

Thursday, April 17, 1958

My darling Eunice,

This is the second episode of this adventure. (I hope you received my last letter – it may have come postage due).

I last left you plowing northward to Surigao. The Abortiz, in character, arrived 12 noon so we missed a chance to fly Monday. We kicked around Surigao – had dinner at Dr. Pia Castro's house. He was formerly at Graham Memorial Hospital in Bohol. He was one of the old Dr. Graham's young assistants – was in charge of the hospital at Tagbilaran until the usual internal frictions evolved and he moved to Surigao to open his own hospital. I learned a great deal about the inner machinations of a mission hospital and a church. Dr. Castro told his story with no bitterness whatsoever since he tried to keep himself out of church politics.

He started on a shoe string in Surigao. His hospital Grace Christian is still small but he built it up from nothing. He has a tremendous sense of evangelistic responsibility and has done a good job medically.

We had breakfast there as well and attended the daily morning worship service conducted by Dr. Castro. He is a strong Garcia man (ie. president of the Philippines – 1957 -1960) since he was his personal physician for 20 years. Got some inside information on the political scene. We slept in the parsonage which really could use a little reconstruction. I am really getting use to *bejuco* beds and cots.

Valentin, Bishop Rodriguez and I took the plane together and had a 15 minute stop in Buenavista. Who should be in the gaily decorated car, complete with banner "Long Live Secty. Castano," party but Cipriano Malonzo. He jumped out, greeted me, and was on his way again. We landed at the Cagayan airport and who should be there but Hester Jason and Mr. Mahy of Silliman. The airports of Mindanao are the crossroads of the Philippines.

We landed at Dipolog hoping that we would make the last bus. We drove like fury into town just as the bus was pulling out. We were packed in and I do mean packed. There wasn't another inch of space. The road to Sendangan – my map says first class road – that means first class for Mindanao. From now on I divide my best expectations and usually will come out with something more realistic.

This territory is dry. The roads are choked with dust. There is drought here – everything is parched. This is different from the East which has not been hit by drought. We arrived at 7:30 PM and they provided us with meals – all six of us (including Paul Lindholm and Lloyd Van Vactor). We were put up in one house. Mr and Mrs. Calcaban – principal of the High School and an old classmate of Valentin at Silliman. Real Filipino hospitality – we have the beds – they are sleeping on the floor, their helper on several chairs.

This Conference is a real contrast to the Eastern ones. This is the mother of Mindanao Conferences and it has all the problems of an older Conference. More conservative, facing

proselytization of other sects, financially behind the younger Eastern Conferences. It has little industry, including mining and lumbering, so the response here is not as alive. They did not have us in the program so they squeezed us in at 11:30 for three mornings (Hester, Valentin and myself). I had about 25 minutes yesterday, Hester 30 minutes today, and Valentin is managing to squeeze in an hour tomorrow. So you get the picture.

Sendanan is a fishing town, but with a nice public square. It is the last church west in the Conference.

We really have been managing to get out of the way churches. I steered clear of any bugs the first week. Today one caught up with me. I have been taking my pills and hope to knock it out quick.

Yesterday I really felt low. I was lonesome for my family – especially since it was Kerry's birthday. I would have liked to call but this town has neither electricity or telephone. Our hostess had her birthday yesterday so we had a little party, but I really would have liked to be at my daughter's birthday.

We will leave early Saturday morning (4:30) for Dipolog and then on to Cagayan de Oro. We'll stay through Monday. Lloyed Van Vactor will be coming back on Monday. I'm looking forward to Cagayan and a shower (I hope).

I'll be thinking about you and counting the days till I see my family again.

With all my love to Scott, Kerry and Jo and Eunice.

Dick