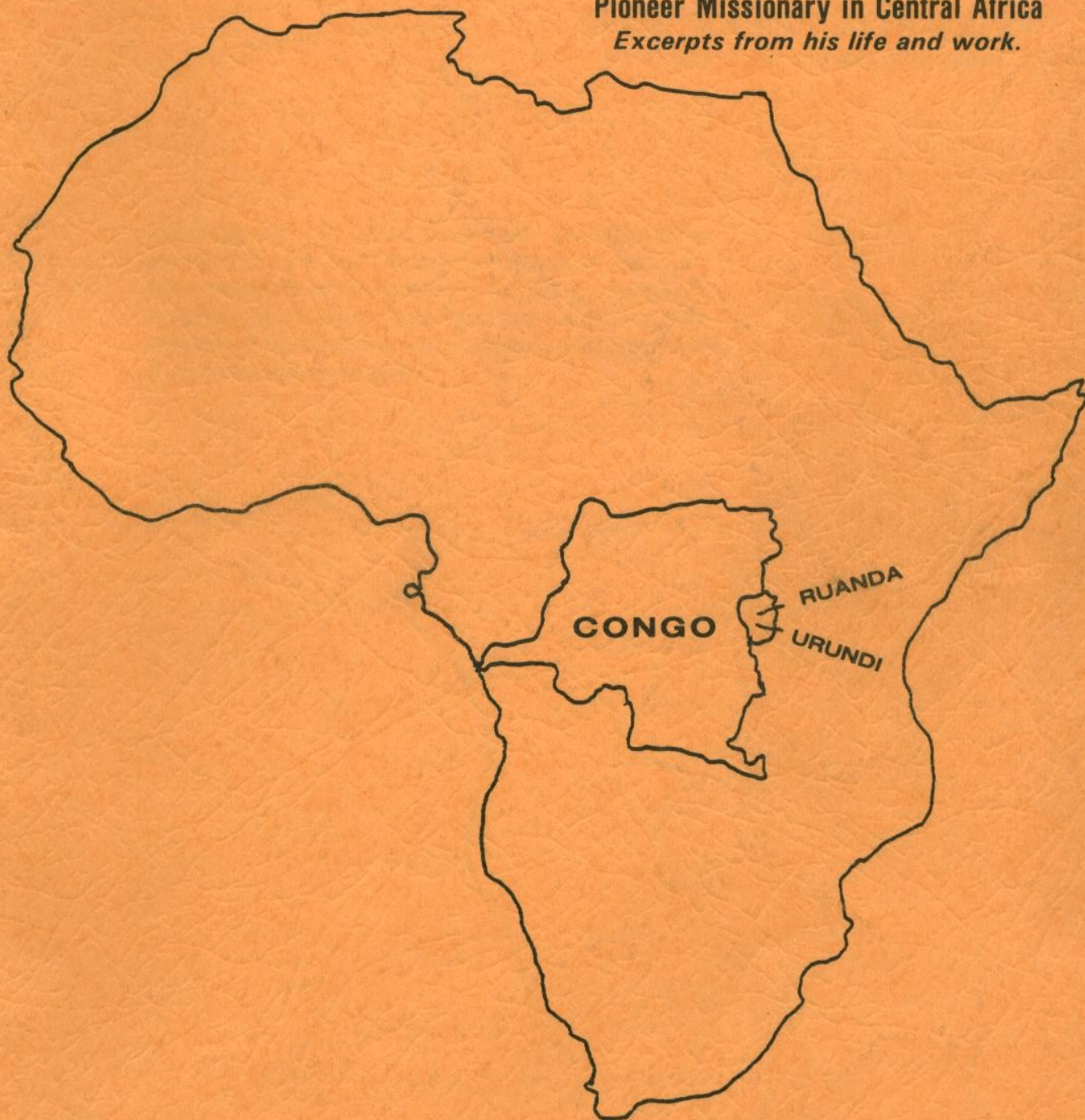


T + K Wade

# A DAUGHTER REMEMBERS

**D. E. DELHOVE**

Pioneer Missionary in Central Africa  
*Excerpts from his life and work.*



By Lydie M. Delhove

Copyright by: Lydie M. Delhove  
1984  
All rights reserved

## PREFACE \*

### EARLY HISTORY

For unnumbered generations the heartland of Central Africa lay somnolent - a sleeping giant warmed by the tropical sun, drenched by torrential rains which, seeping through fertile earth, permitted the growth of impenetrable forests, luxuriant grasses on the high plateaux, swamps of tall papyrus and the ever waving palms of great height.

The age of discovery left this vast country virtually untouched. Only once, in 1482, did the Portuguese explorer, Diego Cam, enter the mouth of the great river which drained this silent land. He followed the river for about 110 miles but turned back when he found the seething rapids of the lower Congo river which he called the "Zaire" (from the native name "nzari" which means 'the great river.')

The giant slept on and it was not until near the close of the last century that Henry Morton Stanley, spurred on by what he had seen on his eventful search for Dr. David Livingstone, organized an expedition in Zanzibar, an Indian Ocean port. With two other white men and a company of 350 Africans, he began his history-making trek across Tanganyika to the upper reaches of the great river which he believed emptied into the Atlantic, an unknown distance away.

Three years after the start of the expedition, Stanley, the sole European survivor, and the depleted force of 115 Africans - the miserable remnant that had escaped the dread diseases along the way and the poisoned arrows of enemies - at last looked upon the mouth of the great river which had so challenged him. He had finally reached the Atlantic.

He returned to Europe, first offering the vast land which he had explored to Britain. Finding no interest he accepted the offers of King Leopold II of the Belgians. He returned to the Congo and travelling up the river, concluded treaties of peace with the chieftains whose domains lay along either side of the river. It became Leopold's private Colony, the value of which the great powers discovered only when it was too late to share in the booty. It was very rich in minerals and potential.

- \* The names of many countries and towns in Africa have changed during recent years. Rather than put old and new names each time reference is made in this book, the name of the town or country is given as it was when the incident took place.

A glossary of names is included separately in the Appendix.

PREFACE, continued:

In 1886 however, a treaty was entered into between Leopold II and the great powers which forever guaranteed the freedom of the territory for trade, exploitation of resources and mission enterprises.

In 1908 the Belgian government took the country over from Leopold and it became the Belgian Congo. Fifty-two years later in 1960, Belgium yielded to pressure and gave the country full self-determination.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLIEST MISSION WORK in Central Africa

When the Portuguese explorer, Diego Cam, reached the Congo estuary in 1482, he found a powerful native kingdom and converted numerous kings of "Kongo" to the Christian faith, along with the nearby Portuguese territory (later called Angola). One convert was Garcia Alfonso who ruled near the coast. One of his sons, Enrique, studied in Lisbon (Portugal) and in 1520 was made a bishop by Pope Leo X. The Congo regularly sent emissaries to the Vatican for a number of years. Because the Portuguese could not get up the river because of the rapids, however, the Christian influence stayed pretty much localized, then it slowly died out.

MODERN missionaries first penetrated into the Congo in 1878. These were British Protestants. The Catholics followed them in a short time. They came in great numbers, especially when the government started giving large subsidies of money for their missions.

The beginning of SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST missions in Ruanda-Urundi was started after World War I by D. E. Delhove, a Belgian. He had served his country during those war years as a reconnaissance officer. Travelling during this time across Ruanda-Urundi and part of the eastern Congo several times, he was impressed by the land and teeming population. He felt it would make a fruitful field for missions. In 1919 he returned and started the Adventist work in the area. Ruanda-Urundi had by then been placed under Belgian jurisdiction as mandated territories.

The founding of Gitwa Mission on a Cursed hill in the beautiful country of Ruanda was the first permanent Adventist mission in that country.

This book is attempting to depict briefly the life story and work of this pioneer as viewed by his eldest daughter.



Pastor and Mrs. D. E. Delhove 1936

Agamie -	Address of house	80
	Field description of Georgia	81
	Water supply	81
	Hydrogeology	82
D. E. Delhove's	bar service itinerary	96
	Summary of travel to	97
	Cincinnati and Avon	98
	Map	

## **DEDICATED**

To the memory of all the missionary pioneers  
who gave their lives  
to the preaching of the Gospel.

A DAUGHTER REMEMBERS  
D. E. Delhove  
Pioneer Missionary in Central Africa

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Early Years	Page	1
2. Preparation for Africa		5
3. Five Years Separation		7
4. My First Memory of Father		11
5. Return to Africa		14
6. Ruanda and the Founding of Gitwe		19
7. Pioneering in Urundi		30
8. A Change in the Making		40
9. To Southern Congo		45
10. In the Equatorial Forest		52
11. A Kirundu Wedding		58
12. Pioneering at Rwesse		65
13. A Tragedy		71
14. Retired		76
15. The Last Year		82
Epilogue		87
Appendix -	Glossary of Names	89
	Brief description of Belgium	90
	Belgian Congo	91
	Ruanda-Urundi	95
	D. E. Delhove's	
	War Service Itinerary	96
	Summary of Promotions	97
	Citations and Awards	98
	Maps	

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to Gladys Ansley who encouraged me to write this biography; who also took of her time to help prepare the manuscript and spent many hours typing it.



## CHAPTER 1

### THE EARLY YEARS

My father's story begins in the French part of Belgium \* in a small community (village) named Marchienne-Docherie. Here Jean François Delhove and his wife, Joséphine Ghislaine (née Lebrun) owned a small farm. They possessed a cow and other farm animals and with the vegetables raised by the family, they earned their humble living. As the years went by, he also rented other parcels of land and with the help of his children, grew enough to increase their small income. Papa Delhove also helped his father who was in the business of building houses for sale.

Maman Delhove did her part. Beside being a farmer's wife, she owned a little corner grocery store. It was literally a 'corner' store, the dividing point for two streets.

Nine children were born to this couple (one died at birth). The others, four boys and four girls, were added hands at vacation time from school during the summers. No one was idle except when sick. Education was encouraged. They were a hard-working, loving Christian family, practicing Protestantism.

This was the family of my father. He, the fourth of these nine children, was born June 9, 1882 and was named David Elie - but always called by his second name - Elie. He with his three brothers and four sisters, learned at a tender age what life and responsibilities were all about. Primary school began at age seven. He graduated from secondary school (high school) at Jumet, a town some ten miles distant. From the ages of 16 to 18 he earned a little money as an apprentice in a work shop, after which he topped off his education with a six-month course in shoe repairing.

He had barely started his own shoe shop (in his parent's home) when, at age 19½, he drew a 'bad' number for military service. He had to go since conscription was mandatory in Belgium. After his 20 months service, he returned to rural Belgium and to his shoe-repairing shop, sometimes making new ones, too.

\* See appendix - for a brief description of Belgium.

It was when my father was seventeen that the family received a box from Canada, sent by a distant relative.\* Tucked in the parcel were some tracts printed by Seventh-day Adventists. Elie read them with interest. After his military service he learned of meetings being held at Liège, some 66 miles from his village. These meetings, conducted by Joseph Curdy, an evangelist from Switzerland, thrilled him more and more.

But - it wasn't long until Elie encountered opposition from his family for his interest in such "silly doctrines", especially so from his oldest brother. Yet Elie was convinced that what he had found was Bible truth. In 1906 he was baptized in the Seventh-day Adventist church by Elder J. Curdy. He was 24 years old.

\* At the time of the General Conference of S.D.A. in Milwaukee, Wisc., of which my father was a delegate in 1926, he spent some time visiting "distant" relatives in Canada. However, he never found the one who had placed the tracts in the parcel.

Meanwhile in the same community of Marchienne-Docherie, another drama was transpiring. Augustin Bailly and his wife, Sylvie, (née Mascaux) lived with their four children - three girls and one boy. Tragedy struck this family. Two little girls died, first one then the other of scarlet fever. The father disappeared. Later it was learned he had died of cholera. The mother died of what people called in those days - a broken heart.

The two orphans, Virginie (born 1884) was eight years old; her little brother, Auguste, was only three years old. They were alone in the world - no other relatives.

A neighbor woman took the two children into her home. It is not known what prompted her to do so - whether there was any financial gain. One thing is sure, it was not love nor pity. She provided food and shelter but that was all. No love, no consideration for their tender age. Her discipline was severe, many times extreme. The least provocation meant the omission of a meal.

Virginie was put to work almost immediately, not only to look after herself and her little brother but to take care of the whole house. She was allowed to go to school until age 12, then more work was piled onto her shoulders. She longed to go back to school but even reading books was not permitted. So Virginie would borrow from friends in great secrecy. In her room until very late at night or even one o'clock in the morning, she read, hiding her book under the covers at the least sound of someone coming up the stairs.

Child abuse of these two children was not confined to meal-deprivation. There were also beatings and physical harm. For example, on one occasion, this woman in punishing little Auguste (age four at the time), took him by the neck with both hands and suspended him in the air, holding him above an open water cistern. She threatened to let loose but was at the same time tightening her grip until he became unconscious. All the while his sister, Virginie, then age nine, was kneeling at her feet, begging and pleading for the woman to spare her little brother. She put him back on the ground - and the beating she intended for him was administered to the sister.....mercilessly.

This abuse and child-slavery lasted for quite a few years. Neighbors complained about her cruelty but could not do much about it because she was "the best friend" of the chief of police and of the village constable.

Virginie thought many times of running away but she was very shy and had no one to turn to for help. She could only wait until someone would show up in whom she could place her confidence.

This "someone" appeared soon after she turned 19 - in the person of a young man, Elie. He had learned of her plight and was appalled. Right away Virginie felt that here was one she could trust. He found an elderly sick lady who needed a companion and helper. Thus he made it possible for Virginie to leave her tormentor who could do nothing about it since Virginie was no longer a minor.

By this time her brother, Auguste, had left and found his own way.

In the new home, the elderly lady poured out a motherly love on the pretty blonde girl. Work became a pleasure and she spent two happy years of her life there. Beside work, there was plenty of time for courtship with the slender, dark-haired Elie. There was also opportunity to become acquainted with his family. They at once befriended her until she felt like one of them.

But there came a shadow. It was during this time that young Elie was attending the Adventist meetings in Liège. As he continued to study the Bible, he became more certain of what he was learning; that it was indeed Bible truth. He believed it and took his stand.

His family members tried hard to make him change his views. They even enlisted Virginie's help and persuaded her to pretend she did not care about him. So when they met on the street, she would turn her head away, not saying anything, pretending to ignore him. His parents urged her to stick to it so that he would abandon those 'silly ideas.'

Elie moved out of his home to live by himself because of the opposition. Then - Virginie heard that he was very ill.

Finally she could stand it no longer and - turning to her wonderful friend, the old lady, she said, "I've got to see him! I can't stand it any more."

Mrs. Bresseur replied, "I'll tell you what to do. You bake a nice rice tart (a very famous dish in that part of the country) and take it to him."

Virginie did just that. Of course, recovery was prompt - Elie from his illness and Virginie from her pretended aloofness. The courtship was renewed and together they began to make plans.

Elie advised Virginie to go to Switzerland to stay with Mrs. Curdy, the wife of the evangelist who had held meetings in Belgium. Virginie went. There she learned about what Seventh-day Adventists believe. She was baptised in lake Neufchâtel by Elder Curdy in 1906. She was 22.

Virginie worked for another Adventist lady in Switzerland for another two years. Although she was happy there, she was also homesick and missed her fiance.

Elie was, meanwhile, working in Belgium as a colporteur (literature evangelist) in the area of Charleroi. Sometimes he helped with evangelistic meetings held by Elder Girou or Curdy or Roth, near Liège. Yet, he was also lonely. He did not have much money for train fare. So one time he pedaled his bicycle all the way from Belgium to Switzerland to visit his sweetheart and to make plans for their future. He returned to Belgium - but not for long. Shortly afterwards he was back in Switzerland for a few months at the Adventist school in Gland near lake Geneva. That was in 1908.

Not long after this they both returned to Belgium. There they were married April 22, 1909 by Gustave Roth (father of André Roth), the Adventist Swiss evangelist who was working at that time in Belgium.

My father was 27, my mother 25.

## CHAPTER 2

### PREPARATION FOR AFRICA

When father accepted the Adventist message he promised the Lord he would be a missionary, preferably overseas. During the years before marriage he had gained valuable experience as colporteur and in assisting with evangelistic efforts - telling others of the blessed hope of salvation in his Lord Jesus. He was full of it. Virginie, his companion, added her love and support.

But for his life's work he knew he needed to know much more. There would be sick people wherever they went. He must learn about treating them. But where?

After a honeymoon of eight days, father left for Watford College, a small institution run by Adventists near London, England. Mother stayed at Jumet, Belgium with his sister, Joséphine. Another sister-in-law nearby made pleasant company, except - mother was not with her Elie. So off she went to join him - for two weeks, then on to Leicester Sanitarium, England (also Adventist) where she hoped to take the nurses' course. At the same time she would at least be in the same country nearer father.

Mother didn't know one word of English, so while learning, she was assigned kitchen work. This she did between classes and her practice time in the hydrotherapy department. There was a brief time when they returned to Belgium for father to help in an evangelistic effort in Antwerp. Then, back to England. This time both of them went together to Leicester to complete what they had begun.

But soon father left to study at Caterham Sanitarium, another small Adventist institution. He stayed there until he finished his course. During those months, I, their first-born, arrived on May 7, 1911, the joyful highlight for her parents that year. They named their little baby girl Lydie May.

Mother carried on with her work and classes for several months, but became more and more dissatisfied that others, not her, had the care of her baby. The climax came when someone gave her baby a piece of chocolate to pacify - the result a whopping stomachache! Finally mother with baby Lydie, left to join her husband at Caterham.

Money was scarce for the young couple. After a few weeks mother and baby returned to Belgium, there to stay with in-laws once again until father finished his course.

When father joined his family he felt ready for his life-work. He put his name down to go overseas as a missionary. During the waiting period he again occupied himself by helping in evangelistic efforts being held by R. Klingbeil in Brussels, then later at Seraing near Liège. The year was 1912.

There was talk of someone needed in a sanitarium to be opened near Cape Town in South Africa. My parents waited and waited. Nearly another year went by. All the time father and mother were asking the Lord to guide them in the right direction. Then they heard that there might be "work" opening up in central Africa, probably the Congo.

The two official calls came almost together. The first was for South Africa. As the Delhoves were considering accepting it, praying for guidance, the second one came from Elder Conradi who was then president of the European Division of Seventh-day Adventists. A telegram came informing them that they were chosen for central Africa. They immediately accepted, feeling it was the right one.

With that decision, definite preparations began in earnest, for the trip and overseas work. Father went to Hamburg (Germany) for some supplies and to obtain shipping and sailing directions. Also he wanted to see Elder Conradi about details of the work. Time dragged on as to what would be their ultimate destination. Meanwhile a second girl was born July 7, 1913. They named her Lucy.

Finally it came - the decision of where they would be located in Africa. Father was assigned to work with A. A. Carscallen in opening up a mission school at Kamagambo near the shores of lake Victoria in British East Africa.

How excited the Delhoves were - to go to Africa to work for the Lord! Mother was prepared to accompany her husband no matter where he would go. Then came disappointment. The leaders of the Adventist work in Europe had other ideas. They said that husbands going to do pioneer work would do so under primitive conditions; that such would be no place for women and young children - not for awhile.

Mother was ready to share privations however primitive and difficult the living conditions, to be with her husband. But she HAD to accept the separation. There was no choice. However, she 'vowed' she would not stay behind for more than a few months, at most a year, then she would join him.

In August 1913 father sailed to Africa - alone. He left behind faithful Virginia, his loved wife, and his two little daughters. I was two years old, Lucy only two months old. We were to stay with father's relatives, first one then another, where mother would have companionship for herself and little ones.

At the beginning of the separation, letters were exchanged. But before the year could bring them together, World War I was declared. Belgium was suddenly invaded. Overnight it was in German-occupied zone. Virginia and her two little girls were trapped there - for what turned out to be four long years. No news could penetrate the curtain of silence that separated them.

## CHAPTER 3

### FIVE YEARS SEPARATION

In 1913 when D. E. Delhove sailed alone toward Africa, his thoughts were in Belgium where he had to leave his family behind for at least a year. His heart was heavy but he knew he was going where he was needed in the Lord's vineyard. So he gathered his courage and pledged to put his heart and soul into his work.

He had been assigned to go with A. A. Carscallen, an Adventist missionary in British East Africa. He (Carscallen) had several years of mission experience so, with the new recruit, they proceeded to the site of Kamagambo mission 14 miles south of the town of Kisii, British East Africa. There they began the buildings for the mission station and school.

Father put to good use what he already knew about building, making bricks and using other skills he had learned from his grandfather in Belgium. Things were going beautifully with natives interested and with the buildings and school work. Time passed quickly and father was absorbed in what he was doing. All the while he was thinking of the time when his family would join him, especially as the year drew to a close.

Then his hopes were shattered. War broke out that August (1914). Belgium had been invaded. His family was in the area occupied by the enemy. It was not possible for messages to go between them. Even his missionary status was suddenly interrupted. As a Belgian and with his country at war, he received a notice to return to Europe for military service.

Father did some thinking. If he returned to Europe to serve in Allied Forces there, he would have great difficulty in keeping the Sabbath and following the dictates of his conscience regarding killing, which he vowed not to do. There were no special favors for non-combatants in those days where young men could apply for medical services or such. He thought that if he could serve in the African campaign he would probably have more liberty to follow his conscience.

With that in mind, he wrote to the authorities. They granted him his wish. He stayed the four years that the war lasted, serving most of that time in the campaign against German-held territories adjoining British East Africa where he had been working. Those territories included Tanganyika to the south and Ruanda-Urundi to the west. \* Since Belgian territory (the Congo) shared Ruanda-Urundi's western border, very soon there was some fighting going on.

\* See Appendix for a description of the Ruanda-Urundi area.

At first, for about a year, he was assigned as Intelligence Agent and scout for the British on the Anglo-German border. He would spy out the movements in any way or manner advisable and as unobtrusively as possible, to learn of their plans. Much of the country was unexplored; often maps were sketchy and inaccurate or non-existent. With a company of trusted natives, he would sneak in and out at close range near their lines, dangerously close at times. He was never caught, however; maybe due to the fact that he was slight and short of stature (5 feet, 3 inches). He was very quick in his movements and reactions. At one time the natives gave him the nickname "Nziye", meaning grasshopper.

Father's next assignment was to the Belgian command. There at Rutshuru, a government command post just over the border from Ruanda-Urundi and north of lake Kivu (in the Belgian Congo), father was assigned the position of District Commissioner. In addition to being recruiter for the army and procuror for food, medicines, porters and all sorts of supplies, he became the local government agent, police chief and even tax collector. This post of duty lasted for over a year.

Then in June 1916 he was transferred to the Belgian column, the "North Brigade" and again given the assignment of scouting. The Allied goal was to chase the enemy out of African-held territories. Delhove, at the head of 100 or so natives, would scout the country ahead of the troops, relaying information - also recruiting porters and food for the troops. This kind of work he did for most of the time until the fall and surrender of Tabora (in Tanganyika) in 1916, and for a year or so afterwards when mopping up the last few pockets of enemy resistance.

What happened to young Delhove's beliefs and convictions as a lone Seventh-day Adventist during those war years? What about the Sabbath? and killing?

During the marches with troops or on his own as scout (and the occasions were many), he never carried a gun per se. When he had occasion to use one, it was to shoot game for food. His Africans carried guns but seldom used them.

