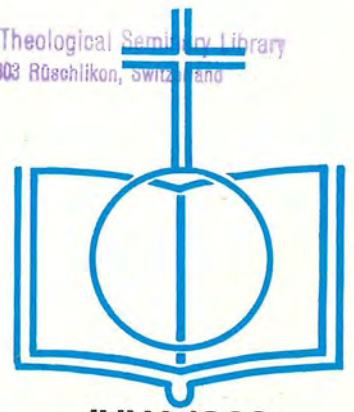


Missionary

# HERALD

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When we began working in Brazil in the '50's most of our missionaries were 'on the frontier'. They were at work in the newly developing areas hewn from the forests. They travelled by dirt roads and ministered to people who worked the land.

In the succeeding years a significant trend has affected the strategy of our mission. Fewer people are employed on the land and more and more are living in the towns and cities. Indeed statistics which have been compiled by the World Bank stagger us by the prospect they present. The cities of the developing countries are growing at such a rate through births and migration that by the end of this present century it is estimated that they will have added some 1.3 billion to their population.

### Births outstrip deaths

São Paulo with a current population of 12.5 million is growing at the rate of 500,000 people per year. Two thirds of this increase is attributable to natural internal growth and a third to those who have migrated from the countryside.

By the year 2000 – only 18 years away – almost 50 per cent of the population of poorer countries, it is declared, will live in cities.

Increasingly, then, our missionaries will be working in towns and cities seeking to proclaim the gospel to those who have been drawn into such places by what they see as better opportunities for work and higher pay.

Curitiba, Cuiabá, Campo Grande and many another city in Brazil is expanding in every direction and this demands a strategy for urban evangelism.

### A wide view of urban evangelism is needed

In Brazil urban evangelism is so often thought of in terms of work in the *favelas* and shanty towns. But there is a need for evangelism in the high class residential localities and the high rise tenement blocks. A way has to be found of getting access to such places as so many are guarded by armed security personnel. Some churches have made a start by telephoning the residents and declaring who they are and asking if those telephoned would welcome a visit to discuss spiritual matters. Of course, some say no, but there are those who say, yes, and visitation by invitation gets one past the armed guard.

The good news of the gospel is for people and if the people are increasingly to be found in the cities and towns of the countries then these places will increasingly be the sphere for our mission work and the strategy of our mission will need to be planned accordingly.



# GOD SPEAKS WITH A PORTUGUESE ACCENT

Some stories told by **John Clark** in his address to the BMS Annual Meeting



On our third day in Brazil we heard the inaugural address at our language school given by the director. He was a Southern Baptist, an ex-professional baseball player turned missionary, from Tennessee. He quoted from Pope John. That in itself would make me remember. It is not everyday that a Southern Baptist quotes from a Pope! It was a quote from a letter he had written to a new missionary going to Brazil. 'God has called you to

Brazil not for what you can contribute, but for what Brazil will give to you.'

We have reason to remember the wisdom of those words. We have received far more than we can ever give; we have learned far more than we can teach. If God is not a Brazilian, as Brazilians love to tell us, at least he must speak English with a Portuguese accent!

## JUST LIKE AN OLD FASHIONED LONDON SMOG

At the height of its growth, Assis Chateaubriand was the fastest growing town in Brazil. Everyday 50 lorries would bring new families into the area. It started as a few houses on a trail through the forest. Within four years it was a bustling town of 40 thousand inhabitants, with a further 80 thousand on surrounding farms.

I cut my spiritual teeth in a new town Church in Britain. When Stevenage was built, first the services were laid — gas, water, sewerage — then the roads were put down and surfaced; then the houses were built. Finally the people moved in.

In Assis it was the reverse. First the people moved in, and built their houses. It was five years before any tarmac was laid. When the services are laid, the roads and pavements will have to be taken up to do it.

Assis was a bustling town with over five thousand cars, plus lorries and buses. You can imagine what it was like without any surfaced roads. In the dry weather a thick red choking dust, just like an old-fashioned London smog, would envelope everything.

In the wet weather it was the other extreme. Roads first became ice rinks and then quagmires. It was often necessary to use chains on the wheels just to visit in the town. If you've never put chains on a car, lying down in thick red mud in the pouring rain as you embrace a muddy wheel, you've missed one of life's memorable experiences.



*Building the sanctuary at Assis Chateaubriand*

*continued overleaf*



## GOD SPEAKS WITH A PORTUGUESE ACCENT

continued from previous page

Yet it was in dirty, muddy Assis that a Baptist Church virtually exploded into life. Among the thousands who moved in were many Baptists. They started meetings on their farms. A work started in the town. The important thing in a situation like that is to have a worker there at the beginning. The BMS responded to the invitation from the Brazilians and sent Eric and Jean Westwood to Assis. When Eric was ill, we were asked to take over. Between us we were only there for three years. Yet in that time the church grew to over 380 members able to support its own pastor.



São Paulo

### TATU'S HAPPY DAY

In São Paulo we have been looking after the hostel for missionaries' children. Our local church is only 28 years old. In that time it has founded six daughter churches, each organized with its own building and full time pastor. At the present it has four mission congregations in various stages of development. In spite of all this, there is still an area between it and the next Baptist Church where over a quarter of a million people live with no work started yet.

