

Introduction

Ruanda Mission documents (Cadbury Library, University of Birmingham) are listed in the Mid Africa Mission collection, boxed with the main CMS collection calendars. It contains printed material of pamphlets, books and magazines either published by the Ruanda Mission or another related organisation with an article by a missionary.

Other documents include Dr. Len Sharp's correspondence from 1945-9, notes regarding the Kabale hospital closure, education and Balakole issues. There is a small photographic archive.

A peculiarity of their calendar index is that places in Uganda, such as Kigezi, Kabale, Kisoro, Bwama, Lake Bunyon(y)i are under listed Ruanda as this area was under the Ruanda Mission, a separate organisation to the Uganda Mission.

The following synopses are divided into three sections: Bwama Leprosy settlement, Kabale High School and Miscellaneous with some comments.

Bwama Island Leprosy Settlement

The nurses who ran the settlement and organised everything were called sisters in charge (small case). While the male doctors got all the credit, it was these women whose day to day work made the settlement a success. Very little is known about them as they stayed in the background except for the occasional article or lectures in the UK while home on furlough.

May Langley and Miss Horton were the first sisters in charge; they were followed by Evelyn Longley, Grace Mash, Janet Metcalf and Marguerite (Margaret) Barley. Each seems to have spent at least ten years, perhaps longer, on the island with furlough of one year every few years, except during 1939-45 when travel back to Europe was impossible.

This was supplemented by nurses and volunteers (including Constance Hornby) who stayed shorter periods when the settlement was short-staffed due to furlough and illness.

Service was through the application to the CMS followed by training or by 'special agreement'. In both cases missionaries had to serve a probationary period of several years. Probation reports record (MAM A 4) on how well they were adapting and fulfilling their work and religious responsibilities. These included a section for self assessment.

Evelyn Longley, joined October 1937, was a temperamental perfectionist at first, which caused misunderstandings with local staff, "sometimes she forgot it was Africa". By 1941 she had mostly integrated successfully.

Grace Mash, joined September 1937, was still getting reports in 1943 even though she was in charge of schools and agricultural administration. "She is as a rule very strong & active, but gets malaria from time to time". After four years on the island on 'special agreement', she offered full time service in 1941 with Miss Longley.

She was a slow language learner but, by 1943, got on quite well with speaking and conversation. "Great zeal & energy in the work of the lepers, she is untiring in her efforts & has a deep personal knowledge of every detail of them, their homes & problems. Very tolerant, always cheerful, but very

reserved about spiritual things – tireless work is the feature of her life rather than evangelisation. But she unconsciously gets on peoples nerves that are not of her energetic reserved temperament.”

This was frustrating for co-workers who wanted her to overcome her natural reserve and shyness, when criticized she usually reacted by working harder, “to drive Miss Mash to further energy of the flesh”. In consequence they seemed to get little time to pray or read spiritual books together. “Perhaps Miss Mash’s wholehearted cheerful nature & inability to lose her temper has often been misunderstood.”

According to Constance Hornby she was absolutely loyal, a great visitor and keen to understand and help her people. Joe Church wrote that she found it difficult to confide in spiritual things, this caused her fellow workers to lack spiritual understanding of her real fellowship needs.

- 1) The Bunyoni Leper Camp, R M Langley, *Church Missionary Outlook*, Vol. LIX no. 703, October 1932

The settlement, here called a camp, was opened in February 1931 with 25 patients transferred from Kabale Hospital. The current population is 205 in 4 villages with a 5th planned.

The first baptisms were on Sunday April 3; 90 adults learning to reading and attending class. On April 14th King Albert of Belgium made a surprise visit and left a good impression.

On January 5th, a large canoe with a wood supply for the hospital overturned in a sudden storm, 1.5 miles from the island. Three volunteers set out in rescue and saved three, but two drowned. The rescuers received a watch, “coveted by every native of these parts”, each for their bravery.

- 2) *The Lepers are cleansed*, Dr. L. Sharp, 1938, Ruanda General and Medical Mission

In 1938 Dr. Muir Medical, Secretary of BELRA, advised that island be fenced in two to segregate infectious from non infectious leprosy patients. This included separating non infectious children from infectious parents, but not otherwise. Parents were very reluctant at first. Major encouragement came from May Langley, sister in charge from the beginning.

