

A Thirsty Land



Algiers Mission Band

No. 128.

DECEMBER, 1959.

ALGIERS MISSION BAND

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A THIRSTY LAND

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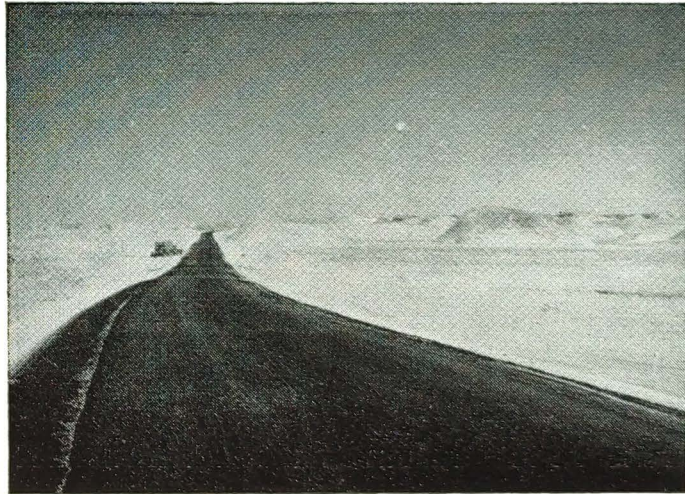
"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."
—Isaiah 9: 6.

Make Straight in the Desert a Highway for our God

Isaiah 40: 3.

**A PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF A MISSIONARY TREK
IN THE SAHARA**

NEW ROAD
IN SAHARA
LINKING
GHARDAIA
AND
OUARGLA



PROPHECY FULFILLED TODAY
A Pictorial Commentary on Isaiah 35.

THE
WILDERNESS
AND THE
SOLITARY PLACE
SHALL BE
GLAD AND THE
DESERT SHALL
REJOICE . . .
Isa. 35 : 1

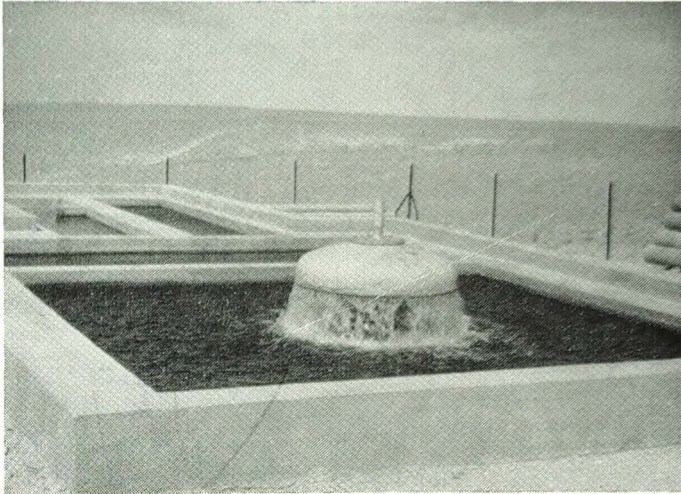


ROAD THROUGH OASIS — OUARGLA
Over 1,000,000 Date Palms.



ROSES — ZELFANA.
(Oasis, 40 miles from Ghardaia)

. . . AND
BLOSSOM
AS THE
ROSE.
Isa. 35 : 1.



**IN THE
WILDERNESS
SHALL
WATERS
BREAK OUT
*Isa. 35 : 6.***

ARTESIAN WELL

*Water springing forth at over 2,000 gallons
per second under 80cm³ pressure.*

**AND
STREAMS
IN THE
DESERT.
*Isa. 35 : 6.***



**NEWLY PLANTED PALM TREES
*Irrigated by streams from artesian well.***

AND A
HIGHWAY
SHALL
BE
THERE
Isa. 35 : 8.



CONTINUATION OF MAIN ROAD
THROUGH OUARGLA



IT SHALL
BE FOR . . .
THE
WAYFARING
MEN
Isa. 35 : 8

IN OUARGLA MARKET PLACE
Preparing to take the Highway.