Sabbath privileges were at first given to him on a week-to-week basis. But as time went on, his generals realized that this soldier Delhove would not parade nor march on "his Sabbaths."

Many years later, a colonel (named Hermans) who was in the same company with 'this soldier Delhove' became governor of the Congo. He recalled those occasions when they were in the same company - and Friday nights came. They would all arrive at a certain place and settle down. Sabbath morning the other men packed up and went on. But Delhove and his men stayed until sundown. Then, they would



pack up, walk all night Saturday and arrive Sunday morning to be with the rest of the troops.

Never once did he forget that he was a missionary and that some day the war would end, then he would be able to resume the work he went to Africa to do. Meanwhile he did his best. He talked to his African men as opportunities arose. He shared his faith with whites as well.

In the German colony of Tanganyika there were some Adventist missions. Most of the missionaries were German. Those who did not flee were taken captive and interned. When father heard that some of them were in prisoner-of-war camps in the vicinity where he was, he asked permission of his superiors to visit the camp. This was granted.

He made a special point to find any Adventists. He would treat the wounded ones, then sit down and talk with them about the things common to fellow missionaries. He encouraged them, calling them brethren in the faith. He reminded them that soon the war would end and everyone would be treated as equals again. All the time he was in the area where there were prisoners-of-war, he went on Sabbaths to study the Bible and talk with them. Yes, he knew the German language.

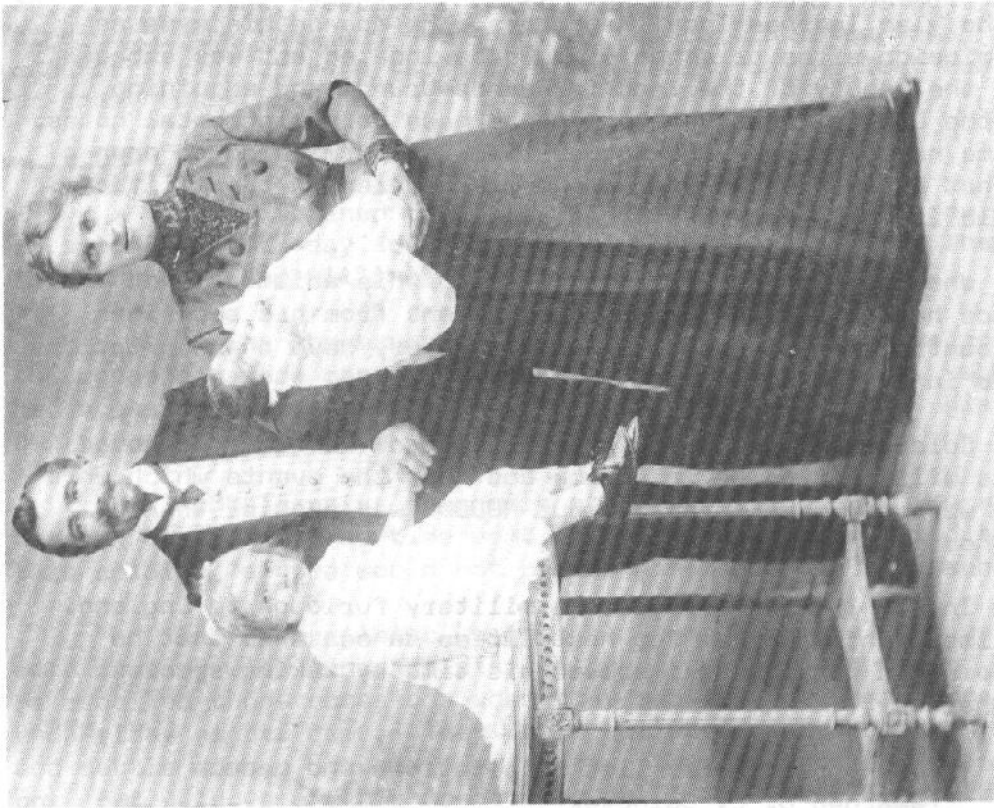
While he was scouting, crossing and crisscrossing the country, he also learned local languages. He opened his eyes as to where mission sites or schools would be located and was especially struck by the beauty of the land in Ruanda-Urundi and adjoining parts of the Congo. Wherever he went he made valuable mental notes. At one time he approached the authorities for permission to open a school. That was denied as long as he was serving in the military. He was told it would not be appropriate.

Whatever he did was to the best of his ability. For his service he was awarded numerous citations from his superiors and the countries he served. (I, his daughter, have these citations and medals in my possession).\*

Soldier Delhove put his trust in God. He fully believed it was His will that he be in Africa and that the events which were happening were for some purpose. But NOBODY was happier than he was when hostilities ended!

In May 1918 he was given a military furlough to England. While he impatiently waited for hostilities to cease so that he could rejoin his family, he improved his time by taking special work in pharmacy.

\* See Appendix for list of citations and medals awarded D. E. Delhove.



Elie and Virginia Delhove and daughters,  
Lydie age 2 years and Lucy, age 2 months  
1913



Five Years later - 1918

## CHAPTER 4

### MY FIRST MEMORY OF FATHER

The year of waiting was long for mother. She was eager to join her husband in Africa. As she prepared for the journey her plans were forcibly altered. Belgium was suddenly invaded that August in 1914. Overnight it was in the German occupation zone - a situation that was to last four years.

Mother with her two little girls settled in with one of her sisters-in-law for awhile, then with another one. She found great solace with her in-laws at Jumet as they tried to help each other through the privations and cruelty of war.

My uncle, Auguste, lived with us the last years of the war - near our Aunt Léa. That was a source of strength and comfort. He worked at a flour mill and from time to time brought home a kilo or two of flour; a welcome addition to our meager rations.

Belgians got very hungry, especially the last two years. Local government gave food coupons to former soldier's wives and that helped. But mother was not 'eligible' as no one knew what her husband was doing in Africa. For all they knew he might be dead.

Mother stood privations as best she could. Yes, she got hungry too, as sometimes she would have to use her money to pay the doctors' bills when her little girls got sick. The money had to go for necessary medicines as she saw them through whooping cough, measles, pneumonia and especially scarlet fever that was followed by a period of blindness for one of her daughters. So, there were times when mother went to bed with an empty stomach.

As the war drew to its close in 1918, my mother with little sister Lucy and I were living in a remodeled apartment-like place which was attached to my aunt Léa's house. It opened into a backyard which was used for a garden. A high fence with a double iron gate surrounded the garden. We had been there half of the war years. Five long years had elapsed since father had sailed for Africa. During the last 3½ years there had been only silence. No one had received word or heard any news about him. Was he still alive? or dead?

I remember mother telling us girls that some day "papa is going to come back." She had great faith that he would.

Then as 1918 draw on toward the autumn, there were rumors that the war would soon end. Mother's hopes were rekindled. One day it happened.

A letter came from England - from her dear husband! In it he told her he was on furlough and just waiting for the signatures that would end the hostilities and for the German troops to withdraw from Belgium. He would be home soon. Oh, what joy!

We didn't know which day for sure. I was too young to remember all that mother said, but one thing I DO remember: "Papa is coming soon; yes, he is alive!"

Each day mother reserved a little part of her meager lunch, keeping it warm in the oven to be sure she had something to offer him.

As the middle of November approached, I remember seeing many German troops passing in our street, retreating back to Germany. With them they took all the loot they could from the Belgians. Horse-drawn carriages were full to the top with some spilling into the street.

The Belgians had been very hungry the last part of the war and it was even more so now. There was violence as the populace tried to force their way into houses, businesses too (although many places were empty) - anywhere, trying to find something to eat.

My aunt Léa had a small grocery store and it was partially broken into. Our iron gates were chained and padlocked. This condition lasted awhile. I was frightened and would watch through the corner of a window to see if the gates and chains would hold out that mad mob.

It was in early December when I saw as I peeped through the corner of the window, a man trying to open our gates - a soldier. I yelled, "Maman, Maman! An officer is trying to get in....." but by the time mother tried to see who it was, he had vanished.

Then came an insistent knock at the door that petrified me, especially when it was flung open. This man had found his way around to the side entrance of my aunt Léa's place. He stood there, a short dark-haired man with a goatee, in an officer's uniform.

To the shock of us girls, mother rushed into his arms. After what seemed a long time she managed to shout, "Voilà papa! Voilà papa!"

Papa? We weren't impressed at all. Although we had been told of his coming, the first shock to me was of 'disgust' that mother would fall into a stranger's arms. That's what I thought, that is - until she announced that it was indeed our long-awaited papa.

Somehow in my childish mind I had another kind of mental picture of the long-absent father. He didn't allow the shock to last long, however. Soon he had his two little girls, one on each knee, shyly accepting two tiny celluloid dolls which he had pulled from his pockets. Holding us close, he talked on and on (what seemed to me, endlessly) of his activities during his five years absence.

That is the first memory I have of my father. I was seven years old. Lucy was five.

I wish I could recall more of those conversations that mother and father had soon after they were reunited. In later years, father did not speak much of his war experiences. So it has not been easy to piece together some of what he went through. One question I do remember mother asking him - very shortly after he returned, was: "How many (Germans) did you kill?" To which he replied proudly, "Not one."

There were reunion celebrations which father's relatives and mother's brother shared with us. Then the question - what to do next. In father's mind there was no question. His one goal was to resume his mission service of preaching the Gospel. For mother? To share her husband's life and work no matter where, and to never be parted again - no matter what anyone said.

But leaving war-torn Europe to return to Africa meant much planning and work. December 1918 came. The war was ended. The long-absent father and husband was home, alive and unharmed. But Belgium, while liberated of the enemy, was also 'liberated' of all kinds of goods such as necessary equipment for a trip overseas. Belgium was empty of everything.

## CHAPTER 5

### RETURN TO AFRICA

To prepare and equip themselves for the trip to Africa, it would be necessary for my parents to do so in England. It didn't take long to pack up as we didn't have much. We were soon ready for the trip across the channel. For my sister and me, it was fun. For our parents it was quite a task to choose what was needed and how to purchase it with the amount of money allowed.

While there mother and we two girls met the young couple that father had become acquainted with while waiting for the Armistice to be signed. Henri Monnier was a young Swiss settled there with his watch-repairing business. He had just married an English girl. Father had persuaded them to become missionaries, too.

So the beginning of 1919 saw the two families busy getting outfitted, making necessary travel documents ready, etc. Journeys to other lands were more complicated in those days since there were more preparations to be made. Journeys took a longer time and were more primitive inside Africa. Possible delays had to be considered also.

By the end of March the little party of two families (the four Delhoves and two Monniers) left the shores of England on the Belgian S.S. Albertville bound for Africa.

There were several stops as we traveled along the west coast of Africa. One stop at Dakar in Senegal, I particularly remember. Although I was only eight years old, it is still vivid in my mind. The ship was busy loading and unloading things for that port. Passengers were taking walks along the pier. I was close to father when a group of Senegalese men approached him. They asked to buy me for a bride! I understood them because they were talking in French. I was petrified and clung closer to my father. It did not matter to them that I was only eight. It's like that in Africa - they buy their brides young in some places (they're cheaper). For me, they offered a higher price. But when they saw that even 100 knives would not do and that father was absolutely not interested, they departed..... I was glad to get back on the boat!

Before we got away from Dakar, however, another incident occurred. Father and Bro. Monnier were walking along the pier when a Senegalese approached them from behind. Quick as a flash he snatched father's wallet. Father instantly sensed what had happened but was not fast enough to grab it back. The tall native was off with the two white men after him. He was outdistancing them when he had to round a corner and was caught. The robber was taken to police headquarters and the billfold retrieved intact - fortunately. It contained the very important travelling papers and some money which they could not afford to lose.

The boat on which we travelled was mainly for cargo but with room for 8 to 10 passengers. The journey was slower than on regular passenger ships; also cheaper and a passenger was allowed quite a bit more free accompanying baggage. Our two families had taken along everything that they wanted for use at their destination.

The ship finally arrived at the estuary of the Congo river where it empties into the Atlantic ocean. The first stop was at Banana on the right bank. There some native crews were taken on board to unload the ship farther up-river. It was hot and humid, very tropical. The ship then continued on up the river a distance of 46 miles to Boma. The smooth sailing gave us ample time to admire the tropical scenery. We passed an island in the middle of the river called the "Island of Birds" - also a fetish rock just before docking at the pier of Boma on the right bank. Here we stayed a few days to discharge cargo for that area.

Then another few miles brought us to Matadi on the left bank of the river - a total of 93 miles from Banana and the ocean. Here everybody disembarked, this being the end of the line for ocean-going vessels. Our two families settled in a hotel to await the unloading of the ship. The boat people took their time. Our goods had been placed first into the hold, so was the last to be unloaded. We waited - and watched - as the meager funds in father's pocketbook got lighter and less. Meanwhile we were all learning how very hot and humid the place was.

Finally we were ready to go on our way, this time by train. The distance of 227 miles to Léopoldville was a twelve-hour ride. The railway followed the river which is not navigable because it progressively narrows with water swirling between narrow walls of rocks called "Hell's cauldron" - a place where no sounding line has yet been able to fathom the depths of the whirlpool. From the train we could see the 32 falls and cataracts in the narrow gorge that the river has cut through the Crystal mountains on its way to the Atlantic.\* The view of the violence of the river is most awesome.

We stayed in Léopoldville, a city on the left bank of the river. We were there for a long while, waiting to begin the next lap of our journey, this time by river boat to Stanleyville upstream to the east - a distance of 1077 miles.

We boarded the flat-bottomed paddle-wheel boat. It was fueled by wood which had to be replenished each evening. We made many stops to disembark or embark people or goods when docking at towns or large villages situated on the banks. It was slow travel.

\* See Appendix for description of the Belgian Congo.  
Also for map of the Belgian Congo.

(I made the same trip thirty years later in a more modern boat, taking nine days to go upstream. However in 1919, I believe it took about twice as long. Often they would anchor at night for fear of being stuck in sand bars. Later on there was a better channel mapped out). Throughout the journey tropical humidity and heat prevail in the great Congo basin and the equatorial forest.

When our two families arrived in Stanleyville, we were confronted with a serious problem - shortage of funds. Many delays, hotel expenses and such had depleted the money allotted by the mission board, even though father and Bro. Monnier had tried to be very economical. What to do?

Writing to mission headquarters in Europe was out of the question as it would take several months for a reply. Father and Bro. Monnier discussed their plight. They decided to ask the Governor of the Orientale Province in northeast Congo, of which Stanleyville was a part, to let them open mission work there. Father knew the governor - but - a big disappointment awaited them. He was away on furlough.

So what to do next? The two families decided to pool their own personal money and continue their journey as planned BUT to travel in the cheapest way possible - third class. This meant that on the boats it would be on the bottom deck with the mob of Africans, chickens, goats, etc. On trains, also in third class (if any) or in box cars. There was still quite a bit of travelling yet to do.

Stanleyville was the end of the line for the river boat. We next boarded the train for Ponthierville to bypass the non-navigable falls and rapids in the river. Now the direction was straight south. This part of the journey was 80 miles. At Ponthierville we boarded another river-boat on the Lualaba (the name given the upper part of the Congo river). That was another 190 miles and at that destination (Kindu) the party transferred to still another train, continuing south to Kabalo. Finally we took the last part of the train journey, going east to Albertville - a total of 445 miles by train. We had arrived on the shores of lake Tanganyika, the Congo side.

From this point on we took a lake steamer going straight north toward Ruanda-Urundi. We were almost there! Then a near tragedy - slowing our journey. We two little Delhove girls came down with a severe attack of malaria with high fever and cerebral symptoms. There were no doctors on the boat.

Mother wept. "Have I brought my little girls here to die?" Earnestly they prayed - and worked to lower the fever as best they knew how, but - it remained high.



As soon as the boat docked at Kigoma, the Delhove family disembarked even though only half the lake distance was covered. Our parents dashed to the hospital with us. After a stay of two days, quinine injections soon put us back on our feet. We resumed the journey on the next boat and arrived at Uvira at the north end of lake Tanganyika. Excitement mounted, for the trip was almost over. (See maps of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi).

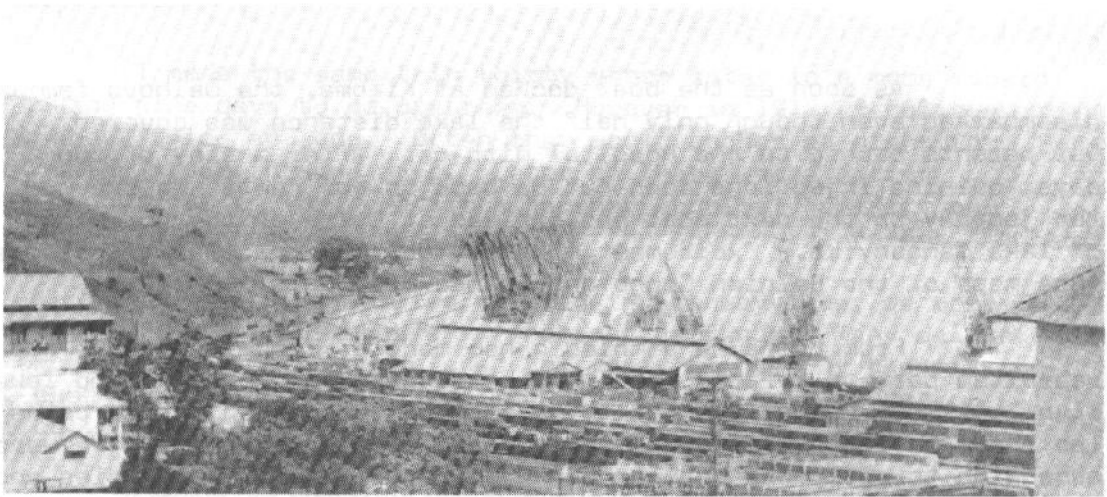
From Uvira we sampled a new mode of travel. Father had recruited porters for the long walk between lake Tanganyika and lake Kivu. All our belongings had to be carried through on native paths (no roads in those days), up and down and around mountains. We were ascending to altitudes between 5,000 and 6,000 feet. The ladies and children were carried in a sort of woven hammock (machila) suspended by poles carried on native shoulders. Father and Bro. Monnier usually walked although they did have hammocks available. In the afternoon the party would stop and pitch tents. The porters would huddle together or find shelter in nearby villages to spend the night. At dawn the journey would resume. We made this 90-mile trip in seven days, arriving at Shangugu at the south end of lake Kivu.

Nothing unusual occurred during this journey - no sighting of wild beasts. Bro. Monnier thought he saw some Cape buffalo (dangerous animals) and was about to shoot them when father cried, "STOP! Those are long-horned cattle!" (belonging to the local people).

At Shangugu we camped on the outskirts of town near lake Kivu for several days while waiting for the next transport. The mountainous scenery and bracing climate of that altitude was refreshing after the tropical heat of the Congo basin.

During that stay there was another near tragedy. Bro. Monnier went for a swim in the lake - a little too far - and began to drown. An African jumped in quickly and being a good swimmer, brought him back to shore. It had been a close call!

The final lap of the journey was on a 20-ton motor boat on lake Kivu, from Shangugu to Kibuye - half the length of the lake and to the shores of Ruanda, our destination. We had covered nearly 2,400 miles across Africa from the Atlantic. Five long months had elapsed since leaving Europe. Our arrival was none too soon. Some events were due to happen - soon. This was August 1919.



Port of Matadi on the Congo River



Mr. and Mrs. Henri Monnier  
(standing)

And the D. E. Delhove  
family

Ready to sail to Africa  
1919

## CHAPTER 6

### RUANDA AND THE FOUNDING OF GITWE

From lake Kivu the Delhove and Monnier families made the short trip to Rubengera, a former German-Protestant mission four miles from the lake. The Belgian national in charge of a military post had been installed during the last year or so of the war and occupied the mission. (See chapter on the war years). He had received orders from his superiors to share the buildings and area with the missionary newcomers. (Father carried a letter that he had received from the Royal Belgian Commissioner at Kigoma when stopping there. It opened the way wherever father went).

The most urgent and immediate need on arrival was to prepare comfortable dwelling places. Additions were anticipated by each family.

On August 24, 1919 father and mother were called during the night to the Monnier home. They helped Sister Monnier deliver her first-born, a girl they named Olive. The delivery was normal but several days later some complications set in.

One month later, on September 25, a girl was born to the Delhoves - their third, whom they named Clara. Delivery was also normal. No doctor was present for either birth.

After these interruptions, father and Bro. Monnier began to explore the area. The country was very familiar to father for he had crossed and recrossed it as a scout during the war. He knew that during the German occupation of this territory, a group of Protestant missions had been manned by white missionaries. After the war, Ruanda-Urundi was given to Belgium as a mandate to be administered by them. The German missionaries were not allowed to return to their former stations.

So - what would be done with these abandoned missions, of Rubengera, Kirinda and Remera? Father and Bro. Monnier made a trip to government headquarters at Kigali. They were promised all the late German missions in Ruanda. With this hope in view they started work. A little school was opened at Rubengera and the native Christians who had been trained by German missionaries gladly attended.

A second station, Kirinda, seven hours march inland from Rubengera was re-opened in the latter part of 1919. The Delhoves went there, leaving the Monniers at Rubengera for several weeks, waiting for Mrs. Monnier's recovery.

But - it was not to be. The new mother got weaker and weaker. Finally Bro. Monnier brought her to Kirinda. There she died five months after delivering her little girl. She was laid to rest at Kirinda. Father and mother took little Olive into their home for a year or so.

They also took another little girl into their home about the same time. Little Germaine was born August 2. Her mother was a Mututsi who had died one month after the birth of her baby. Her father was a Belgian in charge of the military post at Rubengera. He was returning overseas and did not want to have anything more to do with this baby. She lived in our home for many years.

Maman Delhove was really getting her hands full with these babies because before long a fourth Delhove girl, Edna, was born. That was on November 13, 1920. Oh, yes, mother was very happy. She loved babies and was not afraid of work. She was very used to it from her youth. Also, she put us older girls to work helping. We had living 'dolls' and our share of responsibilities.

We were at Kirinda for the whole of 1920.

During that year the men folk were busy doing all kinds of missionary work. In July, Bro. Monnier started working at Remera, the third station, reopening schools and buildings, learning the language, teaching and preaching Adventist doctrine which had not been heard there before.

Father continued at Kirinda with Bible-study and introducing Seventh-day Adventist beliefs such as keeping the seventh-day Sabbath instead of Sunday, not smoking tobacco, non-use of alcoholic beverages, paying tithes, etc. He restored physical parts of the mission such as repairing houses, planting thousands of pineapples and 400 blackwood trees, as well as caring for the numerous fruit trees planted by the former missionaries. The Kirinda bell continued to ring to call Christians to prayer, but on Friday evenings - announcing the beginning of the Sabbath.

A copy of the four Gospels in Kinyarwanda was found. A few of the Adventist hymns were translated. At both places, Remera and Kirinda, good seeds were sown which were the beginning of an Adventist nucleus to be reaped later on.

We, the Delhoves, stayed twenty months at Kirinda, always waiting for the final permission to be granted to possess the late German missions. Not a word came - then - a shadow. Our missionaries heard indirectly that the government in Belgium had handed all these missions over to a Belgian Protestant Society and that missionaries would be arriving soon to take over.

