

FREAK BLIZZARD

December 8th 1967 was a day much to be remembered. Our Cortina estate and heavy baggage were already on board ship at Southampton. It remained for us to travel the fifteen miles from Fareham in the two cars of our friends to board ship. We had fourteen pieces of hand-luggage. The journey took us five hours. When we started at 9am there was a slight drizzle of rain which quickly turned to fine snow, and then to a blizzard. Within half an hour the roads were covered in ice and all traffic was brought to a standstill. We were stranded.

I went through the blizzard to the nearest railway station, about a mile away, to enquire if there would be a train to the port. One was due shortly. Back to the cars, which we pushed up onto the side of the road and abandoned, we all then walked through the blizzard with the luggage to the station.

Our five daughters, in anticipation of soon sailing into the warmer climate, had only sling-back sandals and no gloves. Our youngest daughter, Joyce, was crying because of the cold. A kind lady coming in the opposite direction stopped, took off her own gloves and gave them to Joyce! Twice Cilla, our eldest daughter almost fainted with the cold. The snow was now deep but we eventually got to the station and waited for the train. There was a delay and we began to get a little anxious. so we started singing.

Eventually the train came in. There were also some other passengers for the boat. We piled into the carriage with a sense of great relief. As the train drew near to the port-station it stopped. The points were frozen. There we were stuck for over an hour until 1pm. The time for the departure of our ships the "Kenya Castle". had now passed. One man, with his wife, almost went berserk. Much to her embarrassment, he swore, cursed, and tried to get out

onto the line but was pulled back by the guard. He shouted out of the window when the boat-train from London went slowly past "Tell the captain to delay the boat sailing, we are stuck!"

At last the train moved slowly forward and we pulled in to the port station. Alas, there were no taxis and we had to walk another mile or so through the deep snow to the ship. The Captain had, to our great relief, delayed the sailing of the ship for three hours, so we boarded the snow-covered ship. Many passengers failed to reach the port in time. For some, their cars and luggage sailed away without them. Eighty five in all missed the ship. Some of these flew out to our first port of call, the Canary Islands, and joined the boat there.

At Cape Town on the day we arrived, six of the seventy cars on board were unloaded and our Cortina was one of them. We made a good start but I left my briefcase, with passport, documents and much else of irreplaceable value, in the A.A. office in the docks area. We were well out of the docks when this was noticed. We made a hectic dash back into the docks, which were due to close, and then made an anxious search for the A.A. office in the vast area. It was with much relief and thankfulness we found the briefcase on the floor just where I had left it.

The next morning, after an early breakfast in the lodgings arranged for us by friends, we started out. We had left instructions for our heavy baggage to be trans-shipped and our fourteen pieces of hand luggage were packed into the back of the car with some of the bigger cases placed to make a seat for Beryl and Joyce. Underneath the car revealed that the springs were well down.

The first night was spent in a motel which enabled us to get away at 5am next morning. Kimberley diamond mines were passed and a good day's run took us to Johannesburg. The first 900 miles had been covered on schedule but we were not to stay 'on'. The Christian couple who opened their home to us welcomed our prolonged stay, which was owing to Beryl and Joyce having bronchial flu', and they were exceedingly kind to us. So we spent time with them. Charles loved to go up into the attic where there was an electric model railway skillfully laid out and automated. We all enjoyed listening to the electric organ which had been hand-built and was also in the attic. It could not be played at anywhere near full volume as its vibrations shook the house.

When the doctor gave us the 'green light' we moved on - five days later than intended. We were off schedule now but all to great purpose as we were to find out later.

At Pretoria I spent two hours trying to locate where my father, who was married there in 1905, had had his cycle business. The family remembers that day better than I do as I had gone off with the familiar - 'won't be a minute' which developed into two hours. Coca-colas' all round cooled off the situation. We spent the night at another hotel, at Ingwe.

At the border-crossing into Rhodesia officials asked if we wanted an entry made in our passport. We decided to have one and had reason to be thankful. Missionary colleagues who had

recently been brought out of Congo by police escort, welcomed us at Salisbury. We were away next morning before daylight, crossed the second border into Zambia and sped on to Kabwe where Margaret's brother and his wife were engage in missionary work. We were given a great welcome even though we were five days late and should have been with them for Christmas. It was a very happy weekend.