They lived in a crèche called Enzhu Yamagara (House of Life). 75 children had passed through with about 37 currently. They slept in, two dormitories with patchwork quilts and were looked after by mission-school girls from Kabale. There was a swing and seesaw.

Parents were allowed to visit their children but not to touch them until they were healed. They were kept there until 7-8 years and then boarded out with relatives though some families refused to send children to non-Christian homes. Other went to boarding school but not all had somewhere to go.

The Symonds Ingram School taught elementary subjects with 84 students in non-infectious classes and 16 in the infectious. There was a Scout troop. The hospital was called the Stater Hunt Memorial Hospital. Recently the island chief resigned and a new symptom-free leper promoted, this was “a very great help as they know the people well, and the difficulties they have to face.”

Occupational therapy for adults included furniture making, soldering of iron boats, bamboo chairs, while children made food baskets, rope and fishing nets, knitted garments and made mats.

The pamphlet has the story of Paulo, son of blind Mutambuke, both powerful witch doctors who both converted. Paulo contracted leprosy in 1927 but did not visit hospital as he was afraid of Nyabingi would kill him. When it got very bad he sought treatment and spent one year in hospital before transferring to Bwama. He later became a missionary to Kashenyi.

Overall, 1,000 patients had been treated. In 1941 they had 320 residents, 136 men 80 women and 104 children. There had been over the past year 24 new patients, 24 deaths, 7 births, 32 were discharged (50 in 199), 11 left without permission and 30 were baptised.

Fund-raising was important; there was a constant need for donations. It cost £9 for a hospital bed, £2.10.00 maintenance of one leper and £1.10.00 one crèche place per year. Also needed were a microscope, linen tunics & shorts, knitted vests, scarves, shawls, sweaters, pullovers, old linen for dressings, bandages, knitting needles, wool, tennis balls (old), pencils, safety pins, soap, notebooks, cretonne bags, quilts, blankets and pictures.

3) *Twentieth Annual Report, 1950*

Due to Government order patients from Belgian territories were no longer admitted; 20 were refused in 1950. There was no treatment centre in northern Ruanda; however more attention was to be paid to adjacent British areas with no treatment

Cost of living rises affected the distribution of free food for the disabled, milk for babies, soap rations and cloth materials. Annual Exhibition of pottery, woodwork and basket work.

Grace Mash is on furlough, the Sharps return with the Parrys but have to return to the UK almost immediately. Miss K Parslow has left now, the sisters in charge were Misses Barley and Metcalf, Miss Lowe was the new lab technician.

Due to increases in the cost of living and fall in donations it was decided to increase output from the settlement's 6000 plots under Festo Kibirigi, supervisor

Dr. Sharp part builds two windmills to provide water for hospital before his return to the UK. Technical skills and more funds are needed to complete them

The population increased from 816 to 916 but there were more deaths than normal due to outbreaks of influenza, whooping cough and chicken pox.

Admissions: 73 men, 36 women, 9 children. Births: 35. Deaths: 14 men, 11 women, 1 child.

Much improved: 181 men, 124 women, 19 children. Slightly improved: 81 men, 59 women, 12 children. Stable: 47 men, 39 women, 12 children. Worse: 25 men, 22 women, 9 children.

Dismissed: 6 men, 1 woman, 1 child. Left for or transferred: 10 men, 2 women. Discharged: 9 men, 10 women, 16 children, non infectious departures: 4 men, 22 women, 127 children

Schools have either VTTC or licensed leper teachers.

Bethany School (non infectious): 46 boys, 25 girls. Teachers: John Kimoti, Samweri Mugasha, Samweri Rutiyuga, Godfrey Musekur an, Stefano Rwohobuganzi

Jericho School (infectious) recently enlarged: 22 boys, 10 girls. Teachers: Knoka Katoba and Perezi Ntabugasira.

Bethlehem School (leprosy free): 5 boys, 11 girls. Teacher: Violet Kibanga.

5 children left school and joined the staff, a further 4 boys transferred to the PWD island workers

4) *Talkback Ruanda Mission No. 4*

In 1951 witchcraft was discovered on Bwama; apparently it was common knowledge but everyone was afraid to say anything. When the sisters in charge eventually found out they were horrified and held an open-air prayer meeting saying they would not stop until the practitioners were identified. After an unspecified length of time they received the required intelligence, the culprits were arrested, handed over to the District Commissioner and got 6 months imprisonment.

