

GENERAL SURVEY AND PLANS FOR THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IN TANGANYIKA

PART ONE: THE BATTLEGROUND -Eldred Echols

The Chimala area of Tanganyika is certainly one of the most unusual parts of the world from the standpoint of geography and peoples. Back when the world was young a great segment of the earth's surface sank several thousand feet below the surrounding country, creating the Great Rift which stretches from the Jordan valley to Mozambique. Chimala is situated on the doorstep of the Great Rift. Northwards, the floor of this sunken plain stretches like a sea of waving grass and acacia trees until it fades into the dim horizon. Its lush prairies and green swamps teem with game and vast herds of zebu cattle. Here and there the flatness is broken by a walled village of pastoral Wasangu natives or a manyatta (communal hut) of the giant Masai. Along its sluggish rivers children escape the shimmering heat by splashing in the muddy waters, while flights of wildfowl fill the air with raucous cries and crocodiles sleep on sun-bleached sandbars. This is the world of Usangu--mysterious, primeval, incredibly vast--an elemental world where lordly beasts still challenge the supremacy of man and the only real law is the law of rending fangs and flashing spear. The peoples of this sunken world are mostly pagans, following dark and terrible rites that cripple and blight their souls and keep them in bondage to eternal night. But here and there little whitewashed buildings have sprung up beside clusters of thatched huts and neat signs invite all who can read to attend services of the Kanisa la Kristo (Church of Christ). Lips that once knew only the wild chants of savage Africa now unite in hymns of praise to the Redeemer of all races, and heads that once acknowledged no man as master bow in adoration before the King of kings.

Behind Chimala to the south a gigantic wall juts stark and sheer against the blue velvet of the sky. Sometimes its battlements are lost in clouds, at others the clouds are only worn like a mantle around its shoulders while the lofty summit emerges gaunt and clear. A narrow, twisting road writhes its way up this Chimala escarpment, and the traveler who has successfully scaled it sees stretching before him a narrow plateau of rolling hills and tumbling brooks. He now realizes that what he took to be the rooftop of the world is in fact only the first step to the heights of Africa. He is in a middle world perched between the Usangu Plain and the Elton Plateau. The Elton itself is a 9000 ft. tableland too cold for a settled population, although an occasional herdsman's cottage nestles in the lee of a rocky outcropping, and in verdant alpine glades goats vie with tiny mountain antelope for the succulent grasses. Most of the plateau is barren of trees and wintry winds moan over its bleak landscape at night. Here and there gorges fall away toward the Chimala escarpment. These are thickly wooded with great Lebanon cedars and other indigenous forest. From the tree-tops giant hornbills wail like lost infants and colobus monkeys, immaculate in their coats of glossy sable trimmed in white, scold leopards attired in winter furs. It is from these cold rainforests that we get the cedar timber for our church buildings and homes. But now let us leave the inhospitable heights of the Elton and come back down to the middle world of the Chimala escarpment.

The pleasant little farm where the preacher training school is located bears the name "Ailsa". The former owner called it that because it reminded him of the heather-clad downs of his native Scotland. Here the climate is crisp but not bitter, with a tang of frost in the air that suggests a Rocky Mountain meadow. Wheat, barley and potatoes thrive. The brooks run clear and cold and all the larger streams abound with rainbow trout. Malaria, bilharzia and other diseases of the tropics are not found here. The local people are sturdy little mountain folk of the Wanji tribe. Unlike the Wasangu of the plain below, they are not pagans. Seventy years ago Lutheran missionaries from Germany settled these highlands and converted all of the Wanji to the Lutheran faith, and very few have left it. The native Lutherans

build their own church buildings and support their own African preachers. A few Wanji have been converted to the truth and some have even attended the preachers' training school, but most of them have clung to the Lutheran church.

Ailsa sits on the edge of the Chimala escarpment overlooking Chimala village and the Chimala Hotel. Many visitors to Tanganyika have declared Chimala to be the most beautiful spot in Tanganyika. Surely it is one of the most favorably located from the standpoint of evangelism. The Great North Road from Cape to Cairo divides both the village of Chimala and the hotel property which has been acquired by the church as a base of operations. A large and varied population has settled in the Chimala area. Rice and sugar cane are extensively farmed under irrigation from the Chimala River. Market days provide a kaleidoscope of colors. Suave Indians and turbaned Baluchis display squares of brilliant cloth. Nachusa artisans haggle with slick Bena traders. Here a dusky Wasangu maiden barterers cassava roots for a pot of Wanji bamboo wine. There a handsome Masai stands proudly aloof, watching through half-closed lids the amusing behavior of inferior beings. For the Great North Road is the lifeline of Tanganyika. It is not only the trade artery that sends Tanganyika's produce to the world and brings back the wonders of far places, but it is the social center of the country. Dwellers of forest and plain travel to the Great North Road to get the latest news, to learn the price of hides, or just to watch the big trucks roar by.