About forty miles from Kabwe we left the Cape to Cairo great-north-road and exchanged the tarmac for dirt roads to Dar-es-Salaam. In the local papers this was called the "Hell run." This was because of its frightful condition due to the hundreds of petrol tankers many with tanker-trailers, that had plied to and fro from Dar to Ndola for the past eighteen months owing to sanctions being applied. We passed scores of these vehicles broken down, upturned, smashed and burnt put. Petrol, in short supply, added to the hazards of the journey.

After a night in a Zambian hotel we left at 5am next morning to the last border crossing and wondered how we would fare.

From Dundee, Margaret's home town, and where we had purchased the secondhand Cortina, we had carried a small parcel. This was given to us by a Tanzanian Christian brother who was in Dundee on a training course. He had inscribed, in faith, on the parcel the words 'To be opened on the Tanzanian border.' Within fifty miles of the border we were stopped and requested to take an African young man with a badly injured hand to the nearest hospital. He had been jacking up a lorry which had slipped and crushed his hand. We of course, were already overloaded but could not refuse this samaritan task, which proved a blessing. The comical part was that, as the injured man was getting into the car, three of his relatives tried to follow in after him: We had to stop them and use some forceful words to explain

the limitations of our car! At the hospital mission station, we were welcomed to spend the night. Mattresses were spread on the floor for the family. That night the long rains started. It poured on our dirt read.

At the border crossing we unexpectedly had to pay the customs duty on the car. Our sterling and travelers cheques seemed adequate until the devaluation which had been imposed in U.K. since we left and the commission was deducted. Still it seemed as if we would have enough until the clerk asked for 'devaluation' to be paid on the cheques which we gave to pay for the 'devaluation' on the lump sum! Our money just melted away. We were shs29/- short. Why did we give that shs40/- in the morning? But it was all in God's purposes, He is no mans' debtor.

In the first place, had we not been delayed we could have arrived at the border crossing in 1967. As it was it was now January 2nd 1968, the car was a year older and the rate of customs to pay was thereby less. To pay the customs rate of the year previous would have been impossible. In the second place, at this remote border was an Asian Moslem friend from Dar-es-Salaam, living in a caravan and working on the 'oil run'. He gladly advanced shs100/- which took us through and helped buy petrol for the 900 miles which remained. After passing the border gate we stopped the car and bowed to thank the Lord.

Our Asian friend was the first to taste the sweets from our little parcel which we were now free to open. Faith had been honoured, the faith of George Fundisha. How welcome were those sweets and the coffee and biscuits given us in the caravan after the four hours business with immigration and customs where refreshments were just unavailable. We were given a letter to carry for our Asian friend's family in Dar-es-Salaam, another exercise of faith, which did not prove in vain.

That night, as the day was far spent, friends welcomed us at Mbozi, thirty miles over the border, and they insisted on our staying.

Next day 2.5 ins. of rain fell. Both roads to Dar were closed. The Lord was ordering our 'stops'. It was a joy to speak to the workmen on this thousand acre coffee farm each morning. We made an early start again on the Monday. After about one hundred miles we reached a very bad part of the road. About twenty five vehicles had managed through that day and had churned up the mud and made deep ruts. We drove on top at the side of the ruts but a great boulder brought the car to a halt. Finally we got through and there and then stopped for lunch and for relaxation after the ordeal. Some beautiful wild lilies around the tree under which we sought shade, reminded us of the "Greater than Solomon" and we worshipped with tears of thankfulness.

After another night in a hotel we made a before-sunrise start, the next morning the 9th of January to complete our journey. The day's run finally brought the lights of Dar-es-Salaam into view - and we knew that the Indian Ocean was beyond. We were at journeys end, a journey of about 3,500 miles.

Amongst our luggage in the car were some small presents for George Fundisha's wife and family. These we delivered without delay and we met Martha and the family for the first time. After some time George returned from U.K. but within a few days, as he and Martha were returning home in the back of a lorry. They were involved in an accident and both were killed. Their six children were orphaned. According to African custom a brother of George took the young family into his home and cared for them with his own children.

LAKE MALAWI

Bang! The old van, which we hired from an Arab trader, came to a halt, miles from anywhere and ten miles short of our destination. Margaret and I then had two very small children. Priscilla 18 months old and Hazel only 6 months. Soon after we stopped a lorry came from the opposite direction. Our African driver decided to return on this lorry back to base as we had no spare wheel. He took the wheel with the burst tyre he would soon be back. Little did we know what an understatement that was to prove. Nothing was to pass either way for the next two days until he returned. It was to be eventful.