Unfortunately it doesn't say how many men and/or women and if there were children affected by the sudden imprisonment of their parents. From the description it sounds like a small Nyabingi cell the knowledge having been smuggled in and proved popular with the more traditionally minded residents, whose conversion in the early days was, sometimes, superficial.

That they had survived till 1951 meant that they probably kept a low profile for a good number of years. The circumstances are intriguing.

The informant was Margaret Barley, sister in charge. One assumes that during this time the settlement, hospital and ancillary activities ground to a halt since there was nobody to organise and supervise.

What she does not say is whether these individuals had leprosy. The prison service may have needed an isolation block to prevent its spread, particularly if they had the infectious type. Also the warders responsible for supervision, particularly at meal times and work, would need to be protected.

In the early 1920s, due to transport difficulties Mission supplies were for three months. It also took three months for porters and their cart to make the round trip from Kabale to Kampala. In one instance a sofa, when it arrived, had to be thrown out as the porters had slept on it and it was full of bed bugs.

Postman killed a lion with a spear.

"Once while on a medical safari (1929) all the food Dr & Mrs Sharp had left was tinned milk and tinned porridge, having lost the rest of their food in a fire. Dr Sharp went off to shoot game for meat for the porters and vary the diet of porridge for his family leaving his wife and small daughter Joy under a tree; he set off for the bush with his gun-bearers. Suddenly the porters left behind shouted 'Lion'. To her horror Mrs Sharp saw them 50 yards away. She put her daughter and the ayah in the tree, tore off a piece of bark, scratching the word 'lion' on it with a stick. She gave it to a porter to take to Dr Sharp. For $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour she waited. Eventually he husband came, shot two lions, and the rest went away."

5) *Talkback Ruanda Mission, No.6*

A profile of Margaret Kinzanye, daughter of Yeremiya Kinzanye; he converted and got a job in Kabale hospital. She trained in Bishop Tucker College and became a deaconess .

In the early 1970s the Mission supervised 180 schools with 12,000 pupils under Lilian Clark

- 6) *Pressing On. The life story of Dr. Norman Green 1895-1983*, Margaret Campbell Green, late 1980s

He replaced the Dr. and Mrs. Parry on Bwama in 1965, originally for one year but stayed with his wife for three till 1969. By this stage he had officially retired but had a number of medium term positions before he finally retired. He had no previous knowledge of leprosy and only acted as a medical supervisor to the sisters in charge, Misses Barley and Metcalf.

During this time Miss Pat Gilmer arrived and then transferred to the organisation of the transition to outpatient leprosy treatment services at local health centres; isolation was no longer required. She was chief supervisor with responsibility for distribution of medical supplies and training and is credited with the success of the transition.

- 7) *Breath of Life*, Patricia St John 1971,

Added to Dr. Sharp's description of Bwama Island's Nyabingi resident mugirwa; he was arrested in 1929 and his followers forbidden to return to the island.

May Langley (previously teaching in Toro) and Miss Horton were the first sisters in charge; they were followed by Evelyn Longley, Grace Mash, Janet Metcalf and Marguerite Barley. All made their homes on the island and were renowned for their "good physical health, soundness of mind, gay sense of humour and holy life of fellowship".

A previous patient, Ernesti, became head hospital dresser and clever bacteriologist. A local resident named Nekimya opened his home to patients when the hospital was overflowing,

In 1968 the settlement became a centre for disabled people to learn trades for self support.

- 8) *Prayer Album 1967-77*

Excellent photos of Ruanda Missionary staff, including 1967, 1969, 1972, 1975 and 1977

In 1975 Bwama is described as an eventide home for chronic leprosy patients, other patients were treated in Kiziisi Hospital.

School

Short history of Kabale Preparatory School, 1938-88, c. 1988

Kabale School was founded by Joe Church for local European children in 1938. It was expanded with students from further away who became boarders in 1939. In 1943 there were 22 boarders, which decreased in 1945 as missionaries return home for delayed furloughs, but increased to 30 by 1950.

In 1955 they received government grants and in 1962 took in their first African boarders. In 1968 there were 40 boarders and 16 day students, including 14 Africans and 12 Asians (Moslem & Hindu). There were 120 by 1970, 50% boarders.

The school had a very low profile in the years after the Idi Amin coup of 1971.

Now all students are Ugandan, Jean Summers was appointed headmistress. In 1981 her deputies are Naris Tibenderana and Margaret Walker, Eileen Faber is matron. Nan Read was the previous headmistress, 1953-80, others included Mary Hayward and Muriel Martin matrons and housekeepers, Enosi Birihanza and Wilson Mutebire cooks. Eferansi and Feredasi have been house-girls for 35 years each.

