

My... Year in Washington

By Mrs. ROBERT W. WILCOX.



PRINCESS THERESA OWANA KAOHELELANI.

WASHINGTON is a delightful place. I did not like San Francisco much, but Washington is charming. All the people of Washington are just as lovely as can be.

When I went to Washington with my husband last year I took both of my children with me. We lived for some time at the Hotel Normandie, but when we called upon the President, which of course we did as soon after arrival as possible, he advised us to go to house-keeping. The call on the President was the first call we made, of course. Mr. Wilcox and myself and two children and Mr. Kalaualani, Mr. Wilcox's secretary, went together. My little son was probably the first Hawaiian boy to shake the hand of a President of the United States. He asked us right away where we were living, and we told him at the Normandie. Mr. McKinley was a man who believed in economy, and he told me to go and keep house and practice economy.

After that we went to get a house. To keep house in Washington is something one must get accustomed to. The cooks won't do anything but cook and one must have two or three extra servants beside them. It is not like it is in Hawaii where one or two servants will do all your work. The first month we were not pleased. The butcher and the bread man and the rest of them put in fearful bills. The cooks would order to suit themselves. So Mr. Wilcox put his foot down and after that everything was paid for in cash instead of running bills. The first month the cook must have made a good thing. In Washington they make their living that way. They have to make it while Congress is in session for after Congress adjourns, the town is empty and they have to make it up when the town is full.

We secured a house at 2016 R street, N. W., and after two or three months everything went all right. We lived in this house the balance of our stay in Washington and Kalaualani and his wife are still living there. While we were in Washington they lived with us.

After getting settled I began my calls. All new comers to Washington have to make all first calls. My first call was on the Costa Rican Ambassador and wife. Then on the Mexican, the Japanese, the Chinese Ambassador, the Chinese Minister, Mr. Wu Ting Fah. I do not remember the rest of his name, is very popular in Washington and everybody goes to his receptions on Fridays. I called on General Miles and his wife, the Spanish Ambassador and all the Ambassadors in the city. It is not like it is here in Honolulu where one goes calling once a month; there you go calling every week. I had my reception day. I received Tuesdays and lots of people came and called. I could not begin to tell you they are but I have their cards. Of course all the people that I called on—or nearly all of them at least—returned my call. Among those on whom I called and who called in return were Mr. and Mrs. Brewer. Mr. Brewer is on the Civil Service Commission.

When I got settled there the ladies came around and asked me to assist them in an Episcopal church fair and have charge of the Hawaiian booth, it was called the Trinity church, Third and Sixth N. W. It was a big affair. We put up the Hawaiian table and were assisted by Mrs. Wells and Mrs. Dickinson and Mrs. McFarland Boyd and Miss Lillian Cramer and Mr. D. Kalaualani Jr. Our booth was the "number one" booth. Next came the Philippine or Porto Rican booth. We had pumpkin vine hats, Home Rule pillows, calabashes and also uku,ele, coconut calabashes and tabu sticks, real Hawaiian tapa and mats, necklaces and bracelets and a Holoku, the Hawaiian dress.

Mr. Forest McKinley, nephew of the President, and his wife; Mr. Wu, the Chinese ambassador and his wife, the Mexican Ambassador and the Mexican

Embassador and their wives called on us. I did not go out a great deal while I was in Washington on account of a trouble with one of my eyes. I was afraid it was going to keep me from going to the inauguration but fortunately, the swelling began to go away a

little before the fourth of March. I met Mrs. McKinley at the inaugural ball. Mr. Wilcox was appointed one of the reception committee by General Miles. The President staid there in the balcony and Mr. Wilcox and I and Miss Lillian Cramer were walking around. I said I wanted to see the President. Mr. Wilcox had already gone up stairs with the reception committee and had come down again and was walking around with us. I wanted to go up stairs and I wanted to see the Vice-President. I looked up to Mr. McKinley as we passed and bowed and he bowed in return and turned to his wife and called her attention to us and she bowed. Then he turned to the Vice-President Roosevelt and pointed out the Delegate from Hawaii and his wife. Then he nudged his wife and Mrs. Roosevelt looked at us and bowed.

The inaugural ball was very elegant, such a lot of American beauty roses. But there was no dancing and no refreshments. I had hoped to have a dance, but there was such a crush it was impossible.