Soon it became obvious that we would have to use some grass huts nearby, which road-workers had built for midday shelter from the tropical sun. The road repairs amounted to filling in the ruts and pot-holes and cutting back the grass encroachment on either side. The huts were very flimsy affairs. Two African boys who were with us slept in one hut and we were in the other. The stars could be seen shining through the scant grass roof. We slept the sleep of the weary traveler and did not awaken till dawn. The boys' asked, "Did you hear anything in the night?" We had heard nothing. They told us,, "Simba Bwana". Lions were roaring and kept them awake. That day I visited the nearest villages of a few small huts about a mile and a half away and distributed Scripture Gift Mission booklets and tracts in Swahili and chatted with people.

We needed water and this had to be drawn from Lake Malawi half a mile away and full of hippopotami. Margaret had to boil and strain the water twice to be fit for use. Lunch, and then tea, but still the driver did not return. By 6pm it was dark, as it always is within a 45mins variation, all the year round. We had to prepare to spend another night in the grass huts ; there was only space for one camp

bed for Margaret, and I slept on a ground-sheet with the children. I tied the grass door with an extra piece of string and left the oil lamp burning. We slept until the early hours of the morning. Then, sure enough, we were suddenly awakened by the roaring of the lions. With hair standing on end and knees knocking, literally, I turned up the wick of the lamp. It went out! The oil was finished. I tied the door with some more string and we longed for the morning light. The children still slept peacefully. Hippos were busy around grazing. Later, before dawn, there was a blood-curdling throat-hissing noise right outside the door - it was a leopard passing. Footprints seen in the morning showed that a herd of elephants had passed nearby.

It was a big relief to see the driver return next day. Our journey was completed without further incident. But the nights during our stay in the Government rest house were often wakeful - hundreds of bats lodged between the ceiling and the corrugated iron roof. At dusk they went out in a vast cloud and were in and out through the eaves all night long. And the smell! We got used to the noise but not the smell.

Hazel's Birth

For our first-born Priscilla, Margaret had to travel from Kilwa to Dar es Salaam by the coastal boat "M.V. Mombasa" an over-night journey of about two hundred miles. It was a small ship and the Indian Ocean could be very rough at times. This was one such occasion. The Captain thought he would have a delivery on his hands, but they arrived with everything under control. The boat traveled on to Mombassa.

The next day, after the arrival in Dar, the baby was born. Because it was near Christmas the doctor allowed Margaret to travel back on the return trip of the boat, otherwise it would have meant waiting another fortnight or more. So eleven days after leaving Kilwa, Margaret arrived back with the baby in her arms - I could hardly believe it.

At Kilwa, communications were difficult. A telegram could take several days and the telephone system was often out of order, sometimes by elephants knocking down the poles out in the bush or by torrential rains washing them away.

When Hazel our second daughter was expected, it was a different situation, for this time we went south for the confinement. A doctor friend who was working with the ill-fated Groundnut scheme, had moved into Government service at the hospital in Nachingwea. He kindly invited us to go there.

The months of pregnancy had been really tough for Margaret. While we were at Kilwa Masoko she contracted Bilhartzia - internal microbes were found during ante-natal specimen examinations. This required a course of injections, spread over a month, at the Government hospital at Kilwa Kivinje seventeen miles up the coast. This old slave-trade town called 'crumbling Kilwal, had a population of about five thousand

people, none of which were Europeans. It had been our concern, to take up residence in this town, but we had not expected our prayers to be answered in this way. It was a turning point.

During the time of treatment we remarked about a house which belonged to the Aga Khan, and which was used by him when he visited the town in bygone days, that we could manage living there. That night we prayed about the matter. Next day we heard that upstairs part of the house was to become vacant, but by tragic circumstances. The mother of the family had died in childbirth and the father, with his young family, had to move to smaller quarters. It was not long before we moved in.

The house was Arab-built with flat roof and stone steps outside to reach our apartment. Downstairs was occupied by an Asian hunter and prospector, when he was at home, which was not often. The large walled garden, with coconut palm trees, had been a slave yard.

This house was certainly crumbling. Everything in the house became covered in a layer of mortar dust which was constantly falling from the ceiling. No food could be left uncovered and mealtimes were difficult. We purchased some grass mats cheaply in the market and these we nailed to the mangrove poles which were about twelve inches apart with plaster between, and which formed the ceiling and roof. The poles were visible in the rooms.