We saw how such a work can grow even with minimal help. The work at Vila Iasi was started by the young people of the Ferreira Church. On Sunday afternoons they started a meeting in a member's home. As the work grew the church rented a room in a widow's home. It was at that stage we began to help. The work continued to grow and the widow gave us permission to rent another room and knock the adjoining wall down.

As the work continued to grow, a third room was rented. The congregation is now looking for a piece of land to build their own church.

One of the happiest moments was last April, when the widow from whom we rented the rooms asked for baptism. Dona Maria Concercao or *Mariagarda* (fat Mary) as she was known had started coming to the meetings and ended up by coming to the Lord. Her baptism presented some problems. She was about five feet tall and weighed a good 17 stones. Our baptistry was a window cut into the wall behind the pulpit. Access was along a narrow corridor. We wondered whether she might have to walk sideways to get in. She was about 76. 'About' because we did not know her real age. It was nothing to do with female reticence. When she was a young girl she was found in the forest by a father and his son out hunting. She was bruised and bleeding and refused to say her name or where she was from. The hunters took her to their home and she was brought up with the family. She never told anyone about any details from those traumatic years.

She died not long after her baptism. We never knew her real name, nor her age. The family called her 'Tatu', a little animal found wild in Brazilian jungles. Maria loved that family all her life and happily served them, a living parable of the heart of the Gospel.

### WHY DON'T YOU THUMP HIM?

It is difficult to translate *favelas* because our nearest English equivalent 'shanty town' is misleading. To most people 'shanty town' conjures up a picture of poor homes on the edge or the outside of a city. They are there in and among all the other development, often right next door to luxurious housing developments. Any piece of land over which there is a legal dispute, or where development is planned for the future, will be taken over by the poor. Shacks are built of whatever materials can be scavenged. There will be no light, no water, no sanitation. Infant mortality rates are high. It is an environment of high crime, violence, prostitution and drugs. Official figures put the *favela* population in São Paulo at over half a million.

Our contact with a *favela* started through the missionaries' children in our care. We would pass a small *favela* of about eighty shacks on the way to school every day. It was near a cemetery from which it gained its name — Gethsemane. An appropriate name for a *favela* you may feel. Certainly it was sad to see the dead having so much more care and money lavished on them than the living.





A favela family

# STAY INSIDE!

compiled from a letter by  
**Ailsa Mackintosh**, who is a member of  
 the BMS International Fellowship

To my joy I have found the Baptist fellowship here in Cuba lively, welcoming and noticeably happy. Having found the address of a church in a guide book, I went along on my first Sunday, but even with my few words of Spanish, I did not understand a word of what was going on! I was quickly introduced to a lady who spoke English and who took me under her wing. She introduced me to others and made me feel at home.

There are a surprising number of Baptist churches in Cuba – over 200, in spite of the difficulties. The authorities allow

Church services, Sunday school (for members' children only) and even evangelistic services, so long as they are inside the church building. On no account may Christians evangelize outside the church. The churches suffer from a lack of literature, including Bibles, and are short of all sorts of materials from stationery to paint and building materials. Provided that Christians do not become involved in politics, they are left unmolested, but there is no doubt that to be a Christian here in Cuba, one has to be wholehearted and prepared for sacrifice. This visit has made me aware of how easy my own life is.

## He stamped and shouted

Our children would wave to those in the favela and as a result we started our Sunday School in the open air. The only meeting place was a little mud square in the front of one of the many bars in the favela. We used glove puppets, flannelgraphs, drama and singing.

Our first meeting attracted a handful of children and a dog. The man in the bar stamped and shouted in order to drown the sound of our meeting, but the young people kept gamely going. At the end of the meeting I went with the older boys to the bar to give out leaflets and talk to them all. They were a bit taken back. I think they thought we were going to complain.

The next week was a repeat performance though with more children. Gradually the atmosphere began to change and men would come and listen or at least be quiet. They would restrain any drunks from their bar from disturbing the meeting. When a drunk from another bar caused trouble they led him away. Afterwards one of them said to me, 'Tio (uncle) why don't you take him down an alley and thump him, then he won't disturb your meeting again!! It was a chance to tell him why we were there in



John Clark preaching at a favela service the name of Him who loved the outcasts and rejects of society.

## Our heart ached for them

On one occasion a police car screeched up. Completely ignoring our meeting they ran to a house in front of us, and with guns drawn knocked on the door and ordered a man out. Fortunately he came quietly because we were right in the line of fire. We learned later that he had knifed someone the previous night.

As we got to know the favelados better, our heart ached for them. We saw young girls becoming child prostitutes, hardened and coarsened by the

environment. Young boys would take to drugs and become yet another statistic in the rising crime figures.

We saw others valiantly trying to bring up a family in impossible conditions. It was obvious we were not even scratching the surface of the problem. If anything lasting were to be done it would mean a full time involvement with the co-operation of Brazilian Christians. It was a great thrill to us when Frank and Dorothy Vaughan were appointed to do just this when they return to São Paulo. There can be no tougher task in Brazil today. There are no easy solutions. Pray for them in this difficult and demanding work.



