missionary herald

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Guarapuava town centre, Brazil



We are ready to go back

Writes Keith Hodges, now on furlough from Brazil

I CANNOT honestly say that I wanted to go to Brazil! The role of missionary in a foreign country had never really appealed to me! Thus, God's call to serve Him there was as staggering as it was sudden and dramatic, but its clarity and force were such that it had to be obeyed.

The training period at St. Andrew's Hall was one of great conflict, mainly because of the reluctance I felt in being uprooted from all that was important to me. My call to the ministry many years earlier had taken me away from my pharmaceutical career! Now, I was being removed from the home ministry to fulfil a role that seemed so alien to all that I had known and I was not very happy about it! Naturally, such a condition of mind and heart was not conclusive to an attitude of enthusiasm with regard to the task that lay before me. Hearing about life in Brazil from the living experience of the Rev. Arthur Elder, only served to increase my confusion and promoted a deep sense of inade-

quacy for the work. Looking back I see clearly the strong discipline of the Lord, not altogether a pleasant experience in itself, but necessary and profitable, as He taught me obedience to His will.

The confusion and fear that I had known ever since the day of God's call were heightened by contact with Brazil itself. The shattering impact of large modernized cities like Rio and São Paulo, seemingly greater than any city I had ever seen; the breathtaking wonder of mountains, rivers and forests; the sobering effect of the shanty-towns, with their poverty and suffering; the impossible jabbering tongues that surrounded one on all sides! Confusion... wonder...compassion...and the feeling, "I want to go home! This is no place for me!"

How patient and understanding is our Lord! How strong and yet gracious is His discipline! How necessary it was for me!

Learning

The year spent at language school in Campinas was an experience in itself. Striving to communicate, re-learning to think and pray, choosing words to gain greater effect, re-shaping ideas and concepts, understanding a new culture with its own way of doing things and the re-establishment of different standards and norms for living. Not that everything was resolved in



Campinas, but through discipline I was learning the cost of obedience to the Lord's command.

This process of learning was continued during the period of orientation at Curitiba in the midst of the Cajuru Baptist Church, where I had to come to terms with the fact that Brazilian church life was not what I thought it would be. By this time, my reluctance to serve in Brazil had gone, but the feeling of inadequacy remained. Sermon preparation, each one written in full, was a chore but of great value. The real frustration was in having to read them!

It was the patience, kindness and understanding of the people at Cajuru, and the leadership and encouragement of their pastor, Mauro Seraphim, that paved the way to a new found confidence in myself, and with that confidence came enthusiasm for the task. The love they had

for us, and their belief in us, that was the key! I had caught a glimpse of the warm fellowship of Brazilian Christians, and this was later to become the dominant feature of the Guarapuava congregation.

Growing

Guarapuava, "City of Challenge". That is how I thought and how I probably will always think of the scene of our first pastorate in Brazil. For me it had to be the place where the Lord would set His seal upon our calling. Guarapuava just had to be the place where God would establish us and make sense of all that had gone before. An interior town of some 61,600 inhabitants (1974 census) with a further 90,650 people in the rural area, Guarapuava is strategically placed in the central region of Paraná. Modernized during the last fifteen years or so, and steadily growing, Guarapuava offers much to its people.

The Baptist congregation itself was small, seemingly lacking in natural leadership and with not a few problems. But to offset these features the delightful chapel building was well sited in one of the town's suburbs, being the only evangelical church serving that part. The task

(left) Ari and Ester dos Santos, and daughter Priscila, now evangelists at Pato Branco, Brazil (below) Keith Hodges with Reinaldo Sniker at his induction as evangelist at the Guarapuava congregation, Brazil





(left) Barbara Hodges with members of her women's group at Guarapuaya, Brazil

of consolidating the work already commenced by our predecessors, and of making a powerful evangelistic thrust in the town and the rural area, was a challenging prospect. Foreigners in the midst of a people not yet understood by us, the ministry of leading, teaching, helping and preaching was a burden, and the constant reminder that in being misunderstood lay danger for the work's future, did not really help. Both Barbara and myself were afraid of making a hash of people's lives and of ruining the work already established in the Lord by David and Charmian Martin.

During the first year at Guarapuava we knew misery and we saw little, if any, fruit for our labours, and as time went on we sensed a great failure as crisis followed crisis. Up until that time the only "rays of sunshine" had been the work on the Extension Course and the steady progress shown by Ari and Esther dos Santos in the town congregation.

