

Hartland P. O.,  
Paulpietersburg,  
Natal, South Africa,

Dear Friends: Oct. 23rd, 1922.

This is to be the second part of the founding of this mission station.

After seeing the last flicker of the handkerchiefs of the dear friends who came to see us off, we watched till the last outline of the shores of N. B. and N. S. faded from our sight, and the feeling swept over us that many of those we had bidden good-bye would not be there should we ever return home. But with it came such a gladness that, after the long years of waiting and testing, we were at last on the way to the dark heathen land of Africa. I could write pages about the calling at Sydney, Cape Breton, going ashore, scenery, coaling up for the long voyage, etc., etc., but time and space will not permit.

After about three weeks, we came near enough to the northern coast of Africa to be told by the crew, or rather officers of ship "we are off a certain coast, where should we become a wreck, we might be eaten by cannibals or carried away inland as captives." How much truth there was in that we could not tell, but we trusted God to preserve us from shipwreck.

From the first, we got permission to hold services with what part of the crew was off duty, on Sundays, and also Dr. Sanders held weekly services at night in the fore-castle, and these services were so blessed by the Lord as to result in quite a number of souls being saved. One among these sailors seemed so earnest and wanted also to go with us. He said he was young and strong, he would go and fight our battles for us, build our house and do any hard work required. But of course he could not leave, he had signed a contract to go in that ship for three years.

All were so grateful for services held. Here is an extract from a letter to the Highway: "Off Cape Town, Oct. 11th, 1901, God, who put His seal upon the last meetings in the home land, has given us another earnest of the work that lies before us. There have been good opportunities on this voyage for sowing seed. Some has fallen upon good ground. Three have got saved and others are not far from the kingdom. One said, 'I am sure God sent you on board the ship. Two others, 'I am so glad God sent you here.' One prayed 'Lord, I have been all around the world but never was in a place like this before.' Another, 'Lord, drive the devil out of me and make me your servant boy.' God answered him giving him the witness of the Spirit immediately. He said, 'I feel warm inside,' placing his hand over his heart. Next night, in meeting he said, 'There is a missionary on this ship but we may sail ten years and never have one again. It is like a farmer who drops his seed in the soil and the birds pick them up. It is hard to be a Christian on board ship.'"

So we found hungry hearts who told us they had sailed for years but never had had anyone ask if they had a soul before this.

Our ship had sailed with sealed orders and no one seemed to know just where she might land us. We wished to get off at Durban, the port of Natal, but might have to tranship to Cape Town. So, when this

stupendous promontory hove in sight we anxiously awaited the return of our captain, who went on shore as soon as we were safely in the bay, to find out our fate. His word was "to East London."

East London! 7644 miles from St. John, and we had been 39 days on the voyage in the Mantinea. It had been a wonderfully pleasant journey. No sea sickness, no illness, and only a few days of really rough weather. But I remember it well. One night especially, Dr. Sanders had left our cabin to go to fore-castle for meeting and I was left alone. So rough a sea all ports screwed fast, everything made fast as well. I tried to write, to sew, but oh! The floor was now up on one side, now down, and things slipped and slid, while if I tried to get them I must go down on my hands and knees or I should be knocked about against the furniture. Crash! Crash! went the dishes in the stewards pantry, and quite a number were broken, and the noise on deck of hurrying footsteps, orders, banging of various articles, etc., etc. One wild thought came to me, "Suppose my husband, while scrambling over the coal, which piled high, made up the deck-load, should fail to grasp the hauser (which was stretched from end to end above this coal for safety to crew), and should fall or be lurching into the sea. I, the only woman on board, etc., etc. How blessed to fly to Jesus and pour into His sympathetic ear all of my troubles and fear. He answered at once by a calm, peaceful trust in His promises, and after a couple of hours Dr. Sanders returned with a report of victory in the meeting and the blessing of the Lord.

What a time of testing as we lay off the town of East London! War time, crowded to congestion of the people in town from the surrounding country, and worst of all, so many martial law regulations, it seemed we would have no chance to even land. Must have more passports, must have a place to live in when we should reach Durban, some one to vouch for us, etc., etc., else we should not be allowed to place our feet on shore. My heart cried out to the Lord to open the way, show us what to do raise up some one to plead for us and not to suffer us to be carried back to Canada just yet, when we were really here and so near land.

Now God did answer prayer. The one address we had in Durban was that of the the South African General Mission, so Dr. Sanders telegraphed to them and asked if they could help us by finding us rooms there, so we could show it to the officials and be able to move on with the next passenger boat to leave East London. Back came the answer, promising all we needed and we were able to go ashore.

More difficulties awaited us. It seemed we must contest each step of the way for the devil seemed determined to keep us out of Africa altogether. Did he know, could he see far enough in the future to know how successful God could make us?

No room or rooms to be obtained in any cottage we could find. Hotels so high priced we could ill afford to apply to any of them, and only one had any room. So I sat in a bare room, used by the Salvation Army for a sort of soup kitchen and shelter for men, for five hours. A hot day, two very restless children, and several

other trying things. But I had a chance to pray; even in a crowd one can retire within himself and hold communion with Jesus. I have found this retreat so satisfying to faith, as somehow one's spirit seems to be refreshed while waiting on God.

Finally, after the long wait, my husband returned tired, hot and hungry, and Oh! How glad I was to see him! One room found in a boarding house, but we must pay for a week's stay, even if only one day was all we needed it, and we would be roomed and boarded for one week for \$22.50. We needed no urging to hurry to a place of refuge where, at least there would be a little privacy and quiet and rest. Our stay was just a few hours short of one week, and then we took the "Donnally Castle" for Durban, about 300 miles further on.

Here is one of the disadvantages of South African Coast ports. They all are troubled with sand bars. All rivers have these across their mouths, some to really close them up and water must seep through these to the sea. So all large steamers had to lay outside of most ports, unless they were dredged or at a few places certain ships could come in over the bar at flood tide. (Much of this is all changed at certain ports now.)

In those days these liners usually lay outside and all passengers and freight were transferred to and fro by tugs. Now these liners are very high and tugs are low so a contrivance called "the Basket" was used for passengers and light baggage. This was a circular piece of furniture, made of wicker work, and all enclosed, save the top, a stool or two for any who could not stand, but about ten persons were put in at one time; then the door was securely fastened and it was hoisted, either from ship to tug or vice versa. It was not without an element of danger either, for often miscalculation, because of rough sea, might land it in the surf or between ships, or tip it on its side. (I saw one filled with men tipped very badly, but no accident). Our basket was adrift and I remember Faith's and Paul's wonderment over it all as we landed safely in the tug.

Did you ever approach a strange land where you had no hope of seeing a friendly face and then, while slowly approaching the pier, suddenly see some one all eagerness searching your tugboat of souls for the chance of finding you? That was exactly what happened to us. Mr. J. S. Young was taking the place of Mr. F. Suter, who had gone up country to visit some outlying mission stations and as we came in, he stood on the very edge of the pier searching with his eyes, every face on our tug. Suddenly he spoke out, pointing to my husband and asked, "Are you Dr. Sanders?" Oh, what a relief! Here was some one whom God had raised up, who had come to meet us and take us up to the Mission house. It seemed we must have always been acquainted and when we met the Misses Hitchcock at this home, we had a near feeling to them all, as they warmly welcomed us to Africa. All one family in Jesus.

Shall try and send another installment before long as I cannot send more this time. Yours for Jesus in Africa,

MRS. H. C. SANDERS.