but we have bought mattresses and sleep more comfortably now. Even the heat does not keep us awake after enough of the crowd has dispersed to permit of the closing of the front doors without their being banged upon vigorously by fists, feet and stones. I have a candle and a box of matches on a chair at the head of my bed, in case of need during the night on account of the baby, and in my sleepiness on one of those occasions left the little taper lighted while I went off to dreamland again. Was wakened by the smell of singed hair and, behold, I was on fire more than could be wished. The candle had fallen over. I was glad that He that keepeth thee shall not slumber. My guardian angel no doubt was right there.

In truth, more than once I've been grateful for that angel to whom God gives a "charge concerning thee." . . .

We preach to such unruly congregations there in Chiclayo that sometimes one could be tempted to think it not worth while. Notwithstanding, we keep on obeying orders from above, and know that nothing is impossible to God, nor to him that believeth. "Labor together in prayer" with us and we will surely rejoice together.

Lovingly your cousin and niece.

"Bright as heart could wish"

MONSEFU, PERU, Jan. 24, 1921

DEAR ETHEL:

. . . You are surely welcome to be Auntie to Jedonne. You have surely won the place by your loving gifts, and

deserved it otherwise abundantly by our "age-long" friendship.

I can't tell you how strangely I felt that first moment she was mine "to touch and look upon." Beside the bewildering joy, as I put out my hand toward the rounded white outlines I could see in the dusk & found a little wet hand—I was astonished how wet it was. She was 7 & a half pounds, I think I told you, and now she is at least 11. She's rather baldheaded, otherwise quite as pretty, fat & bright as heart could wish. I haven't had a bad night with her yet . . .

'Spect I will have to quit here, and start supper.

Part of this I wrote with Baby on my lap. . . . Lovingly yours—

"Feel a keen sense of your praying"

MONSEFU, PERU, Feb. 11, 1921

DEAR EVERYBODY:

. . . We are surely busy. The chapel building goes up steadily. The meetings in Chiclayo were suspended during the carnival of water-throwing, but the last one we had there we nearly caught our share of the nonsense. The boys of the street threw "globos" of water at us while I was playing the organ; one burst in front of me, one at my left, one at my right, and one on the wall behind and over my head; but not one landed on me. I played on with much glee in my soul along with the calmness.

Joel and John are ever so fond of their little sister, and her papa and mama for some reason or other seem quite attached to her too! I wonder if you will ever see her before Jesus comes. She is three and a half months old now, and is as healthy, happy and pretty as our hearts could wish. She is about 25 inches long and

weighs twelve pounds and a bit more. Since she was a month old she has not kept me from my old round of teaching, preaching, visiting, housework, etc. You may be sure life has to be about as regular as clockwork to get everything done—my correspondence comes out “at the little end of the horn.”

This has not been written without countless interruptions, so please excuse mistakes or incoherencies . . . We often feel a keen sense of your praying for us.

Yours and God's for Peru,

“One's only refuge”

MONSEFU, PERU, S.A., Sept. 7, 1921

DEAR RUTH AND AUNT MARY AND UNCLE JOHN:

There are quite a bunch of letters from you here that I haven't really answered, though no doubt you get my circular now mailed from Nampa. I can't really answer even yet, for our baby is sick, and even before this I found household cares and missionary work together simply ruinous to my correspondence.

I am often tempted to fear that she won't live. We keep praying and hoping and doing the best we can for her . . . Baby is asleep.—That is, fact is, about all she does any more. In times like this God is one's only refuge and He is a great refuge and strength. . . . His will is ours in all things.

I hope you keep on writing to me even when I am bad in neglecting you. You may be sure you are ever in my heart and prayers, and that it makes me glad to feel your prayers and love. Yours by many bonds of affection,

"Nights I cried myself to sleep"

Sept., 1921

DEAR MAMA AND ALL:

A long, long time ago I meant to send you this, and now I suppose you will get this no sooner than you may see it or a part of it in the *Other Sheep*.

Juancito is sick with a cold. He is therefore "pegado" [sticking close] to my side instead of running out to play and I'm not sure how this will progress as a result.

My days are a bit different now and if I write what occupies my thoughts it may not be best . . .

Have taken up breathing exercises again with Roger, and Greek with Joel! Continue *a b c* with Juancito off and on; of course there are also the three or four classes in Bible school to teach every day except Sunday and Monday, and Sunday I do not go to Chiclayo any more, I teach a S.S. class here. We both go Wednesdays however . . .

Since Assembly numbers have been converted in the Sierra, and here and in Chiclayo together not a week has gone by I believe without from one to four new seekers. God's blessing is manifestly upon us.

It seems years and years since the 16th of this month. Tuberculosis is a regular scourge here on the coast. —It is in the very air.

"You oughtn't to take your baby with you visiting," Mrs. Vasquez, the English missionary, used to tell me. "But she seems so strong and well, and disease germs are everywhere anyway," I used to answer.

—The hardest thing was to see her suffer. God mercifully shortened that. She was sick hardly more than two weeks (had had the cough more than 2 months but so many have had colds nobody thought anything of it.) And He took her—

It isn't here as it is in the homeland; you can't step out of your niche a few days with someone to take your place. So you keep right on. You hardly know how, but you do, or God does the doing. Gal. 2:20 suddenly comes to have a new intense meaning and reality until you *do* almost feel *you are NOT* you.

And when you get time to do nothing, you don't do nothing . . . you get your Bible and read and pray. This is the first time in my life I *could* do that. It used to hurt more than *comfort* though it did comfort as well as hurt. Now it comforts, oh, infinitely! and only a little, hurts.

When you get your balance a little better you can visit again more. In the meantime you only visit when you are sent for, and you just live on the Word of God, and He Himself closes you in and fills you and there is a new strength in you not of yourself at all.

Never, *never*, have I felt Him so close. "Underneath are the everlasting arms."

And then—when they come and call you to pray with a man who thought he was about to die and wanted to get saved—oh, you are ready from your heart's deepest depth! And the man *gets saved*, and is not afraid to die any more, and the joy in you mounts over the pain in you and you *know intimately Him* who triumphs over death absolutely, who *did* rob every sorrow of its power, once and forever! And *all life* is for—all that life is for, is *FOR HIM!* Love Jesus? Yes, I do love Jesus. All the passionate adoration of all the soul is His by His mighty power to *call* it and *answer* it. *Jesus is ours.* How can we ever realize *THAT?* *He*, the supreme soul of all the universe! Jesus, the Son of God!

. . . In a new and intense way Jesus Christ has become the darling of my life. He fills my thoughts more than ever in all my life before.—There do come times of tremendous spiritual conflict, when one can do *nothing* but simply look to Jesus and wait till the storm

passes or the oppression ceases: times when the name of Jedonne seems to be thrust into the place of the name Jesus. But that great exalted name of Jesus is steadily gaining a continually greater victory in my heart's deepest places and fills my whole spirit. . . .

There is plenty to keep one busy and God is sufficient to keep one contented: and I do keenly appreciate Roger, Joel, and John. Did I tell you Joel is studying Greek with me? Makes me remember the time I was six years old! . . .

Sept. 30. Today Lola (Natividad's daughter) brought me some clothing she had made for the boys and Jedonne . . . Well—I laid away in my trunk the little ones. As yet . . . well, there never *will* be anyone to take *her* place—but someday—well, God is a God of *hope* and I *do hope*.—But not till the sadness is more gone. We want another *glad* baby or *none*. Still sometimes I am dreadfully tempted to give away every last little dud.

In this country it isn't the custom for women or children to go to the cemetery. But that day in Chiclayo—Sept. 17—the girls and women *did* accompany the little casket quite a way—then returned to the home, except Joel and John and I and one little girl who insisted on going with her papa, who was among the rest of the men.—Nearly a dozen of them.—Then when we were in sight of the cemetery I brought the children back.—They played along the roadside unforbidden.—I walked alone.—A bony, old Indian woman passing by stepped directly in front of me and without any "saludos" or anything demanded, "Who's dead?" It took my breath for a minute, couldn't answer. She repeated, "Who's dead? "*Una criatura*," I answered then, as if it had been just any baby.

Daytimes I never cried except in the house alone . . . nights I cried myself to sleep in Roger's arms . . .

Say, you would *love your son Roger* if you could know him these days.

Many times I have started mentally to write you *just about him* but somehow it isn't easy . . .

But *this I will* say, I love him more than I ever dreamed I could; our love and understanding deepen every year. Guess it isn't quite 2 years, is it? My, it seems more than that. He is exceedingly precious to me and a comfort unspeakably great . . .

"A never-failing refuge"

MONSEFU, PERU, S.A., Sept. 30, 1921

MY DEAREST ETHEL:

. . . One of the Bible School boys—hardly 15 or 16—a mere mischievous youngster who sorely tried our patience when he was here first—preached so we all listened spellbound, and gave glory to God with all our hearts. His mother had come down to visit the school & sat in one corner of the church, weeping for joy. "Ah," she said tearfully, "that child truly belongs to God!"—Nearly all their family were converted during the past two years; formerly were very fanatical; are relatives of a Catholic priest.

By this time perhaps you know through some other source of the one severe trial we suffered losing our ten months' old baby. Only God is able to bring one through such times with victory and *He* is a never-failing refuge.

Joel, and John, and Roger are more than ever a comfort to me. But they are *not my dream-baby* . . .

In every hour of suffering, even the most extreme suffering, one perfect comfort I have found: the word of God. When it fills the heart & mind & conquers & excludes to the utmost degree possible whatever anguish

or torment is attacking mind or body, it is as though *God Himself* were filling the whole being, in new measure & intensity; and suffering turns to heavenly glory. The joy in you mounts over the pain in you & you *know intimately* Him who triumphs absolutely over death & every sorrow & sin once & forever! Love Jesus? Yes! We do love Jesus! . . .