The former Chimala Hotel (now the Church of Christ Mission) is a hodge-podge collection of quaint cottages built to no particular plan and in splendid disregard for any conformity of style. Some of them were built by Germans; some by British; some were never completed at all. They sit here and there under towering jacaranda and mango trees and looking like just what they are--relics of a leisurely colonial age that is fast passing from the African scene. Generations of dormice and lizards have made their homes in the thatched roofs, just as generations of parrots and green pigeons have disputed with flying foxes ownership of the fruit in the overhead branches. Time was when all these cottages were filled to overflowing with the rough pioneers who opened up the African continent--bearded prospectors in quest of the gold of the fabulous Lupa field, tough ivory and crocodile hunters, European nobles seeking trophies for their castle walls. But these are other times. Winds of change and progress blow over Africa and a new restlessness has seized the "sleeping giant". Native peoples who have known no change in two millenniums have a new awareness that history has passed them by, and they are desperately eager to catch up. They are trying to step in one generation from the doorstep of civilization to the atomic age. Their fingers clutch at bicycles, sewing machines and cameras; their minds clutch at new ideals, new political philosophies, new religions. Old customs and faiths have suddenly become childish and abhorrent to them; all things new are better to them just because they are new.

But "wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together". Africa is swarming with the agents of red China and Soviet Russia, drawn as jackals are drawn by the smell of blood. Every false religion in the world has its salesmen here. Moslem missionaries throng in every market place; bearded Sikhs, turbaned Hindus and white-robed Jesuit priests are taking their battle stations. Not since first-century Rome has the Devil gone to such lengths to marshal all of his forces on one battleground. In every high place of government the little foxes of Communism gnaw away at the tender roots of freedom. They know that as Africa goes, so goes the world.

"Lord, open our eyes that we may see" for truly the mountains around us are filled with horses and chariots of fire, and "they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Lift up your eyes, brother and sister American Christian, and thank God that you have lived to see the century and the hour when the church of the Living God marches forth to conquer the world for Christ, strong in the Lord and in the

power of His might. We are confronted with the greatest challenge that has faced the church since apostles walked the earth. We meet it three million strong, secure in the faith that we go forth under the wings of the Lord God of Israel.

PART TWO: THE BATTLE PLAN

-Andrew M. Connally Jr.

Regardless of the battleground, which in this case is extremely advantageous to us, an army's stratagem must be good in order to win the battle. Therefore, the need for a battle plan.

I. Progress and Position at Present Time.

- A. The Chimala Hotel property has been negotiated for and is being bought for thirty-five thousand dollars. This unifies the property and work previously begun by Bro. Caskey and Echols.
- B. The property is to be used as a base of operations for evangelism of the Wasangu people that are found in profusion in our front yard.
- C. The property was secured for the homes of the missionaries who will work there. An orphanage and medical dispensary will be erected. These two vital social services have been instituted primarily to secure church recognition for the work of the church in Tanganyika. Also a church building will be built.
- D. Prior to the proposed erection of an orphanage and medical dispensary, we have had nothing the Tanganyika government desired; therefore, they were not in sympathy with us or our work. In the last few weeks we have had interviews with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Regional Health Officer, Regional Commissioner and District Commissioner. All have given us every possible cooperation and have evidenced extreme good will in all instances. They have said they were "staggered", "overwhelmed" and "extremely pleased" by the thorough plans and magnitude of our project. They have not only opened the door, but also have extended the hand of friendship to us and our work.

II.

A. Immediate Aims and Opportunities

1. There are sixteen buildings on the hotel property. These are one, two and three room affairs. All are in need of renovation. New tile roofs are to replace the present nondescript thatch coverings.

OBSERVATION: Ten crews of timber cutters are presently cutting three thousand pieces of Lebanon Cedar for these buildings and for the ones we expect to build. Also we are starting to make the tiles for all roofs. All buildings are to be repaired, replastered and painted. Steel windows are to replace all windows which are simply openings covered by screen.

2. A number of new buildings must be built.
 - a. Three houses for missionaries, which would include one doctor, must be built as soon as possible.
 - b. A large cottage capable of housing twenty-five orphans and house parents is needed.
 - c. A building for administration and for a medical dispensary must be constructed.
 - d. The church building should be capable of seating 300 with adequate classrooms.
 - e. A number of small houses must be built for African evangelists, workers, and for storage.

OBSERVATION: Five crews are raking 200,000 bricks for the beginning of these new buildings.

3. A hydro-electric scheme is a primary prerequisite for the orphanage, dispensary and for those living at Chimala.

- B. Construction and Renovation at Ailsa.
 1. At least \$2,000 must be spent to rework the present buildings in order to carry on the preacher training as is needed.

2. Phone wire has been purchased to string a line some 5 miles between Chimala and Ailsa.
 3. Two sets of forty-foot aerials must be erected at Ailsa and Chimala to use our Radio telephone to enable us to have phone service to all points where phones are found.
- C. General Work to be Done.
1. Increase acreage for food for orphans and patients.
 2. Clear a hundred acres of bush to enable us to utilize our property.
 3. Secure livestock, pigs, cattle, chickens, etc. for food for students, orphans and patients.