The first social function I went to was at the Corcoran Art Gallery. It took us nearly three hours to get in. We had to go in two by two. I do not know exactly what it was, but it was some sort of a society and there was a reception being held to the President of the society. Everybody was in evening dress. Everybody had on fine things. When we got there in our carriage we were ushered into a room to take our things off and then taken into another room, where we were to meet this President of the society. After that was over, we met some of the Senators and Representatives and their wives and took a look through the beautiful art gallery. We went into every room and looked at all the paintings and of course met several people there. We came away at almost a quarter to twelve and were driven home in our own carriage—as we always kept a carriage and coachman.

Mr. Wilcox and I were invited to the White House three times—once to dine and twice to receptions. I was not able to go on any of the occasions on account of my eyes, but Mr. Wilcox was present each time alone. We never attended an evening party because I was not well, but I liked Washington society very much indeed. We went to the Capitol and looked all through that and went to the different departments and met the heads of the big departments like Mr. Hitchcock, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Long and other notables. I liked everybody in Washington. Everybody seemed to be good.

I cannot remember all the people that I met, but Hon. Dennis Flynn, delegate from Oklahoma, and his wife, called at our house; also the ambassador from Peru. I also met Senator Cullum in the capital, at the time that Mr. Wilcox and I went all through it. Among others was Representative Woods of Stockton, Cal., Mrs. Oscar Turner, mother of the representative from Kentucky, who was stopping at the Ebbett house. Mr. Henderson, the Speaker of the House, I also met, as well as his wife. One of the most pleasant people I met was Mr. Hermann, the Commissioner of Lands.

As to the theatres in Washington, we attended the Lafayette, the Columbia and the Grand Opera, beside the vaudeville houses. They treated us very well at all the theatres. As long as I was in

the city, I never sat in the body of the house at the theatre. They always gave us a box, and usually sent in flowers as soon as we were seated. Sometimes Carlo Long, and Elen Long, who were then studying at the Georgetown University, would go to the theatre with us. There is a great deal of dress in the Washington theatres, almost everybody being in full dress.

I gave a luau in Washington on the 1st of May, which was my birthday. It was a regular Hawaiian luau, with sweet potato poi and fish, mullet from the fish market, cooked the Hawaiian way; coconut and sweet potatoes, "keole palau," sometimes called coconut pudding. Secretary James Wilson of the Department of Agriculture sent me several large bunches of carnations and I made them up into leis, and as the guests came they had to wear these leis on their necks. After we were through with the luau, we all went to the theatre. I had two carriages come to the door, one of which was my own, of course, and we all jumped into the wagons and were taken to the vaudeville, where we occupied two boxes, still with these leis on. The result was that the people looked at us more than at the people who were performing on the stage. We had on these yellow paper leis at the theatre. We also had some leis made of maiden hair fern intertwined with roses. There were fifteen of us in the party.

After that, one day we went down to Chesapeake beach on the cars and went in bathing. Then we went out crabbing. Then we went to a little Italian villa, where we had our luncheon. After that we went out crabbing again and it was nearly four when we stopped and had some fresh crabs and oysters cooked at the little houses along the beach.

Mr. W. H. Pain and his wife called on us in Washington. As soon as I heard that they were on their way to Honolulu from England, and that they were in Washington, I sent right down and found them. Mr. Pain was on his way back from England, where he had been married and I gave them a quiet dinner at my house in Washington. It was only a small affair, just a few present.

When Sam Parker was in Washington he called on us. Every time he came to Washington he always called. Major Seward, who used to be down here in some capacity, called on us, too. Of course while I was in Washington I met Mr. Hankey, who was on there in the matter of the Bar Association against Judge Humphreys, and I also saw Mr. Geo. Gear when he was there working against Mr. Wilcox and for his present judgeship.

I called on every ambassador in Washington who was in town except the Italian Ambassador. Lord Pauncefote was away, so I did not see him.

We went down to Chevy Chase one afternoon with Mr. Wilcox and a party of friends. They had a very good band down there. There is a big park with a very large lake and they have a pavilion where dancing is going on. The lake is full of frogs. Another day we went down Chevy Chase way and went down to Cabin John. We went over Cabin John bridge. We let the children take a ride in the merry-go-round and then went to see the gypsies. They had a band there, too. Then we went to

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NATIVE POI MAKERS.