# A SEED BEGINS TO GROW

by Alan Easter

Benedito Dourado had a vision of a new life for his family away from the area in the south of Mato Grosso, Brazil, where they lived and where he had a small business. Far to the north new towns were being carved out of the forest in the Amazon basin and advertisements were appearing all over Brazil offering land at very reasonable prices. Up until 1976 there was only the virgin forest but then a private company, backed by the federal government, started to tear a gap in this forest in order that the resources of the area might be developed. This development was made possible by the construction of the Cuiabá/Santarem Highway and it was along this route that the new towns were appearing.

Here was an opportunity to be at the beginning of new things, to adventure in the development of a new town and a new community. The attractions were many and the day came when this family decided that their best future lay in one of these new areas and they began the move from Aquidauana to Alta Floresta in the far north of Mato Grosso and almost on the border with the state of Pará. It was a distance of over 1000 miles. There was a small air strip, just outside the town of Alta Floresta, used by the small four seater air taxis, but this mode of transport was outside the reach of most, and for Benedito and his family it meant travelling the whole way along dirt roads, for even the grand sounding Cuiabá/Santarem Highway was not asphalted. The town was set out in the typical rectangular grid pattern so popular in Brazil and they procured a plot on one of the dirt streets for their shop, a wooden affair, from which they sold haberdashery. Later Benedito was joined by his brother who moved up from the sprawling city of São Paulo and opened a bicycle store.

## **A Church fellowship was needed**

Benedito and his wife had been brought to the Lord under the ministry of the



*Alta Floresta*

BMS missionary Derek Winter when they lived in the Goio Ere district of Paraná and wherever they went after that they linked in with the local Baptist church. In Alta Floresta there was no Baptist church but they discovered that there were three Baptist families who, like them, were starting a new life and missed the fellowship of the church. They met together but soon realised that they needed help if they were to advance in their spiritual life. Benedito knew an evangelist from his old location, José Rosa da Silva who in his early days had been won for the Lord by another BMS missionary, Tony Bourne, then working in the Porto Guaira area of Paraná. Tony also had the joy of officiating at the marriage of José and his wife and of encouraging José to take the Extension

Course of the Curitiba Bible Institute. On the completion of the course José was recognized as an evangelist by the State Convention.

Recalling all these things Benedito resolved to make the long journey south back to Aquidauana in order to persuade José to come to Alta Floresta and lead them in their spiritual pilgrimage.

After prayer and thought José agreed to this move and eventually arrived in the new town. If the work there was to prosper, he realized that it would need the backing and support of an established church — but where could he turn for this? The nearest church was 500 miles away in Cuiabá so José journeyed down that Cuiabá/Santarem Highway, a



journey of 21 hours, to contact the First Baptist Church of Cuiabá. They listened to his story and heard his plea for support. As a result of this meeting Pastor Geraldo of the First Baptist Church and Ben Hope, an American missionary, flew up to Alta Floresta in the American's plane in order to appraise the situation. What they saw convinced them of the golden opportunities for witness in this expanding area and so the First Baptist Church agreed that Alta Floresta should be recognized as one of its congregations and that it would give José the status of an evangelist attached to it and provide some support toward his stipend.

So began the establishment of a Baptist witness in this new town. Not long after the arrival of José in Alta Floresta the Baptist Convention of Mato Grosso asked David McClenaghan, on completion of his orientation, to accept the oversight of this new work and for a time he and José worked together building up the work from scratch. At that time there was no manse and no church building, so both had to be erected on land which needed to be bought.

#### A new area for outreach

News reached David and José that 140 kilometres south east of Alta Floresta the government was creating four agricultural



José Rosa da Silva



The congregation at Terra Nova

villages at a place called Terra Nova. Apparently some *gauchos* (South American cowboys) with their families had squatted on an Indian Reservation in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, the most southern state of Brazil. The Indians had reacted strongly and so the government had stepped in to maintain the peace. They provided these homeless *gauchos* with a plot of land and a wooden house some 1500 miles to the north in one of these agricultural villages bulldozed out of the forest. The villages were set up at 10 kilometre distances and until the villagers could produce a crop or rear some animals they drew their food and clothing by government docket from a central store.

There was one sizeable obstacle between Alta Floresta and Terra Nova and that was the Rio Teles Pires which can only be crossed by ferry and so by vehicle the journey takes about four hours on the dirt road and across the river.

David and José drove down and found one Christian family in one village and thereafter they made regular visits. Their witness led to ten decisions and a teaching point was established.

The fellowship at Alta Floresta then felt it would be a good thing to establish a permanent Baptist witness in these villages and they asked José to go and live among the people.

#### Church buildings are planned

Another of the villages was visited and there too a Christian family was found, to become the nucleus for a Christian fellowship. José and his wife settled among these villagers and quickly won their respect and esteem. He has nurtured them in the Christian faith building up quite a strong fellowship in each village. Often these groups have met together, one travelling to the others' village. There is a bus which can, if the meeting is adjusted to the timetable, be used for this purpose. For his pastoral work José uses a bicycle or, if the distance is too far for this, he has an ancient Volkswagen Beetle.

