

Algiers Mission Band

Story



of 1914

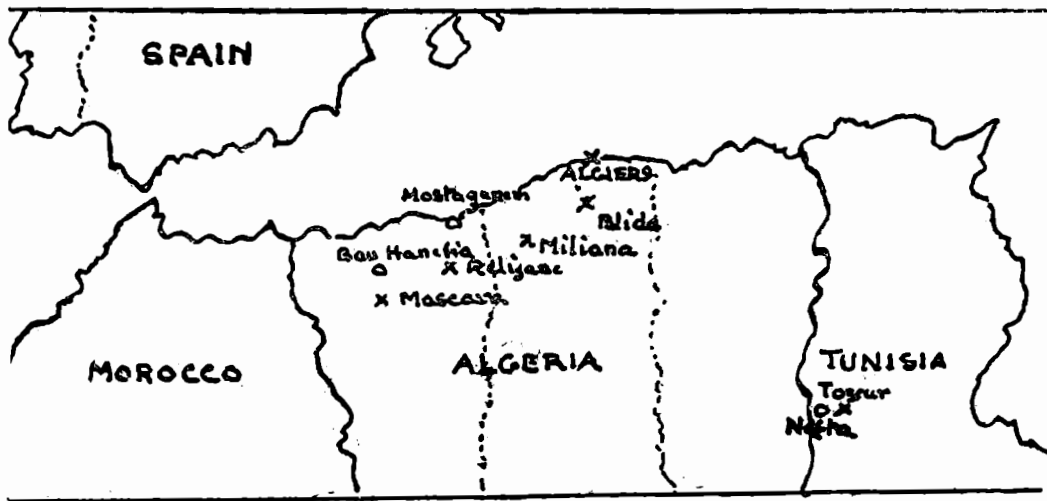
"While there is time."

ALGIERS MISSION BAND
STORY OF 1914



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COVENTRY

Sketch Map shewing relative positions of
A. M. B. Stations



Stations marked by a Cross... X :
Outlying points of advance ... O

A.M.B. STATIONS IN 1914.

<i>Date of Opening.</i>	<i>Algiers.</i>		<i>Inland.</i>
1888	Headquarters.	1901	Blida.
1906	Dar Naama.	1909	Relizane.
1909	Beit Naama.	1909	Miliana.
1911	Dar el Fedjr.	1912	Mascara.
		1913	Tozeur.

Sec. for Prayer Helpers, Mr. J. H. Smeeton, 2, Rue du Croissant, Algiers.

REFEREES.

Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Trotter, Broomfield Lodge, Chelmsford.
Sir H. and Lady Proctor, 16, Queen's Gardens, Lancaster Gate, W
Rev. S. W. and Mrs. Howe, St. Luka's Vicarage, Finchley, N.

WOMEN'S ALGERIAN MISSION BAND, AMERICA.

Mrs. J. A. Walker, Sec., Treasurer, S.S. Assoc., 2300, Dexter Street,
Denver, Col., U.S.A.

ALGIERS MISSION BAND.

Members on the Field, January 1, 1914.

Date of Arrival.

1888	I. Lilius Trotter.	1911	Clare Mennell.
..	B. G. L. Haworth.	..	Ida Nash
1890	F. Helen Freeman.	1912	J. H. Smeeton.
1906	Sascha Perkin.	..	Nellie Smeeton.
..	Alexandrine Gayral.	..	Laura Carr.
1907	Mabel Grautoff.	..	Mary Freeman.
..	May Ridley.	..	S. Soler.
1909	F. K. Currie.	..	Mme. Soler.
..	Millicent Roche.	1913	Mme. Arnaud.
..	Alma Krebs.	1914	Grace Russell.
..	Mary Watling.	..	A. M. Farmer.
..	Alice McIlroy.		

Short Service Hostel. Season 1914-5.

Elsie Thorpe (1911) in charge. Violet Barrow, Vera Stewart, Beryl Handford.

A.M.B. STORY OF 1914.

LAST year's record falls into two halves, divided as with a clear cut line by the week that plunged the world into the War-shadow, dragging into that shadow plans and hopes that seemed brighter just then than at any time of our A.M.B. history.

Starting with the central point of **Algiers**, early spring saw the Short Service House full for the first time as regards its complement of "Short Servicemen" and full in every other way, for Chrira of Relizane was there for six months to help forward her training as a worker, and both the Guest-house outside and the Guest-room within were in constant use for native families, with all the means of priceless opportunities for reaping as well as seed-sowing, when father, mother and children come of their voluntary choice into a Christian atmosphere.