It was not long before Margaret caught dengue fever, called "kudinga popo" (bats swing) by the Africans because the effect of the fever on the joints caused the person to waddle from side to side, like a bat swinging in the wind under the bough of a tree. Treatment took weeks and was painful and debilitating.

Then Margaret had her first attack of malaria - all this while she was trying to breastfeed Cilla and carrying Hazel.

Eventually we went to Nachingwea, as a family, first by the "Mombasa" to Lindi, about a hundred and twenty miles south, and then by train upcountry.

Although the local Asian doctor at Kilwa thought the baby would soon be born, our doctor-friend told us we had a month to await. We were given our own little furnished house - built for the groundnutters- there were some scores of these lying empty. We had our main meals with our friends and their family. When some of the household effects of these houses were sold by auction. while we were there, we purchased a bath, stainless steel sink unit and a dover stove for shs.100/-. These we incorporated into our mud and wattle and palmleaf thatched house at Kilwa Masoko. We had moved back there just prior to the safari to Nachingwea as my brother Dudley with his wife and family had left for furlough in the U.K.

Hazel, born in the hospital, was thin and jaundiced. The day after her birth the doctor called me aside, after the evening meal, to inform me that the chances of the baby's survival were only fiftyfifty, but he added, "Lets pray about it".

There and then we knelt down in the lounge and each of us committed Margaret and baby Hazel to the Lord. It was the turning point. With saline drip and every care and attention the babe made progress. We had occasion to laugh too.

One evening a large owl flew in the open double doors, continued right down the ward and landed on the end of Margaret's bed! This was before her delivery when she was alone.

It was with some difficulty that we returned to Kilwa after several weeks, not only with an addition to the family, but with bath, sink and dover stove.

BUSH FIRE

"The Mission is on fire." So said the District Commissioner as he looked across MsoBay to the little compound of houses a mile and a half away. The whole peninsular was ablaze. The flames had spread rapidly by a gale force wind blowing off the Indian Ocean.

My missionary colleague and I had gone off on safari one hundred miles south, by trader's lorry. Food, cooking utensils and supplies of Christian literature from the Scripture Gift Mission for distribution in villages and schools were the important part of our equipment. We were away for a week.

Margaret had stayed at home to care for our two small children, still babies really, and also to run the daily bush clinic - an enclosure of palm leaves under the shade of some trees.

A good fire-break had been made around the buildings by clearing the ground for several yards all the way round the compound, as the bush fires were imminent. It should have been adequate, everything burnable had been cleared, but a gale-force wind had not been taken into account.

The District Commissioner and his men rushed round by Landrover but the flames had surrounded the buildings, so that they had to retreat. But there was another means of access.

The front of the mission compound was facing Mso bay, with sea only a stone's throw away. The area was about twenty feet above sea level, and could be approached when the tide was out, around the sandy bay.

When the men arrived the grass within the compound was alight. Sparks were blowing from the other side of the fire-break onto the roof of the house where the children were blissfully asleep. Margaret was really as the 'makuti' palm-leaf thatch, with highly inflammable resinous content

threatened to catch alight. Men were sent up onto the roof to beat out the sparks as they landed on the roof. Others beat out the flames of the burning grass as it approached the house. It was now well on into the night.

Eventually the inferno passed, the flames subsided, the danger was over for another year and Margaret was left alone again with the children.

When my colleague and I returned from safari, the blackened ground all around told its own story. Everything burnable had been reduced to ashes. The mission building were no longer hidden from view. Wild animals were not likely to come around for some time either. This was lion country.

FAMINE OF RENT MONEY

Why should our Moslem neighbours who held a Koranic school in their house be allowed to purchase our house and give us three months notice to quit? Could we be blamed if such questions arose in our minds? Were we not using our home for the church gatherings? We had done so for the four years in which we had occupied it.

Certainly we had chosen, on principle to rent the house rather than purchase it by mortgage. Our neighbours on the other side, though Hindus, were very friendly. Mr Patel would water his garden with a hose while our Sunday evening service proceeded. Luxurious growth was promised to the plants where he stood and listened to the message being preached - all doors and windows were open wide because of the heat and humidity.

Mr Patel, a solicitor, helped us in the legal matters relating to the building of a chapel, in which we were already negotiating and which made the Islamic opposition too late. Conversely, through friends, a Moslem who owned a butchers shop in the center of the town, offered us the use of his flat until we could find accommodation. Houses to rent were at a premium and considerable amounts of money were being paid as 'key money' which we could not afford and would not pay anyway.