Recently the fellowship has been greatly encouraged because there have been 20 baptisms and they have come to the point where, in two of the villages, they are able to start building a *Templo*. Then they will have places in which to worship instead of having to crowd into the room of a home or meet under a lean-to at the rear of the house.

The fellowship at Alta Floresta has grown to the point where it has been recognized as a church in its own right and is no longer regarded as a congregation of the First Baptist Church of Cuiabá. Thus have the tiny seeds planted many years ago in Goio Ere and Porto Guaira grown into strong healthy plants producing fruit to the glory of the Lord.





Solange (left) and her sister Dalva



Cuiabá, from the ring road

A broad road sweeps round Cuiabá, the capital of Mato Grosso, like some giant cable seeking to contain the continuous expansion of this growing metropolis. A much more effective barrier is the Cuiabá river whose winding the road follows for a considerable section of its length, but even the river has proved ineffective at the points where it has been bridged and doubtless the pressure for growth will lead to more bridges being constructed.

It is the road which you would follow if, having arrived at the airport of the city, you needed to transfer to the bus station in order to travel on into the interior of Mato Grosso. The route leaves the airport and passes through an industrial sector then crosses the river at one of the narrower parts. At this point there are always people fishing from the banks of the river as can be observed along most rivers at home, but a sight unseen in Britain, would be the teams of two on the river in a canoe, one to steer the craft and the other in the bow skilfully casting a net. At this crossing of the river there is also a large and very popular floating fish restaurant.

From the bridge, continuing on either side of the road, there are new housing developments. Some have a standard housing unit erected by the authorities on each plot, but in other sectors the plot of land only has been sold and each purchaser has put up a building of his choice, the material used, and the styles chosen vary considerably.

In the *Cidade Alta* sector, to the right of the road at this point, the Third Baptist Church is situated. It is with the pastor of this church that Laura Hinchin works, and

she tells us that the church has recently decided to be known by a name rather than a number and now is pleased to call itself *Igreja Batista Betel*.

#### The weekend Mecca

The road then climbs slightly to a large permanent market area on the right which for all of Friday and Saturday is thronged with people. Vehicles of every description and age, which have transported customers from far and near are parked in front. The moment a vehicle pulls into the parking space it is besieged by a crowd of boys offering, in hope for payment, of course, to guard it while the occupants make their purchases. It has been said that a certain famous store in London can supply anything from a pin to an elephant, and certainly this extensive market seems to be able to supply all things necessary to support family life, not only in Cuiabá itself, but in the district for many kilometres around.

A road junction beyond the market provides an entrance into the *Santa Rosa* district on the left where Keith and Barbara Hodges are living and, to the right, is the road on which the *Instituto Teológico Batista Centro America* (The Bible Institute of Mato Grosso) is situated. This is the Institute started by David and

Doris Doonan to help forward the Church work in Mato Grosso. At present it has seventeen students. As there are no grants in Brazil for such studies, the students have to meet all their own expenses and therefore have to work to earn money. Many of them are still engaged in ordinary schooling so the timetable of their day is likely to be ordinary schooling from 8.00 am to 12.30 pm, work in the afternoon to earn their keep, followed by theological studies from 7.00 pm to 10.30 pm. Their weekends will not be free either as each of the students at the Institute is attached to one or other of the local Baptist churches and is expected to assist in all the work of that church over the weekend.

#### A starting point to anywhere

As one continues along the ring road one sees stretching away to the left the seemingly unending *mato* – the tall grass and scrub – which covers so much of this vast state. The road then begins to climb and those seeking the bus station leave it to the left. The bus station is a huge new two storey building with modern ticket offices and well fitted waiting rooms. Buses arriving discharge their passengers on the first floor and those departing board their passengers on the ground floor. From this station a

## CONTROLLED GROWTH

by Alan Easter





The fishermen of Cuiabá

passenger can travel to practically any town in Brazil. It is a point on the national network and not merely a municipal fare stage. Some passengers leaving this bus station could be setting out on a journey of 32 hours or more.

As the road continues its climb a panoramic view of Cuiabá opens out to the right and something of the area of this city can be judged and many of the fine buildings can be seen to advantage. A second broad road to the left leads to the *Centro Político Administrativo*, a magnificent complex of administrative buildings housing the various departments of the state government. As the road continues past this administrative centre it begins to drop downhill and stretches in one straight line to the distant range of hills called *Chapadas*. Seven kilometres from the centre of Cuiabá along this road, a huge new government housing development is taking shape. A new suburb of the city is growing rapidly and, due to its proximity to that administrative complex, it was known by the initials of that centre and simply called CPA. As people began to move into the estate from all over Brazil they were invited to make suggestions for a name by which the suburb could be known. The result of this exercise is that the people have chosen the name *Morada da Serra* — home in the hills.

### 60,000 opportunities

It is being developed in three stages each to house 20,000 people. The first stage is completed and the houses occupied. The second stage is finished and the people are moving in. The third section is still in the building stage. In this particular development the government

is erecting what are known as basic housing units each on their small plot of ground. Such units comprise a living room, bathroom and toilet, two bedrooms and a kitchen. The people buy them over a period of 25 years and when the purchasers have been making repayments for three years they can add to the basic unit or decorate it to their own choice.