Blessing

It was at this point of lowest despair that the situation turned dramatically. Blessing followed blessing as the town congregation and the various groups scattered throughout the rural areas met for worship. Individuals were converted in the power of the Lord; the congregation began to look forward with enthusiasm and purpose; families began to participate in the evangelization of neighbours and friends. There

was a response to Barbara's ministry in her women's group. Public worship had been transformed and the influence of Christian love and caring became evident. The fellowship began considering seriously the calling of a national leader to lead them, a move previously hindered on all sides. New families arrived in the town and co-operated with us. A music ministry, that later led to the formation of the congregation's first choir, began with the arrival of the talented Almeida family. It all began to happen, and the climax of it all came with the setting aside of Ari and Ester for special service as evangelists in Pato Branco, and the induction of Evangelist Reinaldo Sniker as leader in our stead.

God's call on 4 January 1970 had been sealed!

"Going back to Brazil?"

Yes, we're going back. It seems to be the Lord's will for us. The task that faces the Brazilian Baptist churches is a massive and an unenviable one as they reach out to win the land for Christ and as they seek to fulfil their part in the wider vision of the world in Christ. Their capacity, willingness and enthusiasm to do this, is beyond question. But they need help! They need trained and committed leaders, and until they can produce their own from within, they depend upon foreign aid. The Brazilians are willing to have us back so, we are willing to go.

How about you?

We depend on each other

Ivy Riches writes about the work she and her husband do at Yakusu

THE interweaving of Christian work overseas; what a task, but thinking it over it appears that every aspect of the work is interdependent, the one fitting in with the other, although the temptation is strong, sometimes, to think that one's own sphere is more important than the others.

The construction department is not an established institution like the hospital, the school, or the church, but in the case of Yakusu at least it is involved in each of them. During the last year Pete and I have found ourselves busier than ever, with as many as seventeen men on the payroll; builders and joiners working on the school site; labourers also called on to do all sorts of jobs around the mission apart from the work on the site and one man seconded from the hospital to learn the electrical side of things. Unfortunately this young man died suddenly as a result of native medicine which was a great

blow to us all. This has meant that life has been pretty hectic at times, keeping them all busy especially during those lean times when the supplies dried up, either due to shortage of fuel, petrol, diesel and paraffin, which effects all aspects of our life and work, or due to the non-availability of materials.

Having men means being responsible for them and their families. Even when the men are laid off they still look to us when they need help. Sometimes it is for a child in hospital, often needing supplementary nourishment or financial help to pay the bill. Sometimes it is assistance with the school fees or uniform that is needed or, in the case of injury to a workman, to see that the family does not suffer unduly. Often Pete is asked to supply the wood to make the coffin and as like as not the tools to do the job, but there are times when there isn't the wood to spare.

Women only!

Times like a bereavement offer too the opportunity to identify with the people, taking part in their system of helping the bereaved family. Each person in the tribe and village must give a donation of 10p, the women clubbing together and the total handed over to the women of the family, and the men do likewise and giving their donation to the men of the family.



Selling books from the mobile dispensary at Yangambi, near Yakusu, Zaire

I learned the hard way that the two sexes keep to their own patch especially where money is concerned, for I was reprimanded by the wife of one man for giving my donation to the husband, who had kept it for himself; we women had to stick together!

But all our time is not spent on the men, the work, and the family, but also in women's work which entails helping in the class with the sewing even although I'm not much good myself. The women sew mainly for themselves and the family and make some table cloths usually in intricate designs of cross stitch. Just before I left the women were being given a bigger role to play in the life of the church by leading the prayer meeting, which is held on Tuesdays, and some Sunday services.

Books needed

Pete has an adult Sunday school class which although not very strong numerically is proving very stimulating for both Pete and those who attend. This stretches Pete often, especially when he has to deal with subjects like speaking in tongues in a language which has a very limited vocabulary and when the people can speak in three or four languages from an early age.

The arrival of an assignment of Lokele New Testaments, translated by the Rev. H. W. Ford in 1927, was the means of getting the book shop on its feet again. By selling a number of these Testaments to Cedi, the Protestant book shop in Kisangani, the accounts swelled and enabled the buying of Lingala hymn books and Bibles as well as other Christian editions and a few educational things too.

Slowly these books have been added to and the Bibles and hymn books have been replaced many times, as the demand has grown, for the shop not only serves the immediate locality, but also our other stations down river. For example, a large number sell at Yangambi which houses a part of the University of Kisangani, and there Pastor Botoya has sold a large quantity of books, Bibles and hymn books and even made a sale to one of the state officials of *The Talking Drums* by our own Dr. John Carrington.

