

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Vryheid, Natal

Feb. 23, 1951

We are having a very hot month of February this year. Even here in Vryheid some days have been very warm indeed and some nights so close and oppressive I found it most difficult to breathe well. Very soon now it will be cooler and we will appreciate it.

Yet it distresses me to think of the year slipping away so fast. The time is going and so many not yet saved. I do so long to be up and doing while the day lasts and we can still work for Jesus, but I am determined to spend more time in prayer than ever before.

I believe others have written about the church opening at Altona. It does rejoice my heart to see the pictures of such a nice strong building, all completed and dedicated to His service. I do hope it will be a great blessing. Sister Campbell finished her summer work about the time of the dedication of the new church and took over the work at Altona, at that time. Brother and Sister Parks came up to visit her a few days before starting for Cape Town enroute for Canada. It was with a real feeling of sadness that we gathered around my bed for our last prayers together, before they took the train for Cape Town. Our fellowship together has been sweet and we thank God for sending them out to help at this time and pray that God will bless and use them for His glory, over there. We also pray for a safe and pleasant journey for them.

Now we are eagerly looking forward to meeting our missionaries very soon. We have been praying that God would give them a safe journey to this land and a great love in their hearts for these people. But I expect the love is already there. When God calls He puts that love in our hearts which makes us happy and contented in circumstances that otherwise would often be most unpleasant for us. How I thank God for my call—it gets stronger as the years go by, and has always been like a strong pillar to lean upon. I would say to any young people who may be looking toward foreign fields: Be sure of your calling and then go straight ahead. God will not fail you once. He will give you grace and glory and go with you all the way. Praise His precious name!

Yours in His keeping,

GLADYS KIERSTEAD

Dear Highway Friends:

Greetings to you all in Jesus' name!

Were I to write you every time I think of you, I would indeed be kept busy, but as it is I don't begin to write as often as I should. My good resolutions all came to nought after we heard about the new missionaries and the fact that they were soon to arrive in Africa. How I did try, as any woman would to make Altona as attractive as possible, both inside and out!

They were due at Vryheid Saturday, March 3, but they didn't reach there until March 7. That gave me time to get up and help Sister Gladys with extra preparations.

Can you possibly imagine what it meant to us to see these two girls right from the homeland! For the next two or three days our tongues all wagged at once. Not much wonder that Sister Uta became sick and had to stay at Vryheid for another week, while I left to spend another week alone at Altona. That week I reminded myself of the little children counting the days until Christmas as each

night on retiring I would think "Just six, five, etc., more nights to sleep alone in the house."

The Welcome Service at Altona was March 18. How moved we all were as we saw and listened to the testimonies of Sister Uta and Nina! We were reminded afresh that God does and is answering our appeals for help. The church was about full and the people welcomed the girls with a really good offering.

Now Uta and I are stationed at Altona. It is much more interesting when there are two of us. Since Uta came, many are the sick that are coming for help. She was remarking just this evening that we had been on the go the whole day. That remark was made after she and Kenneth had been rounding up our hens. (I fear I had neglected them, preferring a bout with a lion). It didn't take Sister Uta long to get into full harness. Already the natives think she is great because of her size, as well as because of her capabilities.

Having been a Big Sister to the Kierstead boys ever since my arrival in Africa, I wanted to see Harold married, so I, with the Kiersteads left for Johannesburg early Friday morning, March 23. The wedding took place Saturday afternoon, March 24, and a beautiful wedding it was. Perhaps what made it so wonderful to me was that both young people felt a strong Call to the Lord's work.

While we were in Vryheid, Sister Uta had a chance to Durban to clear their luggage. (They think this is a slow country). Since being down there she has been penning letters to the Highway (in her mind). The Customs' Officers are making a terrific ado over the 2nd. hand clothes and Gifts for Missionaries so she is suggesting that such things should not be sent in trunks or boxes with in-coming missionaries but rather through the mail in smaller parcels.