I can't think of any warmer-hearted prayer I could pray for you than just simply, May *He* bless you more & more *Himself*. . . . Yours and His lovingly,

7

Bandits and Beating

"Prisoners for Jesus' sake"

The condition of this letter indicates that it suffered from the rigors of missionary life, for the last sheet bears mud stains and in some places the words are completely obliterated.

HUALLGAYOC, PERU, S.A., June 12, 1922

DEAREST MAMA AND PAPA AND ILO:

Blessed be the name of our God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! May His Holy Spirit rest upon us all and abide with us now and forever to His glory.

Now—to tell you all I can of what has happened I will try.

Four days ago I sprinkled my clothes early to iron them after breakfast, and otherwise had all the *alforjas* [saddlebags] ready for our departure to Pan de Azucar. While they were getting the charcoal iron ready and I was changing Joel's clothes, about half-past eight or nine we heard a revolver fired outside. "What is that?"

Joel asked in alarm. "I don't know, son," I answered. "Hurry, get your feet in here," and the dressing went on. We were not "buttoned up" before several bandits came in and were searching our *alforjas*, collecting all the books they could find and incidentally my husband's razor and my guitar—spilling everything else about in confusion with much rough language and terrifying threats.

As soon as I could I went out where Roger was trying to read the arrest warrant which the sheriff and his deputy had brought. They would let him see but a few lines—it was quite lengthy—and the seal of the governor below—given in Santa Cruz, the nearest town. All he could see was that it included an order to absent us from the neighborhood but the understanding seemed to be that they were to take us to town. Since it was an authorized arrest apparently, of course Roger kept insisting that they take us there direct and when the sheriff spoke of bandits (not his own) killing us on the way Roger made it plain to him that the responsibility would be entirely theirs for our lives and property, in all that should happen contrary to law and order. We asked only to be taken to the governor in safety. They replied only with abusive and insolent language. He made them account for the Bible they had snatched from his hand and thrown aside, and assured them that every single article must be well cared for and nothing lost, for "reclames" would be made for everything. He called me (not seeing me for the people between) and had me make ready quickly to accompany them, as I was included in the arrest; so I gave him comb and candle to put in his pockets, took his night-cap and matches in my own, wrapped up along with a tiny book of Psalms in English rhymes that can be sung to hymn tunes, and away we went after consoling the youngsters and giving a good-bye all around. I assured the weeping Joel we would be back before night—that was my strong con-

viction at the moment—afterward I wondered, for town was eight or ten miles distant and no human hope of terminating the affair so quickly.

We walked down the trail rapidly. After following the river for maybe a mile, through brush, trees, fern, moss, flowers—every thing so beautiful—they made a halt and demanded that I play the guitar for them. They had been talking very insolently all the way, making the worst of threats continually, and Roger with unyielding dignity giving a clear exposition of the usefulness of American consuls, the plain statement of Peruvian law itself, the personal danger they incurred in proceeding otherwise than in legal compliance with their orders, etc. He refused at once in the matter of the guitar, insisting that we proceed directly to Santa Cruz and be delivered to the proper authorities. Then asking me if I wanted to play, I said no; and he refused them a second time. They had been drinking already, were still passing the bottle around, would only continue getting drunker. I felt it was *not* the leading of the Spirit (to play) and the truth was, the danger increased with delay: our only human safety seemed to us to get *into* the hands of the town authorities *out* of the hands of the bandits who were famous in the neighborhood for repeated thefts and murders.

All the way my soul had been filled with rejoicing. It could mean nothing but a decisive test case for the question of religious liberty in all northern Peru and affect the whole country. I was wondering if we would be permitted to have our books in prison and exulting over the little hymnal in my pocket, and of *this* for Jesus' sake, and being with Roger in it. Besides, the language of the bandits was so full of words not in the dictionaries and completely out of my vocabulary that I did not try to follow the conversation. Still I got a little without trying, as I have already reported. I heard Roger protest in indignant surprise that in our country a woman

was sacred, especially when about to become a mother. "*Annque sea del burro,*" was Leoncio's insolent answer followed by a lot more I didn't get the sense of. It never entered my joy-bewildered head that he (the son of the sheriff and the worst of the five bandits) was planning to violate me before killing the both of us. The threats of killing I got plain enough but had no idea they would actually do it, and only realized we were prisoners for Jesus' sake.—But Roger had placed me in front when Leoncio began his threats against me, and we walked on rapidly until the halt I mentioned. I had said "no," but Leoncio planted himself in front of me, turned me around by the shoulders and pushed me toward the guitar. In the instant Roger's fist shot past me into the bandit's face. They all turned on him except the sheriff and one bandit named Juan Flores who took no part against us from start to finish; but the deputy yelled the order to kill us at once, "*Matenlas no mas!*" The confusion was awful. Leoncio fired a shot close behind our necks as we stood there together; the air was full of flying curses, threats. I got between Roger and them all I could but he is so much taller than I and hindered me besides all he could. He had not struck a second blow—NONE in his own behalf—ceasing when they turned their attention from me to him. We both appealed to the sheriff: at first he seemed as much against us as any, in words, not in physical abuse; but at last he began to quiet them down, promising that farther on they could make us play for them. So the march began again. My hat had a big hole in it from the blows (not direct at me but I got them for getting in their way) and someone had kicked it into the ravine. The sheriff sent a man after it—guess he didn't like the looks of my head without it. I got my hair secured with hairpins as best I could, stuck in my broken back comb once more and went on marveling at God's protection of our lives thus far. It dawned on me at last as we

stood there together drenching each other with our blood—Roger with his arm around my neck—that the bandits, at least, were bent on killing us before ever we should reach Santa Cruz, and the sheriffs in no wise disposed to hinder. Three thoughts filled my soul with exultant joy every single moment of the whole experience: This was for Jesus' sake! Whom I loved with my whole being! In a short time we might be in glory!—And I was *with Roger* in it all—we were together, together!

Lots of other things I thought of too: that God would take care of Joel and John, and comfort you; and the effects or results of it all for the gospel in northern Peru. It was funny to remember too how Roger had always spoken so lightly of his former escapes and persecution, that never in all his life had he attained to shed a single drop of blood for Jesus' sake. Our hair, faces, necks and collars were wet with it now. We stole glances at each other and smiled with glee. We were *one* more than ever. We were going through something together, and didn't yet know how it would end either. And it might be that very, very soon I should have two babes in my arms in heaven with the Lord. . . .

There was also a feeling of conviction in my heart that if deliverance should come the attack just occurred was providentially to be the cause, occasion, or motive some way. And I believe it was too. Farther on they tried to get us to go down a path to the left but Roger would not budge from the trail we were in. "That is not the road to Santa Cruz," he said firmly. "You are under obligation to take us directly to the authorities who issued the warrant." A great palaver ensued (by no means a respectful dispute). Roger caught sight of a man working in a *chacra* [field] near by, not an "hermano" but a friend and sympathizer: and he called him: "*Villareal!*" The man came and Roger summoned him as a neutral and friend of both sheriff and himself, to be witness of all this. Of course everybody knew that by-

path was no road to Santa Cruz. Instead it led to one of the wildest, loneliest, most secluded spots in the neighborhood, down by the river that our trail had left some time before. A complete change seemed to have come over the two sheriffs now. From being our mortal enemies they seemed to be working for our deliverance. "I will let you go," he said. "Only pay the commission." "No, sir," Roger replied resolutely, "your business is to deliver us in perfect safety to the proper authorities." That he wouldn't do. I can't remember all the conversation; besides, most of the time, while the *teniente* (sheriff) was engaged with Roger the *sub-teniente* was talking with me, trying to dissuade us from persisting in going on to Santa Cruz. There are more people ahead, he told me, bent on killing you. Even if we succeeded in getting you to town the whole populace was waiting to burn you alive in the plaza. It was the same town where a mob nearly strangled one of our colporteurs and almost [took—(manuscript torn)] Castaneada's life besides other assaults on [our] believers. Not one single Protestant in it and no [telegraph] office. You couldn't be sure any letter would [be sent] by the post office for you. However you couldn't [worry] about the burning. More likely no doubt you [wouldn't] ever get there.

"[What] I want to do," I told him resolutely, "is what is [right] and honorable with God. *No me importa que me quemen.*" (It doesn't matter to me if they burn me.) He looked at me strangely and said not another word. I looked toward the blue sky and felt the presence of innumerable angels. Why, the ruffians couldn't do *anything* without God's permission! If God let them kill us, it would mean *so much* for the gospel in Peru and we were, oh, so ready to go! We were *completely* God's to live or die! The intense, exultant joy I cannot describe!

By this time Roger and the sheriff had arrived almost to the point of agreeing that we would consent to be re-

leased, return to the house where we had been, pack up and leave the place before night, taking our things as soon as we could get horses to carry them, provided the sheriff would accompany us with guarantees of safety from further assault from the bandits. . . . The sheriff absolutely refused to conduct us in any direction [least] of all Santa Cruz. He had never had any intention, or orders, of taking us to town he said but get [rid of] us on the way. But he said, "*Tengo lastima [de] la Señora.*" (He had compassion on me!) In Santa Cruz they will burn you, he said. On the [road] they will kill you, except you return to the [coast] and leave the country at once never to [come] back. We wouldn't promise that of course. . . . And Roger stubbornly refused to go anywhere unaccompanied by officers; they who had put us in danger thus far without reason (bringing such a posse of bandits) were responsible for our self-conduct either to the governor himself or back to the house he had taken us from. (And the bandits continued their fierce threats.) But the sheriff refused still to go with us more, anywhere. His offer to free us for 50 dollars was scornfully turned down by Roger's answering that no man would sell himself thus in a case of simple right or wrong, law and justice (or something like that). I prayed fervently to God to make the sheriff change his mind. He did in the same moment. "I will go," he said, and both sheriffs took us back over the trail, leaving the bandits behind. However after a short distance he left us again, and only the *sub-teniente* followed us. As the other turned I begged him to save the books and guitar for me if possible. He seemed to think he couldn't help it if the bandits proceeded to burn them as they said they were going to, but I prayed to God. . . .

