

Continuing "NORTH AFRICA."

# The N.A.M. News Letter



OFFICE OF THE NORTH AFRICA MISSION, 34, BISHAM GARDENS, HIGHGATE, LONDON, N. 6

HON. SECRETARY: OSWALD L. CARNEGIE

AMERICAN AUXILIARY: HON. SECRETARY, DR. HARVEY FARMER, 303, EIGHTH STREET, BRADENTON, FLORIDA, U.S.A.

No. 30

EDITED BY E. J. LONG, F.R.S.G.S.

JULY-AUGUST, 1943



Photo by]

AN OASIS NEAR GABES

[Mr. J. T. Leadbetter

*Scenes such as this were once familiar to our missionary, Miss Elsie Tilney, for she laboured for some years among the natives of Gabes. Our sister usually spent the summer months in London or Paris, working among the Jews in association with the Mildmay Mission to the Jews. She was thus engaged in Paris in June, 1940, when the Germans entered the French capital. Miss Tilney was arrested, and has been in a camp for interned civilians ever since. The news we receive from her is infrequent and scanty, but we know that her health has been far from good. We most earnestly commend Miss Tilney to our readers' prayers, as well as Mr. R. Brown (arrested in Tunis shortly after the Allied landings in November, 1942), concerning whom the latest news available is given on Page Two.*

## Wonderful News from Tunis

SINCE our last NEWS LETTER was published, tidings have reached us from a variety of sources concerning the welfare of several of the missionaries in Tunis.

First of all, the daily newspapers published a photograph of the Rev. Isaac Dunbar, British Chaplain at Tunis, and missionary of the Church Mission to Jews; and in a news paragraph stated that Mr. Dunbar had succeeded in concealing himself from the enemy during the Axis

occupation of Tunis City. It appears that our friend changed his hiding-place eight times in six months—on one occasion being so close to Von Arnim's Headquarters that he saw the General coming and going daily! In company with a little group of trusted friends, he had the temerity to spend part of Christmas Day at the Church House, where his wife and children had been suffered to stay unmolested.

Some days later we received news of Mr. and Mrs. Miles and Muriel. A British soldier in Tunis had written to Mr. Miles's father (in a letter dated May 18th) describing how "the Lord led him to the native quarter, where he came across the Church Mission to Jews Bible Depot." Our friend then goes on to say (I quote from the actual letter): "It is with great joy that I am able to tell you that your son, his wife and daughter are safe and sound, and in fairly good health. Mr. Dunbar and your son were in hiding during the time the Germans were in possession of Tunis. Through the help of God they were untouched; also, you will be very surprised to hear that no English property was touched, such as the English Church, the Schools of the Church Mission to Jews, etc.

"My friend and I had two lovely hours of sweet fellowship with your son and his family. Praise the Lord! They have not been able to buy milk, meat or potatoes. The last time they had potatoes they paid 4/- per pound. They went up in price to 9/3 per pound—that was six months ago.

"Since the Jerrys have been beaten, the food position here is getting much better, although it will be quite a time before things get back to normal. All the people of Tunis have had a hard time of it, as the Jerrys simply looted everything they could lay hands on. The Jews were also ill treated, and beaten up many a time.

"I am afraid I must close now, but you can rest assured that all is well with your dear ones, although they really do need a rest after labouring here for the Master for seven years without a break."

From a third source of information we learn that Mr. Miles might have escaped from Tunis shortly after the Allied landings, but he felt led to stay on, being confident that the Axis forces in North Africa "would be defeated in about a fortnight"!

But the final item of news is by far the most thrilling. On one occasion German soldiers actually searched the house where our friends were in hiding, but "on reaching the top of the stairs, and the very door of the room, for some unaccountable reason the men turned back and went downstairs again without opening the door." Stanley Miles told a soldier afterwards that they were on their knees, and felt as though a wall of fire were round about them.

I think the "unaccountable reason" is pretty clear to us! As a friend of mine said the other evening, "That story will go down to history as a modern miracle of answered prayer."

And whether editorial decorum permits it or not—here goes: "Hallelujah!"

The fact that we have not yet received a letter from Mr. Miles himself suggests that "civilian" mail travels by a slow and circuitous route, and is far outstripped by the Forces postal services.

We earnestly trust that very soon it may be possible for Mr. and Mrs. Miles and Muriel to come home for much-needed rest and change.

## *Mr. "Bobbie" Brown*

MR. R. I. BROWN has been transferred to a Civilian Internment Camp, from which he wrote on May 2nd, as follows: "Here there are about 20 missionary brethren, and fellowship is sweet. I am studying hard—French, Italian, German, Arabic, and intend to matric. in July and then set about B.A. I feel confident that God is Himself further preparing and equipping me for future service, and lessons learned here are precious."

Again we praise the Lord for such cheering news, and for our brother's excellent spirit.

## *Homecall of Miss Winifred Ross*

It is with the deepest regret that we report the sudden death, as the result of a street accident at Casablanca on May 22nd, of Miss Winifred Ross.

