

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona Mission Station,

Dear Highway Friends: Oct. 27th, 1941

It is a hot African day and its also Monday, so we are feeling tired after having had a full day yesterday.

Eugene had an opportunity made to go to our new outpost and as it was cold and a strong wind was blowing it would have been very hard to go by bicycle—the return trip of about 40 miles—so I suggested that we take the car so we could all go. I asked the girls if it would be cold all day and they said no, it would be very hot by noon. Then I knew it would be all right to take the children, so we hurried to get ready and started out about ten o'clock.

This outpost is a very easy one to reach, and it is right near the road, some miles this side of Moolman, our nearest station. We reached our destination safely and were invited into a large round house where we were served to tea and fried cakes—something like doughnuts. Then at the close of the service we were asked to stay, and soon the table was set and they brought in nice stewed chicken with rice and sweet potatoes and tea. The family of that kraal seem to be very ambitious and clean, etc.

Eugene preached on the second coming of Christ. Then Absolum Sibpja, our worker for that section, also talked along the same line. Eugene interpreted for me as I cannot talk very well myself, and then many testified. Then followed the Communion. This was a very nice service, the dear Lord came very near and greatly blessed me. I thought as I sat there, surrounded by black people, how wonderful it was that Jesus shed His precious blood for us all. We were only in a native hut, no beautiful church that, still Jesus was the same, and we could partake and God was just as near to bless and encourage us as if we had been in most beautiful surroundings.

Several came forward for prayer at the close of the Communion service. One man, who is a seeker, prayed very earnestly for the Lord to deliver him from beer and tobacco. Even heathen can pray if they get in a place where they think they ought to. When we first came to Africa I remember so well taking Reginald to a native kraal. He was very small and lively and enjoyed exploring new places and I found I couldn't keep my eyes closed all the time during prayers. So in watching Reginald I also noticed an old heathen man who was kneeling near us. At first he prayed so earnestly that I thought he surely must be a seeker, but soon he began to tire so stopped and looked around at the others. Many of the Christians were still praying so again he closed his eyes and prayed and prayed. Poor old man. I learned afterwards that he was a heathen indeed—smoking, drinking, etc., with no thought or desire for God.

But yesterday the spirit of the meeting was so good and as the man prayed I felt that he was in earnest. I pray that God will bless and help him for we do need good earnest Christian men in our churches here.

We reached home before six o'clock feeling that it had been good for us to have been there. It was the first time that I had been to any outpost since Baby arrived so I enjoyed the change also.

The teacher helped me by having Sunday school here at Altona and Johannes was here for the afternoon service. Several told me that

they had had a very nice service here too.

Since Brother George Sanders has moved near Alfred Metula's outpost we have taken over the medical work altogether—before we only looked after it when he was away. I find it takes a good bit of time but I believe it is profitable. Nearly every day some one comes for medicines, etc. I just stopped now to do up a badly cut finger. Fortunately it was a clean cut and with care will be well in a few days. This morning we had a woman come for medicines, bandages, etc., for a badly burned baby.

The open fires, right on the floor, cause so many burns for dear little babies. I have a faithful little Sunday school girl with awful scars all over her face. Her name is Evelyn. I believe she said she was burned while the Sterritt sisters were here at Altona and they took care of her. So many remember them in this way too and are so grateful for the help received.

There was a large heathen wedding near us lately. Such a crowd of heathen! I didn't realize there were still so many near us. The bride's party stopped on a hill near us and cooked a goat to eat while they waited for the bridegroom to come. Beer was very plentiful also. Several girls were so drunk they could hardly walk. As I watched their wild dancing, etc., I prayed that God would help us in some way to reach these seemingly unreachable dark souls.

The days are getting warmer and our garden is growing but we do need rain so badly. So very little has fallen yet.

Our children are all well except Reginald. His eyes are troubling him again but not as badly as before. We are praying and trusting God to undertake for him. During prayers at the service yesterday I felt especially led to pray for him. Today he seems a little better.