Already in the first stage there are those families who have enlarged their accommodation by building on extra rooms. Others have embellished their house with ceramic tile or marked the limit of their plot with wrought iron gates and fences or brick walls. In this way each family is able to express its own individual likes and the monotony of stereotype, so often evident in council estates, is overcome and each house and street takes on a character of its own.

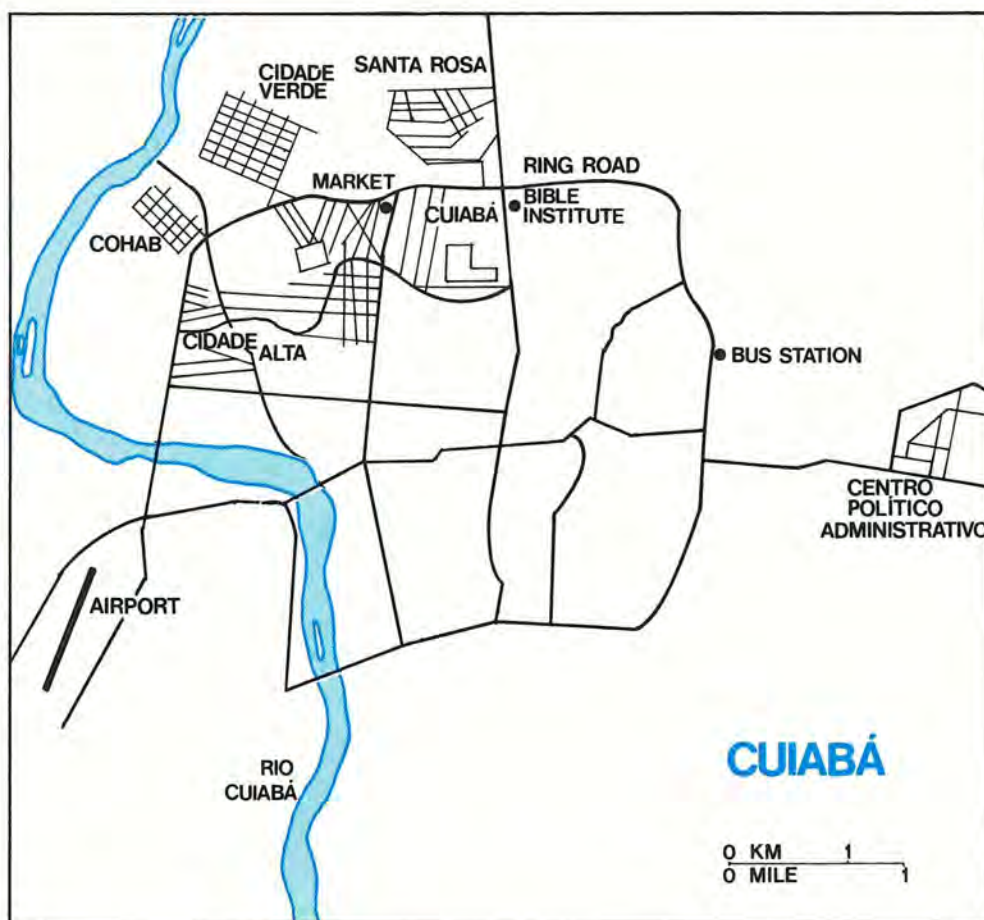
One or two Baptist families have come to live in this new suburb and the Centre of America Convention, under the drive of its energetic secretary the Rev Samoel Martin, who is a product of our missionary work in Paraná, has recognized the great opportunity for witness that *Marada da Serra* offers. With 40,000 people already living there, there

is not one established evangelical work on the estate. The Junta of the Convention invited Keith Hodges to accept the oversight of the work in this suburb — and this was in addition to his work at the Bible Institute where he lectures, and in addition to his work as coordinator and administrator of the Correspondence Course in Christian Training for which the Baptist Convention of the Centre of America invited him to Mato Grosso. The course has been given the name 'Serving the Lord' and is designed to train those who are engaged in the work of the Lord in the local situation such as Sunday school teachers, lay preachers, department leaders and the like in the whole of Mato Grosso. The course is to be launched officially this month.

### The sights are set high

But it was in May 1981 that Keith started to work on the CPA development as it was then known. There was no church building just the house of a Baptist family. The wife has a little shop on the estate. In June last year Keith was inducted to the oversight of the congregation by Samoel Martin, the Secretary of the Convention and also by the pastor of the First Baptist Church in

*continued overleaf*





## CONTROLLED GROWTH

*continued from previous page*

Cuiabá with which this outreach is linked. The work has now expanded beyond the limits of the house. There is an all-age Sunday school of 50. The Sunday evening service averages 60 and over 20 young people gather on a Saturday evening for a YP meeting while Barbara Hodges leads an eager women's group.

The meetings are held in the 'backyard' of a member's house. This plot of land actually lies beside the house and opens straight on to the street. Passers-by cannot but help notice the witness and many are curious enough to stop and listen in order to learn what is going on.