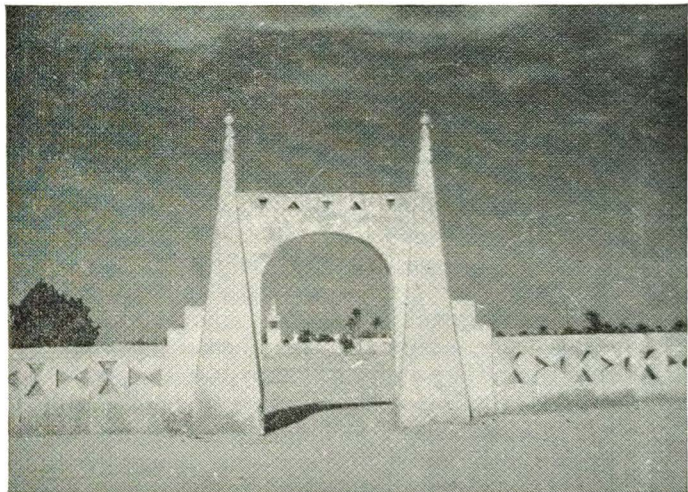


NOT BY MIGHT,
NOR BY POWER,
BUT
BY MY SPIRIT,
SAITH THE LORD
OF HOSTS
Zech. 4 : 6

CAMEL CORPS ON PARADE.
Ghardaia.

NARROW IS THE
GATE, AND
STRAITENED THE
WAY THAT
LEADETH UNTO
LIFE, AND FEW
THERE BE THAT
FIND IT

Matt. 7 : 14
(R.V.)



GATE OF THE KINGS.
Ouargla.

THE LORD'S PROMISE FOR HIS VINEYARD

"I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day."—(Isa. 27: 3).

THIS was the promise given me at the beginning of the summer of 1959, when tempted to be troubled about leaving the dear "Specials" and others alone for so long. For, as usual, on account of the extreme heat in the desert during the summer season, it was necessary to close down the work for several months. Perhaps, after all, this is not such a bad thing. For those who are as yet babes in Christ may learn thus to lean on HIM, instead of depending only on the missionary. Indeed, those who belong to the Scripture Union have been following on to know the Lord, and have been evangelising other members of their families. There has also been a happy exchange of cards and letters between us, though of course one cannot write as freely as one would talk.

A very warm welcome awaited me on my return—from both the parents and their children. As for the two "Specials," we have had some blessed times together. Some who read these words may wonder who the "Specials" are. They are two young wives, who used to attend the classes regularly, till they reached the age when they had to be veiled. It is they who are mentioned above as Scripture Union members. The brother of Special I, is also now a member of the Scripture Union. He was so thrilled by reading the witness of a converted Muslim in a missionary magazine, that he is passing it round to his school chums. Many are the brothers of girls attending our classes who are longing for a male missionary that they too may have classes. How long will they have to wait? Perhaps the Lord will call someone who will be reading this article?

A few days ago I met another member of this dear boy's family. I read to him Luke 15. He wanted me to read to him more—and yet more; and asked me for a copy of the Gospel for himself.

Some time ago I met an invalid man in a house I was visiting in Algiers. I have just had the joy of coming into contact with his daughter-in-law, who is staying with a sister in Touggourt. She tells me how this man is constantly asking if I am not coming back, as he wants to hear more of those good words, and also to have a Gospel. As I had a Gospel of Luke in my bag, this request was soon granted, and she will be taking it to him when she returns home in a few days.

A young bride, who, because she is ill, has been sent back to her mother to be cared for, is another hungry soul. As I was reading to her one morning several elderly women swept into the tiny court. Immediately the Arab wedding cry rent the air—as soon as it subsided, the bride's sister explained to me that one of these women had just arranged the marriage of her son. After the excited conversation which followed had died down, I read the parable of the Wedding Garment. The women

looked at me rather suspiciously. I then sang a hymn, in which the little girls (class children aged 10 and 12) joined me. Then one of these children, noticing the rather hostile looks of these visitors, tried to hide herself behind someone's back. But her sister got up and came to sit close to me, singing on heartily to the end of the hymn. The guests withdrew without comment. But they had heard; and may they remember, and yet apply to themselves the meaning of that parable.

As I write one can hear in the distance the wedding drums, as a procession of veiled women and gaily dressed children follow on, surrounding a bride, who looks more like a sack than a human being, for she is covered with a long veil down to her toes—without even her eyes visible; thus she is led to her husband's home under the roof of his parents. And so, two little girls were missing this morning from our happy children's meeting—the first of the season. But it was encouraging to note how well those who were with us had been remembering the hymns and prayers of last season all through the summer.