A dozen or so of the brethren had assembled at [manuscript torn] . . . Dionisia's where we were staying and as soon as we had dismissed the *sub-teniente* (or

he had dismissed himself) they came down the slope to meet us with tears and lamentations. "Why!" I exclaimed. "This is a time to rejoice, not wail! First for the privilege of suffering a bit for Jesus' sake, and then for His great deliverance that we escaped with our lives!" But you couldn't quiet them. They continued to bewail us with embraces and kisses and tears like rain. We went to the brook near by to wash each other's gore and indulge in some of the most fervent lovemaking yet ever passed between us—then returned to the house to arrange for a speedy departure.

There was still so much to be feared from the bandits who had never ceased their threats of waylaying us on our road out—(and as Roger recounted the story to the brethren I learned for the first time of the threat of violating me)—that toward the middle of the afternoon, the soonest we could get ready, we crossed the river to Cornelia's house in Tosten, in disguise of clothes borrowed from the native Christians. There were no horses available on such short notice and the brethren were too terrified to go any distance to bring any; there was no time to lose; we took what we could carry with ease and went up the mountain afoot with our children as far as a certain schoolhouse (in a district just outside the real danger zone of the bandits), one called San Juan de Dios. On the way the rain drenched us. It was the same little schoolhouse where we had taken refuge, drenched with rain, about two weeks before, on our way to Tosten. He and his wife received us with the utmost kindness; we dried out as well as we could by the smoky little fire, ate hungrily of the "ollocos" (a tuber smaller than the potato, cooked without salt) and after a meeting held among eight or nine men and boys in the schoolroom there were brought ponchos and sacks to spread on the hard dirt floor for our bed. My, we were glad to lie down anywhere. It was too damp and cold to sleep well—and the nervous excitement we had

been through and weakness through loss of blood and the climb up this far on the mountain—but our hearts were full of joy and gratitude.

It was about 7:30 a.m. June 9 that we left San Juan de Dios, Roger and I alone. . . . The previous afternoon just before leaving Dionisia's, Juan Flores (the "good bandit" who also told us, "Your religion is the truth") and an old man brought back to us the guitar and all the books except the Greek grammar Enneaglot and Roger's razor. . . . I think both sheriffs were altogether against us until it dawned on them (there where Villareal appeared) that it might not be safe for their skins to be responsible for the killing of two inoffensive American citizens.—But we could not carry everything with us for such a long journey on foot, and had to leave the guitar with the rest of our things. And when the bandits came back after us, after we had left, as they *did*—not being satisfied yet—they took away the guitar and who knows if we will get it again? I can only pray; most important is that God give us victory on behalf of guaranteees for religious liberty for our brethren, God's little flock who all these years have been robbed from time to time by these bandit crews and threatened continually with just such assaults and danger of death as befell ourselves.

Well, we couldn't be sure of not being followed or waylaid on our way from San Juan de Dios to Tongod, so we kept our eyes and ears exceedingly in the alert. When people approached we took to the woods, and often followed bypaths through the forests not far from the main trail in preference to keeping the direct route. Once we barely got hid in time and were so close we could hear voices inquiring and answering—"no pasaron por este lado" ["They did not pass by here"] or something to that effect. *Somebody* was evidently after somebody or something. We simply took no risks. At one house where lives a relative of Soares, a friend

though not a Protestant, we stopped when the afternoon rains began, and they gave us dinner; were very kind to us . . . I rode, till Tongod, and was so grateful! Roger and I were still weak from loss of blood; and we had been on a steep climb from 7 till nearly noon, through the woods and forests at times where passage was difficult, and from Padilla's to Suares' was about 2½ hrs. trip.

There we had no better bed than in the schoolhouse, but we ourselves were not so damp and cold. (Arrived *wet* but dried at the fire soon.) Yet we did not get any too much sleep and the wetting we *had* had, had given me a severe toothache. Next morning we three set off on two horses, taking turns walking and riding. Roger walked by far the most of the way. About three or four in the afternoon we came to the next to the last house before getting to the high *jalca* [summit], on the vast hacienda Quilcate and arranged to pay for pasture for our animals, food and lodging for ourselves until next day. Suares' mother had put up a good lunch for us of hominy, cheese, chicken and yuca . . . half of which we had eaten at noon, half we saved for next day's noon lunch.—At this little house, though strangers we were received kindly and given a good lot of sheepskins and ponchos for our bed—in a queer room! Potatostoreroom, and idol shrine, for there in a box like they have for their images in this country was a San Antonio with a child in his arms, and a crucifix. But we enjoyed the best night's sleep yet in that place. Set out refreshed. Arrived Huallgayoc a little after noon. We had crossed a high cold *jalca*, majestic bare mountain scenery—and . . . the continental divide and are on the Atlantic slope (about 35,000 kilometers high).

The men wouldn't let me cook—and hired an Indian to see to our meals.—I washed the blood out of my sweater collar (haven't had a bit of chance before, we have traveled like fugitives) and a few cloths that

wrapped our lunch—and made our beds and took a walk to an old foundry with the three men; we had worship last night and this morning and read our Bible. [Letter incomplete]

X Esther's utter disregard for danger may be recognized again and again in her letters. Roger Winans wrote that he never was able to discover anything that Esther was afraid of. Once he was forced to restrain her from attacking a large snake in the chicken house with her bare hands.

"Roger is just right for me"

The miracle organ mentioned in this and other letters was a family treasure which Esther's mother, Anna Carson, had received at the age of seventeen as a gift from her own mother. Perhaps nothing could have pleased Esther more than to have this precious organ sent down to her in Peru.

MONSEFU, PERU, S.A., July 3, 1922

DEAR FOLKS:

This can not be more than a "hasty note" scribbled on the nearest-at-hand paper—something that reached me today . . . I haven't heard from you "for a coon's age" and have been painfully conscious of the uncertainty of your having heard from me either for a good long interval, part of the time there was no chance to send anything for want of a post office . . .

Humanly impossible, it was actually made to be by God's loving omnipotence, that we arrived here last Friday! My whole being is full of joy and gratitude.

. . . My time is *not my own* and really things happen so fast and continually it almost bewilders me. My free

moments I have to rest and pray. There are so many people all the time to see, speak with, pray with, prepare sermons for, play for on your organ. . . . —Souls are being saved and sanctified and God is blessing us in every way. The dress goods you and papa sent me for Christmas I cut out in San Miguel months ago, but Miss Holland's coming, my la grippe sickness, . . . the mountain trip immediately following, with its *unexpected* incidents resulted that I arrived in Monsefu in a big kitchen apron and shawl. A dear sister washed and ironed *one* white dress I had with me, the only one I could bring besides these unsewed ones; her daughter made the one mentioned above, and I made up the one Ilo gave me (green vine figure); both are beauties! Now I have all I need till I get back to San Miguel where I have plenty of duds.

Wish you would mail to me my "Deutsches Liederbuch." Maybe I'm a heathen for wanting it but I *do*.

This packing for moving is the funniest ever.—You should have seen Roger and me try to "cull" down our books. We only have about 14 big shelves full and day before yesterday I bought him another! He is as bad a bookworm as I am. We will have 2 big boxes of books to ship and lots of books "stuck around" in the 3 trunks, 3 suitcases and 3 handbags. You never saw the beat. We neither of us dared scold the other because—pot & kettle both black—. At last he turned his back on me complete and I laughed so at him that he turned around again and we had a hugging spell.

This (second honeymoon?) has beat the first one greatly . . . Remember what you said about marriage, Mamma, "game just begun" . . . Well, its nearly 2 years now and we have NEVER had *one misunderstanding* that gave either of us the *slightest pain*. Some record I think even for sanctified people. Roger is just right for me.—His odd question comes to my mind just now—"Why did God make you so attractive to me?"

It seems like a miracle that **THAT ORGAN** should come to me in Peru. It is so much in my thoughts with you and God.—My, my, my . . .

It is springtime here. Roger and I have felt it strongly even in this tropic where seasons are so little marked. Some trees however are bare in July-August-Sept.-Oct.—just leafing out now—and the birds of all colors are everywhere “singing their heads off.”

In San Miguel we will *see* and *feel* **REAL** rain again. I am homesick for it as ever I was for snow!

It is impossible to tell you the story again now . . . but will say first that Roger and I are completely recovered from the beating the bandits gave us . . . that the authorities . . . have begun prosecution of the criminals, that the children did not suffer capture nor harm of any kind, and that though the purpose was to kill us God delivered us and at no moment did we feel fright, anger, nor confusion in the slightest degree. God kept us in perfect peace and joy. [Letter incomplete]

(The first four pages of the following letter are missing.)

“Not here to count our lives dear”

. . . decision and I must confess I yielded to what seemed Roger’s stubborn preference with a fear that I should pay up for it by losing him.—Fever!—In the end . . . What shall I say? He feels well *now*, and is so heart and soul in *the work*, the Lord’s *own work*, that after all one can only say we are not here to count our lives dear unto ourselves.—It is clearly to the advantage of the work in Northern Peru and if he doesn’t stand up under it he can take his furlough which is nearly due anyway and bring the boys Joel and John to *you*. It is not likely that I shall come yet, nor even in two years

more when my term is up, but when I am no good here any more no doubt it is the wisest economy for me too to return if the Lord tarries . . .