Father went immediately to the District Commissioner to inquire about the rumors. They were true. This gentleman must have felt a bit of guilt for the action taken. Not only was he apologetic to father but right there and then he requisitioned 15 head of cattle to be handed over free. This was a great boon to the Delhove family which by this time included four children of their own plus two foster ones. The commissioner also gave orders that commercial goods be available at cost price and without any custom duties. Furthermore he offered his services to help in whatever way he could.

For quite some time father had nourished in his heart the thought that perhaps it would be better to have a station of their own instead of reclaiming the old Protestant missions. So when it was definite that they (the Delhoves and Monniers) would have to leave, he was convinced that his wish must materialize. But where?

Earnest prayers were sent to heaven that the Holy Spirit would guide to the right spot. Much searching was done. Father would leave his family at Kirinda, set out on foot to look, then return home - to look again another day. He never doubted that the Lord would lead him to the right spot. He went east from Kirinda passing through heavily populated villages. Many of them had never seen a white man before. His knowledge of Kinyarwanda was useful as he tried to calm their fears.

He was continuing his search when one day he came to a narrow hill about two miles long and with a strangeness about it. There was not one hut on it. Furthermore, no native was seen walking on it. Everyone detoured to avoid stepping on that hill. The only exception was when villagers brought their dead which they hastily threw on the rocky bluffs at one end of the hill before they fled leaving the corpses to be eaten up by the hyenas and jackals. Father was intrigued by what he had seen and searched for the reason. This is the story behind the odd behaviour.

Once upon a time many years before, the king of Ruanda was returning to his palace after a mission of death. When a storm broke out, suddenly and fiercely (like it can often do in tropical Africa) he got drenched. Humiliated and enraged, he turned and faced the hill. He summoned the spirits of his ancestors and called down the curse of the gods upon that hill. This meant that whoever of his subjects would ignore his curse would surely be bewitched.

Immediately all inhabitants deserted the cursed hill and as time passed, not even a tree was growing on it. The name of the hill was GITWE (the place of the skull) because of the many human skulls which had accumulated over the years.

When father heard this story and saw the strange hill, he was convinced that this was the leading of the Lord - the site for the mission station - and that in time the curse would be turned into a blessing.

He had no trouble in getting permission from the authorities to settle there. The site was about twelve miles (20 Km) from Kirinda. He was granted a 125-acre plot.

In January 1921, accompanied by several natives from Kirinda who wanted to go with him, father pitched his tent on Gitwe, the cursed hill. I have translated from French some portions of letters he wrote about that beginning:

"I arrived Jan. 30 (1921) on Gitwe hill, which was all deserted. There is not a single tree, not a native village, not a single garden. I pitch my tent which will become my dwelling place for several weeks. I have brought with me some goods like salt, cloth, tools to start work. To shelter these things from heavy rains, I have pitched another and larger tent, a marquee 20 x 8 ft.

I then started looking around neighboring Gitwe for some building materials, to build a shed, but the natives did not want as much as to bring any pole or have anything to do with my projects. I visited them in their villages and pleaded with them that they help me find some materials. But there was so much fear because of the curse resting on the hill. They feigned nonchalance. I continued to plead with their chiefs, too. I kept telling them that 'from this day on the curse is removed from the hill Gitwe for the Lord has brought His limitless blessings instead.'

Finally when they saw that my black-skinned helpers were not struck dead (the ones from Kirinda), they ventured cautiously one by one to help with the erection of a shed. However they would work for only several hours a day, as it seemed that at a certain time, mid-afternoon, they would give a war whoop and all of them getting out of Gitwe as fast as they could run. After ten days the shed was up and sheltering my tents.

Then I looked for a water spring which I found 20 minutes walk from here, which I capped so that the water could run directly into containers.

I forgot to mention that when I left Kirinda, my wife and children stayed behind, bearing the separation during six days. I returned home on Friday evening to spend Sabbath with them and the Christians of Kirinda.

I am now under cover but I cannot stay alone. I must build a nice house to shelter all my family.

But where to find everything necessary for the erection of a house 20 meters long by 10 meters wide (approximately 62 x 31 ft)? To ask the natives for the supplies would for them be impossible. So I supplied myself at the Kikoro forest for the beams, the boards and the bamboos. As for big trees for the columns, I was privileged to be supplied by the little forest of Kirinda. One single tree would take 50 men to carry. You can imagine this colossus. My other building materials from Kikoro had to cover a distance of 80 Km (about 50 miles) and the men would be one week on the road.

"400 bamboos were brought over. They are very light in spite of their being 7 meters (23 ft.) long and 10 centimeters (4 inches) in diameter. One man can carry two of these at one time. They are hollow and since they are straight, they make nice roofing or separation walls or ceilings.

After digging more than one meter (3 ft.), I placed the central columns 3 meters (10 ft.) from each other. Then across these on top were placed the cross-beams (Fr: *sommiers de traverse*). Then came the side columns and their traverse trees (Fr: *sommiers inférieurs*). The bamboos were next placed, lying on those traverses (the tops and the inferiors). Across the bamboos were placed the lattices, which are a sort of reed found in the marshes. These can attain the height of 4 meters (13 ft.), are also very straight, 2 to 3 cm. in diameter ( $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 inch), and are easy to work with and to beautify the roof.

This framework is now in place. Not one nail has been used. To tie all these materials together we have recourse to the papyrus stalk which gives us good ties. To take the place of roofing, we go to the slopes of the hills to fetch a special kind of grass for thatch which, when placed together, resembles well-combed hair. Not less than 1500 loads of 25 Kgs (55 lbs.) so more than 30 tons (weight) went into this roofing. The bamboos could hardly bear this huge weight - even some gave way. Unlike European construction, we build the roof first, then comes the walls.

Since we do not have bricks (for this first house), we again go to the slopes of the hills to search for what we need for walls, which is grass. And for the inside 'plastering' we borrow from the reeds their beauty.

The frames for doors and windows are made of wood as well as the doors and windows themselves. Since there is no carpenter in the area, one has to do his best, sometimes improvising and to do the best under the circumstances. This goes too, for the pieces of furniture. For window panes, metal mosquito netting was used and to prevent wind from over-cooling us, my wife has made some sliding curtains.

After 43 days of hard work, I went to get my family. They did not find a palace on their arrival. But soon the hand of a woman in the house and in the garden quickly transformed a deserted cabin into a villa with flower beds.

We have already planted 1800 young trees which are the start of our little forest. Every day brings with it such a heavy load of work that when evening comes one is glad to go to bed to recuperate for the next day.

Not only do I have my own station to look after; I must also supervise the opening of other sites.... For this reason I went to explore the region of the volcanoes called the Mulera and I found a nice hill where my two colleagues, Matter and Monnier, are settled with their families."

Father had been placed in charge of the Ruanda mission work by the European Division of Seventh-day Adventists so he often needed to make trips away from Gitwe. About the time the work was starting at Gitwe (1921), A. A. Matter came from British East Africa and joined the Ruanda workers. He and Bro. Monnier first started mission work at Mohasi lake near Uganda. But the site was considered suspicious because it was too close to the border. So they were advised to move further inland in Ruanda.

Another place was found between two Catholic missions, Rwaza and Nyunda at the foot of Rwankeri Mountain in the region of the Virunga volcanos.\* The altitude there was 7,600 ft. in an area teeming with people. Rwankeri mission was pegged out, an application made and the grant received.

The two brethren, Monnier and Matter, set to work together though not for long as the Matter family went on furlough. That left Henri Monnier alone except for his little girl, Olive, his only white companion. He had been too lonely to have her away from him.

Father would often make trips to Rwankeri to help Bro. Monnier in his pioneer work and to encourage him. It was a 3-day trip by foot one way. On one of these occasions, father found him ill and utterly lonely and homesick. To consult with Division headquarters would entail weeks or months of correspondence. A decision was needed immediately. Father ordered Bro. Monnier to pack his suitcase, take his little girl with him and return to Switzerland for medical attention and - above all else, not to return until he had found another helpmate. He did just that and came back one year later, married to a nice lady, Olga Pavlov, a nurse and Bible worker. They were determined to work harder than ever and the lapse of years proved their resolve. The Monniers settled at Rwankeri for awhile and were soon joined by the Matter family who had returned from furlough.

At Gitwe, work was proceeding nicely. There were several projects going on at the same time. Materials for a permanent house were being gathered - such as bricks, tiles and stone. Also a church was being planned and the spiritual work was not neglected. There was translating to be done (the Gospels first). The educational work moved along steadily. To help with that, several teachers from Kirinda followed the Delhove family in their move from Kirinda. They were a boon to the beginning work at Gitwe. One especially, Mose Segatwa, who had been left in charge of Kirinda station by the retreating German missionaries, decided to be an Adventist. Another was Lazaro Muruho.

Another kind of work was begun beside those already mentioned. Father installed a small dispensary where, for awhile in the mornings, the sick were attended to. Also when emergencies arose, he would be called at any time, day or night. I remember on more than

\* See appendix for maps of Ruanda-Urundi and the Congo.



occasion his going out in the middle of the night to help some worker's or teacher's wife having a difficult delivery.

Once, seeing a funeral procession in the valley, he stopped what he was doing and taking one of the new believers with him, went to meet the wailing villagers. He asked the leader where they were going.

"Over there," the leader responded, pointing to the rocky outcropping where bodies were thrown. "There, to throw this corpse to the hyenas on the 'hill of skull' (Gitwe)."

Father commanded that the convoy detour and bring the corpse to the mission. There he made them open the reed-wrapped body revealing a young Mututsi girl about the age of twelve. She had died, they said, of "cough." Right there father preached to them about what happens when people die and that there is a better way of treating bodies - by burial rather than throwing them to animals to be disposed of.

I was present and about the same age as that Mututsi girl. I couldn't forget that scene. It was there that I made up my mind to be a medical missionary to help prevent these unnecessary deaths. That death and also Sister Monnier's tragic death made a great impact on my life.

\* \* \*

Another unforgettable experience happened to father when he and a group of porters were on a return trip to Gitwe, bringing supplies for mission buildings. Not all the surrounding Africans were pleased with this white man who dared to occupy their Gitwe hill. Nothing had happened to him because of it and the work was progressing. But - they determined to do away with him.

As father and the group of porters passed through a narrow valley, a blood-curdling yell announced the approach of a horde of Africans sweeping down the slopes, dressed for battle and brandishing spears.

What was he to do? At a time like this, it can only be the Spirit of God that can lead the courageous and trusting missionary and give him the presence of mind as to what to do.

Father, with a prayer in his heart and with full assurance that his God would protect him, turned to face that horde. He strode determinedly up the slopes toward them. They stopped in their tracks in surprise.

Father, with uplifted arm, shouted, "What are you men doing" What do you mean by this intrusion? How dare you disturb a servant of the living God who is doing His business?! Stand where you are!.... Now drop your spears."

Then father, turning to his porters who were grey with fear, he told them, "You may return to your homes. Because of these men who have disturbed us this way, they will carry my loads the rest of the way!"

The porters, with no urging, scattered and vanished. The awed warriors meekly picked up the loads destined for Gitwe.

\* \* \*

For the most part, however, life fell into a simple routine. While father was busy with his work, mother had her hands full with her growing family. She usually supervised the care of the vegetable garden and the numerous flower beds in front of and around the house. Gardens were a must if we wanted vegetables on the table. Even potatoes were grown. Other food like flour, salt, sugar, rice and such staples had to be ordered from overseas. We might have to wait six months or so for their arrival. There was not much European food in the country in those days.

My sister Lucy and I, being the oldest, had plenty to do to help with the care of our younger sisters. We also helped everywhere we could (or should I say, were assigned to do). Oh, I remember planting many trees, as black wattle and eucalyptus. We also had a turn at helping make the mud mortar that father used for laying the bricks for the permanent house.

Our education was not neglected. Father supervised that. He had an unique way of teaching us. He would take a book, a geography or history of Belgium, or other book, for example. After looking at the number of pages, he would assign so many months for the book. After a certain period, he would tell us there would be a test in so many days - or weeks, written or oral. Then we would be on our own. Too bad if we "played the fool" one day - we had to catch up the next. He did not have time to sit and spoon-feed us. He taught us to figure things out for ourselves. It is something I have always been thankful for.

Yes, there were times when we needed help, especially in arithmetic. Oh, those problems were to me something of a nightmare. He would explain to me once, then send me back to figure them out. If I still could not find the solution, in the evening he would explain again - until I understood. He was patient but at the same time he made us feel he expected us to try our utmost by ourselves first. His principle also applied to words. Instead of telling us the meaning, he would say, "Look it up in the dictionary."

While father took care of our 3 R's, mother saw to it that we learned cooking, sewing, housekeeping, baby care, etc. In religion both parents shared. No matter how busy everyone was, we always had family worship.

The way I was taught proved a great blessing to me as I grew older - even away from home, then as a medical worker alone in the mission field. I had learned to 'figure things out for myself' and to look for the solutions in the proper books.

Soon after the temporary house was built, father started the permanent one. This one was made of burned bricks, stones and kiln-made tiles for the roof. It had eleven rooms plus a corridor and a verandah at the back - and served the family better.

Our furniture was made from packing boxes and crates; the tables, chairs, bookcases, shelves, etc. Mother had brought her favorite rocking chair from Belgium, also a little pump organ and a cook stove. Aside from those, we relied on what was at hand locally.

For heavy carpentry some Africans were trained to cut boards in the forest with a two-man saw. Father was fortunate to have learned a few tips from his grandfather. Also, father was a very resourceful person.

When the permanent brick church was being built, father was working so hard to finish it before the rainy season that one day he collapsed of exhaustion. But after a rest of a day or two, he was back at work. No one could keep him down long. He was always in a hurry.

All this dedication and diligence bore fruitage. In 1922 the first baptism at Gitwe took place. The next day father wrote this letter:

"All Gitwe is rejoicing today and also the choir of heaven is singing the most beautiful melodies to show their appreciation of the few souls (for there are five of them) who were buried with their Lord in the watery grave. Out of the 24 who presented themselves..... only those five were found fully prepared..... forsaking sin and to lead a new life blessed by the Holy Spirit. Among those five who were baptised yesterday there were three of the Kirinda Mission. They bore their testimonies before many of their countrymen when I gave them a week's holiday after my permanent house was built. They were ridiculed for one thing, of being baptized again or of not eating certain meats and for observing Sabbaths like Jews, but they remained staunch.

Our baptismal service took place in a nice pool a mile from our station. There was a great attendance, even one white young missionary from Kirinda.

"Today, Sabbath, those five souls partook of the service of humility and the Lord's supper.

With these five believers, the church of Gitwe has laid its foundation. They will be the means of bringing others to Jesus. It would gladden your hearts to hear these converted ones preach the Gospel. Now that I have a few baptized ones it will not be long until I start outschool work in order to reach those who do not come regularly either because of distance or fear of ridicule. A missionary who sees his work crowned with success in such a manner can but rejoice and be fully encouraged to further the preaching of the Gospel.

Our aim is to speed on the work in this country."

signed - D. E. Delhove

The spell of the curse was vanishing from Gitwe after the first year. The hill was becoming a hill of blessings. Soon there were more baptisms. I was in the second group in 1923. When the number of baptized reached 22, a church was organized.

In 1922 father made a trip to British East Africa to attend some committee meetings where some representatives from Europe were. There at Gendia Mission he was ordained to the Gospel ministry. He was forty years old.

\*\*\*\*\*

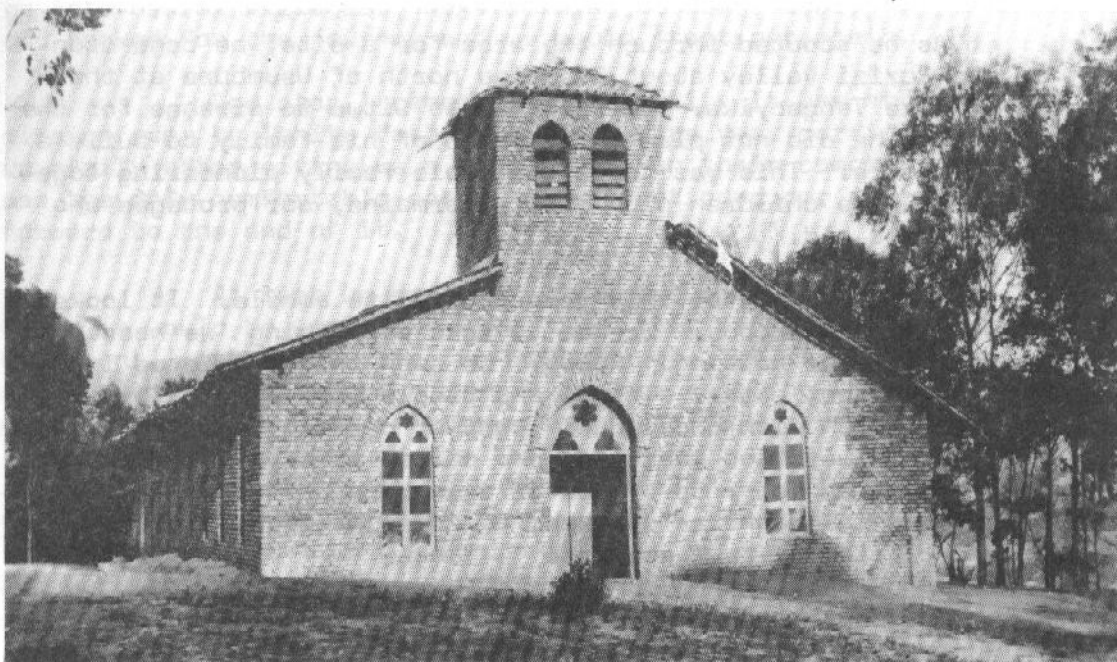
April 1924 was an eventful year for the Delhove family. A baby boy was born, joining his four sisters. He was named Jean-François. He made a bit more work in a busy household but nobody minded! African servants helped with the heavy outdoor chores, also the laundry as that was done by hand. And they brought the wood for the kitchen stove. But the housework and cooking was all done by family members.

Around this time two brethren from the Union of South Africa paid us a visit. One of them, seeing the Delhove family of five children and he with not one, wanted to adopt one of us.

Father looked at mother later that evening and asked her, "If we did that, which one would YOU give up?" Neither of them was interested! They both loved their big family and each one of us was special.

Even an African chief had noticed father's growing family. I had just turned twelve when one day he came with a request. He wanted to 'buy' me to be one of his wives. I would be his 'favorite', he said. Would twelve cows be all right? This time I was not as scared as when we were going through Dakar several years before. But it did not strike me as 'funny' - not then. Come to think of it, though - twelve cows was not cheap in those days!

We had been at Gitwe for a little over four years. Much had been accomplished. It was during that year (1924) that Elder W. D. Read from the European Division, visited the Ruanda field. He was the first visitor from the 'outside.' Many plans were discussed and the brethren (including the ones from Rwankeri) were happy to have counsel. It was Elder Read's opinion that the time had come to start a third mission station in that field.



First Gitwe Church (unfinished) - 1924



A log for building construction

Ruanda cattle

## CHAPTER 7

### PIONEERING IN URUNDI

Two mission stations were firmly established - Gitwe and Rwankeri. With the return of the A.A. Matters, the brethren felt a third mission could be opened - this one in Urundi. The plan was for Bro. Monnier to direct the work at Gitwe while the Matters stayed at Rwankeri. Father was to pioneer the work in Urundi.

As he scouted through the area for a site, he came upon a spot in the Ruzizi valley about 39 miles north of Usumbura at the north end of lake Tanganyika. He returned to Gitwe to arrange for the move. This time he did not plan to go ahead of his family to build a temporary structure. This was to be the whole family pioneering together. We were five children plus little Germaine, our protégée who was then six years old.

Preparations for this trip took quite awhile. It looked more and more like an exodus. We had to take everything we needed, even several tents for housing. Roads? No such things existed in those days - only foot paths. Things and people were carried by African porters, each with individual loads of certain specific weight. If things were too large for one porter to carry, the load was tied to a pole and carried by two or even more porters. People were also carried in 'machilas' (a kind of grass hammock) tied to two poles and carried by four porters.

Our departure from Gitwe was April 1925. The children were carried two in a machila. Mother had a special one made like a chair. She held little one-year old John on her lap. Father rode his mule or walked.

Being carried in those machilas was not always pleasant. Sometimes going down steep slopes we'd find ourselves at a very steep angle and having to 'hang on' for dear life. Or worse, being thrown out of the basket when some porter would stumble or slip. When mother would find sometimes, that the swing was a little too uncomfortable, she preferred walking for awhile. (She was expecting a baby in five months). She was wonderfully courageous.

The terrain over which we travelled? Most of it was mountainous, sometimes quite rugged. We would travel round and round, up and down one valley after another. Yes, it was tiring. But I don't remember any of us getting sick during the five days we were on the way. I remember quite a bit of the trip as I was fourteen then. On we walked - and walked.

After every few hours the caravan would stop. Father would visit the chief of a village for permission to camp on the outskirts and for providing shelter for the porters. Then the tents, several of them, were pitched and camp made. Father would also ask

the chief for some fresh cows milk. He would request that they bring them to be milked right there in our presence. We wanted to be sure nothing was added to the milk - that it was really fresh. Yes, we paid for it. (Note - Ruanda cows did not produce much milk. That is the reason several of them had to be brought to give us sufficient.)

As evening approached, everyone settled for the night most of us on camp cots and under mosquito nets. The Africans would go into nearby villages. Next morning at dawn, everything was folded and packed for the journey and we would start out again.

One stop I remember quite well. It was at a Catholic mission run by 'white fathers.' They were very cordial and put us up cozily after giving us a nice supper in their company. But that was the only comfortable spot. As we continued our journey we looked forward to the end of it.

At last we arrived at the future Buganda mission. We hoped it would be something like Gitwa. It proved to be altogether different. The first thing we noticed was that it was hotter. Then after pitching the tents and when we were settling for the night, we noticed something else - funny noises outside - grunting, sniffing - like animals going around the tents; backing away, then returning, scratching, trying to get in. It was really scary! But no one dared go outside in the dark to find out. We hoped the many pegs father had put to hold the tents had been driven hard into the ground and were holding out whatever was trying to get in!

I do not remember what was said or when I finally went to sleep but I know one thing, we certainly prayed hard - for protection. Next morning, tracks of huge leopards were found all around. They had been trying to find an opening in the tents to sneak under. We realized how close to death we had been because leopards can tear a tent or make a hole under it if hungry enough. But angels of the Lord had surrounded and encamped around us that night.

As the days went by we were to find out that the country was infested with these unusually fierce and bold huge-sized leopards. These animals usually hunt and roam at dusk or dawn under cover of darkness. But these leopards were not afraid of anything, attacking beasts or people sometimes in the middle of the day. They are treacherous animals. They crouch behind a bush or low in the grass, then pounce upon their victims just like cats upon mice. (We were plagued by them for some time.)

Father realized the dangerous situation he and his family were in. He lost no time, first in strengthening the outside of the tents and putting out traps, also hastening to build a temporary house.

Meanwhile as soon as the sun went down in the west, everybody was forbidden to step outside, not even to the outhouse. During the day nobody was to wander far from the place and certainly - to avoid the tall grass where one of these monsters could be hiding. The immediate surroundings were levelled of grass and bushes for quite a distance.