Thus begins another period of work in this part of a Thirsty Land—with so much to be thankful for (including the glad prospect of a helper in the work); and with oh so very much to pray about. Brethren, pray for us. (Exodus 17: 11-12).
I. K. NASH.

DREAMING AND DIGGING IN TOLGA

A FAITHFUL friend of the A.M.B.—herself a missionary to Muslims wherever and whenever she could reach them—Miss Jenny de Mayer wrote in her wonderful book "Adventures with God" the story of a visit she paid to Tolga in 1920, with Miss Perkin. It is a story worth repeating, in Miss de Mayer's own words. She says:—

"We were sent from the Algiers Headquarters on a pioneering trip south of the Atlas Mountains from the Oasis of Biskra down South to Touggourt. We touched during the two or three weeks of our travel 26 different townlets, hamlets and oasis. Miss Perkin was the speaker as she was able to talk and read in Arabic. I, the much older one, was a sort of comrade-chaperone, but I could follow her speech, whilst listening and praying. One of the first townlets we visited was TOLGA. If I am not mistaken, this place had already . . . been visited by Miss Trotter's workers, but no station had as yet been opened there.

"The very first people with whom Miss Perkin started talking, informed her of a very strange occurrence in Tolga. The richest man of the place, owner of the largest date palm plantations, had suffered so acutely from drought, that he was on the verge of bankruptcy . . . Wherever he had made borings for artesian wells, he had failed to find water. So the man, as was known in the place, had decided to commit suicide, and had fixed it for a certain day.

"In the night before he meant to finish his misery in this desperate way, . . . a man in white appeared to him and told him not to commit suicide but to bore once more for water and to do this on a certain spot

in his palm garden, and assured him that water would be found. The message was so definite that the man took courage and decided to try his luck one last time more. Borings were started at the appointed place, and oh wonder!—water rose and rushed forth with the violence and abundance of a stream. The water flowed irresistibly and soon overflowed not only the owner's garden, but the whole of the surrounding plantations and the townlet itself.

“The neighbours who had at first been glad for the man, yea, had envied him, now became threatening, fearing that fever would break out in the oasis, and they unreasonably insisted on his stopping the water or they would kill him. The man, in sore plight and unable to manage the water, then offered them to buy from him part of the super-abundant supply which would be directed into their gardens and bring relief to their also drought-stricken plantations. The neighbours agreed to this proposal and paid over to the owner 75,000 francs . . . The stream of forth-rushing water was captured in the owner's garden, at the very place of its appearance, in a round concrete basin from which two, also concrete, channels went right and left—one to water the owner's the other to water the town people's palm plantations. Thus peace was restored with great profit to every one.

“When we heard this story . . . we were moved in our souls, for here was again a case of our Lord's stepping in by higher power, not only to save a man, a Mahommedan, from laying his hand on himself, but also pouring the blessing of the so much needed water on all the population of this small place—all of them sitting yet in the darkness of Islam and therefore “in a dry and thirsty place.

“We were told where to locate this particular plantation and soon reached the garden in the midst of which flowed the miraculous stream of water. It was indeed a startling sight. From the depth of the earth rose in an unbroken flow a volume of water, equal to the stem of a tree which two arms could hardly embrace . . . Here had indeed ‘a stream broken forth in the desert, and springs of water in a thirsty land.’ And also here, the hand of the Lord had done it.

“We stood wordless under the spell of wonder and even awe, then bowed over the slightly foaming living water, rushing, bubbling over, and drank of it with delight.

“‘We must see the owner,’ said we to one another, ‘and give him the message which this wonderful water was meant to bring to him.’ We found someone willing to call the owner, but as he was absent from the garden, his son came and greeted us. Miss Perkin started talking with him and presented in her winning way, the spiritual side of this wonderful experience which had been vouchsafed to his father and even to all the inhabitants of Tolga. The young Arab seemed to understand of Whom and of what water she was speaking, for he hurried to his home and brought to us a New Testament in French, which some of the missionaries in Algiers had given him. He evidently had read some parts of it, else he could not have agreed with us on the existence and the surpassing

excellency of the living water ' which Christ had come to bring to thirst-ridden mankind.'

" We left with the feeling that here was a soul open to the Spirit's influence and which might be led by the wonder of the visible water to deeper and eternal issues. He presented us with clusters of the most beautiful golden, wax-like transparent dates of his garden, and we left deeply impressed by the wonderful ways of God with the children of men."