Greek and Hebrew are not going out of my life, nor the hope and preparation incident to the translation. I feel a strange confidence that *that is coming sometime and somehow*. "He that believeth let him not make haste." . . .

Never have I more *deeply* loved *Him* and *His will* is *all I want*. Yours and His—

"Strong, healthy and lively"

SAN MIGUEL, PERU, S.A., Aug. 31, 1922

DEAR RUTH AND AUNT MARY AND UNCLE JOHN: You will surely praise the Lord with us for our new baby boy, Roger Joseph Winans, born Sunday, 4 a.m., Aug. 27. Weighs only 5 lbs. but is strong, healthy and lively. Light hair, blue eyes, 20½ in. long. Looks like me, so be sure he needs your prayers! Am afraid he hasn't Jedonne's angelic disposition.—God is so good to us. . . . We are happy and doing well.

Lovingly yours ever,

8

A Step Toward the Translation

Jaen, a "sleepy little settlement of a few mud houses," was the last outpost of civilization before entering the great interior wilderness of Peru. But to Esther and Roger it was the city of their dreams—from here they could reach the Aguaruna Indians!

"My first letter written in Jaen"

JAEN, PERU, S.A., July 14, 1923

MY PRECIOUS PEOPLE:

You can scarcely imagine my intense feeling as I head my first letter written in JAEN. We arrived Thurs. just after nightfall, fording the river in the dark, one so deep that I could not get my heels up high enough to keep from getting wet because I was too slow to take them out of the stirrups in time. It was raining when we were approaching the town, too dark to see anything but outlines of the 8 animals, the whitish streak of road,

the trees & bushes thick on each side. Then the rain stopped—we could hear the river ahead of us that we had to cross.—Then there came irrigation ditches to cross—at last the river—more irrigation ditches—the lights of the town few & dim—I heard a man clear his throat—then a whistled tune; then I could see the figure of a man; “*Buenas Noches*,” he said and I answered the same.—After nearly 3 weeks of journey over the mountain and canyon and forest and bleak cold highland and hot desert patches—by river & brook & cane brakes—past villages, towns, & uninhabited wildernesses—over a continental divide—over roads all but impassable for various obstacles of precipice, rocks, mud, or narrowness, or steepness, across a river by raft, once, the animals swimming—passing nights in the open & frequently drenched with rain we and our bedding & our clothes—suffering sometimes from hunger, thirst, cold, fatigue, “*mt. sickness*” (due to altitude) or wetness—or abominable insects, or losing our way—but *never once* discontented, discouraged, or unhappy. Suffered did I say? Well, I ought to be ashamed to call it so; we never suffered enough to do our bodies harm; baby gained steadily in liveliness, weight, and understanding, & I am in good health & spirits at the end of it all, as are all the rest. . . .

My mule—“*Mine own mule*” named Ford—was in the lead; and once I waited a long, long time in the dark for the others to catch up, for the fording in the dark with heavily loaded animals was not so easy, and my mule is best. Anyhow he goes right ahead river or no river—the others had to be driven to enter sometimes.—At last I heard Roger’s voice relieving the tense suspense: “All right, Esther?” “Yes—just waiting! What in the world kept you all so long?”—“I had to go around by the bridge; it’s a long way from the ford.”

Now you see I have begun to tell you all, from the end to the beginning; but I shall begin from the beginning to the end as I have opportunity. Will tell you

how our home looks, & stop for this time—you will see why—*work* to do.

A one-roomed house of mud whitewashed and much scratched up—room about 14 by 14 feet, I should judge. A bench of sticks on each side of the room, for beds—Toribio & his wife on the one side and we on the other. Am writing at a table in the center: it is about 3 ft. square. Along the wall at my right is another bench, and under it are bags & boxes & truck of all sort to be put away & in order. There is a beginning made; on one end, my books and dishware are already set in array. Under the bed, the saddles, ropes, pack-saddles & apparatus are piled, and one big bag of dirty clothes—3 weeks' wash. At the foot of the bench-bed my hammock bed, reaching to the window. Behind it on the floor a great pile of "junk" to be put away and in order—no beginning made yet. A few pictures & mottoes on the wall. It is 11 o'clock. The men have gone to "explore the land" to see where & how we shall live. The mayor has received us with every kindness, has loaned this house to live in for a month maybe—an outhouse in the rear to cook in—Luzmila (Toribio's wife) is there now cooking soup & I have to go this minute and buy rice. Baby has slept, "dinnered," and played, so no trouble except to keep an eye on him & take him "out doors" nearly every hour or so.

Have met *people*: many curious visitors: many interesting episodes: what I can't tell in letters can wait for the ETERNITY that we shall be *together* with the Lord! Amen! Roger sends love.

Yours rejoicing in His will—

July 17, 1923

P.S. . . . We may move out of here this week, to a little house on the hill about 3 miles from town out of the *malarial lowland*. It is *beautiful* here; the hot season not yet begun; occasional light showers; the people very

kind & friendly. One "Amelia Moreno" gave me a chicken. Must close till next time. Roger sends love.

* * * * *

Baltazar Rubio, Peruvian missionary to the Aguarunas, said that Esther Carson Winans cooked on an ordinary stove (which he said is "composed of three stones with a round clay plate on top") and "lived in the grass huts of the Peruvians, who felt honored with her presence."

"We cook on a fire on the floor"

JAEN, PERU, S.A., Sept. 8, 1923

DEAREST ETHEL:

Sometimes I get almost homesick for my old friends, but letters & prayers go a long way to console one.

First I want to tell you that Miss Park sent me your letter and check, & that I thank you *ever so much*. Our salary is not sufficient for all the expenses incident to the opening of a new station like Jaen—such things as brooms, buckets, basins, dishpans, have to be brought in from the coast, a long expensive trip, costly in time and money. And so your help goes a long way.

Sept. 13.—I have tried so hard to finish this and could not! We are getting "fixed up" as fast as we can, but all cannot be done at once. We live mostly on the dirt floor of a rented "house" made of sticks & upright poles tied together with wild vines, & a grass straw roof. We cook on a fire on the floor, put our pots on big stones, & serve on a table made of sticks . . . We are building two houses quite similar to this one, one for ourselves and one for Toribio Suares & his family . . . Meanwhile we two little families live together.

We have taken up government land; our piece is about 12 or 13 acres, & Toribio's somewhat larger. Renting or buying is both expensive & unsatisfactory in many ways. This land is on a small mountain just above Jaen, and this way we hope to avoid the malarial fever almost universal in this region.—Other tropical fevers do get us sometimes but so far, we get over them too, and go on our way rejoicing.—My husband has made one trip to the interior Indians—the Aguarunas—already, and brought back a vocabulary of about 100 words. They *want* him to come and live with them & teach them.—It is a terribly unhealthy place but we would like to pass 4 months of every year with them if possible.

We have neighbors, & we have friends down in Jaen, and we do what we can for their salvation too.

Our work is not a *great* work but it is one that ought to be done, and we feel altogether convinced that it is *ours*, and, oh, how we love Jesus in it! There are plenty of trials and difficulties and we surely do appreciate your love and your prayers! When I pray you do not seem so far away & I feel refreshed in spirit as I realize the nearness & dearness of God's big family.

Sept. 8, '23 . . . The baby is a darling even if he is little & can't even stand alone yet. He is awful to get into mischief, but he is so cherubic happy a little rascal & shows no signs of dying by any means. Has 8 teeth & on his birthday he acquired a white guinea pig and a little puppy dog by way of presents. We had to buy a cow for him as one can't get milk at any price up here.

"A terribly mischievous scamp"

JAEN, PERU, S.A., Dec. 17, 1923

MY DEAR ETHEL:

Your long and delightful letter received this morning; its checks noted and received as a trust from & for

you 2 dear givers and God; to be used for His glory & our mutual eternal joy in Him, Amen. Will tell you both a big *thank you*. Have needed \$35 recently & been praying for that amount. God is answering prayer rapidly. How marvelously He *does answer prayer!*

Roger Joseph is asleep in the hammock under the (mosquetero—mosquito bar) you sent him—us—a year ago. It has been a *great* blessing.—He is doing *fine* now, better in fact than ever before. Getting older. He is still so *tiny* though lately he has been increasing in weight & size . . . is a terribly mischievous scamp, *very* joyful & lively in his disposition. . . . You ask if there is some little thing you can send me! . . . One thing that I do not have to pay duty on is books and cards and papers; and I have wanted *muchly* "The Tract Primer"—a *dozen* of them—IN SPANISH—(Roger says modestly (?), "I could use 3 or four hundred of them.") . . . Maybe *you* have in mind some little "personal thing? Well, one's life here is just *almost too crowded* for such luxuries.—I would *love* to have kindergarten supplies for baby but I would just *have* to have another set for Luzmila's little girl too—at least "divide up." However, *some* things I could easily make if I *had* a set of Diamond Dyes, the 7 rainbow colors. For mere pleasure that is what I happen to *want worst* just now . . .

The God of peace bless you richly & give you His own boundless joy & peace in the Holy Ghost.

9

"Read, Pray, Sing, Rejoice, Study Aguaruna"

"A sort of slump in foreign missions"

JAEN, PERU, S.A., Mar. 7, 1924

DEAR RUTH, AUNT MARY, AND UNCLE JOHN:

This is the sunset hour, and my heart is full of thoughts to you all. Your letter has been unanswered too long already but we have been all sick with the fevers by turns and so it was about all we could do to take care of each other. Roger is still feverish and weak; baby Roger and I still take quinine, and we are so much better that now we seem to be actually fattening on the stuff! . . .