I remember one time, in the middle of the day, a group of Africans coming and shouting, "A leopard is caught in a trap!"

Not knowing how fast the trap was holding, father ordered us children inside the house and to stay there, as a wounded animal is extremely dangerous. The trap was in our planted corn field not far from the house. Father took his gun, approached the leopard and "put him to sleep." He was caught in the trap by only three toes!

Father was not a hunter. He did not like to kill animals unnecessarily. But in the first years at Buganda he certainly had to get rid of several of these leopards.

I do not remember how long father took to gather materials to build a temporary house but he wasted no time. Unlike Gitwe, he found materials closer to the building site. It didn't seem too long before we felt a bit more secure - so we thought.....

Yet, one morning early I went into a back room which father was using for his carpentry work. I was looking for some shavings to start the kitchen wood stove. After a minute or two I heard some 'funny noises' and realized that I was not alone. Quickly grabbing a handful of what I needed, I hurried to tell father about the noise - that it was louder than rats scurrying around.

Father brought his gun. I followed at a little distance. There hiding and stretched out behind some planks, was a python. It was stretched the whole length of one wall and part of another. Its head was by the door where I had stepped in and out! It was trying to go outside when the bullet silenced it. It measured 20 feet in length!

Father wanted to have the snake skinned to make into purses or shoes or whatever, but he could find no local African to do that. He discovered that these reptiles were worshipped. The natives claimed they were gods and that there was a huge one in lake Tanganyika. They were afraid even to touch a dead one. No wonder there were so many around the place! A native from Ruanda helped skin it.



The Burundi natives learned by and by that animals are not gods nor the spirits of ancestors - and that the only serpent to be feared is the one called the devil and Satan. So here again, the missionary and his helpers from Ruanda found a lot to do. There were many interested ones who attended school and services. Before long some were abandoning their bad habits and heathen beliefs for a faith in Christ.

Well, this was not the end of our 'animal adventures' that first year in Urundi. Some little fellows sneaked in on us, insidiously, without warning and revealed themselves with a bang. I am talking about the 'beasts' of malaria. All of a sudden I felt very sick.... unable to stand on my feet. I collapsed - then do not remember anything, only what my parents told me afterwards.

Within a short time I was totally unconscious, then violently delirious and the fever kept rising - to 106° axilla - with no let up. For three days father sat by my bedside with cold wet sheets, trying to bring the fever down. I could not keep anything down in my stomach. All he could do beside these treatments was to pray, beseeching the Lord to spare his daughter whom he had dedicated to His service when I was born.

Well, since I am writing this story, it follows that prayers were answered, miraculously it seems, as the only sequela of this massive cerebral malaria attack has been recurrent headaches. When I came back to consciousness, father exclaimed, "Praise the Lord, Lydie! I thought we had lost you!"

Soon after this incident, mother's time to deliver her sixth baby came near. That was something else for her husband to 'worry' about. What to do? The nearest doctor was three days march away. If he took mother to Usumbura to the doctor, where would they stay? And what would they do with the children? He decided to do his best, promising the Lord he would give Him the money he would have to pay a doctor, should there have been one in the vicinity.

The day came October 23, 1925. Within a few hours the delivery was over and a second boy joined the family. They named him Paul. In spite of being in a most abnormal birth position, there had been no delay even though he was a big baby.

As soon as it was over, father called me. "Well, Lydie, we promised that since you want to be a nurse, you could take this baby to care for like your very own. Come now and give him his first bath and help me fix mother."

Oh, the joy of that time! For six months little Paul was all mine to love and care for - until I had to leave home to go to boarding school. My parents sensed how much that would mean to me at age 14. I enjoyed every minute of it.

A day or so after the delivery a doctor touring the country paid us a surprise visit. As he chatted with my father and heard of the episode of the day before, he was astonished that there had been no complications, considering the malposition. He told father that he was a lucky man. Lucky? As usual father gave God all the credit.

The year 1926 came. It was now seven years since leaving Europe with continuous service and an overdue furlough. The replacement promised was delayed. We kept waiting and hoping for the promise to materialize. Meanwhile father kept busy.

Then again the 'bugs' of malaria visited us. Several of the younger children came down, one after another with convulsions. The older members of the family could hardly keep up with the tepid baths and wet sheets. One would be over the malaria when another would be stricken. Oh, how I remember that trying time as I helped to save my brother and younger sisters. The Lord again heard the prayers of his servant.

But father said, "That is enough. I've got to get my family out of this malarial country at once, before I have to bury any of them." \*

So waiting no longer for replacement, father called in a Ruanda native worker and put him in charge of the mission. I do not know the name of this Ruanda missionary, but according to a letter father wrote, he quoted him as being a wonderful man as evidenced by the good work he did while the white missionary was away for a year. There were several candidates ready for baptism and the work at Buganda was prospering.

With arrangements made for the care of the mission station, April 1926 saw the Delhove family on their way to Belgium via the East coast of Africa, after crossing Tanganyika by train to Dar Es Salaam. The sudden change of climate from very hot to cool Marseille (France) re-activated the malaria which was still in some of us. Upon reaching Brussels even father was sick for several days.

\* Note: Several years later a new mission station was chosen at a higher elevation, called Ndora, because Buganda proved to be too unhealthy for European missionaries. However it is still an outschool and local district for that area.

While on furlough father travelled to the British Union committee (mission board) meetings, then he was appointed a delegate to the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists which was held in Milwaukee, Wisc. U.S.A.

That summer (1926) father placed me in our Adventist school at Stanborough Park, England. He had looked so well after my education while doing the numerous pioneer jobs, that it was to his credit that I was not behind the others of my age.

In 1927 my sister Lucy joined me in England. The rest of the family prepared to return to Africa. During this furlough father took the course in Tropical Medicine in Belgium. He then had better knowledge of how to treat malaria and other tropical diseases.

The family now reduced to four children, went back to Urundi. Along with them were some new recruits, Bro. M. Duploux and his wife, Rachel (a nurse) with their child, from France.

At Buganda the work was divided. Bro. Duploux took care of the books and medical work and was kept busy with the sleeping sickness raging in the valley. (He also had the diploma in Tropical Medicine). Father had his hands full of everything else that confronts a missionary - such as teaching, preaching, building, overseeing, carpenter work - well, a 'jack of all trades,' so to speak. Thus the two men with their Banyarunda teachers and helpers teamed together for the advancement of the work at Buganda for a few months.

In April 1928, the first baptism took place at Buganda. There were four candidates: Munyankiko Ezekiel, Gaza Simeon, Debora (whose husband was already baptized), and Matsuri Job (the first Murundi). The baptism took place in the river Kaburantura. Needless to say this made the missionaries very happy.

A letter from father dated Dec. 24, 1927 mentioned that the missionaries were still plagued by the leopards. A pet dog was killed right under their noses, also goats, sheep and a mission boy barely escaped - all in broad daylight. The superstitious local natives believed that evil spirits entered the bodies of these animals and that they were sent by witch-doctors to retaliate on their enemies.

Also mentioned was a certain chief Mabeya who was coming to the Sabbath services with his retinue, one day a total of 188 persons. Included were the students of the two outschools, Mutunguka and Rwagalika, which had been opened two weeks before.

In January 1928, the Duplouys moved to Gitwe to help Bro. Monnier prepare some teachers for outschool work. They stayed there several months. Father and mother were again alone with their children, but Bro. Duploux had trained the natives in the dispensary work.

The year of 1928 saw father on the road quite a bit, going from one place to another. For one thing he had to try to put in his one month of practical apprenticeship in a government hospital and laboratory in order to qualify for full status as Agent Sanitaire (after taking the Tropical Medicine course), therefore enabling him to get free medicines and permission to administer them.

He would start at Kitega and be interrupted - would have to meet an emergency there, then continue for another few days - and so on for several times. He finally finished his one month 'stage.'

Fortunately that year, he acquired a faster mode of travel, a motorbike. (His mule had died of sleeping sickness). There was a road of sorts by then, between several main towns. But when I read some of the experiences he had trying to get from here to there, it is amazing that he didn't kill himself or sustain permanent injury. There were hills, bumps, extremely sharp turns, potholes, drenching rains, rivers without bridges. Several times the motorbike slid from under him, going into the ravine. One time such an accident resulted in a severe wrenched shoulder but - he would pick up the pieces and go on!

Other missionaries, like Bro. Monnier, also had motorbikes.

\* \* \*

One of the interruptions mentioned above was an urgent letter from Bro. Monnier, saying he was "not well at all" and was requesting furlough. So father on his motorbike, covered the nine stages (relays) in less than 24 hours from Kitega to Gitwe (approximately 100 miles). Along the way he met Dr..... who told him that Monnier was very tired and overworked. So, arrangements were made for the family to go on furlough within a month.

When someone is at the head of a mission field or area like father was, he never knew what kind of emergency might arise which would demand his immediate decision. This was especially so when it took so long to contact headquarters, which in our case, was in Europe.

With the Monniers having to leave Gitwe, some re-arranging of the workers was necessary. So the Duplouys who had been at Gitwe helping out, were assigned to return to Buganda and the Delhoves would go to Gitwe.

A letter dated June 6, 1928 and written from Buganda says:

".....we are waiting for 170 porters promised to us. As soon as they arrive, we will be on our way..... Your mother is courageous to undertake the journey alone with the little ones, through the forest while I go around the long way with the

"motorbike via Kitega. I would prefer we go together but past experiences with the bike through the forest made us abandon the idea..... "

Another letter dated June 16, 1928 was from Gitwe:

"..... leaving Buganda the 10th, mother and the children, also Germaine, went up via Mabeya and through the forest to arrive at Gitwe Friday the 16th. Had good porters from Nanguka, worked well without delays. During that time I rode approximately 260 miles in 2½ days, going through Usumbura, Kitega, Mgozi and Nyanza, arriving at Gitwe June 12th.....

Quickly I took over the supervision of the mission... and getting the house ready for the family, the same one we built several years ago. (Note: the house that had eleven rooms a large veranda). The Duplouys left yesterday for Buganda. Pretty soon we'll be back into the routine mission work....."

(Routine? Not quite.....)\*

Mother's courage was noticeable. For instance, in father's letter dated September 27, 1928, to my sister Lucy and me who were in Europe written from Gitwe:

"..... We are just back from a trip to Rwankeri, for meetings with the other brethren. Mother went with the four children by caravan, stopping at Ranimba, Kanago and Rwankeri. She had a good trip without too much inconvenience, and was able to find some poshes (food), although small for her 60 porters. Taking four days on the road....

As for me, I left Gitwe a day after they did as there were injections to be given to a large crowd of patients who come every week for treatment. Got to Nyanza that day, already losing a part from motorbike. Next day to Kigali (capital of Ruanda), making a few calls - postoffice, hospital, Governor's residence and some other business, then on to Mulera (Mulera was the name of the region of Rwankeri often mentioned in those early days). A few difficulties encountered on the long high precipitous hills. Just before getting there, numerous boulders to circumvent, sometimes finding myself head-first on the edge of the ravine. No bridges across rivers, well, numerous incidents which would take too long to write about. But I did arrive in one piece. The last day had to walk as I had used too much fuel.

We had three wonderful days at Rwankeri, breathing wonderful cool air (altitude there is 7,600 ft.) with meetings and association with workers. Then came the return back to Gitwe using the same route as going. I had more trouble than previously, fell down a ravine with the machine. Finally had to abandon it at Kabgaya (few hours walk from Gitwe). Got some

\* (Note: words in brackets are my own).

"porters to carry me the rest of the way, but at one place, these accidentally slipped and I was thrown out, causing a most painful left shoulder dislocation. Oh, how it hurt for many hours afterwards.

I arrived at Gitwe alone, in the middle of the night, with no prepared food. Oh, how I missed mother! Where was she?

Mother and the children returned home a day later, having had a good and almost normal trip except for some baggage falling into the river and a box lost or delayed (one arrived ten days later). Oh yes, there were many chiggers in the rest camps!"\*

\* What are chiggers? Tiny flea-like insects that burrow themselves into warm-blooded animals or humans (usually in the feet). As they swell with eggs, they become pea-size tumors, causing quite a bit of trouble at times, especially when numerous. Infection may set in, causing abscesses. They are usually found in dry and sandy places in many tropical countries. They are nothing to laugh about and one must try to remove them before they swell up full of eggs. Removal is done with a needle or pin. One is conscious of them because they cause such itching when they enter the skin.

\* \* \* \*

In father's letter, he also mentions getting back to the work of finishing the Gitwe church, painting the windows inside with white and the outside in green. Also plans were made anticipating some quarterly meetings of several hundreds at the church and about 20 baptisms in the Kikarabiro stream. Father sounded happy to see the work going forward and more souls interested in knowing the Lord and leaving their evil habits.

In 1929 a new missionary couple, a certain Bro. Johnson and his wife arrived at Gitwe (don't know their country of origin). In no time at all, they were "learning the ropes" of mission work and life. My parents enjoyed their company and help.

In 1929 a car road was built from Usumbura to Nyanza and the government abolished the custom of loads carried on porters' heads in that section. Later on, other roads were built criss-crossing other areas. Thus automobiles 'invaded the land.' Civilization was entering this part of the world. Father got rid of his motorbike, to the relief of us all.

Before leaving the story of Ruanda-Urundi, mention must be made of the great famine of 1927-1928, caused by drought. The government tried to alleviate the misery by providing extra funds for food which missionaries of different faiths distributed among the most needy. Some areas were worse than others.

1929 was a year that brought other changes, too - for the Ruanda-Urundi mission field and for the Delhove family. There had been much growth and many changes in the ten years since our arrival in 1919. The three mission stations were adding members all the time to the church. This in spite of what some government officials had predicted.

At the beginning of the work in Ruanda, it had been said that Delhove would probably not have much success because of his religion which was too severe, demanding strict observances to precepts; perhaps impossible for converts to put into practice. But as time went on, it was proven how wrong their predictions were. \*

Also Europeans had not been neglected. While father was in Ruanda he distributed Bibles to many government officials with the result that a few were reading them on a regular basis.

\*Note: At the time of writing, Ruanda, although a small country, has had for a number of years, one of the densest concentrations of Seventh-day Adventists in Africa.



Delhoves and Duplouys 1927

## CHAPTER 8

### A CHANGE IN THE MAKING

1929 was a year of reorganization, bringing changes in the Ruanda-Urundi mission field and for the Delhoves.

Ten years had elapsed since the Adventist mission work opened in Ruanda with my father in charge. The headquarters for this work was in Europe. Communicating back and forth had been difficult with long delays in mail service, sometimes taking weeks and even months. Because of this, often the missionaries had to rely on their best judgment in emergency situations. Thus the leader of the local work had a much greater burden of responsibility than did leaders in later years when communications were better and faster.

Father was aware of the burden put on his shoulders but he carried his duties to the best of his ability, saying more than once, "I'm glad I have help from above that I can turn to when making decisions."

A major change came when the Ruanda-Urundi mission field was transferred from the European Division to the African Division with its headquarters at Cape Town in South Africa. C. W. Bozarth was appointed to be superintendent of the Ruanda-Urundi Union Mission Field.

In a letter dated March 7, 1929 father mentioned the visit by brethren Bozarth and Dick, also the several days of meetings and the organizational changes. Father seemed relieved to have only his one mission station (Gitwe) to care for. The responsibility for the other missions was on someone else's shoulders. He also mentioned Bro. Johnson helping him greatly in all the mission work, even in some areas he was not familiar with, like learning to give intravenous injections and taking care of the dispensary. They got along well together.

On April 26, 1929 father wrote about the government pegging out the auto road from Nyanza to Rubengera, which would pass through Gitwe. The government hoped it would be ready to carry trucks back and forth between those points in about two months. The country was truly getting "civilized" - was no longer isolated.

The missionaries kept busy even though they were now two on the station. In between times father was preparing a syllabus for the first three years of school. He mentions liking this kind of work very much as it gave him opportunity to improve himself in the native language and to learn many new words. But it was also a work of patience and perseverance. He wrote: "One must not take offense at being corrected by the Africans if a word is not well chosen or if pronounced incorrectly."



Mother had taken a black orphan baby into the home, trying to save him from starvation. He eventually did survive and was in my parents' care for some time. Mother also had a group of women and girls for regular sewing lessons. She did this at other stations, too; often using one of her children as translator. (Mother never became fluent in the native languages, as did my father.)

In May of that year (1929) father was getting ready to go to the African Division Council to be held at Solusi Mission near Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. He would leave his family and the Johnsons at Gtwe for awhile. Unknown to him, he was to be absent much longer than anticipated. I quote from his letter:

"I leave tomorrow for Bulawayo. Here is my itinerary. Nyanza, Butare, Kanyaru, Ngozi, Mubukeya, Katara and Usumbura, staying one day at each place, spending Sabbath at the Kanyaru. Hope to get a boat on schedule which will take me in two days to Albertville, then one day to Kabalo and four days to Bukama and two days to Elizabethville (May 25th), then perhaps 3-4 days to Bulawayo. The meetings are to be held the 14th to 24th of June.

Bro. Bozarth wants to see me as soon as possible.

I have divided the work among the seven main teachers, Mose, Lazaro, Yohana, Daniel, Enok, Elaezer and Paolo; each having his district to be responsible for the supervision of his outschools and the preaching services on Sabbaths. I am trusting everything will run smoothly as Johnson takes care of things."

June 24, writing from Bulawayo he describes the 21 days of meetings at Solusi Mission. How he enjoyed these spiritual feasts and the association with other brethren and workers. The committee meetings were where appointments or assignments of workers were discussed, as well as policies of the church and many things pertaining to the advancement of the work in the African Division.

Father wrote that the wake-up bell rang at 6:30 a.m. but that long before that, when at the second cock's crow, he would be up and about, taking his walk and communing with his God for awhile. Then he would return to the hut in time for the wake-up bell and getting ready for breakfast.

This early morning devotion was the pattern of his life as he would write to me: "My first thoughts are for my Saviour." If he was not doing it while walking, he did it in the privacy of his home while the family was still asleep.

Bro. Duploux was also a delegate at the council. At this time he was appointed secretary-treasurer of the new union mission field of Ruanda-Urundi, working with C. W. Bozarth.

Also a change was in the offing for the Delhoves. They were to leave Ruanda-Urundi to go to the Congo Union mission field with headquarters at Elisabethville. Father's assignment: to be in charge of the southern part of that field with its outschools, also to work quite a bit among the Europeans in that area. He was to be "Représentant Légal des Adventistes du septième jour" (Legal Representative of S.D.A. in the Congo). He wasn't to begin until later in the year. But in the meanwhile, he was to visit certain areas in the Congo.

In a letter July 1, 1929 he wrote:

"Here I am at Elisabethville but wishing I could leave tomorrow with Bro. Duploux who is returning home. But cannot do so because I have been assigned to this new field of the Congo and it is good for me to spend a few days with the workers here, to get acquainted with the needs of this field as I know great responsibilities will rest upon my head and I must be ready to bear them..... We will have meetings in a few days..... meanwhile I busy myself learning the Chibemba language of this area. I shall probably speak more in Kiswahili, but I want to know it (Chibemba) also, so as to get closer to the natives...."

July 13, 1929..... "I have gone through the Chibemba grammar. All I need now is to practice speaking which is the most important..... I have been asked by the brethren of the Congo Union Mission, Curtis and Wilson, to help in an interview with the Governor of the province of Katanga, for a concession to build a mission in the region of Sakania (near the border of Northern Rhodesia) to enable us to take care of the ten or so outschools we have in the area. But no matter how much we plead (all in French as I was the speaker) the Governor was not to be moved in his decision to have only Catholics in that area. Not only he denied our petition, he also tried to discredit our mission - that we already had three of them in the province and we ought to take better care of them, as we had not shown much progress yet.....

I tried to explain to him our doctrines as he seemed to link us with the "Watch Towers" movement which was abolished in the country.....but I did not succeed in convincing him..... I heard later that this high official and others were under the total domination of the Catholic Bishop. What the latter said, they had to do.....

Tomorrow I am leaving for Sakania to visit some of the outschool teachers. I shall return in a few days..... will go by train and return the same way. While here I have visited a

mine camp where Africans working in the copper (and other minerals) mines live. Have found several hundreds of Ruanda and Urundi fallows so was glad to talk to them and others. Wherever I go, the Gospel seeds are sown. The mines provide good housing and care for their workers....."

The next two letters are about his long trip to several mission stations in the Congo, accompanying Elder Kern of the General Conference (in the U.S.A.) and C. W. Curtis, the president of the Congo Union - this to help in campmeetings.

First at Elisabethville he attended committee meetings to get acquainted with the field, the workers and the problems of the Union as pretty soon he would be part of them.

Then he went to Songa Mission in the Katanga province, 400 miles from Elisabethville, travelling by train to Kamina where Bro. R. L. Jones met them. He took them by car 100 miles to Songa (via Sungu Mungu). They encountered much difficulty travelling after dark as the car lights had failed. Father lay on the roof of the car holding a flashlight on the so-called road. (He was sick after that night of exposure but didn't tell anybody).

At Songa they met Dr. H. Sturges who had started medical work there. They had a good campmeeting for several days and baptized seventy who were ready to become Seventh-day Adventists. The baptism was in the Lulelwe river at the bottom of the hill from Songa Mission. Father had his turns at preaching which he did in Kiswahili as at Songa there was another language he did not know. But all speeches were translated into the local language - in this case, Kiluba.

On the return trip to Kamina, Dr. Sturges took the travellers in his car. No trouble was encountered in the 100-mile trip of 3½ hours. Arriving at the station, Elder Kern discovered that a piece of luggage was missing - forgotten in a corner of his room at the mission! What to do? An idea.....since the train was leaving only the next day, it was worth trying.

Dr. Sturges lost no time in returning to the mission with his car (late afternoon by then). Finding the forgotten attaché case, he assigned a trusted man to take it by bicycle to the waiting brethren. The messenger's name? Soldier Kanjanga.\*

Soldier pedaled all night, alone - covering the 100 miles in record time, in spite of the darkness and wild beasts (there were lions in that area.) He arrived in time, before the train was to leave.

\* Soldier was a worker and minister for many years, in the Congo and in his own country, Nyasaland. At the time of this writing, he is still living and retired in his own country.

At the station, the waiting brethren met Bro. O. U. Giddings who was going to Songa to pick up his belongings as he was being transferred to the Rhodesia field. It was his work that father would be taking. Bro. F. M. Robinson was also on his way north to take father's work at Gitwe. At Kabalo, Robinson took another train going east while our three travellers continued north to Kongolo.

At Kongolo, missionary R. P. Robinson (no relation to F.M. Robinson) met them, having brought with him three bicycles to take them to his mission, Kikamba, twenty miles away. He did not have a car, so thought the next best thing would be bicycles. Since they were going to be there for only a short visit, they left their baggage with a trusted merchant at Kongolo.

At Kikamba mission, they met Mrs. R. P. Robinson and their two children, Grace and Leonard. After the two-day camp-meeting, they were again on the 'hop' back to Kongolo. From that point they returned to Ruanda, via Kabalo, Albertville, Usumbura, Buganda and arrived finally at Gitwe, August 16th. Father had been gone for over three months.

The decade of pioneering under primitive conditions in central Africa was ending. All Africa was changing. The Delhoves were caught up in these changes as they planned for their move to the southern part of the Belgian Congo.



