

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona Mission,

Dear Mission-minded Friends: 7-9-40

A missionary's life is not always full of interesting happenings or unusual trips. On the contrary life may be as dull and full of routine as it is in the homeland.

Wednesday I returned from one of my unusual trips. I had been to visit one of the Hartland outposts. If you are a lover of hills and you had been with me your love would have been more than satisfied.

The trip from Altona to Hartland was made on horseback. I believe that for more than half of the distance one is either climbing up or crawling down steep and rugged hills. The only roads are cattle and native trails and these are hardly worthy to be called paths. About three or four miles from Altona one goes along the rocky face of a cliff which forms one side of a gorge through which a small stream flows. On one's left rugged cliffs rise almost perpendicularly for three more hundred feet from the edge of your path; on the right the outer edge of the path slopes sharply off an equal distance below you to the narrow river bed. If you looked carefully you could see what seems to be a narrow ribbon of water tumbling down over the rocks into quite a sizable pool below. You must not look at the scenery too intently lest a projecting rocky ledge or a nearby tree, possibly a thorn or aloe, seeks to tear your saddle or leg off.

At last you get down to the stream; you cross; climb another hill; cross another stream; climb another grade; before long you suddenly come out to the top edge of the cliffs rising almost perpendicularly from the Pongola river. Below is the river stretched out like a silvery hair ribbon to form an almost perfect horseshoe; both ends of the horseshoe are quickly lost between other steep and rugged mountains and cliffs. On the flat lands within the horseshoe, cattle, donkeys and people seem little larger than flies.

Two paths lie open to you. One leads you more gently down along the cliffs to what is called "women's crossing," the other goes down at an angle of fifty or sixty degrees to the "men's crossing." More than likely you will dismount and lead your horse down this path.

With the river low, your dangling feet may touch the water; otherwise you might not be able to cross at all or your horse might have to swim. The river was quite low when I crossed.

Once across, you start climbing again; you must climb up on the other side just as far as you came down on the opposite side. This part of your ride will take 30 or 40 minutes, if not more. At last you reach the top and in the distance you can see shiny iron roofs among the trees; this is your Hartland Mission station. The rest of the ride is quite easy.

Sunday morning Brother Charles Sanders and I left for the Bevane outpost on bicycles. Brother MacDonald preceded us on horseback. For the next five miles it seemed as if we were just walking up hills. They were not just gentle inclines—they were steep. We were obliged to rest more than once. We didn't merely perspire either.

We left the main road and then rode along foot paths for about two miles. Here we left our bicycles in a native kraal and went on on

foot. It did not take us long to reach our preacher's kraal. I was quite surprised to see quite a nice little red brick house and two stone rondavals. Everything about the kraal was clean and neat. This is Johan Kunene's home.

The three of us were regaled with tea, that had both sugar and milk, and a cold, cooked chicken.

The walk to the church was probably three or four miles; it was one continuous going down, down, down almost to the Bevane river level.

I was interested in the church as it was the first one I had seen built of sods. It is a good size and well built, even after ten years of use the walls are as straight and almost as good as ever.

We had a very nice service. Nearly everyone present testified. Brother MacDonald conducted the Communion service. An offering of about \$1.80 was taken up.

The return climb was quite strenuous, but it was not long before we reached the main road; the rest of the return journey to Hartland was quite thrilling and could be dangerous if one was not careful to make frequent use of the brake.

Dusk found us at the Mission Station, tired but quite contented that we had been on work for our Lord.

Yours in Him,
EUGENE A. M. KIERSEAD

Hartland M. S.,

Dear Friends: Sept. 1, 1940

Many steamers have been sunk since the war started, and many cargoes lost—but our Heavenly Father saw to it that "that" box was safely conducted over the stormy deep and transported overland 300 miles to this little part of His harvest field. I found it awaiting my return from nursing a very sick Dutch neighbor. (I was there two weeks—she had heart and lung trouble and no one to care for her so her husband sent half English, half Afrikaans "S. O. S."). That same evening George and Brother Eugene arrived from Altona. Our hearts were almost overwhelmed as the box was unpacked and the gifts passed around. Each article is so appreciated! The personal gifts here and there, amongst the many little garments and other articles for the Hospital—all bespeak of the love of the host of dear friends who are holding the ropes for us as we strive to seek to save the lost. We thank God and you all who worked and contributed towards this box. May God richly bless you each one. The little garments came in a time of real need. So often I would have to sit down and cut out and sew a little warm vest for some sick baby with pneumonia or a heavy cold on the chest! The very day we opened the box, two such babies were brought to the dispensary—tears of gratitude filled the mother's eyes as I gave the little sufferers each a warm shirt. I wish you could have seen the transformation a bath and clean clothing could make in a little brown baby! You would have felt repaid for all the time and labour spent on the making of those little garments.

I had not been home a week when I received a letter from my brother Paul, begging me to come and help them. Ruth was just to return from the hospital (by special permission) where she was rushed three weeks before with an attack of C. S. meningitis. I prayed earnestly over the matter and though it looked hard to get away with three

patients in the Hospital and work piled up from my absence before, yet God definitely and clearly showed me the way.

Ruth made a remarkable recovery with no after-effects. We are so grateful to our Heavenly Father to whom special prayer was made on her behalf. It was wonderful how God provided for my every need—congenial travelling companions both ways and His servants, ordained ministers, conducted me to and from the train on the return trip, and I stayed over night at a missionary home in Paulpietersburg.

God was with me and blessed me and has been teaching me about "worry." It is "so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to know 'Thus saith the Lord.'"

I praise God for victory in my soul and for the privilege of serving Him. Pray for me, friends, that God's will will daily be worked out in and through me.

Again thanking you for "your labour of love." Yours happy in His service,

GRACE M. SANDERS

Altona Mission,

Dear Highway Friends: 6-9-40

Some weeks have passed since I last reported. We have been very busy with special work and building. This is the best time of year to work as the weather is fine and it is more or less cool all the time.

I believe I have already reported the building and opening of the Mbucu church. Gladys has told me she wrote you about the building we have been building for the native workers who come to the quarterlies. We used this building during the last quarterly for the first time in spite of the fact that it was not completely thatched and that it had no floor or door and was not plastered inside. We found the building very convenient for business meetings during regular services, Bible classes, sleeping quarters, etc. With the grass roof on we are no longer afraid that the rains may harm our soft brick walls; we can finish the inside work at our leisure or according as means are available.

Today George and I put up the rafters and framework of a smaller house that we are fixing up for our new male teacher. We are in a hurry to get the grass sowed on this roof also as it seems the spring rains are right upon us.

On Monday work began on the Entungwiini church. I have hired a native to haul the stone from the old site to the new site. I believe the builder has also begun his work as well.

At Emozane, 4,000 bricks have been made for their new church. If the rains hold off the natives may start hauling the brick to the new site on Monday next. The rains will also govern its building as well.

A word of explanation may help you to understand why we are building these churches this year and in such a hurry.

You may remember that I told you about the government finally pointing out the church site that had been granted some years ago. The government official measured off one acre of land near water and the farm boundary. We are building anew to occupy this new location of the site.

Our Emozane church had practically fallen down; the roof had caved in and the stone walls were badly cracked and damaged. We asked the farm owner for permission to rebuild or enlarge but he would not agree to