Sister Nina is staying with Sister Gladys. The first Saturday morning they were here she was called upon to bring a chapel message. She has a full time native Sunday School. With her Zulu study and nursing, she won't have too much spare time. Even before we get the Zulu, we can find much to do.

These girls came in time to fill a great vacancy left by the departure of the Parks! The Parks' won their way into the hearts of all of us, native and white. The natives are still crying because they didn't bid them a proper farewell. Who will be better fitted than the Parks' to give the Mission Board and home churches information about the Foreign Field?

Sunday, April 1, the girls are being welcomed in another corner of the Mission Field, at the Calvary Mission Station and April 29 the Welcome Service is at Hartland. These services were arranged, where possible, to coincide with the Communion Sundays.

Friends, keep praying for the work in this corner of God's vineyard. My prayer for the churches in the homeland is still that every church be a missionary church and that every pastor be on fire for missions. When this condition exists, God will open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings.

God bless you every one.

Yours for souls both in the home and foreign fields.

—MARY.

Transvaal, S. A.,

April 3-51

Dear Highway Friends:

It is indeed a pleasure to greet you from

Africa in the precious name of Jesus.

You have already heard about our trip across the ocean, from Nina, therefore I will not bore you by rehearsing that wonderful adventure. I would only like to add one thing and that is I do not feel that it was a particularly good trip as Sister Nina thought. On the contrary I thought it horrible. I was quite seasick for over a week and the beautiful boxes of food prepared by many of the sisters were left practically untouched.

We arrived in Capetown on March the second. We were so tired and lonesome to get a chance to go to church that we decided to stay in Capetown until Monday. We attended the Capetown Baptist Church where I saw my first dedication service. (You may be interested to know that they believe in holiness, and by the looks and acts of the people appear to live it.) Besides our thorough enjoyment of being able to attend the church services we were also delighted with the scenic beauties and hospitality which Capetown affords.

On March the fifth we left Capetown, arriving in Vryheid on March the seventh at approximately nine a. m. We were delighted to see Sister Mary and Brother Kierstead on the station platform to meet us. After loading our luggage, part in the mission truck and part in Mary's 'Anglia' we started for Kiersteads. Nina went with Mr. Kierstead and Mary grabbed my hand and started flying across the station platform with the words: "Come, we have to beat them home." Needless to say, I was flying quite low.

It was a pleasure to meet the rest of the Kierstead family, especially Sister Gladys, knowing that she had been sick for so long. She is not too well but seems to be improving. We are praying that this will continue. It was decided that I should come down to Altona with Sister Mary, and the day we were to leave I managed to get sick again and so was delayed for one week.

On March 18th we motored to Altona for the 'Welcome Service,' and I had my first glimpse of my new field of labor. I would like to say to Sisters Alice and Helen that Altona is just as beautiful as you pictured it to be, and the people just as dear. I like it very much. The 'Welcome Service' was wonderful, although I could understand very little that was being said (except when Sister May or Brother Kierstead interpreted) you could feel the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our midst and we left the service feeling that it was good to have been there.

During the week I am kept busy with learning a few things about missionary life: Morning and evening devotions with the natives, nursing, gardening, poultry farming, carpentering, domestic science, and a few endeavours toward learning to ride a bicycle, besides trying to learn Zulu. The nights are made complete by: searching my bed to make sure it is snake free, chasing down rats of which it seems there must be hundreds when they get to playing tag in the middle of the night; getting up in the middle of the night to mop the floor after a sudden downpour, to protect ourselves against being flooded out; the spare moments are filled with sweet sleep.

April 18th we left Altona early to attend the second Welcome Service to be held at Calvary Mission. I cannot tell you of the joy that filled my soul as we came to the rise of a hill and viewed Calvary Mission, nestled among the beautiful hills of Africa. It seems impossible that such a lovely little church could be built for 900 dollars, when you consider