How thankful we were of this provision, but we were to have reason to be more thankful than we then knew.

The flat was in Acacia Avenue, the main street of the town, with flame-red flamboyant trees overhanging the verandah. The street was ever busy with traffic and shoppers, and led down to the 'Ankari' monument which commemorated those who fell in world war two, Africans with the British fighting together for a common cause.

The smell of the butcher-meat wafted up in the humidity, the swarms of flies attracted by the meat were something we had to learn to live with, as also the strong disinfectant used to clean the place, which gave off a pungent, sickly smell. More than that, adjacent to our rooms were others used as a nursery school. About forty small children shared our toilet cum shower room. The children were of many races and those of ours, of suitable age - we had four children at that time - were allowed to join in with the activities without charge.

The kitchen was not convenient by any standards. About six feet square and without a window, it had a smoky paraffin stove which was a real menace. As a result of this the walls and ceiling were well sooted and dark.

The verandah was our bedroom - a row of beds with mosquito nets strung up from various vantage points.

Privacy was at a minimum both from without and within but somehow we managed.

At the end of three months, when we were able to get a house Margaret said, 'Never again'. Yet only a year later we were back again, of necessity and thankfully too.

But why were we to be more thankful than we at first realized? For the months that we occupied this flat there was a famine of rent-money. There was no provision in the gifts we received during the weeks that we occupied this flat, to pay the rent. In this case it was a matter of provision by kind and not cash.

MIDNIGHT JOURNEY

'Saba saba' had ended; that is, the eight-day exhibition. It was held annually to celebrate the starting on the seventh day of the seventh month, of the one political party in Tanzania. The exhibition had once again run its course. On this eighth year of having a Bible Stand at the exhibition, sales had reached an all-time record, and we were carrying home the takings of shs3,000/-. We had worked ourselves almost to a standstill as the long hours were very demanding and we had, on this day, been very short staffed. It was midnight when we finished and made our way home.

Our son Charles had gone on ahead, on his cycle. Nine of us including two other children were in the Cortina car. The journey home was only about a mile. We rounded the first corner where there was a large training soldiers camp under canvas. As we did so, a man coming from the opposite direction shouted to us 'Angalia, fujo!' (take care there is a riot). We did not know what he meant by that, we were too tired to try and think. We were soon to learn.

As we proceeded we passed a taxi on the side of the road with all its windows smashed. Then, quickly and suddenly, we found ourselves heading for a great crowd of young men from the camp. Charles was off his bike and in there midst being questioned. He shouted to us, 'Don't stop!' They had told him that the taxi - the African driver had abandoned it and run for his life - had knocked down and killed one of their men. They had decided that the occupants of the next car to pass would take the consequences. That was us. Immediately Charles had shouted to us, those nearest to him started to punch him, then they all turned and surged towards our Cortina. We had been impelled to stop by the milling crowd on either side, and all over the road. To turn back was impossible. It all happened in seconds.

Some of the men started thumping on the roof of the car making a deafening noise - Charles asked me afterwards why I had the engine running at full throttle - but I did not hear it. Then some of the men picked up stones and rocks. I shouted to the children to duck as one was thrown at the windscreen, but it fell short and made a big dent in the front of the car. Having my head down gave the opportunity to pray, only one word. 'Lord!'. Then the doors were wrenched open on the driving side. The children were crying and screaming. Their door was shut again but some of the men tried to pull me out. Margaret clung to my arm and I clung to the steering wheel. They were intent on retribution, life for life. Suddenly, and amazingly one of their number, perhaps a senior, came forward, pushed the men back, pushed me back into the car and shut the door. Through the open window he quietly told me to move forward slowly. At this point a bare fist came through the window and hit me on the side of the jaw. Seconds after another came which hit me under the nose. A third would, I think, have knocked me out, but it was mercifully restrained. My mind was whirling, my foot was still down on the throttle. I gradually let the clutch in and the car moved forward slowly. As the men moved to one side, the car shot forward up the road. The headlights picked out Charles now back on his bike making a getaway. We were saved. But then, as we moved on we also saw a road block - a row of 'debris' (four gallon paraffin cans) had been placed across the road. We'd 'had it' now. As we got nearer to the cans I saw a gap through which I thought the car would pass. It did. But just as we got through a fellow raised a metal trunk above his head and threw it in front of the car. To miss it was impossible. It went underneath the car, thumped against the axles and exhaust and eventually came out at the back. We soon caught up with Charles who by now had turned the next corner, and we escorted him home.