It is 39 years since all this happened ; but when, two or three years later, Miss Trotter was able to set up a mission station at Tolga, the water was still springing up from that wonderful source, and still remains a symbol of the " living water, springing up unto eternal life." Perhaps, also, the labour that was put into the digging and the boring of that well, by which the water was released to be a means of blessing to the thirsty land and thirsty people, is symbolic too—of the work of the Lord's labourers in that part of His vineyard, as they strive to prepare His Way to those parched and thirsty souls, that, by His Love they may hear His call offering them the " living water," if they will " stoop down, and drink, and live." For the first years after the station at Tolga was opened, it was occupied by women only, but after some years, it became a men's station, Mr. Lull being established there with a younger worker, or at times alone for a while. The lonely times ceased with his marriage and from that timetill he was called to higher service, in 1951, the work developed and to many thirsty souls the message was brought—and is still being brought, as Mme. Lull carries on the task, with or without help. Too often it is without help, and again we pray once more that someone may be brought to offer to share in the most important task of bringing the children to the knowledge of the Saviour, in Madame Lull's school for girls.

(The picture of an artesian well that you see on another page, will give some idea of that at Tolga, though the Tolga one, when first seen was even more impressive, as it was uncovered, and the water sprang up in a massive fountain, continually renewed.)

ITEMS OF NEWS

FROM TLEMCEN :—

Since our return to Tlemcen at the end of September we have been amazed to see how quickly the usual routine of work has been re-established. Many more children coming on Thursday has led us to start a separate class for older boys (8-14) in the morning. The afternoon is now reserved for girls and the smaller boys.

The women's class continues to give us much joy and encouragement. Just a week ago we were telling once again the story of the nobleman's son (John 4: 46-54) and were struck most forcibly by the words " and himself believed, and his whole house." We are coming to see that whole families for Christ must be our target. There are many in-

dividuals seeking to follow the Lord, who, because of the strength of Islam ranged against them and the present political unrest which makes open testimony doubly dangerous, are fearful--barely daring to testify in their own homes. We must pray that they be given Holy Ghost boldness—and we too must be “bold” in our prayers for their families, that whole households be won for Jesus.

A distant cousin of one of our Christian women has been admitted to the Local Hospital. The opportunity to visit him is much appreciated, as it gives an entrance into the men's surgical ward, where many a broken body hides a hungry heart.

The onset of winter brings its problems in a town overcrowded with families who have been obliged for security reasons to leave their homes in the mountains. Accommodation is scarce, there is much unemployment, food is difficult to come by when money is short, for prices are constantly rising.

Two recent encouragements. Scene one: Washing Day at the mission house: Time 8 a.m. Enter “Z,” a woman. Missionaries hardly know whether to be pleased or not with a visitor at that hour in the morning. After a brief conversation, the reason for the visit emerges. “Madame Waine looked so poorly, I've come to help with the washing.” Bless her heart!

Scene Two: Monday afternoon: Time, 2 p.m. Women's meeting about to begin. Enter a man, “A.” Missionaries not at all pleased at this highly irregular turn of events. After the usual preliminaries that Arab etiquette demands, two large bunches of carrots and turnips were pressed on us. A thankoffering for help given. May God bless “A” too.

R. J. AND M. WAINE.

NEWS OF TOUGGOURT:—

We rejoice to be able to announce that a helper has been given for the work among the women and children, which Miss Nash has carried on single-handed for so long. The new worker is Mademoiselle Martha Daniel, who until recently was an officer in the Salvation Army. While in the S.A., she worked in Algiers as well as in France, and has acquired already some knowledge of the people of Algeria. Feeling assured that God was calling her to work among them, she left the Salvation Army and offered herself a candidate to the A.M.B. to become a missionary to the Muslims. Though as yet not knowing Arabic, her French tongue and previous experience in Algiers will help to make her useful in the work from the beginning. In a happy letter from her, written two days after her arrival at Touggourt, she speaks of her first meeting with the children who attend the classes. She writes:—“This morning I had the joy of seeing the dear little girls. I am in a hurry to be able to speak to them in Arabic. For that I must work every day.”