At **Beit Naama** too the same collective working of the Spirit of Grace had play. The well-disposed neutrality of the past in the house guardian and his wife and child gave place to the thrusting out of the first green shoots of life. Will some take it on their hearts to pray that this dealing of God with families which has been a marked feature during these last two or three years, may be the precursor of the wide-sweeping action of that Grace for which we wait and long ?

At Headquarters the same drawing was noticeable in another way—not in a family this time, but in a group of families from a far away mountain range, that took root, so to speak, under S. Perkin's mothering ; a band of these women and children came daily for months, sitting there in their picturesque inland garb, before she was down in the morning, on terms of close friendliness. It ended when they went back, in her going with A. McIlroy, on an adventurous return visit to their village, 40 kilometres beyond the nearest French centre, in the recesses

of the hills, and such was their welcome that there was every hope of outpost work opening up there in the autumn, had not war conditions stepped in the way.

The other bit of the spring's advance in Algiers in the new direction of keeping open house, was that Mr. Smeeton took in two Arab boy students whose people were far away. They paid their board from their bursaries and seemed another "growing point" for advance, with the hopes that were rising over two young Frenchmen who were offering for the work.

Alongside these offers of theirs, with their possibilities for resuming colportage, came a fresh impulse over literature through an invitation of Dr. Zwemer's to help in Egypt for a time, in its preparation for women and children. This coincided so markedly with the ever-growing longing to supply boys in this direction that God's Hand seemed in it, and I promised three months for two winters if possible, accompanied by B.G.L.H. If you study the face on the cover, and

think of the millions of Moslem lads such as he, brain-starved and spirit-starved, you will know that having the smallest chance of helping to bring them a supply, looks infinitely to be welcomed.

Out to the West, **Blida** was reinforced in the spring by M. Freeman, the first "Short-Servicer" to join our A.M.B. ranks. This was specially with a view to getting at more villages. With only two workers, and the days beginning by 8 a.m. with a batch of delightful babies tumbling over each other in their eagerness to get to their kindergarten plays, and continuing off and on with various groups of learners, it is difficult to follow the calls, even from the houses close by, and the hamlets in the hills above and the plain below (over a hundred of these have been visited and stand open) come off badly.

Next Westward comes **Miliana**, where this year's onward move (and it is only the onward moves we are chronicling in each station) has been the quick developement that has followed changing into a house in the town. This being built on native lines with a central court surrounded

by rooms, gives far more sense of protection to women and girl visitors than the former European-fashioned dwelling outside the gates. Boys, girls, women, babies, come in a stream from morning till night, and are sorted into their respective corners with the friendliest of welcomes.

Relizane, with its outposts of Mascara and Bou Hanifia, has had another soul (a young Arab woman) gathered peacefully into the Church Triumphant, and in Mascara a little group of Spaniards, the firstfruits of the Spanish Evangelist's work, has come into the Church Militant. Here too, the new house so needed for the growing work has been given, three minutes from the native quarter. Here Soler and his family can carry on their efforts for men and boys in one wing, while the two temporary French helpers follow up the native women and girls in the other. At Bou Hanifia all is getting ready, slowly and steadily, against the day when the coming of the right man as manager shall make possible Industrial Work on Christian lines.

Crossing from our Western extremity of out-stations to the Eastern,

the winter and spring saw the long deferred joy of an established footing in **Tozeur**, the great desert town over which we have longed for years—longed the more as each succeeding visit clenched the fact that among its grave student population were really seeking souls, touched with the mysticism that is the pathway in which such as these grope towards God out of the dreary levels of Moslem formalism. The hope for the town was sealed afresh in these first months of steady intercourse with its people in our own rented house, and by the time the fierce May heat brought it to a close, there had been two or three souls where we had good reason to hope that light had become “the light of life.” Visions had dawned meantime of a further growing point at **Nefta**, the nearest town westward along the line of palm-bordered salt lakes that lie on the frontier between Algeria and Tunisia.

The next two months brought other onward steps. First came the Dar Naama Conference, at which Rev. C. Inwood presided, gathering the

links as he had done seven years before, only now more widely and more closely, from the other Missions working in the land. The last evening of the meetings brought a three hours visit from Dr. Zwemer, for the purpose of initiating preparation for Dr. Mott's proposed Conference in January. Rising out of that, by one of God's visible linkings, came the crowning prospect for the intervening autumn, of the answer to many prayers for light concerning our need of a Field Superintendent, who should be able to organize work among men and boys along our own line, and away into the unreached beyond. The post was accepted, just before we broke up for the summer, by M. le Pasteur Cook-Jalabert, a French friend of long standing, and in his rare combination of qualifications for it, the sealing of our hopes seemed manifest. It was arranged that he should join us in October.

