

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona M. S.

Dear Highway:

It perhaps us a bit late but nevertheless we will wish you the compliments of the season and the blessing of the Lord during 1945.

During the last few days we had the privilege of uniting in marriage two couples of young people: Johanisi Zikalala and Beti Mbuli, and Johan Pakati and Esta Sitole. Both Johanisi and Beti belong to our church so we were particularly interested in that wedding. It involved a round trip of about eighty miles. Both the young people and their parents seemed very grateful that we were willing to go and have the wedding in their home.

I was unable to go to Ermelo as I planned, on account of illness, but Brothers George Sanders and Johanisi Nkosi went instead. I understand they had a good reception, and were able to organize an outpost just outside of Ermelo. They handed me the names of twenty-eight men, women and children who wished to be considered as adherents. Pray that God may work in their midst and will save souls.

On their return trip our brothers contacted several scattered members and adherents at Idalya and Piet Retief. At both places we now have a nucleus that we trust may grow into an outpost.

With the passage of time we are realizing more clearly the truth of the Scripture: "The harvest is great and the labourers are few." We have more openings and opportunities for expansion than we can attend to. We are also somewhat afraid of the size of our work out-running our ability to finance it, but God is able and if all His stewards would bring their tithes into His storehouse we are sure that sufficient support would be forthcoming.

We are making an extra effort this year to add to our finances by farming operations on Balmoral. Brother George Sanders is in charge. We already have upwards of fifty acres under the plow. We would add considerably to this if we had the capital and the equipment.

Harold and Glendon have been sent to a new school at Comondale. This is nearer home, has a quieter atmosphere, and is cheaper. We are trusting that they will be happy in their new surroundings, Harold is in Grade VIII, and Glendon is in Grade V.

We wish to thank all friends, especially those at Beals, for the gifts that were sent to help the boys in their school expenses. The Lord bless you richly.

Our efforts in planting fruit trees at Altona is beginning to have results. We shall be having a nice supply of grapes, peaches, guavas, quince, and figs. Other fruits will also come into bearing in the near future. We are grateful for these additions to our diet as vegetables are very scarce and hard to raise.

School has again opened here at Altona. So far there are fifty-six pupils; more will be coming next week.

We are still happy in Jesus and are fighting the good fight of faith.

Yours for Africa,

EUGENE A. M. KIERSTEAD

Hartland M. S.

Dear Highway Friends:

Greetings from Africa in His precious name! It has been a very long time since you heard

from me. I started several letters, but each time had to leave off writing and later just did not send the letter. It is just a year yesterday since my operation, and my heart praises God for His wonderful care over me, and the way He has lead; and blessed my soul. It took months to regain my nervous energy. I can now do a great deal but have to still be careful lest I overdo. I seem to feel a new energy and lots of ambition. I was away from home for six months. When I returned I found God had been wonderfully blessing on the Mission Station through the Bible School held, for a few weeks for two terms, by George and Charles. Only Eternity can reveal what those two sessions of teaching has meant and is to mean to our work. I arrived home in time to attend a few classes on the closing day. It was blessed to hear George examine the preachers orally on part of the teaching of the term. They had just returned from an all night's meeting. In this meeting they had tried to put into practice what he had taught them and each passed remarks or gave his opinion as to the effectiveness of co-operation; and he pointed out the results. Each speaker followed the first, driving the nail a bit deeper, and the last one clinched it, instead of each speaking from a different subject. There were seekers that night. Close upon the closing of the Bible School came our Quarterly and it was one of the best since our return to Africa. A spirit of revival came upon the worshippers and some began confessing their sins! We praised God for "the drops, but for the showers we plead."

Charles left yesterday morning at 7.30 for Paulpietersburg to take in a service and see what he could do today about meeting Myra. Praise God for His wonderful care of her as she crossed the dangerous Atlantic. We are all happier than tongue can tell and are looking forward with keen anticipation to her arrival here. I presume he got the booking of his seat through and took train towards Laurence Marques today. He may stop off before he reaches that town and wait for his permits and passports. It is wonderful how God helps in puzzling circumstances like these. God is raising up friends for him—perfect strangers to him, in three of the towns which he may go to—Missionaries. One has invited him to his home and to take him to meet the boat as they expect missionaries on the same one too. "God doeth all things well," praise His name!

We are so eager to get tomorrow's post to find out how he made out today in all of his plans.

The natives are thrilled to know the wedding is to take place on the Mission Station. They want to do their little bit to help towards "sweeping the yard" as they call it. That means anything to make the yard look neat and clean—such as clearing it of weeds, cutting the long grass, etc. So, according to their request, I appointed 4 days this week. We are to start on the Church tomorrow. A whirlwind came and tore off considerable of the grass of the roof and for some days it has been under repair. Some children kindly fetched some white clay from a distant river, in sacks on donkeys, and mixed with a little paste, does just fine for a whitewash. Mixed with other clays we can get several pastel shades and it is quite a saving. Charles' bedroom and the kitchen were done today.

We are trusting God for a very blessed time the day of the wedding. The natives are so pleased they are going to at least have an "Umama" (Mother)! And especially so as she

is a nurse. So, even though a stranger to them all, Myra's position as "wife," and Matron of the Hospital, will soon endear her to their hearts. But you should have heard the comments in class one day a few weeks ago when Charles told about Myra's soon arrival! They hoped she would not "be with a temper," and be harsh to them. They desired to be allowed to enter her kitchen. And ready to give to supply what little needs they might have. They hoped she would not make Charles change—he satisfied them—he dealt kindly with them—he is their "Ubaba" (father). Of course her not knowing their tongue would be a drawback but Charles would be right close to her and when they spoke to her, she would whisper to him, "What is she saying?" Then he would whisper back the interpretation and then she would smile and get Charles to interpret for her. Yes, she would soon learn to understand them. May God make her a great blessing to the work. If the weather is fine I expect we will have a great gathering of all classes, to see something few of them have ever witnessed before: a white man's wedding! We are looking to God to give us strength and wisdom to care for all this crowd and speak to their hearts and bring many to realize the nearness of Christ's coming for His bride—even as the day finally dawned this morning for Charles to go and meet his bride and bring her home and prepare a great "supper" for his friends.

In closing I want to thank all the dear kind friends for their prayerful support and the many Christmas cards, letters and gifts which we have recently received. Two parcels from Port Maitland and one from Victoria Corner came as a GREAT SURPRISE. Thank you very very much and God richly bless and reward you all! May He give you a very fruitful year in His service this New Year.

Yours happy in Him,

GRACE SANDERS

Altona

Dear Highway Friends:

I am very late with my letter this month. The days have gone rapidly and we have arrived at the last day.

January was a very busy month. The boys left for school the 15th. I believe Eugene wrote a letter telling you that they are attending the Comondale school this year. They are enjoying their work very much.

Our school at Altona started the 16th also. We have the same principal again this year but a new lady teacher. There are over eighty children, not as many as last term as many are herding cattle and watching birds to keep them from the gardens.

Interest in Sunday School seems to be very good indeed. The teachers are a good help and I have over eighty on the register. I am teaching the beginners this year. They are a lively little crowd but very good and I enjoy it. I have about forty in my class. Last year we spent much time studying the life of the Apostle Paul. This year we are studying the life of Jesus. My Zulu is limited but I love teaching these little black children about Jesus. Many who have heard so very little before.

This month we spent a few days away from the Mission. We left Altona the morning of the 7th. The car sputtered along, simply refusing to go nicely so we didn't reach Woolman until noon. There we went to the garage but as it was lunch hour, we had to sit there, in the heat, until the mechanic had returned.