FROM DAR NAAMA:—

We have here now, in Miss I. B. Gow, another young worker earnestly studying the elementary beginnings of Arabic, while at the same

time becoming accustomed to hearing and speaking French, so different from merely studying it in a French grammar. Soon she will be joining the course of 1st year Arabic lessons in Algiers, which should be a great help to her progress in that language. We hope too that another candidate for the A.M.B. may soon be with us, to profit also by these Arabic lessons. This is Miss Monica Bullick, now giving some temporary help at the London Centre, "Algiers House," Ealing, while waiting for her visa.

NEWS FROM SETIF :—

Mademoiselle Germaine Chollet and Mlle Lydie Péterman are, as I write, very busy in the process of "settling-in" in the lately acquired mission house in Sétif—Villa May, so called in memory of Miss Mary May and her sisters, whose constant interest in the Mission and generous gifts and legacies made it possible to obtain this house—which we hope may prove a suitable centre for the mission work in Sétif. When the settling is satisfactorily accomplished, Mlle Chollet and Mlle Pétermann are eager to start visiting the women in their homes and receiving the children to classes in the mission house. They have been making friends with the children of the neighbourhood already, and find them friendly and responsive, which is a hopeful sign for the future.

ABOUT MILIANA :—

It is sad to have to speak of Miliana as a "not open" station—though the brief visit of two missionaries there in October proved that the native guardians of the house were faithful to their charge. Still the work of the station is at a standstill, as Miss Collins is obliged to remain at home for a time, and Miss Grautoff has not as yet any other helper. But we may hope and pray that the Lord will show His way through this difficult situation in His time.

AT TOLGA :—

It is regrettable also that we have to report that Mme Lull is again without help in the school. For, though it may be a joy to her to have her two elder daughters with her they are both engaged in other work ; so they cannot help their mother in hers. Mme Lull is sure to do the best possible to carry on the school, but it may necessitate reducing the number of scholars. Last season there were about 70, but without a second teacher to take on some part of the work it would seem impossible for one teacher to cope with such numbers.

RELIZANE AND MOSTAGANEM :—

Owing to Miss Clark and Miss Powell having been detained at Dar Naama to the end of October owing to the urgent needs of Headquarters, their new season of work at their two different stations did not begin till November—a good deal later than usual—therefore there is no special news to hand yet of their activities. But, none the less they must not be

forgotten, and past experience of what their work has been would help us to picture them as they make their way through the poor little streets—taking to the so often miserable little homes the message of love and salvation: or give a loving welcome to those who come knocking at the door of the mission house, seeking the friendship and sympathy they are quite sure of finding there, together with the “beautiful words of life” which there is no one else to teach them.

AT BLIDA :—

The prosaic but practical fact of a bad shortage of water and the unavoidable amount of “business” connected with the property, must use up so much time and energy that it seems a wonder our two missionaries there can do anything else. But they do; and we hear of many kind efforts to get children, whose parents are rather helpless or indifferent, into school: of sick or backward children being taken to the doctor, or helped with their reading, and so on: besides the taking of large classes, a sufficiently exacting work, though encouraging when the children seem keen to learn as often happens: but equally *discouraging* when as we hear now and then a few unruly children, with a hostile and mischief-making spirit, upset the whole class.

HOME OFFICE NOTES

As this magazine goes to Press, it is thought we should bring to the notice of our Readers the need at Algiers House, our London Centre, for a suitable Christian housekeeper to live-in, and to undertake any cooking for those who come to stay from time to time. Other household duties will be involved but the work is not heavy, and a good home is offered, with small remuneration.

The need is urgent, and the post available presents an opportunity to one who feels that the Lord may be calling her to serve Him in a sphere of this kind. Pray with us, that the one of His choice might come forward. Meanwhile, Miss Edge will be pleased to send all particulars to the applicant who should write fully to her at—Algiers House, 92 Gordon Road, Ealing, London, W.13.

* * *

Owing to lack of space in this issue of the magazine, it is regretted that it is not possible to insert an account of Miss Edge's recent visit to the Field, but she looks forward to telling a little about it in the March number.

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An unknown writer thinks about Christmas Day

But art Thou come, dear Saviour ? Hath Thy love
Thus made Thee stoop, and leave Thy throne above

Thy lofty heavens, and thus Thyself to dress
In dust to visit mortals ? Could no less

A condescension serve ? and after all
The mean reception of a cratch* and stall ?