Already this congregation is looking ahead. They see the necessity to have their own plot of land on which to house the growing activities of the group and in great prayer and faith have asked the authorities for a piece of land 5000 sq metres in extent – and all the signs are that they will get it. Their ambitious plans envisage a church building on this site capable of seating 500 together with a Baptist Centre to be used for a Nursery School, Sunday School, Scout Troop and Community Lecture Centre. They also plan to build on the site a manse, a caretaker's house, a play area and a basket ball/volley ball court.

### The work of Paraná is extended

Solange, one of the students at the Institute, helps with the work on this estate. She is a young lady whom Keith and Barbara led to the Lord when they were working at Jacarezinho in Paraná. She is showing great promise as a student and is a most valuable asset to the work at Marada da Serra, but even so more help is needed and it is hoped that an evangelist Keith knows, and with whom he worked in Paraná, may be persuaded to come up to Mato Grosso and become a partner in this enterprise, seeking with the others to reap the fullest possible harvest from this potentially high-yield field of some 60,000 people. Yet it is a daunting task. How can two or three cope with such an opportunity when they can only give part of their time to it? How urgently more help is needed and how vital the prayer support of those in this country if the hopes are to be fulfilled.

# THE CHRISTMAN FILE



by **W J Christman**

Published by The St Andrew's Press  
Price £1.90

This book proclaims itself to be 'outspoken – relevant – lively – controversial' but I prefer the verdict of William Barclay who simply said – 'fascinating and deeply moving'.

The Christman file is the story of the author's first pastorate in a very deprived parish of Edinburgh. It is an honest account of success and failure, of spiritual growth and professional integrity, of commitment and rejection. It is set amid great need, suffering, and even personal violence. Born in America, Bill Christman learned the hard way as men usually do in the ministry and often his dreams of what a Church should be

were shattered and he became disillusioned. His college training left much to be desired as he was confronted with situations that had never been dealt with, even in an academic way. The author finds, however, that people respond to love. They need to be met where they are; accepted for what they are; patiently and lovingly drawn into the Kingdom. The author seeks in very practical ways to show, to the community, the Church as the body of Christ serving the needs of all who want help. But it all gets too much for him as it appears to him that his ministry is simply smoothing over a succession of endless bickerings between rival factions in the congregation. He leaves and returns to the States for further training. This was only temporary, however, and now, as a naturalised British citizen, he is in Scotland once again, this time in a parish in Glasgow.

This book may be an insight for some and for those deeply involved in the ministry already a gratifying, honest account of our daily struggles. An uninspiring cover design will not help to sell this book.

REC



*The bus station at Cuiabá*



# DR IAN ACRES — 'THE SOCIETY'S FAMILY DOCTOR'



Among those who retired from the Society's service at the Annual Meetings this year was one whose association with the BMS spans half a century.

Dr Ian S Acres was accepted as a missionary candidate in 1932 and left for Bolobo in 1933 where he and Mrs Acres were to spend the next 13 years. Working mainly in Bolobo hospital, Ian's priority job was the programme for sleeping sickness control in the surrounding areas.

In 1946, the Acres returned to England for the sake of their children's education. Ian entered General Practice in North London just before the National Health Service began in 1948. His partner in practice was Dr Girling, the first doctor to serve at Bolobo. This partnership was to give Ian the opportunity of serving BMS at home in various capacities over the subsequent years.

As an elected member of General Committee, he served on the Medical Advisory Sub-Committee from 1954, as Chairman from 1960 to 1967 and as Secretary thereafter. In 1967 he succeeded Dr Burton as Medical Director and held this office until he retired from practice in 1976. When Dr Rathbone became Medical Officer, Dr Acres was persuaded to continue as the Society's Honorary Medical Adviser.

During his year as Chairman of the Society (1975-1976) Ian presided over the deliberations of committees with his customary quiet assurance and in 1977 the General Committee showed their appreciation of his worth by electing him a Life Member.

Whether it was producing the *Baptist Doctors' Missionary Fellowship Bulletin*,

writing much of the BMS Medical Literature, advising the Overseas Department, convening the Medical Panel or caring for prospective candidates and missionaries, Dr Acres has been the perfect 'Family Doctor'. The motto of the Royal College of General Practitioners is 'Cum Scientia, Caritas'. Ian's advice on medical matters was always balanced and informed. But within this reflection of his scientific training went a great humanity which many of us will remember in his kindness, courtesy and sympathetic interest and his constant concern for the

Lord's work of healing men's lives at home and abroad.

Some indication of how Ian will be impossible to replace is that his work is to be taken over by a group of doctors! All who have been grateful for his friendship and counsel over so many years will want to wish both him and Mrs Acres, who has always supported Ian in all his many commitments to the BMS, many years of happy and contented retirement together.

IMF



*The old Bolobo hospital where Dr Acres worked*



# LINKS WITH THE PAST

by Stanley Browne

Once, after talking about some of my experiences as a Baptist Missionary doctor in the former Belgian Congo, now called Zaire, I was asked, 'Why did you, a Baptist living in England, go to the Belgian Congo?'

'The country we used to know as Belgian Congo, was actually British Baptist Congo long before it became Belgian Congo,' I replied.