The supply of one to lead the tiny "Church" among the Arabs in Algiers was thus in view; and it seemed as if the next step were being taken in preparation for consolidation, for when we seniors left for

England, the four men members rose joyfully to the thought of meeting together while alone, in the Guest-house of the Short Service Hostel, with the further purpose of breaking Ramadan together, and drawing in outsiders to hear.

They had not met thus for more than a fortnight or so, when the storm cloud burst over us all. They were kept steadily holding together, but under military regime they could do nothing to add to their number.

The weeks that followed were anxious ones for us, who found ourselves suddenly cut off from returning and to a great extent from communication with those left behind. Little by little we breathed freely again, as we heard how God was keeping them in peace and safety, and we learned to wait with some degree of patience, till at last towards the end of October, most of us who were on furlough in England were able to return by sea together.

But what a different outlook from that with which we had left—

M. Cook-Jalabert bound to remain in his Military Chaplaincy till the end of the War, the two colporteurs for whom we had hoped, away at the front, and since then the news that one is a prisoner in Saxony and the other killed ; Dr. Mott's Conference, which bespoke such advance, relegated to an indefinite future ; the Short Service helpers, who had formed a fresh and full contingent at Keswick, almost all kept at home by war conditions ; the hopes of expansion in the mountain outpost, and the "Village Missions" that were in view, shut off by the binding of martial law, and the prospects for Tozeur doubtful—work even in its hemmed-in aspects, only to be carried on very quietly. It was the case of once more learning the lesson that it is through times of darkness and pressure that each onward stage has to pass. Thus only can the earthly husk perish, and the Divine elements remain, awaiting the incoming of true spring.

Slowly the limited autumn plans took shape, with the welding in of certain new combinations, for which we thanked God ; notably that

Mr. Smeeton and his sister came into residence at 2 Rue du Croissant, thus leaving B.G.L.H. and me with much freer hearts in preparing to start for Egypt as soon as the New Year came. One outcome of the months in England had been the gift from one side after another, in sums varying from pence to pounds, of funds for boys' literature on the Algerian side, and the prospect of Cairo with its leisure and its inspiration for gathering material, worked out as the next step.

Another result of this reinforcement at Headquarters was the opportunity for following up an effort by S. Perkin and Mr. Smeeton for blind men and boys. This had started in the spring, when the sight of a singularly refined-looking beggar, sitting helplessly day by day near the mosque above us, had made the first link with them.

The classes for native embroidery and lace at the different stations resolved themselves into more immediately useful knitting classes for the Red Cross. The children took vigorously to the new craft, even though knitting needles had to be, "faute de mieux," of long nails or

umbrella ribs. Yarn proved as scarce as needles, so we started spinning it from sheep fleeces, thus giving employment to the older women for whom times were hard. So the War came into the life of the winter, while the horizons of the "might have been" were touched and swept backwards by it, giving us to share in our little measure, in its strange days.

"He Himself"—the Master Husbandman, "knew what He would do" in the repression, cutting down, cutting back the new growth, "that it may bring forth more fruit" and His "thou shalt know hereafter" carries us on till the day that is nearing, when His sequel shall be seen. . . . So till then He shall have our trust, unquestioning, illimitable. "For He is worthy."

I. LILIAS TROTTER.

2, Rue du Croissant, Algiers,
July, 1915.

ALGIERS MISSION BAND.

Statement of Accounts for the year ending December 31st, 1914.

Receipts.	Payments.
<i>January 1, 1914.</i>	
To Balance in Bank . . . 11,352.45	By Missionaries' Allowances 4,477.90
„ Cash in Hand 118.85	„ Two Representatives of the W.A.M.B., America 3,582.10
11,471.30	„ Rents, Taxes, Repairs 2,073.55
„ General Fund :	„ Payments & Materials for Native Work . . . 380.40
Donations 6,460.66	„ Travelling 1,909.60
Product of Native Work 390.80	„ Itineration 169.80
„ W.A.M.B., America :	„ Station Expenses, Medical, Printing, &c. 637.20
Donations 6,092.74	„ Appropriated Gifts . . . 494.80
Appropriated Gifts 1,272.20	13,725.35
14,216.40	„ Balances Carried Forward :
	In Bank 10,677.75
	„ Hand 1,284.60
	11,962.35
Francs 25,687.70	Francs 25,687.70
= £1,027 10s. 2d.	= £1,027 10s. 2d.

25 Francs = £1.

Examined and found correct, Algiers, April 12, 1915.

Joseph Turner.

This Balance Sheet represents about one quarter of the expenditure of the Mission, the Honorary Members of the Staff being responsible for the remainder, I. L. T.