Doreen West and Miriam Smith also play a part in the bringing of books to the people when they go out on clinic trips, and informing the pastors and evangelists of the books available and the new editions as they come in. This means that the written word is there ready for the people who are very thirsty for it and it means that the market is no longer at the feet



Some of the pipes used for the production of the water supply being unloaded at Yakusu, Zaire



A new diesel generating set being unloaded by workmen at Yakusu, Zaire

of the Jehovah Witnesses whose salesmen come round very frequently on bicycles selling their books at what must be heavily subsidized prices.

Miracles requested

At Christmas we had the lighting up of the church for the first time for the Christmas Eve service. Pete had installed the electricity at the request of the church and on Christmas Eve it was put to good use when the student nurses put on a marathon nativity play which led on to the stories of Moses and Hannah. Had it not been for the lateness of the hour it would have included Solomon as well! As it was it had gone 3 a.m. before lights out. But in spite of the fact that Christmas Day was work as usual most churches did have a Christmas Day service after working hours. In our own church the service was well attended and was without the theatricals.

Although not involved in the medical work yet we are involved with the electrical side and the water supply and there still remains the extension of the water supply to the student nurses camp. Not directly involved with teaching we were yet given the task of building and completing a project which was first begun in

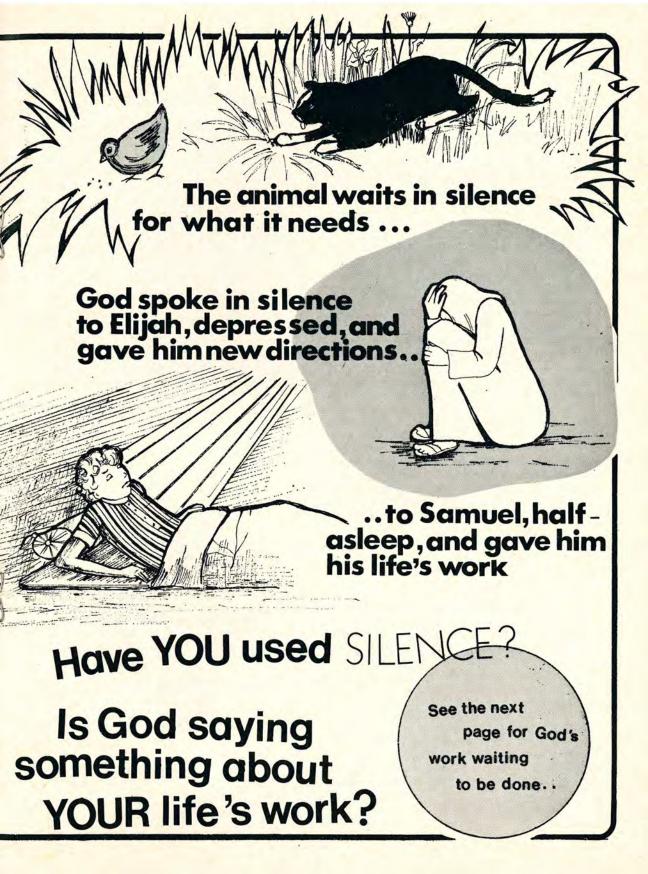
1960. This is now almost complete but is hindered by the fact that roofing tins are still unobtainable. But the individual also comes with sewing machines, car batteries, cars, guns, cameras, etc., and expects all kinds of miracles to be worked on them.

For ourselves we need the hospital, and the medical care it can give us; we need the church and I would dearly have loved a teacher for our son Steve and was more than glad to have the help of Winnie Hadden for the music classes! We are all to some extent dependent on each other and this way work does begin to merge together, many parts but only one head, Christ, who is all in all.

If you are a builder/engineer/handyman prepared to serve God in Zaire write now to:

> Rev. Mrs. A. W. Thomas B.M.S. 93 Gloucester Place London W1H 4AA







In case you wondered, I was not suggesting that God only makes himself heard in the silence of depression or the drowsy stage that precedes sleep—though I have known present day missionaries who did recognize a calling in one of those two experiences. The methods God uses are so varied. After all, He made the world with all its possibilities: why should He not use it all, as it seems appropriate for each person?

But we can make it easier for Him to be understood by our listening. Have you ever asked God where He wanted you, and then honestly listened for an answer? Perhaps some of the

answers could be provided here. . . .