I'll explain what I mean. We have to begin before the Berlin Conference of

1885, at which the Great Powers marked out spheres of influence in Africa. That Continent was changing rapidly, becoming more than a few dotted lines of rivers on a blank map except for such legends as 'Here be elephant' and 'Here be lion'.

Ten years before, a journalist-adventurer, full of guts and bombast, had set out from the east coast of Africa to cross the Dark Continent searching for the source of the Nile. How Stanley found Livingstone — 'Dr Livingstone, I presume' — is well known. More than two years

after setting out from Zanzibar in 1875, when no news had reached the Western world for months, and when many (including his sponsors, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *New York Herald*) were writing epitaphs with the theme 'Missing, believed dead,' a Yorkshire Baptist named Robert Arthington, wrote a challenging letter to the Baptist Missionary Society in London. He offered to finance an exploratory expedition up the Congo river with the object of taking the story of God's love to the unknown tribes that must inhabit the centre of Africa.



Yalemba Church



In July 1877, the London Committee, with tremendous faith and vision, accepted the challenge, and resolved to send two of its experienced missionaries, then stationed in the Cameroons, up the Congo River to survey the land for Christ.

A month later, news flashed from Boma (a tiny port at the mouth of the Congo River) that Stanley and the bedraggled remnants of his expedition had actually arrived there, so ending an epic transcontinental journey of 999 days. Alas, Stanley's three white companions had perished on the way, as had a third of his complement of Zanzibaris from the east coast.

### I came from where the sun rises

I have a personal link with that expedition. That link was forged in a most unexpected fashion. One night in the year 1937, as I was eating a frugal meal in a mud-and-thatch rest-house in a little village called Malinda in the former Belgian Congo, about forty miles from the State-post of Isangi, I was asked to see an old man who was very ill. With a hurricane-lamp in my hand, I went with my guide to a nearby hut. The bearded white-haired man was obviously near to death. His breathing was rapid and laboured; his eyes were sunken. I felt his pulse. It was feeble and irregular. There was little I could do. His features were so different from those of the forest-dwelling Bantu of the district that I ventured to ask him where he came from. He was obviously not a member of a local tribe.

In a weak voice he replied that he came from a far country 'where the sun rises'. What was he doing so far from 'home'? 'I used to work for Bula Matadi.' I



*A war council like the one which planned attack on 'Peace'*

couldn't believe what I was hearing. 'Bula Matadi' (the Breaker of Stones) was Stanley's nickname. I waited. Then the poor old man spoke again, summoning his strength to say, as he paused for breath from time to time, in a weak voice tinged with evident pride, 'I journeyed right across this land with Bula Matadi. I was his cook.' Here he was, a man from Zanzibar, who had reached the West Coast of Africa with his master, Stanley, and who now lay a-dying in the very heart of the Dark Continent — midway between Zanzibar and Boma. I spoke a few words of comfort to him and held his hand while I prayed. He died that night.

Stanley's cook and a Baptist doctor from England, span the history of Central Africa — he from 1875 to 1937; I from 1936 till today.

### Who will follow Jesus?

Returning to the Baptists in the Cameroons, they made their plans. Within six months of the London Committee's decision, two of them, (Comber and Bentley) were on their way, up the Congo River and into the interior,

where they camped at the capital of the 'King of Kongo' at a place called San Salvador in what is now Angola.

I have a personal link with Holman-Bentley, not directly, but through his son, Henry. Seven years after that exploratory venture into unknown Central Africa, Bentley and his wife and six month old baby were travelling up the Congo River in the little mission steamer named *Peace*. They stopped at the village of Bolobo for the night, to cut wood for the hungry boilers of the boat. On the upper deck, Mrs Bentley was giving her baby son a bath. As soon as the tribesmen assembled on the bank saw the white baby, they clamoured to be shown him, and could not be satisfied until his mother had consented to pass him to the crowd. Here he went from one dirty hand to another, until — to the infinite relief of his parents — he was handed back to them, none the worse for his ordeal though more than a little dirty.

'I was that white baby,' said Henry

*continued overleaf*





Assembling the 'Peace' at Stanley Pool

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Bentley to a crowd of London Sunday School scholars thirty years later, as they listened spell-bound and open-mouthed to this story.

'My parents were missionaries: they wanted to share their faith with black people in Africa.' 'I too,' he added, 'am a missionary, and I want to share my faith with you. Jesus loves every one of you and wants you to follow Him and serve Him. Who will follow Jesus, and even be willing to go to Africa and serve Him there?' Among those who put their hands up was little Stanley Browne.

I mentioned that the Bentley family was travelling on the mission steamer, *The Peace*. It was on a navigable stretch of Congo River above Stanley Pool and above the treacherous rapids. The 300 loads into which the boat had been divided had been carried on men's heads along the south bank for three hundred miles to avoid the rapids. The loads were unpacked, and the parts reassembled by a young engineer-missionary George Grenfell. That's how *The Peace* was floated, above the Congo rapids.

Bentley himself was one of two men

who were the first to reach Stanley Pool via the south bank of the River Congo, and to survey a route through the territories of mutually hostile tribes. His companion was a man named Crudgington. This man was still alive in 1928, and I had the honour of shaking his hand at the Central Hall, Westminster, in July of that year.