What to do? (as we often heard say). Should we phone the Police, the British High Commissioner or friends? We decided to 'sleep on it', if we could. Thankfully the children did. We did not want to make an issue of it, and perhaps jeopardize our work and that of our missionary colleagues in many parts of the country. Were not the men justified in their action in their own eyes?

THE GREAT POST STRIKE.

'Mummy' said Joyce our youngest daughter, 'Where's the shopping?'

We looked behind as we traveled along, the back of the car where the groceries had been put was empty.

Just previously, as we were going to a friend's house on the other side of the town for a prayer meeting - at these meetings we 'prayed round', everyone taking part, including the children. We were discussing the need to put the frozen food which we had purchased, into our friend's fridge until we returned home. At this point we discovered that the large carton with our weeks supply of grocery provisions had been stolen.

The Great Post Office Strike was on in Great Britain. We had been reduced to our last shs.100/-, and this we had very carefully spent in Dewhursts. Several things were taken off the shelves and put back again, as we sought to make the best use of the money we had left.

The Strike was on for six weeks. We had received no letters and therefore no gifts. Unsolicited gifts were the means of our support. We trusted in God's faithfulness to fulfill His promises to supply all our needs. He always did in cash or kind, the former usually through the post. As it was, we had been only able to buy half our usual amount of provisions and now even these had been stolen.

Our routine every morning was to take the family to their three different schools. This was a journey, encircling the towns of about seven miles. The journey had to be taken four times daily. In the morning we left the house at 7am. The car was roasting hot when the mid-day trips were made. One or two other children also packed into the car. In the morning, after children were left at their respective schools

the G.P.O. was visited and the personal box, 996, was opened. It was in the bottom row of boxes and we virtually had to go on our knees to see if there was anything in our box.

Hope had almost given way to despair. Morning after morning the post-box was empty, apart from local mail, mostly bills which we did not want just at that time.

The mail was also depended upon, for correspondence courses. Before we left U.K. we had given Cilla and Hazel the choice of staying and going to boarding school, or returning with us and studying by correspondence. They had chosen the latter. Lessons were sent for correcting and were received back fortnightly. The strike had interrupted this also and hindered the momentum of progress.

As to our stolen provisions, the family was full of this loss and soon made it known at the prayer meeting. Eventually, we finished up with all the supplies we needed and more from our friends through their loving concern. But they did not know that we had spent our last shs.100/-, or that we had only been able to buy half of our week's needs. Our Heavenly Father, did.

One morning, when the routine visit to the post box was made, there was a surprise overseas letter. But the stamps were French, although the handwriting was familiar. It bore a Le Havre office stamp on the front and two extra 'Letter Strike Service' stamps on the back. These two stamps were overstamped with 'By Emergency Strike Post Mail'.

This letter meant more to us than can be told. What concern was shown for us by the donors in seeking out a means to communicate with us. How we thanked our Heavenly Father and our friends too, who had sent it.

We have kept the envelope as a momento, never knowing that we would use it for authentication. Here it is.

Pole-fishers.

Tinkle, tinkle. The sound of the nail-scissors falling onto the concrete floor awakened us. "A big white dog", said Margaret, as something was passing through the air outside the mosquito net. It proved to be her clothes sailing by on the end of a pole, line and hook.'

As we had no air-conditioning we were compelled to leave the windows wide open because the temperature remained high on the coast, even at night. The relative humidity was almost one hundred per cent.

The windows had wrought-iron grills fitted as burglar-proofing, but there were other ways and means of helping oneself. Realizing what was happening I pulled up the net, jumped out of bed, and roared, 'Numna gani wewe?' (What are you doing?). The pole-fisher ran for his life and left behind his apparatus and a pile of clothes outside the window which he had already 'fished'.

Pole fishing was not always done at night. On one occasion Margaret had managed to purchase some nice blue material, which had been made at the mills in Jinja, Uganda. With this material she made some long needed bedspreads for the children's rooms. These she had run up on her sewing machine, which was a parting gift from friends she had helped while staying in Nairobi. Margaret spent six months nursing at the Kenyatta (then Princess Margaret) Hospital and at another up-country in Kerugoya for the sake of gaining tropical experience. This was before we were married.