Father  
on a trip

## CHAPTER 9

### TO SOUTHERN CONGO

When father arrived home at Gitwe August 12, 1929 after three months absence, he found that mother had already done quite a bit of packing. My sister Lucy, home from her schooling at Collonges in France, had also helped. As soon as they had word about a move to the Congo, they wasted no time in gathering boxes and crates, sorting out what they wanted to take along and what they would leave behind for other missionaries to use. There was much excitement. Everybody was looking forward to the move. After all, they were going to a city - Elisabethville!

The big departure day was September 1st. They took the same route father had travelled on several occasions. Part of the way was new to mother, the five children and Germaine. (I was still in Europe). With them were two young Ruanda boys, Simeon Lugaragaza and Jared, to help the family.

They travelled by motorcar from Gitwe to Usumbura. That was a luxury. On previous trips they had been carried in machilas by porters. From Usumbura they went on lake Tanganyika by boat, then by train making several changes. Finally the long journey of 1450 miles was completed. It had taken 24 days.

Katanga mission, their destination, was situated about four miles from Elisabethville on the road half-way between Elisabethville and l'Etoile du Congo, a mining place. The mission was also headquarters for the Seventh-day Adventist activities of the area at that time. (Katanga was made an outpost a few years later when the Congo Union Mission headquarters moved into that city, Elisabethville).

When the Delhoves arrived, they stayed a few days at the mission. But due to the shortage of housing, father looked for a place to rent, closer to town if possible, so he would not have so far to go to and from his work. He found a house large enough for his family about midway between the mission and the town. There was a yard all around with space for a garden and grazing for a couple of goats (for milk).

And yes, father bought himself a car, a second-hand one and his first. So - he learned to drive. The other European missionaries each had a car but he could not ask them to take him everywhere he had to go. He was to travel a lot and the bicycle was too tiring and slow for long journeys. For certain trips, as when visiting outschools in the Sakania district, for instance, he would go by train. He would take his bike along, checking it

on the train, so he would have it to use when going from village to village. Some of these trips would keep him away for six weeks or so at a time as he would be contacting some of the church members in isolated villages. He was always accompanied by one or two native workers.

During this time he tried again and on several occasions to obtain a concession for a mission in the region of Sakania. But nothing would budge the government officials from their decision to keep Adventists out of the area. We were "persona non grata." It was Catholic territory and no Adventists or other Protestants were to be allowed into their area - no matter what. They even considered refusing any more permission for new outschools. Some of our church members were mistreated and - at one place, beaten.

Seeing this situation, father wrote to the church leaders that it was futile to try for a Sakania mission and suggested looking elsewhere, like to the north Congo. There were many areas in the country where we would be well received, not only by government officials but also by other religious faiths; also in regions where the name of Jesus had never been heard.

Father worked one year at Elisabethville and was kept busy with native and European work. The family was happy and quickly adjusted to their new environment.

January 1930 was a time of excitement in the home. I arrived from Europe after several years absence, on my way to my first job as missionary-nurse. I was given three months to be with my family before proceeding to Songa mission hospital.

During those years away I had been very ill, undergoing three major surgeries. I had been close to death but, though far from my family, the hospital had kept my parents informed of my progress. Nevertheless, it had been a time of anxiety for them. In spite of it all, there I was, back in Africa and on my way to my first mission assignment!

Father looked at me with tears of joy welling in his eyes. Mother was no less joyful but didn't show her feelings as readily as father. Again, after many years we were together, a complete family - for awhile.

At the end of 1930 the family prepared to go on furlough to the Cape, South Africa. By train from Elisabethville to Cape Town, it would take only 4 to 5 days. But they decided to make an adventure out of it and travel by car. There would be two cars as Elder and Mrs. Curtis were also going on furlough. They would try to stay together, camping together and helping each other if need be.

So the packing began. No trouble for the Curtises. They were just two. But the Delhoves, oh my! Where to put everything and everybody! Two of the children rode with the Curtises. Both cars were of the touring soft-roof models so no baggage could be placed on top. But everywhere else there was a place, they tucked in (or tied on) baggage - under the feet of passengers, on the outside, on the fenders and running boards, tied on both front and rear bumpers - were sacks all over. One could hardly see the color of the car. After all, bedding rolls and some food had to go along as well as wearing apparel. But finally everything was stowed away or tied on - and they were on their way.

They took their time covering the 2000 miles to the Cape, spending part of their furlough on the road. They had a few 'troubles' with one car or the other, but finally, they arrived. The Delhoves settled on the Helderberg College grounds for the remainder of their furlough time.

During that time, in February 1931, father helped in some evangelistic efforts at Claremont, Cape, which was the headquarters for the African Division. This occupied him for several weeks. Before they returned to the Congo, again by car, they enrolled Lucy in the boarding school (Helderberg) to continue her education.

They arrived at Elisabethville only to pack up. At the last committee meeting, father had been appointed director of Songa Mission, 400 miles northwest of Elisabethville and 60 miles from Kamina, the railroad stop. They traveled to Songa by car but sent their belongings by freight train.

Songa Mission, established in 1921 among the Luba tribe, meant yet another language for father to learn - a challenge he always met when entering an area where he had not been. Before long he was acquainted with it, though he was more fluent in Kiswahili, so used that when preaching.

Songa was also a medical station. The first doctor arrived in 1927. Since at this time (1931) he was on furlough, I had been alone for a year taking care of patients - not easy for a young, inexperienced nurse. Diagnosing and treating diseases, confronting difficult obstetrical cases (I wasn't a midwife at that time) made me realize my inadequacies. Now father would be the mission director.

As soon as my family arrived, father said to me, "Lydie, I am mission director, but even so, you have charge of the medical work until another doctor arrives. I will not interfere with your work. Furthermore I will not step into your department unless you ask me to. If you need help that you think I can give, don't be afraid to ask."

He certainly kept his word. I couldn't have wished for a better relationship. On several occasions I did ask for his help. One time was for a neglected obstetrical delivery where I had to remove a dead fetus. He held things for me during the procedure. (Note: the mother lived and I assisted her in live deliveries later).

The government required smallpox vaccination campaigns at times, in an effort to eradicate the disease. When these occasions came around, we (father and I) went together, especially when we had to travel to distant villages far from the mission. He would take time off from his many mission duties to help me. We'd go on our bicycles where the car couldn't go. Yes, we always took native helpers along.

On one occasion, I received a note from a young Pentecostal missionary 180 miles away, to come see his wife who was very ill. Father again said, "I'll take you there in the car."

There was a 'passable' road to Busangu mission. We arrived to find the young bride of three months dead of blackwater fever. The husband was all alone with his grief! We stayed there a day while father made a coffin. Then we transported it to Kamina, quite a few miles away - to have the body checked by a doctor to confirm the diagnosis - and for burial. At that time it was not permitted to bury Europeans anywhere but in designated cemeteries. Yes, the young husband accompanied us. (Three years later, he died of the same disease! Their faith did not allow their missionaries to take anti-malarial or any other medicines).

In 1932 Big rejoicing! Dr. and Mrs. E. L. Morel arrived from the U.S.A. to direct the medical part of the mission. Father had been wonderful but I was so relieved to no longer have the responsibilities of medical decisions.

I lived with my folks in one of the mission houses, having my own little room with a door to the outside so when I was called at night I would not disturb the family.

After one year at Songa, my parents called for my sister Lucy to return from Helderberg College to teach the four younger children. They saw no other way as father could not take time to teach them. It would not have been fair to the work. So - Lucy arrived and taught them until education by correspondence became available and our family decided to follow that plan. It took much less supervision but meant more work on the part of the students.

Helping with the educational work for the Africans at Songa were several African missionaries from Nyasaland. One in particular was Soldier Kanjanga and his wife, Edna. They were at Songa for quite a number of years. Another was Harry Kalulu. I do not recall the names of others. Songa station was quite a strong



school with several outschools in outlying areas - some isolated. These needed to be visited from time to time. These teachers helped and encouraged the expansion program beside helping with the spiritual and medical needs. There was plenty of work to keep everyone busy as the church went forward.

Songa was a pleasant place to work and live. The climate was warmer than Elisabethville but not as humid as in some places. A river, the Lulalwe, flowed at the bottom of the hill. Crocodiles? Only an occasional displaced one.

There were other animals but not in the abundance as in Buganda, Urundi. My sister Edna and I both remember the lions prowling through Songa mission, roaring at night.

Edna also remembered one evening when mother told her to check the henhouse before going to bed. One hen had just hatched a nice handful of chicks. Edna took her flashlight and found the mother hen. She put her hand under her, to feel the chicks - then rush back to mother in fright.

"Mother, I don't know what is under that hen! It feels 'funny' - cold and scary!" she said excitedly.

Mother quickly picked up the big Coleman lamp and went back with Edna. What she saw explained what had been happening to her chickens. She thought native thieves had been stealing them. But - there was the 'thief.' A big python was in the process of swallowing the mother hen, having already finished off all the chicks!

Father was away on an outschool trip, so Germaine dashed to call Dr. Morel to come with his gun. He put an end to that 'thief.' Although not the largest, this one measured about 12 feet. (Pythons are numerous in many parts of tropical Africa, also many other kinds of snakes, some poisonous).

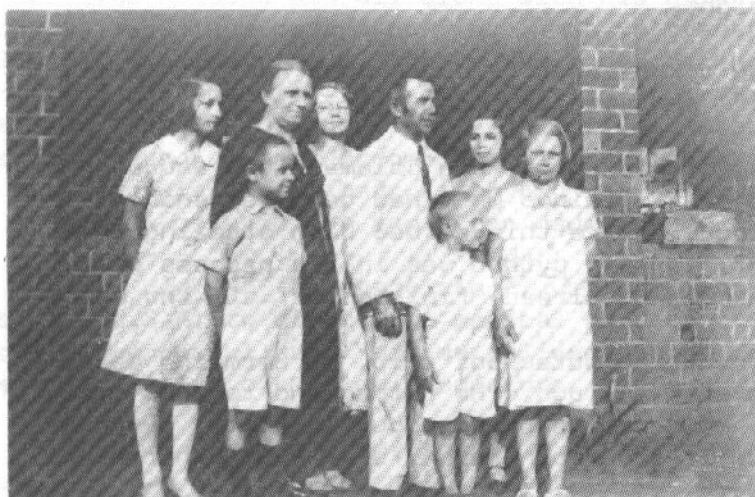
It was during these years, the early thirties, that the world depression came to Africa. As a result a few missionaries with their families had to be returned 'home' and appointments of new recruits were delayed or cancelled because of shortage of funds. Those remaining at their posts had their salaries 'cut', not once but several times. I do not remember hearing a single complaint. My father who still had five children at home, plus Germaine to feed, said, "Even if they give me only 100 francs (approximately \$3 then) I shall try to put food on the table....." We were thankful to be able to stay 'on the job' in spite of having to cut many corners.

Better times came and with it the prospect of an overseas furlough. After three and a half years at Songa, my parents left in February 1935, going via Cape Town. They left their girls, Clara age 15 and Edna, age 14 at Helderberg College while they went on to Belgium with the two boys, the youngest children. (Father did this to save the denomination some money - something he was always trying to do).

They boarded a German ship, the S.S. Ubena, at Cape Town, bound for Antwerp, Belgium. Lucy had preceded them and was in Europe in school at Collonges, France. This was the second Belgian furlough for my parents, and - unbeknown to them, would be their last.

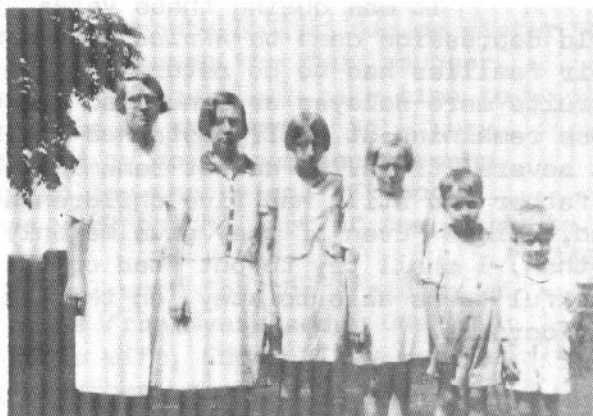
In September of that year, I arrived in Belgium for my furlough. During those few months, Lucy joined me and together we took the Belgian Tropical Medicine course which qualified us as "Agent Sanitaire" (Health Officers) in our African mission work.

Before we finished our course, our parents and brothers had returned to the Congo - and to another change.



Complete family  
at Songa 1934

The six Dalhove children  
1934

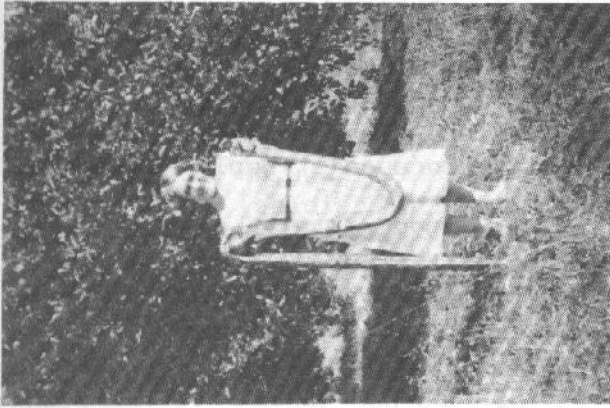




Germaine and Joseph  
(another protage)



Mother and helpers  
trying to feed a baby goat



Lydie holding the  
chicken-coop thief



Going on furlough to South Africa

Oh! Where to put everything!!



## CHAPTER 10

### IN THE EQUATORIAL FOREST

When father and mother with the two boys returned from their European furlough to Songa mission in the Congo, it was to transfer their household goods to Kirundu Mission. They were to replace the young couple who had to leave that station because of health problems.

Kirundu mission established in 1927, is situated 180 miles southeast of Stanleyville. The small area it occupies had been cut right out of the equatorial Ituri forest, a hot and steamy place most of the time. It is an isolated station with the nearest medical services at a hospital some 55 miles away. Europeans lived at the port of Kirundu which was 45 miles away on the Lualaba river (the name given that portion of the upper Congo river).\* The nearest neighbor was a Greek plantation owner who lived about 18 miles from the mission.

From the port of Kirundu one could travel down the river (going north) to Ponthierville in one direction - or, going south, to the settlements of Lova and Kindu. Also there was a road from Kirundu mission itself - that is, if you can call such cleared areas 'roads.'

Father worked hard for three and one-half years in that trying climate. He put into use his Tropical Medicine training and was "Agent Sanitaire" for that area. He had not needed that status at Songa as it was a medical mission with a nurse or doctor responsible. So father was medical officer for the little dispensary. Since he was qualified and could give intravenous injections, much of his medical work consisted in giving medication for the disfiguring disease of yaws which was endemic there. Also he treated many other tropical and common diseases.

The natives in the area of Kirundu were of several smaller tribes, one of them being the Walengolas numbering about 5 to 6000. Even they had their own language. (One of the first things father did when entering a new language area was to translate John 3:16 into their language).

Although this was Ituri forest, it was not the area of the famous Bambuti Pygmies, who dwell in the same forest but to the northeast of the country and who stayed pretty much together.

Mother did her share at the mission. She had classes for native girls and women. She also supervised the gardening. At Kirundu the sweet pineapples really grew big and juicy. But the climate was

\* See appendix for map and description of the Congo.

too hot for some European garden produce. They got along with what they could get locally. Other tropical fruits that grew well were bananas, papaya, mangoes and a few exotic varieties. They had goats for milk and chickens for eggs.

Wild life? Sure. There is always something in the tropics, especially in an equatorial forest. Little things like mosquitoes, drivers' ants (soldier-ants), snakes - some things crawling, others flying were ever-present. And there were some big ones, like crocodiles in streams and of course, elephants, leopards, lions, hippos, monkeys - even okapis.

My brother Paul told me of one incident that he had heard about. Father had gone with a couple or three mission workers to visit an outschool - a trip necessitating crossing a stream. Father went on ahead, crossed on a log and waited up-stream for the others. When his helpers caught up, dripping from wading the stream, they observed that he wasn't wet - and asked where he had crossed.

Father turned to point out the 'log' - and no log could be seen! His helpers exclaimed, "That was a croc!" Another instance of angel protection!

There were leopards, too, sneaking out of the forest edge not far from the mission houses. Father one day was returning to the house at dusk after prayer meeting in the school. He found himself face to face with a leopard in the road - his way to the house blocked and the big cat staring at him. Father had only his Bible and hymnbook in his hand. When he was about 15 yards away, he pointed his books at the animal and shouted at the top of his voice, "What are you doing there, YOU?!"

The leopard got such a fright that he bounded off into the pineapple patch. Father made record time getting into the house.

Kirundu area was more difficult to work than most stations where father had been - not only physically but somehow spiritually. There seemed to be an unusual amount of deeply engrained devilish voodoo, witchcraft, taboos - just plain satanic ways among the natives in their dealing with each other.

Father had battled witchcraft all of his missionary life and was not afraid to confront any of it, knowing that his Lord Jesus was master even over evil spirits. Sometimes when he found some of it going on too close to the mission, he would enter the hut, kick over all the vials, bones, etc. and tell the owner to move elsewhere. Obviously this did not endear him to that element of the population.

One such witchdoctor lived and practiced close to Kirundu mission. A constant battle ensued for each could not stand the other's ways of interference. This man was very powerful in the area and the missionary wished he would go elsewhere or stop his evil ways. Father was to find out later that he was even more dangerous than he suspected.

The government was trying to eradicate certain evil practices which contributed to maiming and deaths of human beings. In certain parts of the Congo there had been vicious gangs called "the leopard-men." What were they? Men disguised as real leopards would first undergo a period of rigorous training on how to attack and murder their victims so it would like a leopard's kill. The victims were always human. These murderers would cover themselves with leopard skins, a hood with only two slits for eyes and iron claws on their hands. The claws were made from rods with sharp hooks or steel spikes easily concealed in a hollow cane. Artificial leopard pads carved out of wood were worn on the feet. The attack would usually be at twilight or night, just like real leopards. The victims would be attacked the same way as the leopards, too.

The motives for these murders would be numerous - revenge, jealousy, disputes, etc. - any reason the witchdoctor or chief of the gang deemed reasonable enough to get rid of a person. Sometimes the murder would be for getting some human parts for 'medicine' or for cannibalistic purposes.....

Why do I write these ghastly things? These were situations my father had to deal with - and - he was instrumental in capturing eight of these leopard men. He had found their hiding places near the mission. Police and army closed in, captured them and they were convicted. One of them was the witchdoctor that father had so much to do with - a bitter enemy of the mission. On trial, it was revealed that those eight men had killed 26 persons, mostly for cannibalistic reasons.

However distasteful witchcraft was to father, he distinguished the difference between that and the work of the regular medicine men. Since father had taken a course in tropical medicine and treated many patients at his dispensary, he obtained medicines from the government free. But - he also respected the native medicine-men's knowledge. He had opportunity to resort to that knowledge at times, also.

For instance, one day in the middle of the forest, father was suddenly stung by a giant centipede. Nothing in his 'black bag' alleviated the pain and swelling. He was in agony for hours. A native went to get a certain root which he squashed. He made a small incision in the area of the sting, applied the stuff - and within minutes the pain was gone. Next day the swelling was gone, also.

### The Lowa story.

This 'chapter' in father's experience took place while he was in Kirundu, but the beginning was way back in the year 1922. At that time a group of natives residing in the Bas-Congo region near Matadi (at the mouth of the Congo river) rebelled against the government. For this they were exiled away from their homeland, far into the interior of the country at Lowa and south of Kirundu mission. The only way to Lowa is by river boat as it is on the bank of the Lualaba. These exiles stayed together, speaking their dialect and did not mix with the local natives.

Father at Kirundu heard about these natives and that they were interested in knowing more about the Bible. So he and some helpers went there by dugout canoes. It took some time as it is something like 50 miles upstream. Upon arrival he found a group of very intelligent people with an interesting story. One of the leaders of those exiles told him this story:

"Not long ago I had a strange dream. A small white man dressed all in white, including his helmet, would arrive in a canoe. In his hand he would have a black book from which he would preach. A voice told me to follow his preaching. As I look at you, I recognize the man in my dream. We are ready to accept the truth from that book."

Father stayed there and held some evangelistic meetings. As a result quite a few of the group accepted the Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and were baptised. After a short while father established a church at Lowa.

Among the group at Lowa was one woman, the mother of a girl being baptised, who was hostile to father. When she saw the baptism taking place, she rushed into the water, grabbed father's hand and bit him severely. Later on father was called in by this woman when she could not deliver a baby after being in labor several days. He saved her life by removing the dead fetus. She recovered and was grateful to him, but never accepted the Adventist doctrines.

(There is a sequel to the LOWA story. Many years later, when my brother Paul was himself a missionary at Kirundu in the 1950's, a group of government officials who were sent to examine the exiles, were so impressed with the good spirit of the converts that they recommended they be permitted to return to their former homeland in the Bas-Congo. On their return there, they started another Adventist center.)

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1939 mother and the boys went down to the Cape (South Africa) in order to put John and Paul into school at Helderberg. She stayed there several months, then some months with me at Cape Town where I was on leave of absence, taking the midwifery course.

Several months later father came to join his family for his Cape furlough. He arrived in September by boat via the east-African coast. We could not meet him at the docks because World War II had started and the harbor was a restricted zone. Once again the family was together for a short time. Only Lucy was missing. She was a worker at Rwankeri Mission in Ruanda, having graduated at Collonges (France) in 1938.

At the beginning of 1940 we separated once again. I went back to Songa Mission; father and mother returned to Kirundu leaving the four youngest at Helderberg. This separation affected my parents deeply. But - the youngest were in their teens and had to pursue their education.

I have heard mentioned the sacrifices missionaries make when leaving behind the comforts of life and adjusting to a different life-style and culture. But as I heard it from my parents, one of the biggest sacrifices made is separation from school-age children; either that or asking for a permanent return to their home base. It was harder during my parent's day because children in school then did not have a travel allowance provided as in later years. Once in school, the children stayed, working during vacation time to help with expenses. In some cases they might not see their parents for several years, especially when they were at a distance of 3000 miles or more.

Yet - growing children also mean new relationships, as mother and father soon discovered. In only a few months the family circle would be enlarged and the big event would be right at Kirundu!



Parents and sons at Kirundu 1937



At Kirundu



Having worship with patients  
before treatments



Giving injections



Mother's Sewing class



Brick making  
(burning in kiln)

## CHAPTER 11

### A KIRUNDU WEDDING

It was during their last year at Kirundu that father received the request. Not that weddings were unusual for him. After all, he was a minister. But this one was different for - not only would it be a European couple, but his own daughter's wedding, Clara's.

They had watched this developing friendship at Helderberg College with Thomas W. Staples (Tom), a young South African. Tom had graduated the year before and was already working in Ruanda. Clara would be graduating from Helderberg at the end of 1941. Their plans included Clara's parents.

Tom began making the arrangements several months before the big event, which was to be December 2nd of that year. It was easier for him to contact Belgian officials since he was in the colonies where they would be married. That's when he learned about the amount of red tape involved. There seemed to be 'snags' right from the beginning.

When Tom and Clara had begun their planning, they wanted the wedding to be in Gitwe church in Ruanda since that was the first mission station father had established and was in the country of Clara's birth. But two months before the wedding date it was finally decided that it would be held where the parents of the bride resided - in this instance, at Kirundu in the district of Ponthierville.

