

Sam Shewmaker sent me this journal that Alvin Hobby kept of a village trip he and friends and schoolboys made long, long, long, long ago.  
Hope you enjoy it as much as I have . . . . .  
Roy

### **“Roughing It”**

ALVIN HOBBY

The following diary of a trip made together with a group of our African missionaries in June, 1948 will give some idea of what I consider my first real introduction to “Darkest Africa,” although I had been in the country since 1938.

I had often heard of the “Zambezi Valley,” or the country across the hills from Kabanga Mission, toward the Zambezi River, and had seen some of the people from there, but I had never had any special longing to see the country. However when I learned of the plans for this trip, I decided to go.

The aims and purposes of the trip varied with the different individuals who went. Some went to make a survey of the possibilities of doing mission work in this area in the future. Some went for what teaching and preaching they could do on the trip. I went mainly to help brother Shewmaker get some color slides and motion pictures to take to the USA with him, since he was planning to leave shortly.

A considerable amount of planning and preparation is necessary for such a trip since all needed provisions for the missionaries, and native helpers, medicines, guns, ammunition, tools and gasoline and oil for the trucks, etc., etc., must be carried along for possibly a trip lasting for three or four weeks. There are no accommodations to be found in the villages. So camping equipment must be taken. If someone gets hurt or becomes ill, or gets snake-bitten, there must be medicines for him. If the bicycles, or motorbikes, or the truck breaks down, there must be means of repairing them. These and a hundred and one other things must be taken into consideration in making preparation for the trip.

Although several native boys were taken along to help with the work of travelling and with chores about the camp, everyone had something to do. And, although each person had, more or less, to be a jack of all trades and help with everything that was to be done, there was to a certain degree, a division of labor, which became apparent as the trip progressed, about as follows: Foy Short, pathfinder and woodsman. J.C. Reed, doctor and night watchman. J.C. Shewmaker, preacher. Stanford Shewmaker, hunter. Orville Brittell, truck driver and mechanic. Eldred Echols, cook and photographer. I kept a diary of the trip besides, as stated before, helping Brother Shewmaker get pictures to take home with him.

But the diary follows: ---

#### ***Wednesday, June 2, 1948***

Brother Brittell arrived at Namwianga about 8 o'clock this morning, having left Sinde Mission about 4 a.m., all of us were waiting for him. In fact, Foy Short came up from Bulawayo three or four days ago; and Brother Echols has had the boxes and tins packed ready for the trip a number of days already.

All of us knew we would have to make final preparations at once because Orville would not want to tarry long. So, for a while it was a mad rush getting bedrolls tied up, groceries put into boxes, bicycles oiled, clothing and toilet articles collected, medicines selected for first aid kits, gasoline in the truck and motorbikes and shovels, and axes collected, and all this carried out to the truck and put on with bags of cornmeal and other food for the native boys, etc., etc.

During all this operation Georgia, Sister Shewmaker, Margaret Short, and sister Reed did what they could to help, but they all seemed a little depressed at the thought of being widows for two or three weeks, or possibly much longer! