

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Sat. March 3, 1956

Missionary's Widow Back From Ecuador

BY DAN COUGHLIN

A pretty young woman held two deadly Auca Indian spears Friday in Seattle and smiled bravely as her heart and her thoughts raced in a faraway land where less than two months ago similar weapons claimed the life of her missionary husband.

Mrs. Olive Fleming, 24, has returned to her home here from the steaming, verdant jungles of Ecuador—where on January 8 the Indians swooped down on her husband and four other men whose only purpose was to bring the gentle word of God to them.

One of the spears at which she looked was found on the bank of the river within a few feet of where the missionaries were killed. The other is a souvenir, purchased before a strange radio silence told Mrs. Fleming and the wives of the other four men that tragedy had befallen them.

BELIEVE GOD CALLED'

Said Mrs. Fleming: "We went to the Indians because we believe God called us. That is why I am going to go back. Those of us who know must do so."

Mrs. Fleming hasn't yet decided exactly when she'll begin the long journey back to the jungle and to her missionary work among members of another Indian tribe, the Quechuas. She has a year at the most, she said, because her re-entry permit to Ecuador expires then.

She is remarkably serene, for one so young, when she recalls the terrible thing that happened so recently. She said:

"Everyone prayed for us. We believe it helped. Only God can understand what was to be. I hope in Him; He holds my future, and I trust in Him."

NATURALLY GAY

For her seriousness of purpose, Mrs. Fleming is a naturally gay young woman, with a...

[Image: Mrs. Fleming. Caption: **Widow Holds Auca Spears**, Mementos of the Tragedy that brought death to her missionary husband are held here by Mrs. Olive Fleming. Spear in front without feathers was found on the river bank close to where the Auca Indians of Equador slew her husband and three other men January 8. She returned Friday. -- (Post-Intelligencer Photo.)]

... spontaneous smile and sense of humor that sparkles through what must doubtless be a difficult time. She long ago made her peace with her God.

Besides the spears, eight-foot long, wooden and thin, evel-looking [sic] weapons, she brought with her some of the trinkets that the Aucas gave the flying missionaries before turning on them.

Among these is a woven basket, ceremonial rattle or bracelet, two pieces of bark cloth and a woven bag in which the Indians had tied a parrot they presented the missionaries. A Quechua chief's parrot-feather crown also is a prized possession.

"They say it was the first time trade carried on between a plane and the ground," she said.

The missionaries, she recalled, dropped a basket from the plane, flying overhead, to the Indians on the ground. The Indians took the missionaries' trinkets from the basket and placed theirs in. Then the basket was retrieved.

Mrs. Fleming is staying with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Ainslie, 3208 E. 97th St. One of the first things she did upon arriving here Thursday was to go to the home of her dead husband's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth L. Fleming, 1403- 10th Ave. W. She and Fleming were married in June, 1954.