Another must were the marriage banns (public announcements required by some European governments). These banns had to be published for two weeks in the bride's parents' village in Belgium. Also, in Ponthierville, the place of the civil marriage. Furthermore, the groom's parents (who lived in South Africa) had to send their approval even though Tom was "of age." Finally, there were to be two weddings. No. 1, a religious service; No. 2, a civil ceremony - at Ponthierville.

With these legal hurdles finally surmounted and the date at hand, Tom travelled from Ruanda to Kirundu via Rwankeri mission where he was to pick up his future sister-in-law, Lucy, who was stationed there and who was to be maid-of-honor. Clara, the bride-to-be, with graduation over, arrived at Kirundu from Helderberg.

Preparation for the big day had been going on at Kirundu and - the participants were at hand. There remained one more problem. There was no church building (yet). Since they had to have a church wedding, they improvised one. With an abundance of palm

avenues, they made arches with palm leaves leading to an altar. It looked ready and appropriate for the occasion.....

But December 2nd dawned wet and rainy. Since the wedding was to be at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, there was hope (?) that the weather would clear.

Part of the plans included the services of neighbors, a Greek couple (plantation owners) who lived 18 miles away. He was to be the best man. They counted on his wife to bring the fresh flowers for the bridal bouquet.

They came all right ..... but at 9 o'clock in the morning, five hours before they were supposed to. He insisted that the wedding should be held right then. He had business to attend to at Kirundu port - business that could not be deferred.

The Greek lady had brought the bouquet.... but oh! horrors! they were chrysanthemums - white and yellow.

Mother gasped. "Oh, no!" she exclaimed. "These are funeral flowers!" She referred especially to the white ones which are traditionally used in Belgium for funerals. It was a very unhappy mother of the bride who saw those flowers as the only source of a bridal bouquet.

At 10 o'clock, the rain stopped. Father saw this as a good sign (also an opportunity above all to keep peace) and he called for the wedding to proceed, announcing it to the Africans by drum beats. Soon the village people arrived and seated themselves on the lawn near the palm avenue. Father led them in singing hymns.

Not for Clara the Lohengrin's bridal march by Wagner! She, with Lucy at her side, walked up the avenue to the hymn "Onward Christian Soldiers." In one hand she carried the chrysanthemum bouquet; with the other she daintily held her long gown, trying to avoid soiling it with the mud. An orange-blossom crown held her veil. Lucy wore salmon-pink - also a long gown.

Father conducted the ceremony in French, for mother's benefit who gave her daughter away (very emotionally). They had time to take a few pictures - then the rain started again and did not let up until late afternoon.

After the ceremony, mother told the young couple, "You are not married - yet, remember!" She wanted to get across to them that they were really married only after the civil ceremony which was to be at the Panthierville District Commissioner's office.

So the next morning at five o'clock father, Tom and Clara set out in the old 1929 Chevy for the port of Kirundu some 45 miles away and with 52 bridges and one ferry to deal with. They made good time as by 7:30 they boarded the 'balsinière' (which is a sort of light-weight metal motor launch about 20 ft. long). It is used locally to transport produce. A couple seats were put in, otherwise if there were sacks of peanuts or such, passengers would sit on them.

It was four hours downstream (about 25 miles) to Ponthier-ville. They wasted no time in getting to the District Commissioner's office, whom they found in a bad mood.

Looking at the party, he asked icily, "Where is the mother of the bride?"

"At home," they replied.

"I cannot marry you," he told them. "The mother has to be present to sign, too. Come back tomorrow with her. I will not be here but my assistant will be and he'll see to it that you get married."

Father, Tom and Clara looked at each other. Not a thing they could do but retrace their journey back to Kirundu. This time it took six hours by the motor launch as it was upstream. They arrived at the port of Kirundu at 6 p.m. The Greek lady started to congratulate them on their marriage..... then stopped, noticing their downcast faces.

Father explained what had happened and made arrangements for hiring the same motor launch the next day. Then they jumped into the old Chevy and headed back toward Kirundu mission.

About midway - poooofffftt..... a flat tire. Before the car came to a stop, father was out and walking down the road.

"Father, where are you going?" No answer. He seemed to have disappeared (it was night) and - the young couple were left - they didn't know where..... After about 15 minutes, a man on a bicycle rode by in the direction of Kirundu port. Some time later, approximately 20 people arrived, got behind the car and pushed it the one mile to the nearest village. There they found father. He had sent those natives to bring in the car. Then he gathered the rest of the villagers and .... preached to them!! He was not going to loose any opportunity of speaking for the Lord!

After the meeting, a village woman brought the three white travellers something to eat - baked plantains, roasted peanuts and cassava greens hot with red chili.

"What a wedding reception!" the participants commented to each other.

It was late so they settled for a little sleep as it was too dark to fix the flat tire. Father sat in a chair with his head resting on his folded arms on the table and with the company of thousands of mosquitoes. The young couple went back to the crippled car where they also tried to sleep while being chewed alive by more thousands of mosquitoes.

The man they had seen on a bicycle was a courier father was sending with a note to the Greek lady, asking her to send her chauffeur with their truck to take them on home to get mother, then bring them all back to the port the next morning.

On arrival at the mission (one ferry and 22 miles later) at 4:30 a.m., Tom put on his overalls. He folded his suit into a small suitcase and placed it near the front door. He reminded Clara to be sure and bring it along when they left later to return to the river port. Clara then tried to catch a few winks of sleep while father and Tom fixed the tire and mother got herself ready for the trip.

One hour later the party was back on the road - this time with mother along. The tire was fixed the best they knew how and pumped up hard.

About eight miles down the road at the ferry crossing, Tom kicked the tire to test it - and found that all the air had escaped!

"Lord," he groaned, "we've done our best to fix this tire! Please, Lord, I'll pump it once more. It's up to You now to keep it hard." Tom pumped - hard (with small hand pumps in those days that was hard work!). . . and it stayed up for the rest of the trip.

Back at the village where the Chevy had spent the night, Tom and father slapped on the wheel securely. All got into the car and took off, not stopping until they reached Kirundu port. By then it was 8 o'clock in the morning.

As father and Tom walked toward the launch ahead of the women, Tom remembered his suit. He turned, cupped his hands and shouted to Clara, "Bring my little suitcase with the suit."

Clara replied, "I don't have your little suitcase. It must be sitting at home where you put it several hours ago!" (Tom was still wearing his overalls).

Oh, my! Oh, my! What to do now? One thing sure, no one wanted to retrace those 45 miles back to the mission just for a suit. All the same, what a let-down feeling!

Immediately father took the situation in hand. The Greek trader was standing there, inquiringly, for Tom and Clara had been talking together in English. So father explained. "The young man has forgotten his wedding suit!"

The Greek rose to the occasion. "Oh, that's no problem. Come with me," he invited.

They followed him to his house near by, wondering what this middle-aged man could do. Then he said, "I am waiting for a bride that I ordered by mail from Europe. I plan to get married in a few months and bought a wedding suit. I would be honored for you, young man, to use it first for your wedding..."

Tom graciously accepted the offer. BUT - this kind man was short and stocky, whereas Tom was tall and thin. He tried on the shirt. It was too large at the neck - three sizes too large. It would have to do. As for the trousers, they were too short; even with the cuffs turned down they reached way above his ankles. The girth around the waist? A couple generous pleats folded at the back and held in place by his belt kept them up though it did little for the bagginess. But - it was the best they could do under the circumstances. Clara giggled and father hid a smile with difficulty.

So - on to Ponthierville. They had just arrived when it started raining again; one of those tropical showers that really soak. Tom thanked God for the rain and gratefully covered the borrowed suit with his raincoat, keeping it on until after the ceremony ended.

The marriage officer said that they were blessed to have rain on their wedding day - that it was considered good luck in Belgium. The ceremony lasted only a few minutes. With all the necessary signatures down in the registry, the second ceremony was over.

Next - a bite to eat. With only one hotel man in town they had no choice but to accept his invitation. They ate what he offered - rice, lettuce and sardines. After thanking their host they wasted no time getting back to the launch and heading upstream.

The wedding party counted on reaching Kirundu port before dark - but - every so often the launch stalled. The pilot and Tom took turns freeing the propeller which kept tangling in the reeds growing in the water near the shore. Meanwhile mother was feeling sicker and sicker. The heat was affecting her and that, with the motion sickness made her most miserable.

But finally the long day was ending. They arrived at Kirundu port about 8 o'clock that evening, returned the borrowed suit with many thanks and started out for the mission in the old Chevy.

That part of the trip took them almost five hours although it was only 45 miles. But at night and on such roads it was necessary to inspect each of the 52 bridges, some of them made just of poles. And of course, there was the one ferry crossing.

It was in the wee hours of the morning when they arrived back at Kirundu mission, exhausted. They tumbled into bed with just one wonderful thought -

"MARRIED AT LAST!"

\* \* \* \* \*

With the departure of the newly-weds and Lucy, father and mother were once again alone at Kirundu. But they would not be there for long. Other plans were even then unfolding.



The Bride and Groom

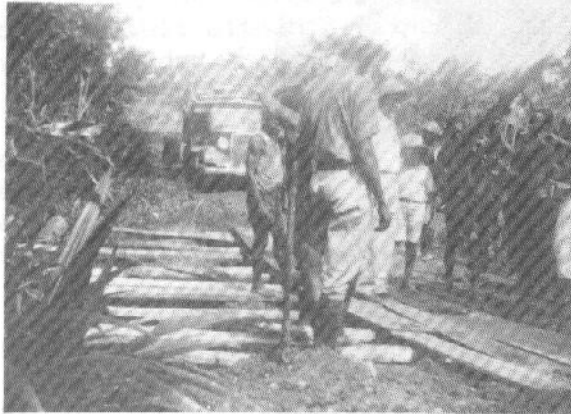
Clara and Tom Staples



Clara with her parents



Bride with bridesmaid,  
her sister, Lucy



Inspecting bridge before crossing.



Road through tall grass



## CHAPTER 12

### PIONEERING AT RWESSE

During their last year at Kirundu (1942) mother became quite ill. The doctor diagnosed severe anemia and advised transfer to a healthier climate without delay. So the brethren asked father to open up a new mission station in the mountains of eastern Congo. That meant a move from the hot steamy Kirundu mission in the equatorial Ituri forest to the Kivu province and its cool, high altitude of 6,000 feet or more. It is one of the most scenic areas of Africa.\*

Travelling in the Congo was anything but easy. (I made the trip twice by bus from lake Kivu to Stanleyville. It was an ordeal, not only because of the condition of the road but also the nature of the terrain). Briefly, this is the route my parents took:

From Kirundu mission to Kirundu port - by car.

From Kirundu port to Ponthierville by river boat, with car and baggage on board.

From Ponthierville to Stanleyville - by train, including the car as the river is not navigable due to falls and rapids. At Stanleyville one has to cross the river as the town itself is on the opposite bank.

From Stanleyville it is all the way by road, via Nia Nia, Mambasa, Irumu, Beni and Lubero. There are many rivers to be crossed, some by bridge, others by ferry or pontoons. To begin the journey from Stanleyville, the way is through thick, steamy tropical forest. Beyond Mambasa in the direction of Irumu, the aspect of the forest changes rapidly. The road leaves the great central basin of the Congo and climbs little by little toward the sources of the great tributaries of the Congo river.

After the Ituri river has been crossed, the forest is left behind. Wide valleys and grassy hills with clumps of small trees ascend toward the first mountains outlined against the eastern horizon. They are the crest of the Congo-Nile dividing ridge with its high altitudes and grand scenery.

From Irumu they took the road going south to Beni, then it again ascends higher and higher toward Butembo, becoming still more scenic. That brought them into Kivu province. It is from here that one, if lucky, can see the summits of the Ruwenzori range.

\* See appendix for description of the Kivu (Belgian Congo).

I say "lucky" because they are most of the time covered with clouds of mist. (It was my privilege on one of my two trips to see the mist lift and glimpse the snow-capped peaks).

From Butembo to Lubero was only a few miles.

What kind of trip did my parents have when covering the approximately 700 miles? And what did they find upon arrival at their new place of labor?

Let me quote from a letter that I received about that time, (Words in brackets are my own), from father with the heading of:

Rwasse Hill, Km 232,  
Route Irumu-Lubero,  
July 11, 1942

"Dear beloved children,

We have arrived at our new camping place since the 9th of this month. We want to relate to you our journey from Kirundu to here ('We' means mother and himself). We left the mission July 1 at dawn having asked the Lord to bless our trip, this after having been up since 3 a.m. packing the car. On our knees we put ourselves into the hands of God who never fails to answer our supplications.

We had a good trip to Kirundu port (on the river) except for a flat tire. But since we would have had to dismount the wheel for repair, and some bolts of this wheel having been attached inside the drum, we didn't feel like doing that much, so we just pumped air from time to time during the last 14 Km remaining till the port. There we had plenty of time to arrange the crate of poultry and to add a few more hens and ducks that we wanted to take along. (This crate was on the truck with all their other baggage).

We were ready a long time before the boat arrived (coming up the Lualaba river) in the evening. Then our 'Joséphine' (their car) and all our baggage were put aboard the Prince Charles. This beautiful boat which was used as a regular mail carrier, had been transformed into a cargo ship since having gone through a fire several years before. We did not arrive at Ponthierville the same day. We had to take a cabin and the ship docked at a wood camp. (Where the boat loads firewood at night).

Next day we were soon at Ponthierville, although some fog delayed us. Quickly we went to have our names stamped out from the government registry (exit) then took care of all our baggage which had to be divided into different categories and weighed. As the train was leaving only at 1 p.m. we had time to pay for the car and baggage all of which were sent as merchandise. The chickens were not forgotten."

"Five hours by train for the 125 Km (80 miles) and we arrived at Stanleyville on the left bank. As it was evening, we had our servant stay in the shed to care for the poultry crate, while we crossed the river in a dugout canoe. The regular motorboat was being repaired. This did not please mother too well - she had visions of being eaten up by crocodiles. (There is no bridge spanning the river here and it is quite wide).

As soon as we passed to the other side we headed toward a hotel where we spent three nights. During the day we were very busy making purchases or getting 'Joséphine' fit for travel. We could not avoid the purchase of new parts like certain bolts, nuts, fan belts, oil, gas. Meanwhile, also, we had to contact government authorities to give us a road pass for paid furlough. Our baggage was on the road by the fourth day, ahead of us. We were advised to insure it against numerous road dangers.....

We had taken along from Kirundu an old bicycle which needed much repair. That was done and it was placed on top of the truck with the other baggage. We wanted to follow as soon as possible - but 'Joséphine' was not quite ready. At last on Sunday the 5th, we were on our way.

The first day we covered 210 Km without a hitch. But on the second day we had two flat tires and a broken luggage carrier on one side and soon - on the other side because a large box was continually dancing around, due to the bad road. At Kirundu, the day we left, we had a bad start when eight students took upon themselves to climb on top after helping in pushing. However we did manage to cover 315 Km to Mambasa. There we took lodging at Hotel Petit and took time to repair the tires.

We left at noon, bought gas where it was least expensive. At mambasa it was 6.50 fr. a liter. We travelled the 115 Km to Irumu. Had to take time here to have our road pass signed as it was the exit from Orientale province. That meant also the end of free transport for us. From now on we must pay. (Father had free travel as a war veteran in some parts of the country.)

The numerous ascents and descents (of hills) to arrive at Beni and beyond took us a long time with our 'Joséphine' which seemed to give up the ghost. We got to Beni in time for lunch. A distinguished lady with her children were looking after this hotel. They treated us well and gave us some sandwiches for the road, free of charge.

We still had a little gas in reserve and took only an extra 10 liters in the tank because it cost 6.75 fr. here. The ascents got more numerous and we got to the end of our gas before arriving at Lubero. But a transport agent passing by, sold us 36 liters.

We were afraid of the many turns and descents at night, so we decided to spend the night in the car. But OH..... such COLD!..... Mother took a pair of my pants. I rolled a tent around me which also served for a pillow. We hunted for all the knitwear we could find - anything that could help keep our body heat from escaping....."

"We had gone past Km 235. We inquired if there was a mission other than the Catholics in the area. Answer - no. We went to Lubero at dawn of the 9th, arriving there at 6 a.m. We were frozen. Quickly we asked for a hot drink and breakfast. After this we went to get our names put on the registry at the government post. THEN, we inquired of the whereabouts of the famous (illusiv) Rwasse Hill. We had to turn back to get to Km 232.

There we were shown a hill..... with the form of a hog-back, with a small clump of eucalyptus trees.... It had taken us more than four hours to retrace about 28 Km. Our 'Josephine' was at the end of her strength - was willing to do 3 or 4 meters then stop. We examined spark plugs, distributor, pump, carburetor. Every time we thought it was all right. But - nothing doing..... A native chauffeur (driver) passed by. He had already spotted us on the road the night before and was returning. He searched for the reason, fiddled with the coils, etc.,etc. We tried again, but rolled only a few meters. We called a few natives to push us, till we got to Km 232. Our baggage which we had seen at Lubero in the morning went ahead of us but we wanted to know where to lay them. We walked the last remaining Km and learned that they had been set in a government rest-house, put at our disposal until we could have a permanent place.

One incident here which could have turned into tragedy - At the place where the native chauffeur had helped me, I dropped my billfold without knowing it. It did not contain much money but did have quite a few important papers. More than one hour afterwards some searchers and I turned back afoot. Happy were we to find it. A good reward was given to the two who helped. We arrived at Buyara government rest-camp.

Then the head teacher Samuel (Karekezi) was waiting for us and a few students welcomed us by singing. We quickly got acquainted with the area and prepared for the night. We had one small cot for mother and I, but I preferred a straw mat on top several wooden boxes and left the cot to mother. We were not warm at all. (Altitude here is 7,700 ft.)

Next day we went on the Rwasse Hill to plant 140 pineapple plants, 60 lemon trees and some other trees. Very good soil in this area.

But there is something more valuable than food. That is the spiritual interest shown. The three Ruanda teachers who are working in pioneering have already done good work. There seems to be present some interests only waiting to be developed. If we have more teachers, then we will no doubt see some blessed fruit reaped here..... We do not want to say too much ahead of time, but we nourish the firm hope of a good harvest of souls from this part of the Lord's vineyard. We shall let you know from time to time how the work progresses..... "

signed, your loving father"

When my parents arrived at this new station of Rwesse, they had to leave the car and their belongings at the government rest-camp. Father commuted back and forth (50 minutes walk) to the site of the new mission. There was no road yet.

After things were started, they took several days off to go to Rwankeri in Ruanda - not far from Rwesse - where daughter Lucy was working. While there, he wrote more in his next letter about Rwesse. Here are some excerpts of that letter, dated August 9, 1942:

"When we saw the new site (Rwesse) on July 9th, there was not one stick planted there, only a clump of a few eucalyptus trees, the remnant of an old village. We quickly saw what was necessary to do. We gathered some materials for a temporary house (8 meters square) divided into four rooms. In the one for the kitchen was a large fireplace made of dried bricks, as it is very cold on this hill. Fog surrounds us often.

We did not have any boards for the windows and doors, but a native carpenter lent us his tools and we sent some locals to the forest to get what we needed. As for bricks, we made the molds out of our packing crates. A good clay soil for bricks was found in a nearby valley - and the work was on.

In 18 days of hard work, one room was plastered and ready to shelter our goods.

To describe to you this area without having seen it would be a bit difficult. If you remember Rwankeri, it is about the same climate. Altitude is even a bit higher. All the European vegetables grow and the price is low. The site for this station is a good choice. The area is thickly populated. The hill is quite high, so we must make a road clearing around it for cars to get to the top.....

After setting our goods in the new shelter on August 5, we set out for Rwankeri. About midway, in the National Park (Ruindi) \* we met the two Duplouys, Bro. Lyndon Tarr and Lucy who were on their way to see us. So Bro. Tarr took our 'Josephine' and returned to Rwankeri, while I accompanied the Duplouys to Rwesse to measure the sites for permanent buildings. Then we returned to Rwankeri.....

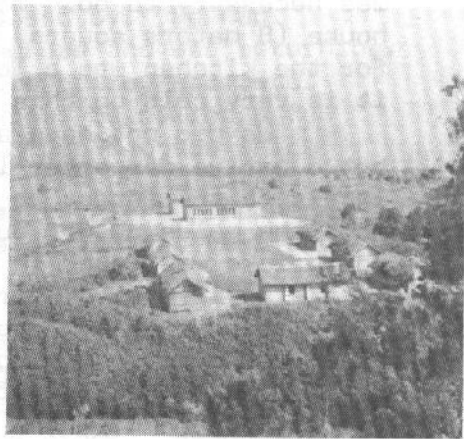
After we go to Gitwe, we shall return to Rwesse at the end of August to resume work there....."

Father and mother were at Rwesse for a few more months, then Bro. and Sister P.K. Wiley from the U.S.A. joined them. Elder Matter, Sr. was there for awhile, too.

\* See Appendix description of the Kivu, Rift Valley in eastern Belgian Congo.

Soon after my parents arrival at Rweesse a multitude of sick and afflicted ones came, needing care. Father as usual, tried to ease and help each one.

The school and outschools were soon full of students eager to learn. Since then, many have joined the church. The new station was off to a good start and was adequately staffed. As 1943 drew to a close, father and mother could look forward to a furlough which was due.



Lucy and Rwankeri Mission



D. E. DELHOVE

## CHAPTER 13

### A TRAGEDY

My parents were due a furlough in 1943. Since it was during World War II, they could not go to Belgium, so were granted time in South Africa instead.

It was to be a family reunion - parents and children. Of the six children, only Clara and Tom (Staples) would be unable to be in South Africa. They were stationed at Songa Mission in the Congo. So our folks planned to stop there on the way to Cape Town. I was at Malamulo, Nyasaland but had arranged for my furlough of three months to be at the same time. Edna was married and lived in Cape Town. The two boys, John and Paul were in school at Helderberg near Cape Town.

My sister Lucy was at Rwankari as nurse and girls' worker and had her furlough granted at the same time. In a letter I received from her, dated September 11, she gave details of the plans. She was expecting father and mother by car (from Rweesse) to pick her up. Then together they would leave Rwankari Sept. 27th and drive to Costermansville (at the south end of lake Kivu.) From there they would continue by car to Songa where Clara and Tom were. Around October 5th they would continue their journey by train from Elisabethville to Cape Town, stopping briefly to visit friends at Bulawayo in Southern Rhodesia. They were to arrive at the Cape between October 20 and 27th.

I left Malamulo September 12th on my way to Cape Town where I stayed with my sister Edna, husband and baby in their apartment. While waiting for the folks, we visited the boys at Helderberg from time to time, getting more and more excited as the time went by. I had not seen Lucy for seven years - not since we were together in Belgium taking our Tropical Medicine course.

I had not seen father and mother for several years either. We planned to have a good reunion..... So we thought. However - we were totally unaware that something was happening to change these plans. . . .

Our first inkling of that came one evening with a phone call from Claremont, a suburb of Cape Town, from our mission headquarters. It was sometime between Oct. 3rd and 5th (I don't remember the exact date). Elder Bozarth, our Division president, was on the line. This is what he told me:

"I got a phone call from the Belgian Consul in Cape Town. He wanted to get in touch with you folks about some press news which he received from the Congo. It said something like this -

"Car accident near Kamituga mines. Reverend Delhove and wife injured, 30-year old daughter killed.' The Consul wanted to know if it was your family which he knew you were expecting soon?"