Miscellaneous

M L Guillebaud articles, Getting to Kabale and Kabale Hospital, 1920s, MAM E8/1

There's a weekly government van and Indian lorry to Kabale with reasonable charges. The accommodation is not especially comfortable. The Rukiga roads are lined with trees and hillsides are crowded with small villages, but not on the hilltops. Cultivation reaches the summits where there is cooler air and greater rainfall, which lessens the risk of crops drying up.

Kabale Hospital has five blocks. The first is administration, pathological room and operating theatre the second was the women's ward with a maternity unit of 6 beds; the third was outpatients and stores; the fourth the isolation unit for women with contagious disease; and the fourth and fifth wards the men's wards with isolation courtyards.

On Christmas Day the English children handed out gifts to the patients, dolls were given to men much to their bemusement; a trumpet was a popular for one boy

A later article has an obituary of Robert Serubibi, native of Bafumbira who died in 1947. He started as a house boy, received an education and was the first *munyarunda* to be ordained. In 1938, He with wife and child, moved permanently to the missions in Burundi.

L & E Sharp correspondence, 1944-49 (Ms. MAM A5)

These letters concern Ruanda Mission management issues after the Sharps' return to Uganda in 1942. They cover policy and administration of the leprosy colony, schools, and hospital, with financing, fundraising and accounting of money spent, staffing consultations and family news.

1944, Jan 2, Miss Longley is sick, temporary nurses were Misses Hornby, Lanham, Pippit and Thornton. A new nurse is needed after Miss Butlin's wedding; he requests that Miss Metcalf joins as soon as possible.

Dr. Stanley Smith's threatened resignation as Secretary to the Mission came because of "increasing party spirit among the missionaries of the Balokole Persuasion, who show hostility towards European missionaries, the Bishop and the church as a whole". His threat made people think twice about consequences and a compromise was reached; "which we trust will have the effect of causing wiser counsels to prevail". He seeks support for their stand from the Council.

He adds that the other side say that If you don't get the 'Vision' you cannot join their party, "they practice tyranny or domination over the consciousness, thoughts and opinions; there is no real freedom only conformity and subjugation".

1949: Miss Metcalf needs further leave to overcome tiredness from her illness; she needs to be in full health to face the rigours of the colony.

April 1950 Grace Mash will get one year leaves as recommended by the Mission. She needs the full year; the reason she is anxious to get back so quickly is not fundamentally a longing to get back to the work but the fact that she is not completely at peace in herself.

Mission to the under-loved – Christian rural service in Kigezi, Richard E Lyth, 1970s, Ruanda Mission

The Christian Rural Service was founded in 1962. Fifteen joined the Government adult literacy campaign and also convert in their free time. They set up a co-op to build a protected spring. They took agricultural improvement courses and taught techniques on soil conservation, coffee plantations, domestic animals, education, public health and hygiene. They set up self help groups that focused on village industries and crossed the religious divide as they included Catholics.

Ruanda Executive minutes, 1936-1949 (CMS G3 A11 g2, 5 & 6)

Grant for a European salary for head teacher, Kigezi High School, 1936

Kabale Preparatory School: A new girls' dormitory was built in 1937. Entries re the Education grant, 1947, TTC in 1948, the introduction of co-educational in 1950

In 1949 Miss Parslow, matron, transfers from Kabale Prep School to Bwama. There is 4 staff for 25 pupils who pay 650/- a term maximum. Insurance is needed against children's accidents. Repairs to roof guttering estimated to be £20; a building fund is to be started.

Kabale Church , 1938: It was estimated to cost £500 to remove the old roof timbers and replace them, if possible, with ant-proof timbers; replace iron cover; and give a 'good coating of paint'. It would cost extra an £100 to provide a recommended ceiling for the protection of Europeans, as the roof without a ceiling, is not sun-proof.

A grant of £100 for new house for J Church 1938 was allowed to replace Smith's old house, which was to be demolished.

Kabale Hospital, 1937: It was decided to close European Hospital due to high demand and low finances. The European ward was to be closed and the two 'ulcer' wards to be demolished and the hospital to be replaced with a small unit for a doctor and nurse. Drs Symonds and James were to remain and Mr. Tribe was to move into the nurses' house.