Our Church has taken a sort of "slump" in foreign missions and decided to close the work in Peru. They wanted to send us all to Central America, but we two feel led of the Spirit to continue here as before—trusting the Lord for our support. In one of his letters Roger

wrote: "This is a great country for birds and flowers. God feeds the first bountifully, and clothes the second beautifully, and so He has promised to feed and clothe us if we will trust Him."

By this time you have doubtless received my letter telling of receiving the \$2.00 . . . and of the package too, with its lovely contents of towel and romper suit and rubber apron—such practical gifts as well as beautiful ones. I put them in our Christmas stockings and there were a few other things for every stocking too; we had quite a time over them. Baby was not a bit behindhand in pulling things out of his own wee sock and it was great fun to see the 3 year old Elisa, Torbio's little girl, with her Christmas things too. We killed a fat hen; I had made candy; and we rejoiced in prayer, singing, and Scripture reading among ourselves. By next Christmas the Lord willing we should have others to join us in a truly Christian celebration of the day. We are winning friendship and confidence in several families and continue in our house-to-house visiting, selling scripture portions, etc.

I had to quit this and "do up" the evening duties. It is time now to put out the light and go to sleep.

God bless and keep you ever—alert for His coming—always rejoicing in Him.—

Yours lovingly—

"His fist full of furry hind feet"

JAEN, Mar. 18, 1924

DEAR MISSIONARIES ON THE COAST . . .

If I don't use the typewriter a little will get out of practice altogether; may I practice on you?

We are all quite free of the fevers these days, but continue to take quinine & have added little pills for

the rheumatism that has a mean trick of following the malaria.

Interruption number one. Roger Joseph protests wildly—Que Cosa [What?]-Bah, a little black chicken belonging to one of the neighbors coming toward him. He chases them with tremendous masculine gusto when they are going the other direction but when they think he has something good to eat they scare him out of his wits. . . .

The other day I heard him scolding & screaming by turns and being busy did not go to him; so he came in to me on all four as fast as he could & behind him following him was a little blue & green parrot from next door. Buma the dog began to growl & bark at the bird & baby was very content to shift his share of the quarrel.

You know about how my days go, with housework, visiting, answering a few letters, caring for baby . . . he is asleep now. (When he isn't in some sort of mischief or other it's usually because he's sick or asleep.) What was I, enumerating my occupations, well, also studying the Aguaruna word list; I want to get it "did" before Roger brings me another . . .

Speaking of guinea pigs, most of mine have been given me by women just out of their friendship for me. One has 2 little ones "*bien pintaditos*" [well-spotted little ones]. During family worship this morning I heard an awful squealing from one of them & I had to stop praying long enough to withdraw the cause thereof. Roger Joseph had discovered the new arrivals for the 1st time & had his fist full of furry hind feet. After I got through praying I hunted for the other guinea pig baby & was greatly grieved not to be able to find him. At last, where do you suppose he was? Under Susie Wiggs, his wide fat mother.

On the top of my cupboard I have some tame creatures of another sort less welcome. Taking down a basket of "tetes" (bowls made . . . of gourd-like things)

woof, wow! Out came a great flock of cockroaches enough to shock the soundest nerves. Called my chickens to the feast. Even Roger Joseph joined in the general excitement. Beans are cooking for supper, but I must go buy rice, write another letter, read, pray, sing, rejoice, study Aguaruna—say, wouldn't it be great if Jesus should come before this letter reaches you & we meet in the air so suddenly? O I am ready and looking for Him with such joy & longing!

Meanwhile I am asking God for a fence, a temporary shelter on our land (or where it pleases Him), a saw-mill, a few permanent buildings, some pasture and a little truck garden to help make life a bit easier if that be to His glory. All these we do see by faith already, at a stream called Agua Turbin, on a hill 3 mi. distant where lives Samarin the chief of the Aguarunas & Cosio [sometimes spelled Kosio] the Spanish-speaking negro who has as much influence among them as the chief himself. Believe he is now reading his New Testament & wants us to come & teach "his Indians." We are earnestly praying for the conversion of these 2, and the little Aguaruna nation for God as John Knox asked of God all Scotland for Him. Join us in these requests of our Heavenly Father and so share in our thanksgiving for them when He shall "bring it to pass." I have ceased to specially pray for our own support because I feel convinced that it is already provided for though I do not know how. I believe the Board will not close the work in Peru . . . Closing in haste but in much love,

"How passionately I yearn"

The following letter to Ethel was written on the back of a carbon copy of the letter to the missionaries on the coast. This letter marks another advance toward the coveted goal of reaching the Aguaruna Indians.

We enjoyed our visit in Pomera so much. Learned more of the language & people, & gained in friendship with them. They do not dream how passionately I yearn over them for Jesus. I can hardly wait to go again. Maybe we can move there to live, next Nov. Pomera is about 20 leagues away but the roads are such that it generally means 3 da. on horseback to get there.

. . . Those were such dear verses you copied for me. I have enjoyed reading the books you sent me too. How good you are to me! Especially I do thank you for the Weymouth Testament. I think I wrote thanking you for the Diamond Dyes. Now that we expect to move to Pomera I shall not likely use them till I get there.—

"Nine little schoolgirls"

JAEN, PERU, S.A., Apr. 8, 1924

DEAREST ETHEL:

Never before has a box reached me so soon after its mailing! I was not looking for it months yet.—Answered your letter some time ago, & promised to let you know when box arrived. *Yesterday*.

Buma the dog looks quite stylish in the collar. She *hated* the little bell on it, & the baby *coveted* it, so I took it off & put it on the little "Bruan" to baby's great delight . . . *And the combs EXACTLY* suited me. I do thank you for *everything*, dear Ethel!

I am so sorry I cannot write you a great long letter this time; we have had too many people; and among the visitors, two Aguaruna Indians named Panquit & Et-sambi. Their father was killed; he was "medicine man" of the tribe. These . . . young men are among the best looking of the tribe, know very little Spanish—sufficient for trading . . . Chief's name is Samarin—(Sah mah reen). Do pray for the conversion of these men. They

are so friendly yet with a certain shyness as yet—& we hope to be able to live in their village 8 months out of the year. Jan.—April inclusive are the worst months for fevers—I have been seriously ill—baby & I are both ourselves again—Roger has gone up to Loma Santa to help finish building the house on the hill where we want to live during the fever months so as to have longer lives among these Aguarunas for God.—We are advancing in the study of their language by the help of God.—

Have to go now to visit a class of 9 little schoolgirls in a native home—here in Jaen.

Yours with so much love—

Esther's first term was up in August of 1924. Poor health and the threat of the closing of the mission work in Peru caused Esther to consider a furlough at this time. Her health improved, however, and Esther and Roger joyfully moved to Pomera in Aguarunaland toward the close of the year.

"No feeling of anxiety"

JAEN, PERU, S.A., Apr. 22, 1924

DEAREST ETHEL:

We are in considerable suspense here as to what the [church is] going to do with their work in Peru. We have received nothing on our April salary as yet but no notice of when they expected our salaries to cease. The last definite word that we had was for us to make such arrangements as we could to carry on the work under some other agency if we did not want to go to Guatemala & there has been such a long silence from the coast missionaries that we do not know what to think. But we stood by our first conclusion, to go on in the Aguaruna Indian Mission at all hazards . . .

We have prayed much over these decisions and moves & are sure God will guide in these matters . . .

Meanwhile we are making arrangements to spend a few months in Pomera the village of our Indians. I lack little of mastering the vocabulary Roger bro't me before the rainy season set in, (260 odd words) . . . and now the roads . . . can be travelled, rains are letting up, our fevers over, etc. We are short on funds but perhaps what little merchandise we have will carry us over our little financial stress till God sends more. I have no feeling of anxiety on that account.

Your letter came yesterday & refreshed my spirit. How God is so good to us!—Baby is sitting on the table (on which I am writing) playing with his little Teddy bear you gave him. Baby Roger is doing well at present . . . except that he does not walk. But the little rascal climbs up on the eighth round of a ladder whose rungs are a foot apart. Makes sentences like "Hat-go-money-calle" (*calle* is Spanish word for street)—and spells his name "R-O-E." When he got his finger mashed in the grinding mill yesterday called loudly "Jesus! Jesus!" and is forever asking me to "Pay, Amen."

Better not send me any books or things till we know for sure whether I go in August. God's will be done. We do trust Him & rejoice with joy unspeakable & full of glory!

Your Esther who is God's & loves you so dearly.

"There is no shadow"

JEAN, PERU, S.A., July 3, 1924

DEAR COSUIN RUTH AND AUNT MARY AND UNCLE JOHN,
. . . "We all do fade as a leaf." Have news that my dear mama is not long for this world. Well, I look for Jesus to come any time. And I expect to move to

Heaven myself before I die in that event. Anyhow there is no shadow in Christ's *victory over death* for Himself and for us. I have that victory in my own soul. Must close—

Yours with tender love—

P.S. Board are reconsidering their action and will not likely close the work. Amen!

"Increase of friendly feeling"

JAEN, PERU, S.A., Sept. 5, 1924

DEAR AUNT MARY, UNCLE JOHN AND RUTH:

. . . It is not at all certain that I shall come home on furlough at this time. If I should insist, our Board is honorable to keep their promise and grant it. But they are hard pressed for funds at this time and I am so well now that if home matters can be settled otherwise I do not like to put any extra burden on anyone.

We have been two months away from the Loma Santa home, on another visit to the Aguaruna Indians in Pomera. Had a good time. Learned more of the language and people, increase of friendly feeling between them and us. We hope to move there in November . . .