The continuing evidence of Christ's compassion at this moment needs three well qualified nurses in Brazil. They need to be midwives as well as state registered nurses, for emergencies are varied and cannot be divided off into neat compartments as they may be in Britain. The women who answer to this need have to be tough physically, and determined: they will have to cope with the re-validation of their qualifications in Brazil, the Portuguese language, and driving a mobile dispensary on appalling roads.

ARE YOU LISTENING?

The ministry in Brazil needs as many ministers as will listen. For city suburbs or forest pioneering or new town development, adaptable, dedicated, persevering men are needed.

ARE YOU LISTENING?

Sri Lanka's Baptist churches feel that they do not need more missionary ministers. What they do need is a person who really knows Sunday School work, with bags of ideas and initiative to train and inspire a generation of Sunday School teachers. A women's worker

is needed, a person to direct evangelism as a programme, and another who is a specialist in community development. These people are needed *fast*—or the B.M.S. will lose the visas which make entry into Sri Lanka possible under the government of the country.

ARE YOU STILL LISTENING?

Doctors and nurses for Zaire, Bangladesh and Nepal; secondary school teachers for Zaire still; primary teachers could be very useful if they would adapt themselves to being church workers for adult-literacy or women's work. Builders are scarce and often necessary for Zaire and Bangladesh, while agricultural teachers and some kinds of engineers are needed in Nepal.

LISTENING?

If you have listened so far, and have understood that God could be starting (or continuing) a dialogue with you, there will be much to do in consequence. Your call will need testing, perhaps in conversation with your minister or a close friend. You'll have to look at what you can offer to God's service, what your skills and qualifications are when honestly reviewed. (And it can be just as easy to be dishonest in saying, "I can't do anything!", as to act in the opposite direction!)

Then write to—The Personnel Secretary,
Baptist Missionary Society,
93 Gloucester Place,
London, W1H 4AA

and TELL ME WHAT YOU'VE BEEN HEARING. . . .



People engaged on the food for work scheme leave their equipment as they queue for food at Diptipur, India

Disaster leads to new purpose and new hope

writes Marilyn Mills as she recalls the time of drought and famine in Diptipur, India

"Agya!" (Sir/Madam) . . . "In our village we need FOOD—WATER—HEALTH. We want to live."

That was a phrase that Alan Casebow and I would hear many times as we toured from village to village in the Diptipur area, towards the end of 1974.

For some years, efforts had been made to establish agriculture and health extension projects in scattered villages in West Orissa, but little lasting impact had resulted. Although to some extent, both the hospital and the agricultural project boards accepted the need and tried

to work together, each had its own idea as to priorities. These did not always merge completely and did not have permanent impact in the district. While it is possible to accept as a theory a cooperative approach by health and agricultural projects with an evangelistic emphasis, yet in practice it proves difficult. To provide in depth care, to ensure follow up work, to meet the cost of travel and other expenses involved, all present problems which hinder the effectiveness of the programme. It is also true that to some extent there still tends to be a prevailing attitude that most agricultural and medical help administered in the name of Christ, should be available first to Christians.

However, within a short period of time, several situations arose in the area around Diptipur, resulting in the emergence of a more closely interwoven and valuable community development programme. In the Church, a Mission of Renewal brought about changing and positive attitudes between church, farm and hospital, making it possible and necessary to sit down, pray and plan together. Christ has called us to proclaim a Gospel of saving health to the nations. This does not isolate people's needs as simply bodies needing medicine or surgery,



stomachs requiring food, souls needing salvation or minds requiring education. We are not disembodied souls and in Diptipur there is a call to serve people, people who matter, people who deserve fullness of life.

It was felt that more could be achieved if a community development programme was conducted in a closely circumscribed area, in cooperation with the village leaders and using Diptipur as the treatment and guidance centre. We thought that we knew the needs of the people, but through the local government Panchayat (village councils) it was arranged to do a survey of eleven villages. We planned to visit all the homes and to talk to representatives from all sectors of the community. This survey took place



at a time of imminent famine following a year of drought.

As we saw villagers boiling jungle roots and the barks of trees to keep alive, having last eaten rice three days previously, little children in emaciated conditions, coupled in many instances with eyes pouring with pus, wells almost dry, rice fields shrivelled up having produced little more than hay at harvest time and whole families crowded in apathy around the door of their little mud hut, our hearts were not only cut to the core at what we were witnessing, but the words of Jesus jumped at us. . . .

"I was hungry and you gave me food, thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, sick and you cared for me. . . ."