Pray for us, friends. There is so much still to be done and the time to do it in may be very short. We do not know but it becomes us as Christians to be diligent while the day lasts, lest night come and find us with so much unfinished work that we should have done for God.

Yours in Christian love,

GLADYS KEIRSTEAD

Altona Mission Station,

Dear Highway: October 28th, 1941

Another quarterly meeting has become history. The meeting place was Hartland. The time was the 15th to the 19th of October. The attendance was rather less than usual as there has been and is much sickness about.

Three candidates were baptized and received into church membership, a middle-aged man, a married woman, and a girl in her teens. A new woman worker sent up from Alfred Metula's area and a male worker was disciplined for selling tobacco. A special offering of a little over \$5.00 was received.

There was little to report from the outposts except that two churches were in the process of being built—one in Natal and one in the Transvaal, and that Paul Nkosi had been on a "scouting" trip down towards Zululand where a few of our adherents have moved.

Visible results were not very evident, although many people came forward to the altar for prayer.

Business meetings were the order of the day. Several ran long past meal time and took many hours of our time. It is rather singular that most of them concerned workers.

I have spoken of one worker being "set

aside" or disciplined. This was Jacob Mngati, a preacher without a place to preach. Mngati has been at Hartland for several years serving as a Government Malarial Assistant. He was converted and sanctified in our services I believe and later "set up" as a preacher. Recently he started a hotel or tea room in Paulpietersburg and it was not long before we heard he was selling tobacco in his shop. When I approached him on this point he stated that he found it necessary to do so to cover his high rent, but stated that he knew he was breaking one of our church rules. He promised to give up the hotel—this he soon did. The hotel was also the indirect means of starting a lot of talk about him: that he was thinking of taking a second wife, etc. The talk arose from the fact that he was taking one of the hotel girls back and forth from work to home on his motorcycle and had slept once or twice in the same home as the girl. Mngati's case is an example of how gossips will take little things and almost ruin a preacher's reputation enlarging on them. It is the little foxes that spoil the vines.

A second business meeting concerned one of our older and more important workers, Johan Kunene. We were really obliged to take the Quarterly meeting to him on Monday as he had broken his knee-cap and was unable to walk. That business lasted from one o'clock until about seven or so in the evening. Johan reported that a second one of his boys was wanting to take a second wife and bring her into the home; also his third son was courting many girls. He seemed unable to cope with the situation and wondered what he should do about continuing on as a preacher.

Several factors seemed to hinder him from taking a decided stand. First he was physically helpless and dependent on his sons for working out his hut and garden rents. Secondly he claimed that his daughters-in-law would not support him in making a case against his boys for bigamy. After much discussion the daughters-in-law declared they would fight for their rights and Johan decided he would take a firm stand against his sons' actions. Pray that Johan may have the courage to put his convictions into practice.

A third meeting considered a report that some of the Hartland workers were considering breaking with our mission and forming a new church or some such thing. In spite of their denials the rest of us felt that there was some foundation for the rumor. Pray that this danger to our work out there may be averted.

Yours in Him,

EUGENE A. M. KIERSTEAD

Altona Mission Station,

Dear Highway: Nov. 3rd, 1941

We are trying to work up a complete list of those who are supporting or helping to support native workers and getting them in touch with the workers they are supporting.

Changes in supporters and changes in our native worker lists necessitate periodical revisions such as this.

Vancouver friends support Aloni Nkonza.

Seal Cove supports Johanisi Nkosi.

Sandford supports Triphina Msibi.

The True Blue Class, Fredericton, supports Tulina Dhlamini and Lizi Mbuli.

A brother, per Charles Sanders, supports Paul Nkosi.

A friend per Charles Sanders supports Talida Nzima.

The Sanders family support Paulina Maseko.

We would be pleased if anyone can enlighten