Our sister, tracts in hand (in harness to the very last!), was chatting by the roadside with a Captain of the American Army, when a "Jeep," driven by a negro, swerved violently and knocked down both Miss Ross and the Captain. The officer was still breathing when picked up, but died later. Miss Ross had been killed instantaneously.

Thus, with tragic suddenness, there has been taken from us one of our most outstanding workers—a missionary in whom a Martha-like zeal and energy in service were matched by a Mary-like devotion to her Lord.

During the Great War Miss Ross was a nursing sister in Salonika, but her splendid work then in a noble profession was later eclipsed by her quite unique labour of love among the destitute natives of "Tin Town," Casablanca. If Florence Nightingale was "The Lady of the Lamp," then Winifred Ross was "The Angel of Tin Town," and our hearts go out in prayerful sympathy to the orphaned thousands of that wretched settlement who will never again behold the face of their beloved "Tabeeba."\*

We grieve, too, for Miss Emily Grant—Miss Ross's American fellow-worker—and trust that it may be possible for one of our missionary sisters to join her in the house (quite near Tin Town) that has suddenly become so lonely.

Miss Ross joined the N.A.M. in 1920, and was in her 57th year.

\* Arabic for Doctor.

## The late Rev. Henry Oakley

OUR heavy loss upon the mission field has been followed by the sudden death on June 17th, at his home at St. Albans, of the Rev. Henry Oakley—for many years a loyal, warm-hearted and most helpful friend of the N.A.M.

Of his remarkable ministry at Trinity Road Chapel—covering nearly half a century—and of his close identification with many Evangelical Societies, others have already written and spoken; our own recollections of him are as a genial, sunny-natured Council member, radiating good-humour and enriching us by the fruits of his wisdom and wide experience. He will be greatly missed.

Mr. Oakley, whose gentle and gracious wife was called Home in 1941, was in his 80th year. To the sorrowing relatives we express our heartfelt sympathy.

## The Annual Meetings

THE Court Room of the Caxton Hall was well filled on Thursday, May 27th, on the occasion of the Annual Meetings of the N.A.M. A glad note of praise prevailed throughout the gatherings—praise for all that GOD had done recently in liberating North Africa from the power of the enemy, and also for the opportunities He had given in preceding years for the spreading of the Gospel both in Tunisia and Libya, as well as in other parts of the Field.

The afternoon meeting—preceded by a brief session of prayer—was presided over by the Rev. S. J. Henman. There were three speakers: Mrs. C. W. Morriss, of Nabeul, who spoke of missionary work in places that have made headline news during the Tunisia campaign; Mr. I. E. Bowles, Assistant Secretary of the Mission, who gave a graphic—and, at times, refreshingly humorous—account of his active association with the Society during fifty years, stressing above all else the unflinching faithfulness of God; and the Rev. J. Chalmers Lyon, whose devotional ministry was greatly appreciated.

In the absence of Mr. J. Moreton Harris, the Rev. E. J. Poole-Connor took the chair at the evening gathering. Miss K. M. Gotelee (at present doing censorship work) told of the Lord's blessing upon the work among the Europeans in and around Tunis, whilst Mrs. Liley dealt with the witness among native women and girls, and spoke also of her husband's work among Arab men both in Tripoli and Tunis.

The Hon. Secretary, Mr. O. L. Carnegie, then presented the Balance Sheet, and mentioned items of interest in current news from the field. The closing address was given by the Rev. G. H. Lunn, whose association with us at our annual meetings now covers a great many years, and whose sympathetic interest we greatly value.

## Changes in North Africa

*The following article, from the pen of Mr. L. J. Bocking, whilst far too long for a single issue of the NEWS LETTER, is of such exceptional interest in the light of current events and future prospects, that we are publishing it in serial form as space permits.—ED.*

THE war has in many instances been the cause of sudden uprootings and changes, and this has been the case in Christian work as well as in every other sphere. Let us recognise, however, that by the over-ruling of GOD much good may result from many of these unexpected and, at times, unwelcome upheavals.

Recently North Africa has been much in the limelight, and history has been made out here that will have no mean place when the full story of the war is written. Christian workers in the Barbary States have been caught up in the whirligig of events, and for them much has changed and still is changing.

One is thinking much these days of the workers who were in Tunisia. During the armistice period they were perhaps less handicapped than those of us who were in Algeria or French Morocco. They had greater liberty and reported a continuation of their work and blessing upon it. But the day that brought liberty to Algeria and Morocco meant enemy occupation for Tunisia, and no news has been received since of most of our fellow-workers who were there.

In Morocco and Algeria the missionaries have had many and varied experiences, ranging from the period at the beginning of the war when, politically, they were placed on an equality with every Frenchman and considered the best of allies and friends; all through the long armistice period, when nominally "Vichy" ruled and we were officially frowned upon and ticketed as undesirables and possibly dangerous to public safety, until the revolutionising 8th of November, which marked the beginning of a new life of freedom that was to bring with it many unexpected changes and new activities.