"The love of Christ leaves us no choice." Within six weeks the B.M.S. and several relief agencies enabled a large scale famine relief project to be organized from the agricultural

(continued on next page)



Children are among those who suffer most during times of drought and food shortage. They were therefore given as much care as possible in the Diptipur area, India. (above left) Fourteen week old twins were discovered weighing less than 3 lbs each (above) Supplies for the Children's Feeding Centres being taken from Diptipur. Villages have to arrange their own transport, firewood and eating place (left) Nutrition programmes and health programmes work hand in hand. A staff nurse distributes prophylactic doses of Vitamin A to a child in a feeding centre

centre and hospital. About 1,500 families benefited from food for work programmes giving not only short term relief, but long term benefits of irrigation, drinking water, fish culture, land levelling, seed support for the next harvest and total health care. 2,200 young children received a mid-day meal and supplementary vitamins throughout the year. A women's evangelistic team comprising ordinary village housewives felt that the Gospel should be shared by word of mouth also in the villages where the love of Jesus was being witnessed to in action. National newspapers and local radio reported that Christians were demonstrating real care and concern for all people at their time of need.

Local effort

By March 1975, a new mobile dispensary Land Rover supplied through Christian Aid, arrived and heralded the start of an exciting community health outreach. This programme is being financed jointly by OXFAM and the British Government Overseas Aid Development fund at present, but it is hoped that it will gradually become more self supporting.

All the field work is done by village level health workers, chosen by their own villages and trained in Diptipur Hospital. This has proved to be a cheaper and more effective staffing pattern than that which relies upon highly qualified staff for basic village needs. These women are enthusiastic, have wonderful memories and devise entertaining ways for

propagating health in their communities. Their training is mostly in the hands of a fine Indian nurse, Maya, and I am amazed at the knowledge that they have amassed and the effects that their work has had in one year. The results in the cleaner and healthier villages, speak volumes.

United Witness

The Diptipur team visits each centre twice a month for a clinic, supervises all immunizations and examines referred patients and families with special problems. The village workers dispense simple medicines and attend most of the village confinements, as well as visiting homes regularly and examining all young children for the "Top Ten" diseases each week. The programme has now evolved into one of a total developmental nature as the Agricultural centre joins hands with us. Crop demonstration plots are to be found in the same villages and a scheme is now in operation whereby keen, small farmers are receiving a simple agricultural training on a similar basis to the health workers. Volunteers from the villages are expected to take an active interest in the work of all the village level workers and a joint village health/agriculture committee meets each month in Diptipur. We now have hopes that plans will be taken up to ensure an adequate number of wells for drinking water and small kitchen gardens in each village.

The church has still a long way to go before it can be said that it is taking up all the opportunities now presented for village witness, but



Miss Marilyn Mills and the Rev. Khiron Das were often stopped as they drove through a village and were given a petition signed by the villagers asking for help

Two doctors for Ludhiana

DAPTISTS always remember D that it was a B.M.S. missionary who founded the Ludhiana hospital. Through the years B.M.S. missionaries have served on the staff. Now. no B.M.S. missionary works at Ludhiana, but the Society has contributed £1,000 to the cost of sending Dr. Brian and Dr. Nancy Nicholls to Ludhiana for a year. Four other Societies are also contributing towards the cost. Dr. Brian Nicholls gives details of his wife and himself. They left for India on 26 April.

Nancy and I have been married for nearly ten years, and have three children aged seven, six and three. We met at Medical School in Birmingham where we both qualified as doctors in 1965. At the present time I am training to be an orthopaedic surgeon at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Birmingham. This is a four year scheme which I started after obtaining the F.R.C.S. examination, and I am just beginning the final year. My

wife also works at the same hospital where she is a parttime anaesthetist.

We have been interested in India since our student days, as one of our closest friends spent his childhood there, and we have several friends who were missionaries in South India. The possibility of going to the Christian Medical College at Ludhiana arose last summer when we met the Publicity Officer from Ludhiana, Nirmal Kaul, at a friend's house, while he was spending a few months at the Selly Oak Colleges. He told us that they were very short of orthopaedic surgeons at the present time, as three of the senior surgeons had recently emigrated. He



asked me if I would be interested in going out there to work for a while. Fortunately I have been able to get permission from my hospital for a year's special study leave at the end of which I will be able to return to my present post.

While we are in India I will be helping with all types of orthopaedic surgery, but hope to take a special interest in hand injuries, which are a particular problem there. My wife also hopes to be able to do some anaesthetics on a part time basis, provided the necessary arrangements can be made for the children.