#### 'Meat, meat' they shouted

My links with those distant heroic days do not end there. My duties as missionary doctor based on the BMS hospital at Yakusu included quarterly visits to the sister mission station at Yalembe, a hundred miles to the West. More than once in 1936, I was able to attend worship in the beautiful Yalembe Church. Among the very old men in the congregation were some who formed part of the crews in fifty-six heavily manned war canoes. These had harassed Stanley's flotilla as it ran the gauntlet of crowds of bloodthirsty cannibals. On 1 February 1877 they took off from their villages along the north bank of the river, shouting 'Nyama, nyama' ('meat, meat') as they tried to kill the white intruders and their Zanzibari companions. Now, wizened old men in their eighties, they

were worshipping the God brought to them by white men and reading the words of the Christian Holy Book in their own language.

#### They ran for their bows and arrows

George Grenfell, the man who set *The Peace* afloat on the waters of the upper Congo, was a painstaking and accurate hydrographer. He made charts of the Congo river that form the basis of present-day navigation-aids. In his journeys, he saw the evils of the Arab slave-trade and watched helplessly as



George Grenfell




Holman Bentley



burning villages and fleeing tribes-people indicated the depredations of those who traded in human flesh. Understandably the villagers hated the Arabs, and by extension anyone with a light skin. When the inhabitants of villages lining the banks of the river Lomani — a majestic tributary of the Congo — saw a little steamer making its way slowly upstream, and then saw some pale faces on board they ran for their bows and arrows and began shooting. They saw the arrow guards being lowered around the deck, and watched their arrows ping ineffectively on the close wire mesh. That was the first contact of George Grenfell with the Lomani villagers.

#### **I shot at him**

Fifty years later, I was cruising slowly up that same river, in a worthy successor of *The Peace*, named *The Grenfell* in honour of the Baptist engineer-missionary. One day, our boat pulled in opposite a little village where logs for boiler fuel were stacked for sale. Soon after we had docked, the sick came aboard to see the doctor. One old man led his equally aged wife over the gangway to the deck where I was holding the clinic. The woman was in pain, and I could see that she needed an operation. The husband consented, and I prepared the instruments for sterilization over a small Primus stove. While waiting and getting the anaesthetic ready, I asked the husband why he so readily brought his wife to me? He replied that he knew that the white men of God would always help people in need. I then enquired about his contacts with white people. He told me that he remembered a white man coming up the river when he was a young man. Thinking he was a slave-trader, he had joined his friends



# WORKERS ON WHEELS

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**Help to buy motor-cycles to enable pastors  
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and shot poisoned arrows at him, but they did not penetrate the metal screens. Sometime later he had been captured in an Arab slave-raid on that very village and eventually was sold to a merchant. He managed to escape, and found his way to his own village.

By the time he had told me his story, the

instruments were sterile, and were ready to begin the anaesthetic. Before doing so, the doctor from far-away England, on the decks of *The Grenfell*, prayed with a man who had tried to kill George Grenfell, asking God to guide the hand that held the knife that would shortly be plunged into the flesh of his wife — to heal and not to injure.



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## PRAYER GUIDE NOTES

**Ian and Isobel Morris** (1 July) had a baby son in April.

**Stephen Mantle** (1 July) Doing a course at St Andrew's Hall, hoping to return to Zaire later in the year.

**John and Rena Mellor** (1 July) John is taking a course at Spurgeon's College while on furlough hoping to return to Zaire with a view to doing more evangelistic work.

**Joan Maple** (5 July) returns to this country in August at the end of her service.

**Aidan Huxford** (7 July) end of short term service in summer.

**David and Irene Masters** (8 July) on furlough.

**Myrtle McDonald** (15 July) has gone back to Canada.

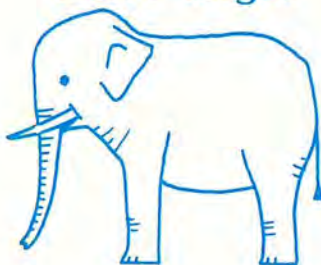
**Peter and Margaret Goodall** (19 July) Margaret is home for a short while. Their daughter Rachel flies out in July to be with her parents for the school holidays.

**Elizabeth McCubbin** (21 July) is now in Kandy.

**Jim and Janette Watson** (25 July) now on furlough.

**David and Joyce Stockley** (30 July) probably on furlough.

Don't forget



... to order extra copies of the August issue of the *Missionary Herald*. It will be very helpful for your church's harvest programme.

### MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

#### Arrivals

**Rev A Ferreira** on 15 April from Curitiba, Brazil

**Miss S Le Quesne** on 22 April from Dacca, Bangladesh

**Miss C Preston** on 27 April from Chandraghona, Bangladesh

#### Departures

**Rev N B and Mrs McVicar** on 12 April for Dacca, Bangladesh

**Mr and Mrs D Davies** on 20 April for Kinshasa, Zaire

#### Births

On 21 February, in Brazil, to **Rev H R and Mrs Davies**, a son, Rodrigo

On 10 April, in Kimpese, Zaire, to **Mr and Mrs. I Morris**, a son, Stephen Russell

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously. (31 March-26 April 1982)

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