Our thoughts go back to the first contacts with the men from overseas. What a thrill it was to see them, and many were the questions we fired at them. A number of road accident cases brought to the local French hospital gave us unique opportunities to get into close touch with some American soldiers. Full permission was given to help these men and to hold ward services, the hospital staff being grateful to have somebody who could interpret for them! A short time before we should have been very sceptical had anybody prophesied that we English missionaries would so soon be conducting services for American soldiers in a French hospital, and in the very town to which we had been sent by the "Vichy" authorities as "internees."

Let it be said in passing that the devotion of the French doctors, nurses, Arab ward-boys and office staff to the American and British

soldiers was unremitting and exemplary. In a desperate but unavailing effort to save the life of a badly injured British lad, one of the native ward-men most willingly submitted to a blood transfusion, and he told me afterwards that he was prepared to do anything for a British soldier.

On another occasion a bad plane crash resulted in the death of four men and injuries to one other. The accident was first observed by an Arab forest guardian who, with the help of two or three other men, made stretchers out of branches and leaves, and took the charred bodies over some miles of rough, forest country to the nearest hamlet. Here in a small room they erected an altar with candles burning at the head of the aligned bodies, after what they knew to be the usual custom of most Europeans; and there they kept vigil until the arrival of the authorities from a distant town.

Other fatal accidents occurred, and one was strangely and sadly stirred in the presence of those silent, broken bodies of young fellows from Home, who, even before reaching the battle line, had been brought to such a sudden and tragic end. We were able to hold a brief service just before the bodies were taken away.

Men passing through the town at different times were invited to the house for a cup of tea or coffee, and invariably interesting conversations were held. Some stayed for the night, including on one occasion some officers just through from the front.

In other places we were able to see something of what other missionaries were doing for the soldiers. In one large place scores of R.A.F. men find their way every afternoon to the missionaries' house and enjoy a homely tea. This is strenuous work, especially for the lady of the house, but she is proud to do it, and,

although all are more than welcome, if a Scotsman turns up he gets a smile as broad and as long as only a Scotswoman can give to another of her own kith and kin, and a special invitation to "cum agin." On Sunday afternoons some 80 or so of these men attend a Gospel service, and to hear them sing their favourite hymns does one's heart good. In other places a similar work is being done, and is continually being extended and enlarged as needs arise and opportunity permits. Christian lads in the forces will have a unique opportunity of seeing something of this foreign mission field, and we must pray and believe that from amongst them there will be some chosen of God to return one day, not as soldiers to fight against flesh and blood, but as ambassadors of Christ to engage in the still harder and longer fight against principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

(To be continued.)

DAY OF PRAYER AND PRAISE  
FOR  
NORTH AFRICA

**ALLIANCE HALL — SEPTEMBER 16, 1943**

SESSION—

10.30—11.30	MOROCCO	Leader: Rev. E. J. Poole-Connor
11.30—12.30	ALGERIA	" " S. J. Henman
2.30—3.30	TUNISIA	" " P. J. Smart
3.30—4.30	TRIPOLI	" " E. J. Long

EVENING SESSION: 5.30—6.45

CHAIRMAN: REV. E. J. POOLE-CONNOR

Testimonies by MISSIONARIES to ANSWERED PRAYER

**KINDLY NOTE THE DATE !**

**FINANCE**

With a view to saving expense, the Council of the Mission have decided to print only a limited number of copies of the audited Balance Sheet for the year ended December 31st, 1942.

A brief summary of the Financial Statement is given hereunder, but should any subscriber desire to have a detailed Balance Sheet we shall be happy to send on a copy,

BALANCE SHEET

RECEIPTS				PAYMENTS			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
For General Fund ... ..	6,222	0	1	General Fund ... ..	7,404	17	6
„ Designated Fund ... ..	2,064	11	0	Designated Fund ... ..	1,923	8	9
	<hr/>				<hr/>		
	8,286	11	1		9,328	6	3
Balance 31st Dec. 1941	}			Balance 31st Dec. 1942	}		
General Fund ... £3,433	11	0	4,954	11	0	3,912	15
Designated Fund £1,521	0	0		Designated Fund £1,662	2	3	
	<hr/>				<hr/>		
	£13,241	2	1		£13,241	2	1
	<hr/>				<hr/>		

A word of explanation is necessary regarding the balances brought down. The balance in General Fund at 31st December, 1941, included a special donation of £2,000 given by a most generous helper of the Mission for use during the year 1942, and the remainder represented monies due to missionaries which could not be paid at the time owing to restrictions on the sending of funds abroad. Of the £2,250 in General Fund at 31st December, 1942, £2,000 was specially contributed by the friend mentioned earlier, for the work of the Mission during 1943.

The Council would welcome an increase in the number of subscribers to the General Fund, and might we remind our friends of the advantage to the Mission of covenanted gifts.

O. L. C.