On this Saturday afternoon the bedspreads were completed and put onto the beds and were admired by all the family. As usual we went out to the beach for our weekly swim and picnic.

When we returned home a cry went up, 'Where are the bedspreads?' They had all been 'fished' out of the windows and no trace of the operation had been left behind. They had vanished into thin air.

QUARRANTINE QUARTERS.

Not again? But it was and this time for nearly the whole of the boat trip back to Africa.

On the journey home, the previous year, Hazel came up with measles when we had been only two days at sea. We were then in port in MO Mombasa. At first it was not known what was wrong with her. As we proceeded on the journey and the other children developed the same symptoms we were all put in quarantine quarters as a family.

This was not the only eventful part of the trip. Although we did not know it at the time, our boat was the last passenger ship to pass through the Suez Canal before that historic occasion when it was closed to all shipping.

The following month, after we arrived home in the U.K. Joyce was born in Dundee Royal Infirmary where Margaret herself had done her nursing training some twenty years previously. Because of this final family addition we spent fifteen months on furlough instead of the usual one year. Our return trip by sea was to be eventful for more than one reason too.

We had booked to travel via the Suez Canal. While on our way, and while still in the Mediterranean Sea, the Captain informed us that we might not get access through the Canal. If this was the case we would have to retrace our passage and travel around the West Coast of Africa.

It was quite a tense situation. Eventually we gained access but passengers were not allowed to disembark at any of the Canal ports. Moreover, it took two and a half days, instead of about fourteen hours, to pass through the Canal.

In the Bitter Lakes there were about eighty merchant vessels anchored which had been stranded there since the closure of the Canal.

When we emerged into the Red Sea we were met by a large Naval ship and escorted to the Indian Ocean. The vessel traveled on the windward side of our ship so that the Royal Marine band on board could give us a concert. This was greatly enjoyed. Finally a line was sent across on which a crate of drinks was transported as a token of thanks. Then, with much blowing of sirens the navel vessel steamed away at about twice our speed and was soon out of sight over the horizon.

Another unusual event occurred. After a day or two in the Indian Ocean we received a SOS. An officer on a merchant ship which we had passed, had become seriously ill. We did a U turn and steamed back for some hours on this mercy call. The sick man was taken on board and put off at the next port of call for treatment.

For us, as a family, there was something dramatic - quarantine quarters again! This time it was for German measles. Our quarters were at the stern of the ship under the dog deck. The passengers dogs yapped and barked all day. I had to turn steward and wait on the family at meal times. To stagger from the galley with piles of plates of food, up flights of stairs, along the decks, was quite a feat, especially if a gale was blowing and the ship was rolling. It was tough on the children, robbed of using the swimming pool, especially during the long passage through the Suez where the temps were very high. However, we did have some substitutes and some advantages and privileges too.

HOLIDAY IN THE GAME RESERVE.

"The journey on which you go is under the eye of the Lord". The famous Ngorongoro Crater was to be our final objective; its amazing geographical characteristics -

When the missionary family from Moshi visited Dar-es-Salaam Hazel returned with them to help in the Children's Center during her school holidays and before we visited Mochi as a family for our holiday in the game reserves. It was with some excitement that, after some days together at the Center, we set off for Lake Manyara, less than a hundred miles distant.

It was thrilling to see the herds of elephant of various ages, groups and sizes. Some had massive tusks, the old bulls especially. We watched them mount on their hind legs circus fashion, to gather food from the tops of the trees. or to bend the branches low with their trunks.

We were amazed at the giraffes with their stately walk through the trees, or standing to eat from branches at eye-level fifteen feet or so high. But what captured our fascination most was when a female and her young calf galloped off in their most unusual gait, when Charles clapped his hands and shouted. It was like a slow pendulum cum rocking horse movement. Then they stopped and looked round at us to see if the distance between us was sufficiently safe giraffe-wise.

The vast herds of bucks now grazing, then fleeing through the forest across the clearings in the trees, jumping fallen trees in there stride, as in a steeple chase, was really beautiful to see. The zebra too, with their dazzling stripes,

which seem to scintillate in the tropical heat, would race off with a back-fire of their hind legs. The great lake Manyara was a wonder in itself.