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Aguaruna Primer

"A high roof of palm leaf thatch"

POMERA, PERU, S.A., Feb. 12, 1925

MY DEAR ETHEL—

Yours & Effie's Christmas check (\$2.00) reached me safely. It would have come in time, too, but the recent revolution in Chota & smaller local ones in Jaen caused a delay in the mail about that time.—We waited 3 mos. & then came a pile of correspondence . . .

Maybe I wrote you already that we live in a house whose walls are like a 7½ ft. high picket fence, capped with a high roof of palm leaf thatch—a big oval enclosure as large as a good-sized barn. Dirt floor. We bo't it (but not the land) for cloth & knives. Two native Christian boys from the coast live with us (till July Assembly) & one of them (John Salazar) teaches a primary school here to Aguaruna boys (& 1 girl) . . . They study out loud like the Chinese & make a tremendous racket.

One native woman—(Aguaruna) Tsitsingu had a 3 or 4 mo's old baby die of congested lungs I think.

A heavy cold like influenza was epidemic & nobody escaped. She wanted us to baptize the baby (& we did, name Susanna) and later when she died Roger gave her a Christian burial at the mother's request. Tsitsingu herself was baptized Catholic when married to a negro named Kosio, from the coast, the only one in this village beside ourselves who are not Aguaruna Indians. He wants all his children baptized & talks of becoming converted himself. A man named Luis . . . came one Sunday & was converted. Has been here twice since & is coming again. Another man from Bagna Chica is here now visiting us & learning all he can of our religion—wants us to visit him & see if he with all his family can "enter." One Aguaruna Indian is learning Christian customs & doctrines with expectation of becoming converted. His children as well as the chief's & Kosio's are among our schoolboys. (Letter incomplete)

"If we only knew the language"

POMERA, PERU, S.A. July 20, 1925

MY DEAR RUTH—

Yours of March reached me long ago—but I was not very well and could not bring myself to write even home folks at Lakeside except very little. Later my husband and I were "day and night" working on an Aguaruna primer, of only 20 or 30 pages. If we only knew the language it wouldn't have been such hard work but the truth is we had to learn it ourselves as we made it.—We wanted it done in time for Roger to take it with him to the coast, [for publication] when he left to attend the annual meeting in Monsefu. . . .

This year is the first I have missed . . . We are expecting a new arrival in our home by Aug. 3. Roger will *just about* get here in time! God is with me; also Roger (Jr.) who calls himself Rogie; also a native Agua-

runa boy and girl, Andoash and Moratina. The boy speaks Spanish brokenly. We have plenty of visitors most of the time, but to me it is quite a novel experience. I can hardly wait till Roger gets back.—If I were in just a bit better health I would do better with my correspondence. Have not been my old self since having malaria so severely in Jaen a year ago. . . .

Our Indians wear some clothes: don't know that I should say "*clothes*." Isn't that a plural noun? They are fortunate to have on 1 garment that for the men is a loincloth only and the women both arms bare and generally one breast as the garment is knotted at one shoulder and falls loosely under the left arm. Tied at the waist. Bare legs and feet of course. Little girls wear this garb but boys are stark naked until eight or nine, even ten or eleven. There *are* worse tribes in the world all right though these are *very* primitive. I have seen them eat (or carrying home to eat) certain species of big fat white tree-grubs; ants; beetles; snails; to say nothing of small lobsters, tadpoles, frogs, monkeys, and I think someone said they will eat certain wood rats. Other animals occasionally caught, killed, and eaten are deer, bear, tapir, armadillo, a kind of squirrel, and all sorts of game birds including parrots.

. . . How I should enjoy springtime again! Here there is much rain, and between rains, heat, though the nights are cool and pleasant and even daytimes not so hot as in Jaen.

"The sweetest 'human' pleasure"

POMERA, PERU, S.A., Dec. 5, 1925

DEAR AUNT MARY AND UNCLE JOHN:

Your letter written from Lakeside reached me some time ago, but as I got sick with fever about that time I am behind in answering my letters. Little Roger and

"big Roger" were ill too but they and I are quite ourselves again: we get over these fevers quicker than we used to and that encourages me. The "little new baby" [Frank] is getting big and fat, he doesn't get sick, sleeps well at night and is so good and happy daytimes that he is just about the sweetest "human" pleasure one could ask in life. I thank God daily for him. . . .

With many interruptions I resume! The scholars have come—baby waked from his nap—Roger J. had his head bumped—the boy who is my kitchen helper is asking me questions about some Bible pictures I gave him to look at. He is taking great interest, is learning to read, and we expect him to be converted soon.

Anival and some other Indians came just now for quinine. We give liberal doses gratis: one cannot live in this region without quinine. We enjoy "saving life" for them, and at the same time the less malaria we can have around here the less contagion for ourselves as well.

. . . We haven't gone hungry yet either. Write again when you can.

Yours with much affection—

"A busy life"

POMERA, Dec. 5, 1925

DEAR COUSIN RUTH:

How I did enjoy your letters written from Lakeside.

...

Yes, I really do enjoy my babies intensely. I do like married life. I love my husband and we are closer "pals" than when we first began. Our life has its trials, and earth wasn't designed to be heaven, but we do have many joys here and best of all the peace that lies only in the will of God. Of course I miss Joel and John, Papa, Mama, Ilo, and friends in the U.S. But the years

fly by faster than ever and there is glory, eternity ahead. My heart sings over the prospect. We'll be together soon . . .

And God hasn't told us all His secrets either.

Writing with baby on my lap doesn't make for legibility you will observe. Excuse us.

One of John's little naked schoolboys has come out to play with baby and watch me write, for a few minutes. He "got permission" and I'm wondering how long he will venture to "stay out." Rogie (J.) is playing with a tin can. He is throwing it—nearly hit me too.

Last month he came to me one morning saying, "Rogie bad." We had earnest conversation and prayer together. He has had renewed interest in Bible stories, songs and praying, since then. One day (since then) he said, "Rogie loves Jesus much." He was three years old last Aug. 27. Frank George W. was born the 16th of the same month . . .

I like "Humoresque" too. You must enjoy the Victrola greatly. When I get to heaven, say, I shall "ecstasize" in music. There's nothing I miss so keenly here. . . .

—We are outdoors—baby Frank and I—on a big rug. He is trying to grab at my pencil. I put him down on the rug, he "flops" over and tries to creep—but his ill success wearies him and he fusses to get into my lap again, and it's hard to write.—Roger has been down to Kosia's house—just returned—suppose he is "doping" sore eyes, dealing out quinine, or curing somebody's sores. He does quite a bit of medical work. I keep house, write letters, (so does he) and we study Aguaruna all the leisure we can get. Of course we take time for prayer and Bible study and a little reading, family worship and visiting—a busy life when one sums it all up.—Just now he is much occupied overseeing the clearing of land and housebuilding for us across the Snail Creek. Indians do it for knives, cloth, thread, etc. There has been much

fever in Pomera this dry (?) season but a change seems to have set in and nearly everyone is better.

I have to stop now and see after supper. My, I do love all my "folks" near and far. May not one of us miss being ready for Jesus when He comes!

Yours with much love,

11

Furlough

"Weary in the pursuit of an elusive language"

POMARA, JAN. 8, 1926 [new spelling]

DEAR COUSIN MYRTLE RUTH:

The youngsters will not let me write in peace in the house so I brought a Brussels rug outdoors here to put baby down on and gave Rogie a knife to play with so I guess I can answer yours of Oct. 19 that came since I answered your other two letters of recent date.

My 92 chickens are scattered abroad about me, and Niki the dog is just a few feet away basking in the sunshine—where I wouldn't bask, no sir, it is too hot in "this here tropic."

The baby is about 60 seconds on the rug. He is not yet 5 months old and I predict he'll be creeping all over in another month; he goes backwards now, and tries desperately to go forward. Can "clear his belly" from the ground and can sit up alone nearly a minute at a time

before toppling. Is happy, fat, lively, and a constant joy to us. Rogie is inclined to be frail and delicate, but we are thankful he keeps on living and growing . . .

Come and take dinner with us and let's talk instead of write! Guess I must have eaten too many ripe bananas—I feel the heat and it makes me stupid. Am just getting over a stubborn spell of diarrhea and the slow convalescence of malaria. In the cool evenings and mornings I feel splendid, and get some language study done, and a letter or two written, every day besides other regular day's occupations . . .

. . . We have fish or game every day for nearly a week without a break, often. When by chance there is none I kill a chicken and when they are depopulated a bit I set another hen. That keeps Andoash our Indian boy busy going to the "yunga" after corn. The range is good for chickens here and our board, on the whole, is very cheap. Our main outlay at present has been the cloth and knives to pay Indian labor to get our new house built. Perhaps we may move into it—(across the creek Pomara, but still on the bank of this same Maranon River)—within another month.

This letter has been rather idle chatter seems to me. There is often such a mood, isn't there, when one has a "heavy undertone" beneath it? You mention "problems and perplexities"—suggesting ours as greater by comparison? Well, great or small we all do certainly need to keep taking them all to Jesus in prayer and thus neither getting indifferent to our responsibilities nor becoming "solemn-choly" over them. At least so I'm counseling myself this morning. I am tempted to be weary in the pursuit of an elusive language, tried over the dense materialism of the Aguaruna Indian, distressed over Kosio's persistent giving them the cane-whiskey that is so much worse than their native *masato* that is only slightly intoxicating—not to mention a few other items that come to mind readily—and then I remember

"nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors"

... Well! If we "keep on praying" no doubt we shall come through shining and be ready when Jesus comes.

Yours ever—

"Quinine 'as usual'"

POMARA, PERU, S.A., April 5, 1926

DEAR COUSIN RUTH—AUNT MARY—UNCLE JOHN!