As well as working in the

(continued from previous page)

the local pastor now finds more acceptance in those villages than hitherto. We pray that our united witness may present a whole and saving Gospel which can meet the needs of the entire family.

Big and Small Sahu, twins from the village of Matia Mahul, are smiling witnesses to such a Gospel. Now lively three years olds, they burst forth with infectious laughter and mischief, something which their mother feared they would never live to experience. Underfed and poor, this whole family have witnessed to the effects of an interwoven ministry from Diptipur, the "place

of light". Famine relief, agriculture demonstration, health programme and the preaching of the Gospel have touched every part of the lives of this Hindu family. Mother and children are no strangers now in the Diptipur church. Older brothers read the family passages from the Gospel purchased in the Agricultural Centre Christian Reading Room. They and many others are beginning to understand from the Diptipur combined witness, the truth of Jesus' words. . . .

"I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

Jesus is Alive!

Pauline Weatherby arrived in Zaire just before Easter and has written about her first Easter in that country.

"It was just before 5.15 a.m. and there was a gentle knocking on the door. I was already dressed and followed the caller along the path, across the fields to the football pitch. It was very wet underfoot, a few dogs joined us as we went, and the air was filled with the noise of crickets and croaking frogs. It was still dark when we arrived —not to play football, but for the sunrise service, this was Easter Sunday and 50/60 people were gathered for worship.

"We sang the first hymn in French, rejoicing again in the wonder of the resurrection, and

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medical field, we hope that we may be able to contribute in some small way to the spiritual work taking place in Ludhiana. We are both committed Christians and active members of our local United Reform Church where Nancy has been an elder for the past two years.

then followed a time of open prayer when the people were invited to pray in any language, this led into a time of praise in song, now mostly in Kikongo (the language which most of the local people speak). After a short talk in both Kikongo and French we formed a large circle -at first holding hands, and then doing various actions, to sing a song which I am told was about our oneness in Christ Jesus. It was a super start to Easter day—the morning service which followed later in the day was also very lively. I must confess that I didn't understand much, but as we sang a neighbour whispered—'This means, Jesus is alive,' and somehow that was enough."

A Good **Foundation**

Jane and Walter Fulbrook are responsible for the agricultural project at Potinga, Parana, Brazil. A recent letter shows how they are also involved in the life of the church, and tells of an important find.

"One great privilege we have is to be involved in the work of the church here. Although we are only here for a short time, we have found a ready welcome in all the churches, and especially in the Potinga Church which is our nearest. I am not sure how many times we have been called upon to give addresses, and to take part in various activities, but we have been kept fully occupied in all our spare time.

Rock

"An interesting feature we have come upon is a big outcrop of stone. Quite out of the realm of agriculture, but nevertheless very useful. We had bought stone for building, and had been carrying stone some distance for roadmaking, when we were told to look up in the forest above the bungalow. We now have a tractor road right to this stone, and we seemingly have an endless supply of what in appearance is very much like Cotswold stone. It is quite easy to get out with a pickaxe and breaks readily for concreting. I can just imagine what a whole house would look like in it, but, of course, that is only a dream! The folk here have an idea of replacing their wooden church, perhaps in the future they may build a stone one. It would certainly be cooler in this subtropical heat."

Missionary Record

Arrivals

20 March. Rev. G. and Mrs. Oakes and family from Colombo, Sri Lanka.
30 March. Mr. and Mrs. G. D. Sorrill and son from Chittagong, Bangladesh.
2 April. Miss E. Staple, en route for Leprosy Conference in Singapore.
2 April. Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Bull and family from Butwal, Nepal.
4 April. Miss L. Quy from India.

Departures

18 March. Mr. S. Mudd for visit to India and

Nepal (returns 23 April).

April. Dr. K. and Mrs. Russell and Miss P. Weatherby for Kinshasa, Zaire.

Death

9 March. At Bristol, Rev. H. W. Burdett, aged 98; China 1918-1939.

Acknowledgements

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anoymously or without address.

(5th March-5th April, 1976)

General Work: Anon: (Cymro) £30.00; Anon: £1.00; Anon: £8.00; Anon: £7.00; Anon: £10.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon: £39.69; Anon: £5.00; Anon: (J.B.) £5.00; Anon: £18.00; Anon: (Assurance) £35.00; Anon: £10.00; Anon: £60.00; Anon: £2.00.

Medical Work: Anon: £5.00.

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World Poverty: Anon: £100.00.

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