Dear Lord, I'll fetch Thee hence ! I have a room
(*Tis poor, but 'tis my best) if Thou wilt come

Within so small a cell, where I could fain
Mine and the world's Redeemer entertain,

I mean my heart : 'tis sluttish, I confess,
And will not mend Thy lodging, Lord, unless

Thou send before Thy harbinger, I mean
Thy pure and purging *Grace*, to make it clean

And sweep its nasty corners ; then I'll try
To wash it also with a weeping eye.

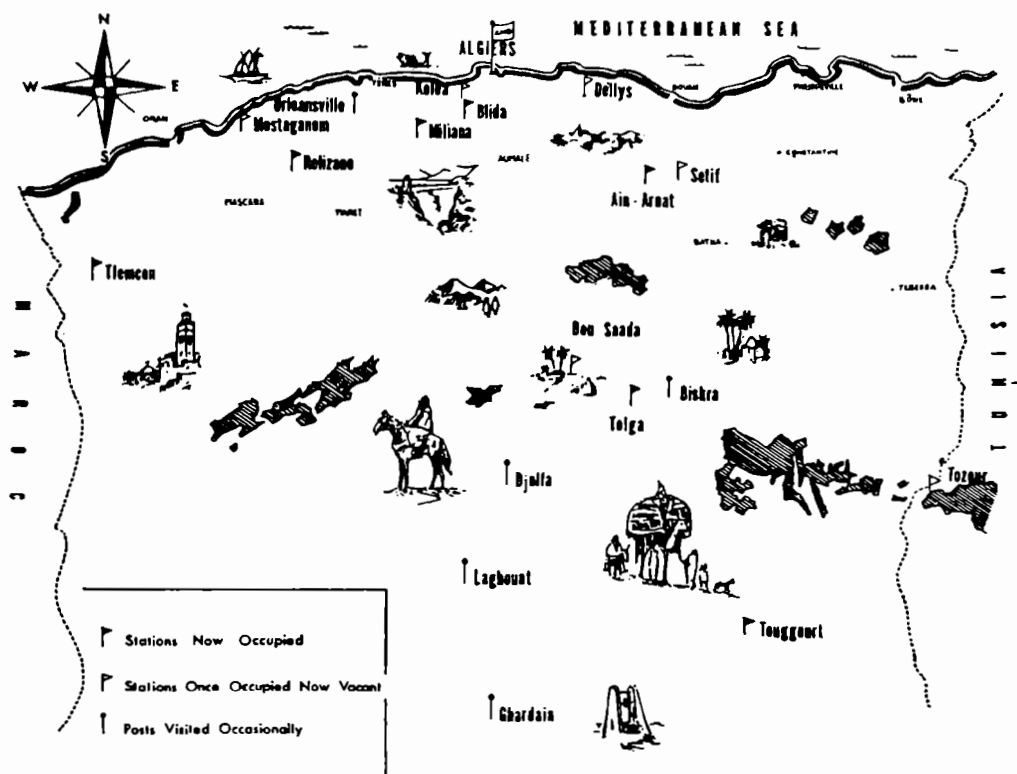
And when 'tis swept and wash't, I then will go
And, with Thy leave, I'll fetch some flowers that grow

In Thine own garden, *Faith* and *Love*, to Thee ;
With these I'll dress it up, and these shall be

My rosemary and bays. Yet when my best
Is done, the room 's not fit for such a guest.

But here's the cure ; Thy presence, Lord, alone
Will make a stall a court, a cratch a throne.

*Manger.



STATIONS AND WORKERS

ALGIERS (DAR NAAMA, EL BIAR)

1920 Miss V. Wood
 1956 Mr. & Mrs. P. G. Longley
(on furlough)

1959 Miss I. B. Gow

BLIDA

1929 Miss P. M. Russell
 1948 Mlle. J. Guibé

MILIANA

1907 Miss M. D. Grautoff
 1956 Miss E. Collins *(on leave)*.

RELIZANE (MOSTAGANEM)

1947 Miss E. Clark
 1951 Miss A. E. Powell

TLEMENEN

1949 Rev. and Mrs. R. J. Waine

TOLGA

1937 Madame Lull
 Mlle. R. Ramos

TOUGGOURT

1930 Miss I. K. Nash
 1959 Mlle. M. Daniel

SETIF

1946 Mlle. G. Chollet
 1959 Mlle. L. Pétermann