Stunned, I replied, "Yes..... It must be" .... but I do not remember the rest of the phone conversation nor who contacted my two brothers at Helderberg. One thing I knew was the shock at the thought that such a close member of my family was no more. Lucy and I were very close.

Also - what had happened to our parents? The news said they were injured. Where were they now? The accident happened on October 1st. We only heard several days later. Elder Bozarth's phone call came around 5 o'clock, too late to go to see the Belgian Consul that day for any more information he might have.

Next morning Edna and I were at the Consul's office as soon as it opened. We found a very sympathetic man who said he could not tell us any more than what he had told Elder Bozarth.

But he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I will send a telegram to the Congo to get more information as to the accident and the condition of your parents and their whereabouts. I will let you know when they reply." As we parted, thanking him, he added "that's the least I can do for you."

Well, the answer took a long time in spite of being by telegram. Meanwhile Edna and I spent the time as best we could 'living in a fog,' wondering whatever happened to our parents and why we were not getting any news from anybody in the Congo. Were they still alive, mother and father? Day after day - nothing. A time of agony and prayer.

Finally on October 11, the Consul called us. He had received a reply at last. It said, "Delhove and wife were injured and taken to the mines hospital at Kamituga, but at this time had left."

That was all! Where were they? It was not like father to not write if he was able to do so.... he was always so thoughtful.

After another few days of waiting, word came that he and mother were at Songa with Clara and Tom. They would be arriving in Cape Town on a certain day.

We were there to meet them. Father was whispering emotionally as we embraced, "Sorry, Lydie, sorry - but Lucy is resting in Kamituga cemetery...." Mother was walking with a cane, limping because of a gash on her leg that had not yet healed. She looked like she was still very much in shock.



We took them to the apartment at Sea Point (a Cape Town suburb) which the Division had prepared for them. I moved from Edna's place to be with them for the rest of my furlough. After we sat down, they talked about the accident. Following is the story:

The three of them in their car were driving from Rwankeri to Songa, lodging that first night at Costermansville. The second day a few hours drive found them near Kamituga, which is in the Kivu province with very steep mountains - and on a one-way road that was privately owned and kept up by the mines. It was father's turn to drive the road at that time of the day (cars going the other direction would have a later time). But, they saw coming toward them, another vehicle, an empty ambulance. The road was narrow so both drivers stopped to study the situation. The ambulance was on the mountain side; my folks on the edge side.

They agreed that there would be enough room for father to edge past the ambulance - with care. But father did not see that the shoulder which was supposed to be part of the road, was loose dirt. It gave way under the right front wheel and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  meters (about 5 feet) of it slipped, letting the car and its three occupants with all the luggage roll down the embankment. Father was thrown out of the car on the second turn. Lucy and mother went down to the bottom, 80 meters (approximate 250 feet), resting in a shallow river.

Lucy was dead from massive head injuries, having been tossed and tossed with the baggage. Father found himself sitting on his haunches on the embankment, having difficulty breathing - and watching mother. She was trying to climb the steep embankment after the cold water of the river had revived her. She was yelling, "There is somebody in a yellow shirt down there who is dead....." (it was Lucy she was talking about).

Mother was bleeding from the head and leg, her clothes all torn. It is amazing that she could climb that steep embankment. Later she didn't remember a thing about it.

The ambulance driver, a black man, saw it all from the road as he had not resumed his driving. He went down to meet mother just as she collapsed halfway to the top. Father told him to take her to the mine hospital and to come back to get him and Lucy's body.

Lucy was laid to rest at Kamituga. The service was conducted by Catholic priests. My parents were too sick to attend but father had prepared a short speech to be read at the funeral.

Father had four main ribs broken. Mother had a depressed skull fracture and was unconscious for three days. Doctors were ready to relieve the pressure, but didn't have to as she came out of the coma on her own. They left the hospital after a few days treatment,

then travelled on to Songa where they stayed with Clara and Tom for several weeks before continuing on to Cape Town where we met them.

I asked father, "Why didn't you let us know about this?"

He looked surprised and said, "Oh, didn't Elder... let you know? He was supposed to. When I got to Kamituga hospital I wired them in Ruanda about the accident and to please inform all the children."

Father was very saddened to think that no one had even wired or written to any of us - also that no one went from Ruanda to Kamituga to see them. (Yes, they did receive the telegram). But no one went. We never knew why. Father and mother felt abandoned.

I stayed the rest of my furlough (one month) with my parents at Sea Point. Mother needed much nursing care, not only for a bad wound on her leg which got infected, but also for her mental condition. She was in severe depression (and remained so for a long time) so we feared to leave her alone. Father could not stay with her all the time. For one thing, he needed some therapy himself. He needed to get out of the house. He would walk and walk - for miles. Sometimes he would go to Edna's place above the Cape Town gardens, or often to Claremont to the Division office (six miles one way). He would feel better after talking about it with the brethren or others who would listen.

After I left to go back to Malamulo, Edna would go to Sea Point to keep mother company most of the day, taking her little Arthur, her first baby. The sight of the one-year old grandson was most beneficial for mother. She improved greatly and the suicidal tendency disappeared. However she never regained her former self and had some change of personality to the end of her life.

As for father, he seemed to recover pretty much. He talked less and less about the accident, then not at all. But it is my belief that from then on, his physical condition also declined.

To this day, this episode in our lives has left a big unanswered WHY in my mind. Lucy had dedicated her life to God's work. Her place at Rwankeri remained unfilled and the dispensary closed until I was called to reopen it five years later.

However not so to my father. He had confidence that this tragedy was for the perfection of our characters and that everything was for our best. But I was - and still am - sure of one thing, that the blessed hope of the return of Jesus and the earth made new has significance for me like it never had before.

\* \* \* \* \*

After my parents went back to the Congo, the governor of the country sent a message to father that if he would press charges against the Kamituga mines, he would win the case because they were at fault. They were responsible for the road since it was privately owned. No signs had been posted about the danger of the soft shoulder and also, the ambulance did not have any right on that one-way road at that time.

Upon receipt of that letter, father looked at mother and said, "Do YOU want to make money over Lucy's body? As for me, never, NEVER. It would not bring her back." So - charges were never pressed.

Incidentally, no hospital charge was ever made for Lucy's funeral and my parents medical expenses even though it was a private enterprise.

\*\*\*\*\*

So - our furloughs came to an end. The anticipated happiness of a family reunion was transformed to one of sadness with unanswered questions. I went back to Malamulo to my work of treating the sick. My parents returned to the Congo, back to the beautiful Kivu province with another "WHY" hovering over them.

Sometime before the accident, the brethren had told father that he would be put "on retirement" in the coming year. This greatly disturbed him. He was so active, not complaining and did not ask for retirement. He would only be 62 on his next birthday. The two boys were still in school. So, it was with a heavy heart that he headed back north to face this new challenge and make the best of it.

## CHAPTER 14

### RETIRED

Father and mother had not been back from furlough long before the decision about retirement had to be faced and the choice made of where to live. Father refused to be repatriated to Belgium, his homeland. Instead he chose to stay in the Congo. His heart was in this country and here he could continue his mission work on his own, spreading the Gospel. The most important goal in his life was to hasten the Lord's return. He determined to continue doing this so long as he had breath to do so.

My parents were in the "Kivu", back at Rweesse mission which he had founded just two years before in July of 1942. It was an area of European (white) settlers. They chose to also settle in the "Kivu." And - what is the Kivu, that northeastern province of the Belgian Congo?\*

In that healthy area farms and plantations had been developed. During World War II, the anti-malarial drug (quinine) could not be obtained from its main source, Indonesia. So the Congo government encouraged the cultivation within the country. They desperately needed the drug to treat the population within the country. The Kivu was a splendid place to grow the cinchona tree. So many planters and settlers went into this business. Some grew tea, coffee and pyrethrum, also European vegetables.

Since father was a World War I veteran, the government gave him a place to settle - on a low hill called Muhola, south of Lubero; a beautiful setting at approximately 6,000 ft. altitude. It was just a few miles from the famous Kabasha escarpment \*\* and the first of numerous plantations in the area. The location was just off the main road to Lubero, therefore only about 65 miles south of Rweesse mission.

There at Muhola, father and mother went to work. With two or three Africans helping, they built a house with walls made of stones gathered from the countryside, also some bricks. The tile roof was later replaced with corrugated iron sheats (in 1947). They did not have a car - father never drove again after the accident. Their supplies came by trucks for many came and went on that main road from Rutshuru to Lubero and beyond. By the time my parents settled there, regular traffic such as transporting goods, mail and passengers was available - from as far away as Stanleyville or, in the opposite direction, to Ruanda, Uganda and lake Kivu.

\* See description of the Kivu province in Appendix, Belgian Congo.

\*\* See description of the Kabasha escarpment in Appendix, Congo.

Before long my parents had a vegetable garden, some fruit, shrubs and trees, also Cape gooseberries, tree tomatoes, raspberries and strawberries. All kinds of vegetables could grow there. But father's main plantation was pyrethrum, a perennial plant with a pretty daisy-like flower which was in great demand at that time as a pesticide. The flowers were picked, dried and shipped to companies dealing with that product. Father did not make much money from this as his plantation was small, but the few francs earned did help augment their pension.

Mother raised a few chickens for their eggs, also a dozen or two turkeys to sell to the Ruindi guest-house restaurant down in the valley in Albert National Park. Or they might exchange for fresh fish which a friend of theirs caught in lake Edward, also situated in the Ruindi plain. None of these areas were far from Muhola. In fact, they were so close to this national park that once in awhile some wild animal would leave its sanctuary there and wander up the escarpment.

For example, one evening mother heard a commotion outside the house at the rear. She didn't want to loose any chickens or turkeys to thievas, so she dashed outside in the dark - shouting and yelling, for she thought she heard the chickens squawking. She came back into the house, failing to find anything, but still concerned that there WAS something out there.

She looked through the window. It was bright moonlight. She was shocked to see just a few yards from the house, a large leopard sitting on its haunches, not the least bit afraid to be so close to a human habitation. He could not have been very hungry because he just sat for awhile. Mother made some more noises (from the safety of the house).... and finally the leopard went on his leisurely way. There was no gun in the house to scare him off. Mother received a good scolding from father for her recklessness in darting out of the house with a leopard in the vicinity.

Father kept busy one way or another. He was a man who could not stay idle. He continued to get up early to read, study and meditate. He read a lot, mostly religious books and his Bible. Even when walking he would read. As he met passers-by, black or white, he would talk to them. The nearest neighbors at Muhola were on the next hill. However, he would not spend too much time in visiting and 'just talking.'

Around 6 o'clock in the morning he would assign work for his native helpers after having had worship with them. Their wives and some of the older girls worked, too, when it was pyrethrum flower-picking time. Then father would return to the house and have breakfast with mother before proceeding to whatever work he had assigned himself for the day.

The Sabbaths he would have services with his workers and their families for they lived on the plantation in their own little village. Some were Adventists, some were not. Others from nearby areas were invited also.

Father did not have as many African workers as some of the other planters. His pension money did not allow it, especially when first retired and before the pyrethrum crop was ready for market. Their savings went into the building of the house. A small inheritance from his parents came in handy and a year or so later, made it possible to put on the corrugated iron roof, replacing the porous tiles that had given them a lot of trouble.

It was not long after retirement before the brethren asked father to 'help' them out in one capacity or another. He gladly did. Since Muhola was only 65 miles from Rwesse, he went there on several occasions, travelling by bus, to help the new missionary family start or to help in the building program - or at other times to contact the government as go-between for one reason or another.

But the biggest task asked of him was the Ingathering Appeal. This annual worldwide denominational appeal is to gather in funds from the general public. It provides aid for a world-wide program that includes medical, educational, welfare and evangelistic projects and is a means of making contact with millions, presenting them with the scope of Seventh-day Adventist work. Funds were to be used to provide clinics, dispensaries, mission schools, etc.

So for about 6 or 7 weeks, father would leave mother to look after the place and would go on his annual trip, taking him far from home. He had a special pass as a veteran, to travel free in some areas. He used it freely. Starting on the bus from Muhola he would travel to Stanleyville, then on the river boat down the Congo river, a trip of hundreds of miles. He would contact everyone, whether white, black or brown - no one would be missed for his or her contribution to a good cause. He was afraid of no one, whether an important high official in the Government or a poor African laborer. He had such a way of talking to people that it was hard for anyone to refuse help for 'such good causes' as he would describe how the money would help others less fortunate. At the same time, he would sow seeds of the good news of the Gospel.

Quite a few years later my brother Paul encountered some of the people father had contacted on his Ingathering trips. At one place, a European hearing that name - Delhove - said, "Wait a minute.... Delhove? Are you related to a short little man who collected money for missions?"

My brother replied, "Yes, I am his son."

"What a man, what a MAN!! After getting a donation from me, 500 francs or so, I would watch him. He would ask every worker on the road on my farm for a donation. He would get it, too, although sometimes only a few centimes. What a man!" he said, shaking his head in wonder.

Thus father contacted uncounted numbers of people during those few weeks - all the way to Leopoldville, approximately 1,800 miles from home - and on occasion, even to Matadi. When the bus or boat or train would stop for refueling or to take on water or to discharge passengers, he would quickly hop out and contact others gathered around or even run into a nearby home if there was time enough. He was always running.

When his bags became too full, especially with coins, he would exchange them for bank notes. Then at the first opportunity he would deposit it in a bank along the way, to be forwarded to the proper bank account at headquarters. Father was the Adventist Union's number-one Ingatherer for a number of years, bringing in many thousands of francs to the church treasury.

During the last years of his life, father was made a member of the council of the Governor General of the Congo at Leopoldville, the capital. Also he was a member of the Provincial council at Costermansville in the Kivu. So when planning to go to these meetings, he would plan to go several weeks ahead to do the Ingathering on the way. Thus the many contacts increased as he covered such vast areas of the country.

Father's knowledge of native problems was extensive and his counsel was appreciated by government leaders throughout the country. He knew at least eleven languages that he could converse in and several others that he could understand.

When my parents retired, their two sons were still at Helderberg College. Although there would be great difficulties in financing their continuing education, they decided to stay and work their way through college.

But - there was a war going on - and the boys were Belgians. Their country was fighting so they were contacted to put in required time in the army in the Belgian Congo. That was at the beginning of 1945. Both John and Paul were assigned to an army camp at Luluabourg. They requested and obtained Sabbaths off from work and parade.

Then Paul was transferred to another camp at Watsa (near the Sudan border). There his faith was put to the test as week after week he refused to 'work' on the Seventh day of the week, the Lord's Sabbath. He was put under house arrest, then sent to be court-martialed.

Paul kept reviewing in his mind our father's faithfulness during the first World War.... also the advice of his brother-in-law that "whatever happens, stand fast and look to God for help."

After what seemed many days, the major who was holding him for trial brought a telegram received from Leopoldville. It read: "Discharge Delhove because of father's actions in World War I. We know he is sincere....." (The Governor General of the Congo and father had been in the same company in East Africa during World War I.)

Paul was immediately discharged - honorably, and went to Muhola, spending a few days with the folks before returning to his school work at Helderberg.

A few weeks after resuming his schooling, Paul one day got a most welcome surprise. He received a check from the army for all the back pay that had been held during the long weeks he had been under house arrest, waiting for the trial.

\* \* \* \* \*

Around 1946 father at the request of the leaders of our work in the Congo, went with them to find a site for a mission station in the Kasai province in western Congo. This was to be Lulengele Mission.

There had been much delay on the part of the government in granting permission to open our work there - also delay for two other missions, Nebasa in north Congo and Tala in the northeast near the border of Uganda. In fact, several years had elapsed with no reply, in spite of numerous attempts to get permission.

There the matter stood and father and mother went on a furlough to South Africa. Since father was on retirement, he was not eligible for any more paid furloughs. However the brethren voted them one (special). So at the end of 1947 and beginning 1948, they had several months at the Cape, staying at Fish Hoek, a seaside resort. Mother needed some specialized medical care which she got at Groote Schuur Hospital. Some of us suspected father was not well at times. We urged him to get a good checkup but he would shrug it off, always saying, "it will pass." He refused having anyone making a "fuss" over him.

Our parents enjoyed their stay in South Africa. They felt rested and were happy to see some of their children. Beside 'enjoying' this rest, what else did father do? He typed a catechism pamphlet from Swahili into Kikongo, the language of the Bas Congo area. He had started the translation while at Kirundu and Ruessa.

Note: Bas Congo was an area where Adventists did not have any work. Every time father went on a trip to Leopoldville and to



Matadi, he would visit the Bas Congo area. Upon return he would urge the brethren to do something about sending someone there to start work as he found many interested people in that very populated area.

Work did eventually open there in the Bas Congo. He didn't live to see it, but the story is told in the sequel to the Lowa story at Kirundu, Chapter 10.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was after their return from South Africa, while father was attending one of the Governor's councils in Leopoldville, probably 1948, that he received a telegram from the president of our mission work in the Congo. "See what you can do to release those three stations (Lulengele, Nebasa and Tala)."

Father wasted no time. He made an appointment with the Governor General. The interview was short but very friendly. Father came right to the point in making his request.

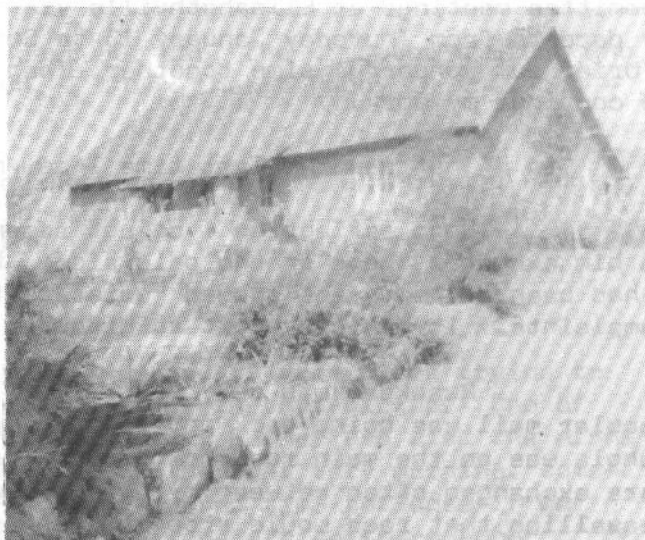
The Governor replied, "You mean to tell ME that permission to open up those stations has not yet been granted? After all this time?" Then calling his secretary, he gave orders that this be done at once. Within half an hour the long wait was over.

(Elder Bozarth, president of the Southern African Division, wrote me later that father was the one who did more than anyone else to get these new mission sites of Lulengele, Tala and Nebasa).

As for father's reaction? Immensely pleased but, like always, he gave glory to God for success and thanked Him for the privilege of being His servant.



Muhola Hill



Muhola house

## CHAPTER 15

### THE LAST YEAR

Father was not well but for an occasional visitor, very little or nothing was apparent.

However as early as 1947, while spending three months at Muhola with my folks, waiting for papers to admit me to the U.S.A. on furlough, I saw some signs that concerned me. From time to time I would watch him as he sat at his desk in the corner of the living room. His face would whiten and, stopping what he was doing, he would try to breathe deeply. These episodes would not last very long but I was aware that they were signs of cardiac ischemia and that he should seek help. He didn't pretend he was all right and between these attacks he did seem normal. I was sufficiently concerned that when I left to go to the States, I advised mother as to where to get help should something happen to father (although I tried to minimize and hide my fears).

I returned 18 months later on my way to my new work at Rwankeri mission. That was at the end of 1948. I stayed only two days at Muhola as my brother-in-law, Tom had to fit me into his tight schedule. His wife, my sister Clara, was in her last weeks of pregnancy. She and their two children had been staying at Muhola while Tom was beginning work at the new mission station of Nebasa. We wanted her nearer to the hospital where she would go to deliver her third baby. Tom left us at Rwankeri and returned to Nebasa.

The baby was born December 19th. Tom returned to fetch his family and take them to Muhola. There they would stay for a time as Nebasa mission was not ready for them yet. It was an opportunity for me to go with them to Muhola as Tom would go on his way to committee meetings at Elisabethville via Rwankeri. So, I again saw my parents from Thursday January 13 to Sunday, January 16, 1949 - a brief but wonderful time together. Then I returned to Rwankeri to continue my work.

That was the last time I saw my father alive.

Upon reflection I do not remember seeing anything different in him except perhaps on the pale side. He had lost some weight while I had been overseas and seemed "quieter" than usual. Of course, no complaints. It was his habit to hide his aches, pains and discomforts.

Rwankeri was only about 100 miles or so from Muhola. Regular mail was going back and forth by pouch from Ruhengeri. As Muhola was on the main road going north to Lubero and beyond, letters were exchanged often between my parents and me. Also, our missionaries travelling that road would stop at Rwankeri and give me news of my folks, since many of them stopped at their place also.

It was in February 1949 that father was invited to accompany Dr. Newbold and Elder Amba to peg out several dwellings at the new medical station at Mahagi (Tala) - one of the three mission sites father had been instrumental in getting from the government.

His letter to me dated February 9 described their trip there and back to Muhola. He mentioned having a bad ankle that he 'twisted' and which prevented him from going around. It happened midway through the trip and he was quite annoyed by the mishap.

In his next letter dated Feb. 23rd, he was jubilant about news of their youngest son, Paul, newly married in East Africa- and that he and bride Paddy would be arriving within days to spend the rest of their honeymoon at Muhola. There they would wait for permission to proceed to Lulengele Mission (in the Kasai province of western Congo) for their first work. In that letter, father mentioned having caught some "flu" bug on the way back from his trip three weeks previously and that it was still bothering him.

Wednesday March 9th, I received a letter from my sister Clara (still at Muhola) saying that father had had a heart attack the week before and was in bed, still weak. This news alarmed me. The more I thought about it, the more I wanted to run over there to see what was happening..... I knew it must be serious as it was not like father to be in bed. But - I had no car or other way of "running" to Muhola to see for myself. As the hours and time went by, I got more and more concerned. Finally I asked our local mission director to please take me in his car.

We got ready to go to Muhola early Sunday, March 13. On the way, we had passed Rutshuru and in the middle of the Ruindi plain in the National Park, a pickup going in the opposite direction at great speed toward Rutshuru, approached.

As the pickup sped past our car, the director's wife, who was in the middle, shouted, "Oh, I think that's Paddy in that car - on the passenger's side."

Fear of the worst gripped me. Where were Paul and Paddy going at such great speed? (I presumed that the driver was Paul). Were they on their way to Rwankeri to get me perhaps? What.....What?! Our driver stepped on the gas to get to Muhola as soon as possible. We arrived at 9 a.m.

There we found mother in tears.... and Clara trying to comfort her. Yes, that was Paul and Paddy in that pickup. One of the neighbors was taking them to Rutshuru. Father had died the night before (March 12) and the funeral was to be that very morning, sometime between 10 and 11 o'clock. There was no time to loose if we wanted to attend. Mother refused to go, preferring to remember father the way he was when alive.

We turned around and headed back to Rutshuru for the funeral. We were just in time to see him before being placed in the coffin. It was hard for me to realize he was really dead and not just sleeping. There was no trace of suffering on his face, only peace.