While my dinner cooks and babies are "being good" by themselves I will scribble to you dear ones if you'll excuse the "scribble" part of it.

Have taken quinine "as usual"—so am "*well*." Fact is I'm quite a "quinine fiend!" If I leave it more than three days I get fever and little Rogie is nearly the same as I. He is thinner than a three-year-old ought to be, but lively and happy and mischievous as most youngsters of his age. Baby Frank is fat and cute enough sure. I do enjoy my home. Their father still "just suits me" as when first married—and, indeed, **MORE**. How good God is in everything!

We are thinking of coming to the States on furlough. . . . Of course we expect to return here as soon as possible.

Yours with lots of love, hope and joy—

Esther's one furlough was taken in 1926. She was ill and tired—a "pitiful sight" one of her former Olivet pupils described her changed appearance. With little Roger Joseph, a frail child of four, clinging to her skirts, Esther gave missionary addresses from coast to coast, firing her listeners with a love and a feeling of responsibility for the hitherto practically unknown Aguaruna Indians.

"Only borrowed"

Esther's "whole troop" of children included Joel and John, who had come to the States for school in 1923; Angelina, the "borrowed" Peruvian girl who must have been about seven; Rogie, four; Frankie George about a year and a half.

LAKESIDE, CAL., Aug. 21, 1926

DEAREST ETHEL!

If I hadn't "gone & had" the fever again since arriving home, my, I should have written you and Effie so quick. How I LONG TO SEE YOU! Oh!

But I'm lots better, only still weak & can't write *long* because I have so many all at once just at the *present epoch*. Never mind!

I've a wild foolish feeling, that is an *impulse* maybe! to bring my whole troop of five children to see you! One's only borrowed—a sort of . . . well, if Jedonne had lived she'd have been nearly as old . . . little native Peruvian named Angelina . . .

But sometime before the year's over I hope indeed to see you!—Just don't know when yet . . .

We are so happy here together. Will write you again "soon's I can." Have quite a few meetings ahead. Have been in only one so far because I promised to rest first.

And, oh, I have had such blessed new experiences with Him whom we love best! Yours—

12

Papa and Mama

"Our heavenly Father's marvelous love and care"

This letter was written at sea on Esther and Frankie's return to Peru after the furlough. Her parents, Anna and Frank Carson, went with her after selling out in California and purchasing implements and machinery for industrial work among the Aguaruna Indians.

Little Roger Joseph was left in Pasadena to be educated with Joel and John in the States.

June 28, 1927

DEAR COUSIN RUTH, AUNT MARY AND UNCLE JOHN:

The Lord has brought us thus far on our journey in joy, peace and safety.

Papa and Mama were talking of writing to you and as we expect to mail our letters for the States as soon as we arrive in Paita you will know when you receive this that we shall have arrived in Peru.

Our staterooms are clean, roomy, and nice, even beautiful. We are continually reminded of our heavenly

Father's marvelous love and care. How we wish we could win to Jesus every soul on this boat . . . I have been astonished how much Spanish Mother can speak, and understand of what she hears. Even Papa is learning more than I thought he could in so short a time and I believe he will understand Spanish very well within a year or two and speak it too to some extent, enough for his own needs.

We are eager, of course, for the meeting with Roger and the other missionaries.

"Scour them with ashes"

POMARA, Sept. 12, 1927

DEAREST ETHEL:

We all arrived safely here with the blessing of God, though the trip was hard on Papa even more than Mama.

On account of having to go through a part of the country where a revolution was going on, we could not get our freight or baggage through until more than a month later; except the bare necessities for the trip. So on our arrival . . . we found ourselves living in a kind of communistic fashion, without enough pots and buckets & wash basins to go round for actual demands. So we use the same things for various purposes & have to scour them with ashes for change of use. It all makes life unusually strenuous, till our goods come, for we haven't even enough clothing till those boxes arrive & have to wash 2 or 3 times a wk. to keep clean. Well, I simply gave up all hope of writing letters till we are living civilized again . . . Daytimes I work hard & at night am too tired to write. A little private prayer, Bible reading & study, a little housework daily, care of the baby, looking after chickens (which is a big item in our food supply) and helping with the cow & calf; a little teaching

every day; family worship of course; and sometimes sick folks to be treated, visitors to receive, or a round of calls among the Indians. I don't even have time for any systematic language study of Aguaruna until we get more settled. When Roger comes with the loads we will be desperately busy for a few days getting places to put things and things put in those places; you can scarcely imagine how it is—no food except what is raised on your own place, no lumber except what you get sawed under your own roof, no furniture except what you make yourself. "But *one* thing is needful"—and we do cast all our cares on Him—rest in His love—strive to do His will—rejoice in the beauty He made all around us—and are very, very happy. Frankie George is a robust little rascal full of love, play, & joy. But indeed I must go to bed—we are out of kerosene till Roger brings us more next Saturday!

Yours & God's with a heart full of love—

"... such humble joys as baby chicks and turkeys!"

POMARA, Oct. 28, 1927

MY DEAREST FRIEND ETHEL—

From morning till night we are all ok, so busy that I told Mama, "I've a big notion to put a notice in the *Other Sheep* and give up all my correspondence." Still the hope stubbornly remains that the pressure of occupations will "let up" bye and bye, or little by little.

Am not sure whether I have given you a list of those occupations in a former letter or not. But I'm going to go into detail over one typical day & then you will see that it is by no means lack of *intense desire* to write to you longer and oftener, but just these present circumstances.

I have the ordinary routine of housework, and *wood* fires to keep up, for which I bring in almost half the

wood. Part of the time I take care of the baby & he is at that trying age where he carries off valuable things and loses them, and it seems to me I waste lots of precious time hunting up those things & praying till God really lets me find them. Also I have to take care of our chickens & turkeys, with inconvenient arrangements, but just recently the net wire has come & they have begun leveling ground for a new chicken house, beautifully planned, which will save lots of time in caring for them. All these secular cares make it more than ever imperative for me *not* to neglect study of Aguaruna language & Bible & prayer. There are always incidents that break in & take extra time; for example! Sometimes the men folks happen to be away & I have the cow to take to or from the pasture, or both; yesterday a hen stole her nest and I took my Aguaruna book with me to study while I followed her through thickets, garden, pasture, etc., for hours to see where she went to lay; day before yesterday a poisonous worm stung baby, and I had to give him the yuca leaf water treatment; the mule got out of her pasture (someone left the bars down) & the handmill I grind corn for the chickens broke & I had to get the new one put up. Some days there is washing to do, some days we have to take advantage of the sunshine to dry out stacks of things which otherwise mildew quickly in this hot moist climate.

Besides all that someone is always having fevers or sores or sore eyes, needing attention. Juan Salazar teaches the Aguaruna school every day as a rule and has to study for exams to get his teacher's certificate this yr. or early next yr., or the school will be closed; so to encourage him I have been studying Peruvian history & geography; and helping mama study Aguaruna, too, a little bit every day. Two of our little . . . religious periodicals (Spanish) have been begging me for articles or translation or both & I really long to do that . . . have neglected to write for the *Other Sheep*, alas.

That is my tale of woe! No time! We can't afford a cook & could scarcely get one anyhow. But say, I've a tale of joy bigger than my tale of woe but will have to state it more briefly because it's suppertime already.—The triune God! I can't tell you *how much* He means to me. His people! You—and many lesser friends—and all . . . whom I know & love. My immediate family; & the gladness of living & working here for Jesus; the bright hope of His coming; the Scripture promises; Nature; and such humble joys as baby chicks and turkeys!

Now I must close—pray especially that God help us to get the language. Of little Rogie [left in the States] I can scarcely write, but I have the victory, and do not worry over him or Joel & John at all. God comforts & reassures me always, as I pray, and of course I do pray continually. I pray for you too, & the other girls where you are, rejoice in your lifework for God, which is greater than you know. I love you so dearly, your letters are an untold comfort to me—only forgive me for being so poor a correspondent. Will surely do my best to write you once a month anyhow. And I am so grateful for Miss Litch's & *your* part in Rogie. Yours lovingly—

"Forgiving . . . is better than vengeance!"

JAEN, VIA CHICLAYO, PERU, S.A. Dec. 31, 1927

TO MY FRIENDS, DEARLY LOVED IN JESUS:

We are "Hasting unto the coming of the day of God."

Tonight that thought is unusually vivid in my mind and heart. Not mine only! For multitudes will be conscious together, in the closing hours of the old year as in communion with God at this hour and truly meeting one another at the Throne of Grace.

Mother and I are keeping Watchnight with you in spirit, although we all seem so far apart . . .

Our work here is slow and trying, as all pioneer work must be. It is brightened by the steady shining of God's promises, like stars in the night of this heathenism that surrounds and presses in upon us! It is lightened by the incidents of answered prayer from time to time, and by letters from you who pray for us. It is strengthened and sustained by you and God. Strange and wonderful how He lets us all work together.

We can see . . . what Paul described in Romans: "And their foolish heart was darkened." The low beastly plane of existence! I have seen them eat raw bugs. Their dances end like the heathen dance in America ends. But even the lowest of these can be saved and lifted to heavenly places with Christ!

Seems to me I have said, over and over, what our work is here, and named the problems, and stated the needs. Exploration; the making of a Christian home among those who do not yet comprehend that hard work is more advantageous than fishing and hunting, and that forgiving is not only a possible thing but better than vengeance! That love is better than war! That mercy can rejoice over judgment!

Then the matter of fact phases of the work—teaching, learning the language in order to translate someday—giving medical attention to the sick, and preaching Christ in every practical way possible. Especially are we striving to add an industrial feature to the school and mission establishment . . .