The most unforgettable part of our visit to the game park was the constant invasion of the tetse fly, upon and into the car. Great hordes of them. The windows of the car were all wide open as usual because of the heat and humidity. As soon as the tetse attacked us the widows were promptly closed and the flies in the car were swotted. The tetse fly can give a good nip and Alice, always imaginative when health is concerned, thought we would all get sleeping sickness! Our stay in the park was cut short and it was with some relief that we emerged out of this ordeal.

The main part of our safari then began - to the Ngorongoro Crater. The road was new to us and rough. We had enough time to get to the Lodge where we were booked-in for two nights. A deposit of shs.100/- had been paid.

From the hotel which we visited near to the reserve, the road climbed considerably. We were well laden and fairly well down on the springs. Then suddenly, a larger rock than most was in our pathway protruding out of the ground. The car straddled it and I thought we would clear it. Not so. 'Thump!' We looked back anxiously and to our dismay saw there was a telltale trail of oil. The sump plug bolt had been knocked out. There was nothing left to do but turn the car around, turn off the engine and cruise down the hill as fast and as far as the volition of the car would take us. Then what? To get the sump repaired in this out-of-the-way place was impossible. We decided to push the car to the hotel. Thereafter a wait until nearly midnight, we were able to hire a vehicle to take us back to Moshi and the Center.

The next day at a local garage, I was able to borrow a second-hand sump and take it, with a mechanic, back to the stranded car.

Back home in Dar-es-Salaam the branch of the same firm as in Moshi mended the broken sump and changed it with the borrowed one which was then sent back to Moshi. Quite a big expense? Yes, but apart from the shs.100/- deposit which we could not retrieve, we broke even. What it would have cost for the family for the two nights at the lodge would have covered our expenses. An additional expense at the garage was that the clutch assembly had to be renewed. We considered that had we missed that protruding rock and continued on our journey up the escarpment to the crater, we would never have made it with a defunct clutch and could have been stranded in very different circumstances. Once again we had reason to be thankful. We had been truly "under the eye of the Lord".

SONGO SONGO.

Way out in the Indian Ocean lies the island of Songo songo 20 miles off the Tanzania coastline of Africa. Margaret and I visited the island by a small Arab dhow during our honeymoon. The journey took five hours as there was a scarcity of wind.

Two years later I visited the island with a missionary colleague and spent a week there camping, to distribute literature to the 500 population, all Moslems.

In later years deposits of gas were found and the whole population was moved to the mainland so that the gas could be exploited.

When my colleague and I stayed there for a week we found the people friendly and helpful. We had a youth named Saidi to help us with the chores. On our return journey by the small Arab dhow, soon after we embarked a gale blew up. The sea became very rough and the swell was terrific. Saidi, a landlubber, clung to the mast with both his arms and legs! The waves and swell one moment took us up to the crest and then down again into the trough, about twenty feet up and down. The African skipper and his one crew member seemed to be used to such situations but my colleague, who had been in the Navy, even so found this trip somewhat alarming.

When the sail started to rip it had to be lowered to half-mast. Waves broke over the little craft and our camping equipment was drenched. Such was the force of the storm that the skipper had to let the boat be driven off course and we eventually landed at Kilwa Kivinje about 17 miles north of our destination. The journey only took 1hr30mins.

It happened that the local colonial District Commissioner was that day at Kilwa Kivinje. He had been watching us through his binoculars. As we arrived he came down to

the beach, held out his hand to me and said, 'Dr Livingstone I presume?'

Once again Margaret had been left alone with two babies for the week. She also ran the bush clinic single-handed. Her task was surely the more demanding.

(0225 - 311659)

11 Rowacres
Bath BA2 2LH

"A home of their own"

(2 Sam.7;10)

The above promise was given while in Denmark in 1982 & confirmed from 1 Chron.17:9 four months later. Was it to be in Dar es Salaam, or a small-holding in the country, or even our home in heaven? We prayed that it might be within walking distance of a small assembly where we could be useful. (At that time we had not got a car).

On August last year, & after we had come to the conclusion that we were not to pay a further visit to Africa, Merv & Beryl asked us if we would like to look after a house they wished to purchase in Bath, which they could use as a base for home-leave from Hong Kong. (Merv has a long-term contract flying jumbo jets).

After much searching we were led to the above address & moved in last month. The house, in a quiet cul-de-sac, is only about 200yds from the Sledbrook Evangelical Church.

Join with us in thanking the Lord for His gracious provision.

Yours in our soon-coming Lord Jesus,
Allan & Margaret.