III. Evangelistic Program Enlarged

- A. Start a systematic program of evangelism and visitation to strengthen the existing congregations and increase the membership. This will include the printing of tracts, showing of slides, more preaching and personal work.
- B. Increase the practical application of knowledge gained by preachers in the training school. This will entail more time spent in actual preaching and village work, guided by missionaries.

IV. Immediate needs for this Work

- A. A doctor must be secured no later than January 1, 1963. It is imperative that this be done in order to fulfill our commitments made to the government in order to secure recognition for the church's work.
- B. It will take approximately 50,000 dollars to do what has already been outlined. Cash is needed for immediate building purposes. Regular support needs to be enlisted to carry on the works being begun. The orphanage will cost approximately \$500 per month to run; this is yet to be raised.
- C. We needed a qualified builder. No longer do we have such a need. Mr. Ken Postlethwaite, a government builder in Nyasaland, has offered his services for the renovation and construction of all buildings needed. Mr. Postlethwaite is a personal friend of Bro. Connally. He is an excellent builder and will prove invaluable in all practical phases of the work. We feel greatly blessed by his coming.

V. Future Aims and Opportunities

- A. Ailsa's hydro scheme needs to be completed to expedite the work.
- B. We need to utilize the water and land at Chimala by putting in a fish farm to provide extra food and protein for students, orphans and patients.
- C. We need to put a launch on the nearby Ruaha River so that during the rains we can visit our congregations that are isolated from December to July due to the rains and mud. Also no medical help is available to anyone on the plains during this time as the people cannot come out. This situation is hopeless as it is. The constant need for recruiting personnel for all phases of work.
- D. Two missionaries for the consolidation and implementation of the work begun in Dar-es-Salaam. It is our unqualified opinion that the work there will never flourish until such is done.
- E. Isolated members are found in about a dozen spots over Tanganyika. Visitation and the establishment of the work at each of these various places is needed.

SUMMATIONS AND CONCLUSION

1. The proposed construction and renovation will cost 50,000 dollars.
2. Regular support must be increased by 500 dollars a month to do all planned.
3. A doctor by January of next year is a must.
4. Another family is needed to help the Connallys at Chimala in the near future!

PART THREE: A NEW RECRUIT ENTERS THE BATTLE
-Tom Dockery

As we left Dallas' Love Field at Saturday noon, July 7, there were lumps in our throats for the loved ones we were leaving behind. It seemed impossible that we were at last on our way to Africa and the new experiences awaiting us there. After a tiring, but uneventful three days, we landed at Mbeya airport, and were welcomed to this strange land by the Echolses and Connallys.

We ate lunch at the Mbeya hotel and collected necessary supplies before making the fifty-mile trip to Ailsa. We were surprised to find that many of Mbeya's shops are no less modern than those in United States towns of comparable size. It was also encouraging to learn that the selection of goods was rapidly improving.

While driving across the Usangu plains, we almost thought we were back in Texas, though there were many differences, of course. The roads were narrow and dusty, and the people were mostly dark-skinned, but much of the country was similar to parts of West Texas.

I was rather skeptical to learn that I was expected to speak at the Wednesday evening services, as I had never spoken through an interpreter and I was not sure just how much these people could understand. We gathered at the Ailsa building located a short distance from our new home. It is made of handrade bricks with a floor of packed mud. The pews were handmade by the boys but are quite adequate. Services began with a song in Swahili led by a student boy and lustily sung by everyone, with strong base harmony. Following a prayer by one of the boys, Brother Echols introduced me, and to my surprise, everyone clapped! It was not as hard to speak through an interpreter as I had expected and since the boys here have studied in the school they are able to grasp much more of the Bible than an average native Christian. The sermon was short and the service was concluded by a song and prayer. We were impressed by our first African service and the whole-hearted way everyone entered in.

On Sunday I was scheduled to speak at Igurusi, a village at the foot of the mountains on the road to Mbeya. Once again I was apprehensive, knowing the people of the villages are not as advanced as the student boys. Igurusi's building was erected by the boys of hand-made bricks and is covered with a corrugated metal roof. The seats are mud benches rising off the packed mud floor. The walls are white-washed and it provides a nice meeting place for these people. This congregation is the largest on the plains, and there were over 60 present for services. Grandwell Nglube, one of the assistant teachers at the school, had gone ahead to teach the class, and we arrived just at its conclusion. Again I was applauded after the introduction, and everyone entered heartily into the service. Following the services we made pictures of the building and the group, and then were overjoyed when one came requesting to be baptized. The baptism was conducted in a ditch running in front of the church building. It was a very simple but quite impressive.

Though we have been here for only a short time, we are impressed with the potential of the church in this area, especially on the plains. There are hundreds of thousands of people here without any knowledge of Christ. They are quite receptive, but much teaching must be done, and it will take a long time to bring them from paganism to Christianity. However, I believe that with increased evangelistic work, in the near future the Usangu plains will echo with the words "Church of Christ".