In San Francisco, just before sailing, we purchased a lathe and a water wheel. They cost \$390.00 and their transportation to this place has cost almost as much. Most of you know that Father and Mother Carson are fellow missionaries with us here, and that without father's mechanical ability consecrated to Christ's service here in the Indian village of Pomara we could not have tried to do anything at present along this line (Please

note: though we live among the "wild" Indians themselves, their town is not marked on the map, and Jaen is our only post office, three days' journey away.)

The lathe is used in making tools and parts of machinery that cannot be obtained here in any other way. By its help, my father has made another lathe, to bore logs, to make wooden pipe, to conduct water to turn The Wheel.

That Wheel you know must be turned! So much else turns on It. Other wheels, for spinning and weaving, will not turn unless The Wheel turns first of all.

One building Roger put up in my absence while on furlough we call the carpenter shop. The big lathe that bores logs is there, and one log is bored! Others lie piled on each other, waiting their turn . . .

What now is the purpose and value of all this secular labor? Though its main value points forward to the future—Christian training of the Aguaruna people for God—yet even now it has a very great bearing on our work. It gives employment to many Indians, who when they are idle, are always restlessly making war on each other or spending their time in vice and drunkenness. It gives us contact with the *well* Indian. School work gives us our chance at their children. But the Indian labor gives us our best opportunity with the adult male population not only of the small village of Pomara but with others who come to us even now, from down river. If they do not come to us, we would be much longer in learning their language, gaining their confidence and love, and giving them the Good News. We cannot visit such a number of them in their homes even once a week, as comes within our doors daily.

. . . It is my conviction that we cannot personally visit and evangelize even a few thousand Indians: but that by means of this industrial feature of our school work we shall be brought into individual contact with a

greater number than we could in any other way, and indirectly cause the influence and knowledge of the Gospel to pass speedily to the entire tribe and even all the neighboring tribes.

"You—helping together in prayer with us!" We shall indeed hasten on to the Day of God!

May you all have a happy New Year with Him!

Yours and His,

13

"Irreparable Loss"

"About the earthquake"

JAEN, VIA CHICLAYO, PERU, S.A. 1928.

DEAREST ETHEL:

This is the last chance I shall have of writing you for another 3 mos. I guess, our opportunities of sending or receiving mail either one have been exceedingly few this year . . .

Just before sending my last letter to you I scribbled on it something about the earthquake, don't remember how much. We had a slight one about the 7th of May, but on the 14th one that shook down one of the Aguaruna houses & 2 old shacks of theirs, killed one old woman, & thoroughly frightened the whole population. The shock was much more severe in Jaen (3 days' journey away) & other small towns of the province, almost completely destroying Jaen & 2 or 3 villages. . . . We have had tremors and an occasional slight earthquake all during the past month. It did our house no damage, because of the way it is built—when poles are tied together one

will slip by the other, back & forth, when shaken, but if they had been nailed they would have doubtless jerked apart & fallen. All our books were tumbled from their shelves (or nearly all) & most of the dishes out of the cupboards (which have no doors) and as we were not frightened the Indians all came to our house to sleep, for a week or two, till their fears subsided & the quakes grew less & less severe. The one real damage it did do us was to spoil our water ditch & as fast as we could get it repaired another tremor would cause another small landslide that would fill it with rocks & dirt again. We hire Indians to work & help us mend it, but it is not right yet, & half the time we have to carry our water from a distance. Papa helps too much though he is not able to work much. Mama has not been able to take care of the baby as much as she did a mo. ago & I had to give up the afternoon teaching, have school only in the mornings. Have close to an ave. of 12 or 13 . . .

There I have to go & see after the baby & perhaps I better close for this time anyway for I have quite a few letters to write.

Yours with love & gratefulness—

"Striving to complete"

JAEN, CHICLAYO, PERU, S.A., Aug. 29, 1928

DEAREST ETHEL:

Day before yesterday was Rogie's birthday. When is *your* birthday? I don't remember that I ever did know.

Had a letter from you today, so I feel uncommonly "at peace with the world"—all except this horrid pen and I'm too lazy to get up & hunt a better one.—As usual I've had a busy day & no time to write till night comes, which is just when I can't use my typewriter. Would wake up baby. He's had so much fever he's getting as

nervous (almost) as Rogie. It sure does take lots of patience to see one's *babies* suffer from having to live in the tropics . . . I'd ship him to the States tomorrow if I could! Am surely *grateful* that Roger J. is *where he is!* But little Frank does not have the fever nearly so badly as little Roger used to; and keeps growing, so far, which Rogie *didn't*; though I'm sure he would grow faster in the States and not be so thin in body. His face is still plump & pretty anyhow. And he's as bright a little rascal as any real normal Am. baby of his age is; and always so happy.

Well, this letter is too one-sided in topic so far; but yours was so *good and kind* in its news of *that little boy* [Rogie] . . . It isn't safe for me to think too much along that line but I do so inexpressibly appreciate your relation to him & to me . . . the covenant [Ethel had promised to care for the children in case anything happened to Esther] . . . (I am reading bits of Shakespeare, by the way! but of course the Bible most of all.) . . . Well, I can hardly wait till Nov. 1; seems as I can *never* get too many babies; every new one is "wanted" as intensely as the first one was . . . And I'm never forgetting your "promise" . . . Great souls are capable of *waiting*. That is *my* life's hardest lesson . . .

. . . I feel like thanking you again, for the Shakespeare, guitar string, carbon paper *and* especially your frequent letters.

Mama and Papa are a great help & comfort indeed. . . . They are steadily but slowly failing in health, however . . . I am quite sure they would have failed more rapidly had they remained in the States . . . At any rate they are better satisfied to be with me here in their last years and we often tell each other that though death *has* no terrors for us, to whom heaven is more real than earth,—yet even in its painful aspects we do not "live" it till it happens; that Jesus may come before their other-

wise-to-be-expected departure can take place!—I haven't the slightest notion that I shall die in November, myself, but we all do know that *nothing* need dismay one who *fully* trusts *Jesus*. Just on principle, I am striving to complete what I should like to leave *finished* within the next 2 months—corrected list of Aguaruna vocabulary, a brief grammar of it, a first reader for school use, & wish I might finish a paraphrase-translation of Luke (not the one we expect to make for the Bible Society to print). This one is bound to be too imperfect for sending to press. It is a sort of "trial" affair, to be run off on our duplicator, just a few copies, for some errors never do get detected till the copies are actually *used* in school & S. school, etc. Goodnight . . . Pray for us . . . I know you do—"Yours truly,"—Mama and Papa send love.

The following letter written by Esther's husband speaks for itself.

"A grave on a hilltop"

[November, 1928]

TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN MISSIONS,
Kansas City, Mo.

I feel it to be my sad duty to notify you of the death of my wife on the 6th of this month, at 1:20 p.m. She has been unusually active in the school & household duties during the last few months, & no one dreamed that the end was so near. Under her care the little school had taken on new life. The attendance was larger & more regular. The boys were learning the Lord's Prayer & a few Spanish hymns, & one of them had been clearly converted. The school work, the translation, & the ex-

tension of the mission down the river were big in her vision.

On Sunday, the 4th, her time arrived to be delivered. After the baby was born (Nov. 6) she tossed from side to side restlessly, complaining of pain. Finally she asked me to call her father & mother & pray. She rallied just a little, but shortly after one o'clock lost consciousness & sank rapidly, passing away at 1:20 p.m. . . .

Yesterday we laid her body away in a grave on a hilltop overlooking the mission premises & the river. Father Carson with the aid of a neighboring Peruvian improvised the coffin from a soapbox & an old chest. Two white flowers which baby Frank had gathered for her the day before when she was yet alive were laid on her breast. At 1 p.m. we gathered about her in the schoolroom. The school children joined in singing the Spanish hymns that she had taught them. Then I told, through an interpreter, of our call & coming to Pomara; the purpose of our coming, & of her hopes & plans for the Indians. I closed by telling them of the resurrection & of the assurance which comforted my heart, & by inviting them to accept Jesus & share in that glorious event. Many of them understood me because down through the years we had been telling this story through interpreters, through the children, & at times in broken speech in their own tongue. It so happened however that a group of Indians were present who had come from miles away for the first time. After the Lord's Prayer in Spanish we looked for the last time upon the face of our precious wife & colaborer.

We have no plans for the future except to push on & do the best we can. Mother Carson, though old & feeble in health, will do the best she can to help with the 2 babies & our own little household. Father Carson, besides helping with the housework, will continue as time & strength permit to install the saw & other machinery. I will have added to my former duties such of the labors

which my wife has just laid down as I shall be able to carry. Many of these labors or duties will go undone. Neither time nor my ability will permit me to do much with the translation work. It must wait . . .

I have refrained from any attempt to express my own sentiments over this unexpected & to me irreparable loss. I feel & have felt all that a human mortal is capable of feeling. My eyes are not on the past. I am looking into the future, & sincerely trust that I may be able to give as much or little of my life as remains to the one purpose of giving the knowledge of the gospel to these needy Indians.

Yours as ever in Christ's service,

ROGER S. WINANS

Ira and Lucile Taylor, missionaries to Peru, wrote in 1949 of visiting Esther's grave. They found a neatly kept fenced plot a hundred yards or so up a steep hillside above the Marañon River. There were fresh flowers at the headstone. On inquiring the Taylors were told that it had been done by the elderly but rugged Aguarun they had met the day before on the trail. Esther Carson Winans with the help of God had won his heart and at the same time an entrance to a benighted tribe.

Baltazar Rubio, a Peruvian who worked for many years among the Aguaruna Indians, wrote of Esther: "Peru is honored to have her remains. . . . I have found that, even though Esther Carson Winans died, she still lives."