As a war veteran, the government gave father a full military funeral. It seemed the whole white population of Rutshuru was present as well as some African soldiers.

After the service I interviewed Dr. Calonne, the Belgian doctor who cared for him. This is his account of his last hours:

On Friday afternoon March 11, father arrived at the doctor's office, a very sick man. Dr. Calonne diagnosed his condition right away as a severe heart problem, one of the worst heart irregularities he had seen for a long time. With no hospital to treat cardiac ailments, not even an EKG machine for hundreds of miles, the only thing he could do was to send him back to his hotel room for complete rest and medication. He assigned a trained African nurse to stay with father, with the order not to leave him.

Next day, there was no change. The doctor visited him several times.

In the evening of Saturday March 12th, after another injection, the doctor told father he would be back in an hour or so, after he had consulted another doctor. The attendant who was still with him reported that father looked and felt easier - was even talking and "trying" to convert him.

At 9:30 that evening, father asked what the time was. Then he closed his eyes and very peacefully and quietly, breathed his last.

The doctor also told me that father's heart was too damaged and that if he had recovered from this attack, he would have had more. Then he added as we parted - "You know... your father was a true Christian. I did not share his beliefs but I certainly admired him. He not only believed his religion, he lived it."

Back at Muhola with the family I got more details about those last days proceeding his death.

After the trip to Tala with the brethren in February, it seemed father never got over the weakness which he attributed to the flu. Although he went about his work, he felt tired and once in awhile, extreme weakness. About once a week he would be

be seized with an attack which Clara and mother suspected as being of cardiac origin.

One day he had a very severe attack while in the valley fighting a bush fire that threatened the plantation. While he was there, Paul, at the house, was apprehensive and felt that he had better go down and see what was happening. He found father lying helpless on the ground where he had fallen, having one of these "attacks."

Paul improvised a stretcher and had him carried uphill and put him to bed. That was March 2nd. He stayed in bed a couple of days with what he called severe cramps, feeling queer and like being choked and held up by the throat, with nausea and much difficulty in swallowing. The nights were lengthy and restless and he said, "When I put my feet on the floor I feel dizzy and helpless."

On March 10th he wrote me a letter - his last (which I received several days after the funeral). He described some of his past ordeal and was puzzled as to what was ailing him.

In the letter he wrote (in part): "On my way to Costermansville where I MUST attend the Provincial council of which I am a member, I shall stop at Rutshuru, consult Dr. Calonne or another doctor. I shall not stop at any treatment to get well, even if I have to get it at Costermansville. If Dr. Calonne says I have to go to the hospital, I shall do so. I am not at all well..... I hope I do not have any more cramps which I have had for several days which seems that heart, stomach, sternum seemed cramped together."

In finishing his letter, he added - "If you need anything from Costermansville..... let me know." (That was like father, always thinking of others). He realized his illness was serious for he ended the letter "I fear there is some hidden complications. Please pray that I may get well again. If not - His will be done..." (He was ready to go).

It was in that letter that father for the first time described his illness to me.

Paul had accompanied father to Rutshuru on March 11 and had wanted to stay with him. But father objected and told Paul, "No, you go back to Muhola. One of these days you will receive your permit to proceed to Lulengele to start up the work there in the Kasai..... I'll be all right here in the hands of Dr. Calonne."

So reluctantly, Paul left him in the little hotel room.

Father knew that he was a very sick man. We learned later that a few days before his last trip to Rutshuru he had told mother, "I can go now. I have my replacement" meaning that Paul would be pioneering at Lulengele Mission.

Also when stopping at the Ruindi hotel in Park Albert on his way to Rutshuru, he told one of his neighbor-friends, "I feel it is finished for me."

His friend tried to cheer him up by saying that he would be as good as new after seeing the doctor. But father was emphatic. "No, I am finished," he insisted.

In His mercy God let His servant go to his rest, sparing him more pain and the invalidism which would have been hard for a person like my father to endure. He was 66 years old.

He was a man of boundless energy and great enthusiasm even when he was ill. He was never downcast but always cheerful and bouyant with the great goal of his life - the advance of the work of God always before him.

He had the satisfaction before he died, of seeing his son Paul ready to enter mission work. I was back from furlough and at my new post, having re-opened Rwankeri dispensary that had been closed since sister Lucy's death five years before. And Tom (Clara's husband) was starting Nebasa Mission.

It is my firm belief that father was a man of God and that when Jesus returns to claim His own, he will be in the first resurrection and hear our Lord say, "Come thou, faithful one, inherit the kingdom which has been prepared for you." He awaits the return of his Lord whom he loved and served to his last breath.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two weeks before his death, father was knighted (named) "Chevalier de l'Ordre de Léopold II" for his service to the natives of the country, by the Royal Prince Regent of Belgium.\*

\* See Appendix for list of citations and awards of D. E. Delhove.

## EPILOGUE

Father's death was a shock to all of us but especially to mother. She was like a crippled person whose crutches had been taken away from her. We decided she should not stay at Muhola alone. We finally persuaded her to live with me at Rwankeri after Clara and children and Paul and Paddy left.

I returned to Rwankeri the next day leaving Paul and Clara to take care of things and prepare for selling the plantation. There was not much time as Paul and Paddy were due to leave April 16th for Lulengele Mission near Luluabourg. A couple weeks later Clara and the children went to join Tom at Nebasa Mission.

They had done their best. Muhola was sold. The planter who bought it, brought mother to me at Rwankeri on the 12th of April. We were alone - mother and I. Life had to go on.

For some time mother did not want to go on living without father. We children tried to show and surround her with care and love but her loss was more than she could bear at times. She finally got better. She lived with me eight years, first at Rwankeri then at Lulengele. One year she spent with son Paul and wife Paddy at Songa Mission. Her last five years were with Clara and Tom who were then at Rweese Mission.

Mother died October 1963 at age 79 and her grave is behind the church at Rweese. During her last few years she was totally disabled by Parkinson's disease.

There are now three graves of our family in the Kivu province awaiting the call of Jesus when He comes for His own - father, mother and Lucy.

\* \* \* \* \*

The whereabouts of the rest of the family at the time of printing:

Clara married T. W. Staples and together have been in denominational work in Ruanda, the Congo and lastly in Quebec, Canada. Tom is now retired and Clara soon will be. They have three children, one of whom is in the work in the Far East Division.

Edna worked a short while in the Southern African Division president's office, then married A. Blennerhassett. She lived in Cape Town, South Africa many years and died November 1983. She had two sons.

John (formerly Jean François) married Patricia Ingle. They have worked many years at Helderberg College and now live at Onrus, South Africa. They have two sons.

Paul married Patricia Buckle. Both have been in denominational work since 1949 - in the Congo, Ruanda, Burundi and Nyasaland. At the time of writing, they are in Johannesburg, South Africa managing the Adventist Book Center of the Southern Union there. They have two children.

Lydie (the author) was a medical missionary for thirty years in the Congo, Ruanda and Nyasaland. Half of that time she worked with doctors, the other half - alone. She had to leave mission service in 1960 because of poor health. At that time she came to the U.S.A. and worked part-time at the Glendale Medical Center, Glendale, California for 13 years. She is now retired and lives in Canon City, Colorado.



GLOSSARY

Of countries, towns and places mentioned in this book.

<u>Old Name</u>	<u>Present name</u>
Albertville	Kalemie
Astrida	Butare
Belgian Congo	Zaire
British East Africa	Kenya
Congo river	Zaire river
Coquihatville	Mbandale
Costermansville	Bukavu
Elisabethville	Lubumbashi
Katanga (province)	Shaba
Leopoldville	Kinshasa
Luluabourg	Kananga
Northern Rhodesia	Zambia
Nyasaland	Malawi
Nyanza	Nyabisindu
Ponthierville	Ubundi
Ruanda	Rwanda
Stanley Falls	Boyoma Falls
Stanleyville	Kisangani
Southern Rhodesia	Zimbabwe
Tanganyika	Tanzania
Urundi	Burundi
Usumbura	Bujumbura

## BELGIUM

The kingdom of Belgium in northwest Europe is a small country, only 11,700 square miles - an area approximately 175 miles long and 90 miles wide. It has Holland as a neighbor to the north with Germany and Luxembourg on the east. It shares the south and south-western border with France. The coastal region beside the North Sea (about 1/10 of Belgium) is a low-lying area of dunes and sections of land reclaimed from the sea and protected by dikes.

The central plain is gently rolling, slightly elevated and has a number of fertile valleys irrigated by many waterways. Several large rivers flow through Belgium to the North Sea.

In the southeast of Belgium is a rocky but densely wooded plateau, the Ardennes highlands, with an altitude of 1,500 feet at its highest point. It is an extension of the forest from northeast France - an area unsuited for agriculture.

The climate varies from the dampness of the coastal region to the inland plains and higher altitude.

Belgium is one of the most densely populated areas of Europe, with nearly 10 million people. In spite of this, 1/5 of the country is covered by forest. Another 58% of the land is used for field crops or stock raising and about 2-3% for horticulture. The great majority (about 75%) of the farms are family-owned units of 2½ acres or less with a diversity of crops - fruits, vegetables, farm animals - a little bit of everything.

Over 15% of the inhabitants live in Brussels, the capital, situated in the middle of the country with Antwerp as its North Sea port (the busiest port in Europe). Smaller cities are Ghent, Mons, Liege, Arlon, Namur, Brugge, Charleroi. Some 70% of the population live in communities of under 25,000 persons.

The people of Belgium are divided into two distinct ethnic groups.

1. The Flemings with their own language, Flemish, which resembles Holland-Dutch. They comprise approximately 55% of the population and live mostly in the north and northwest portion of Belgium.

2. The Walloons speak a dialect, "Walloons" but the official language is French. They live in the south and southeast of Belgium.

Most Belgians are bilingual. Those living in Brussels call themselves the "neutrals", although suburbs are either Flemish or French-speaking.

## THE BELGIAN CONGO

The Belgian Congo\* occupies the middle of the African continent. On the north are the countries of the Sudan, the Central African Republic and on the northeast, the French Congo. The Atlantic Ocean touches only a 25-mile frontage of the Congo where the delta of the mighty Congo river channels its waters into the sea. Angola lies to the southwest of the Congo and to the south is Northern Rhodesia. The eastern boundary includes lake Tanganyika, Ruanda-Urundi (with lake Kivu) and Uganda.

The extreme width of the country in an east-west direction is about 1,200 miles. From its most northerly to its most southerly point the distance is about 1,250 miles. The estimated area is 904,757 square miles.

At the time of this story the country was divided into provinces of Kasai, Bas-Congo, Orientale, Katanga, Equatoriale and Kivu. The capital was Leopoldville although previously for several years the capital was at Boma. Matadi was and still is the chief port on the river and accomodates ocean-going vessels which can go up the river to that port which is 93 miles from the mouth of the river.

The native population at the time of this story was approximately 12 millions. At present, according to recent figures, it is 28 millions.

A relief map of the Congo reveals the central portion as a huge depression in the form of a basin, with borders more or less accentuated throughout its whole circumference. The waters of the basin are drained by the Congo river into the Atlantic ocean. They flow through a bottleneck which the river in a succession of 32 falls and rapids, has cut through the rocky passages of the Crystal Mountains that parallel the Atlantic. It is evident that the center of Africa was once an inland sea. This depression is entirely covered by a very dense equatorial forest, often marshy and always humid and tropical.

To the south are the plateaux that form the Congo-Zambezi divide between the two river systems. In the southwest is the Angola plateau where the Kasai river rises. It is the chief southern affluent of the Congo river, which, with its tributaries flow into the Atlantic to the west. The Zambezi river (south of the Belgian Congo) with its tributaries flow into the Indian Ocean on the east side of Africa. As the basin slopes slowly to the southeast, it is fringed by rugged mountain country rising to the Katanga plateau, a region about 4,000 ft. above sea level. These plateaux are areas of savannahs traversed by long stretches of open forested country.

\* Present names of places, countries and towns are listed separately. See Glossary of names in Appendix.

In the southeast, rising rapidly from the Katanga plateau to form the Katanga mountains, the Congo-Zambezi ridge continues. Numerous rivers start in this area, some flowing south to the Zambezi and the Indian Ocean; others flowing north to the Lualaba river (the name given to the upper part of the Congo river) and on to the Atlantic Ocean.

To the east and northeast of the central basin are the mountains that slope up to the Great Rift Valley and the Congo-Nile divide, with Ruanda-Urundi and Uganda beyond. Thus it is seen that the whole of the central basin of the Congo is drained by the Congo river and its tributaries.

Only in the most northeastern part of the Belgian Congo, in the region of the Virunga volcanoes and beyond to the lakes Edward and Albert, do the rivers flow into the Nile system and ultimately into the Mediterranean.

#### The Great Rift Valley

The Congo-Nile divide is actually the eastern side of the Great Rift Valley, an immense Graben or fracture of the earth's surface - the most orographic region of the Congo. This geological feature actually begins in the Mid-east, extends through Jordan and the Dead Sea, then into Africa where it divides with one branch going through Kenya. But the Central - or Western branch - lies to the west of Ruanda-Urundi and is thus the eastern border of the Congo.

A number of lakes (Albert, Edward, Kivu, Tanganyika and Nyasa) are in this great cleft of the earth's surface. Some of these lakes have depths below sea-level. The "floor" of the valley is traversed by rivers - as the Ruzizi river across the valley between lakes Kivu and Tanganyika. North of lake Kivu, the Rutshuru and Ruindi rivers flow across the Ruindi plain to lake Edward. Between Lakes Edward and Albert lies the Semliki river and valley. This western branch of the Rift Valley is 869 miles long and of varying widths up to 25 miles and extends from the Zambezi river and lake Nyasa northward to the Nile valley.

The rugged mountainous country on the east side of the Rift (the Ruanda side) climaxes in the region north of lake Kivu - the Virunga volcanoes. The highest of these is Mt. Karissimbi, over 14,700 ft. It is in the Congo and is extinct. There are eight principal volcanoes and hundreds of craters. Most of these are extinct except for Nyamulagira and Nyiragongo which erupt from time to time spewing lava over the countryside, forming the "lava plain." Two of these volcanoes are on the Ruanda-Uganda border; three are on the Ruanda-Congo border and three are entirely on Congo soil.

North of the volcano region and between lake Kivu and lake Edward is Albert National Park, at a lower altitude in the portion known as the Ruindi plain. It teems with wild life that includes lions, elephants, hippos, antelope, buffalo, leopards and other animals, also many varieties of birds.

And on the west side of this Park is the Kabasha escarpment. This magnificent and sensational geological feature can be appreciated more since a road has been hewn out of the solid rock. As the road leaves the valley floor it climbs higher and higher, ascending to the crest - a distance (by road) of 69 miles to the town of Lubero, altitude 6,500 ft. The view at first as one ascends from the valley, is that of the plains just crossed and beyond to the range of volcanoes. In clear weather, even the snow-capped peaks of the *Ruwenzori mountains* are visible in the far distance. The mountainous scenery is one of wild beauty. From Rutshuru to Lubero is approximately 130 miles. The coolness of the high altitude contrasts vividly with the heat of the lowlands. Just a couple miles beyond Lubero, the road crosses the equator.

(NOTE: The Ruwenzori mountains between lakes Edward and Albert in the extreme northeast of the Congo are on the border with Uganda. These mountains tower to an altitude of 16,795 ft. and glaciers are on certain peaks. The snow-line is about 14,800 ft. The mountain chain is about 80 miles long and 62 miles wide.)

As one continues north from the 'top' of the Kabasha escarpment, the terrain ascends, then descends gradually, still rugged and mountainous, until finally at Beni, some 240 miles from lake Kivu, one is at the edge of the Ituri forest, back to the hot and humid realm of the equatorial Congo climate. It is this part of the Ituri forest that is the domain of the small people, the famous Bambuti pygmies.

Beside mention of the Great Rift Valley and the Kabasha escarpment, one other area should be noted - the Kivu, (Kivu province of the Belgian Congo). This area was explored later than the rest of the Congo. Also it has a special reputation of its own in that it is a portion of central Africa where the climate is *temperate and delightful* due to the altitude.

In later years, as the area was settled, there were plantations of cinchona (quinine), coffee, tea, pyrethrum, bananas and many European vegetables grown by European settlers and natives in surrounding villages.

The province of Kivu is divided into two parts - Maniema and Kivu. Maniema is lower and hotter - in the Lualaba river valley. It is rich in history, once the center of the campaign against the

slave traders. To its wealth of vegetation must be added mineral resources as gold, tin, etc.

"Kivu" proper, of Kivu province, is the region between lake Kivu and the Ruwenzori mountains to the north. Lake Kivu and its outlet, the wild and torrential Ruzizi, is one of the beauty spots of central Africa. Lake Kivu is the highest lake in central Africa, nearly 4,800 ft. and is in a marvelous setting - a jewel - in the midst of the central Graben (rift). It is believed that once it was the original source of the Nile until its northern exit was blocked by a flow of lava. Now its water is part of the Congo system, flowing south through the Ruzizi river into lake Tanganyika and then to the Congo river.

Population: In the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi, native peoples are represented by the following ethnic groups:

The Bantu (negro) form the bulk of the population.

The Sudanese include a few tribes in the north and northeast Congo.

The Nilotics are less numerous and are in the northeast Congo.

The Pygmies are negritoos. A few thousands live mostly in the equatorial forest.

The Hamites are the leading tribe of Ruanda-Urundi, the Watutsi, who composed the nobility and government class of the people of Ruanda-Urundi. The Hamites are brethren of the Galla of Ethiopia. They seem to have come from Egypt with their long-horned cattle. The pure-blood Mututsi is distinguished by his tall stature, often 6 to 7 ft. tall. He has a long face, regular features, aquiline nose, thin lips, small joints, narrow shoulders and long slender limbs.

In the Congo there are at least 70 languages among 200 tribes. Five of the main ones are Kiswahili, Tshiluba (and Kiluba), Lingala, Kikongo and French.

## RUANDA-URUNDI

Ruanda-Urundi is almost wholly a mountainous region just south of the equator. On its northern border is Uganda. To the south and east is Tanganyika. On the west it shares lake Kivu and the Ruzizi river as common border with the Belgian Congo to the north end of lake Tanganyika.

The topography is a geological jumble, from the low hot Ruzizi plain and narrow strip of land bordering lake Tanganyika to the high altitudes reached in a succession of mountains, hills and high plateaux - these separated by valleys which are at times deep and swampy. The mountain chain that is on Ruanda's west forms the Congo-Nile ridge which divides the country from north to south and is the water-shed between the two great river systems. Thus the greater part of Ruanda-Urundi is in the Nile river basin.

Beginning at lake Tanganyika and lake Kivu, the country rises rapidly eastward to the Congo-Nile divide and altitudes of 6,500 ft. in the south to 7,500 up to 7,900 ft. in the north. From this high ridge the terrain descends slowly toward the east as far as the Ruvuvu and Kagera rivers which are affluents of lake Victoria's sources of the Nile. There the altitude is 4,500 to 4,900 ft. The most southern source of the Nile is at Kigizi Hill which is 6,724 ft. altitude - in Urundi.

The area of Ruanda-Urundi is 20,900 square miles. At the time of this book's story, the population in Ruanda was 2,700,000. In Urundi it was 2,300,000. At the present time (1984) it is about double.

Prior to World War I, Ruanda-Urundi along with Tanganyika territory was German East Africa. Belgium received the territory of Ruanda-Urundi as a mandate from the League of Nations in 1924 because of its participation in the war. In 1949 united jurisdiction of the territory began under the United Nations. Ten years later (1959) separate governments of a monarchical form were authorized.

In Ruanda, however, prolonged disorders followed. The Bahutu people who were predominately peasants and the majority, rose against the domination of the ruling noble class, the Watusi. The Bahutu in a Hutu-dominated provisional government, established a republic which was proclaimed in a United Nations' sponsored referendum in 1961. Surviving Watusi fled and became refugees in neighboring countries.

In 1962 independence was granted to both countries by the Belgians in conjunction with the UN. Ruanda became Rwanda, a republic with a president. Urundi became Burundi, a monarchy but at the time of writing it is now a republic.

DOCUMENT LISTING SERVICES AND ITINERARIES

OF D. E. Delhove - during World War I

(from his compilation made and sent with his application to the Minister of Justice, Belgian Congo for his military pension)

8-1-1913 to 8-11-1914 Civilian-Missionary engaged for S.D.A. church.

8-12-1914 to 2-16-1915 Information Agent at the disposal of British army at Kisumu, with the consent of the Belgian Consul at Mombasa who had sent the order of recall to rejoin the army of which he was number 5264.

2-17-1915 to 3-15-1915 Trip from Kenya to Congo via Rutshuru.

3-15-1915 to 6-6-1916 Enlisted as non-commissioned officer of the police and Administrator F. F. at Rutshuru under "Commissaire General Henri."

6-6-1916 to 6-17-1916 Rejoined the North Brigade following order wired by Col. Monitor.

6-17-1916 to 9-19-1916 Chief Information Agent attached to the North Brigade (Belgian forces of the Allied Command).

9-19-1916 to Dec. 1916 Native-carriers Recruiting agent.

Jan. 1917 to March 1917 Recruiting agent in the Ruanda-Urundi Chief-of-Squad.

April 1917 to 9-23-1917 Harrassment of Naumann Column (German) from Ugala then on to Ikoma..... toward Dodoma following Naumann (Tanganyika campaign).

9-24-1917 to 5-8-1918 Liaison Officer (south) toward Mahende Luwali, Lindi and return (to the north) to Dar Es Salaam.

5-8-1918 to 5-27-1918 Return journey to Europe on furlough in England.

5-28-1918 to 11-29-1918 Furlough in England. Took a course in pharmacy.



SUMMARY OF PROMOTIONS

Of D. E. Delhove during his services in the Allied Command during World War I in Africa.

8-12-1914	Information agent for British troops
3-15-1915	Enlisted non-commissioned officer of the police at Rutshuru (Congo)
5-4-1915	<i>District Commissioner (Fr: Administrateur Territorial F. F.)</i> at Rutshuru
5-6-1916	Recruiting agent for porters, food and other supplies; collect taxes.
5-12-1916	Named First Non-commissioned officer
12-14-1916	Named "Agent Militaire."

CITATIONS AND MEDALS

Issued to D. E. Delhove for his services to the Colony, 1914 - 1918 and in later years.

8-12-1915	Citation from Colonel Henri at Rutshuru
2-24-1916	Citation for his conduct during East African campaign
8-21-1916	Citation for his conduct by Général Tombeur (Belgium)
10-30-1916	Received the Gold Medal of the Order of African Star with palms and the War Cross (croix de guerre)
7-21-1917	Received the Service Star by Royal decree
10-19-1917	Citation of "The Order of the Day" (Ordre du Jour) of 1st Regiment of South Brigade at Mahende by Major Muller
1-17-1918	Received the British Medal D.S.M. (Distinguished Service Medal) for distinguished service
7-21-1918	Received Commemoration Medal for African Campaign 1914 - 1918
7-26-1921	Received Commemoration Medal for the War 1914-1918
11-13-1921	Received the Victory Medal
1-20-1936	Received Golden Medal (Ordre Royal du Lion) Belgium
11-20-1947	Received Citation from Minister of Foreign Affairs
1947	Named Chevalier de l'Ordre de Léopold II (Knight of the Order of Léopold II) for his services to the natives of the Belgian Congo.

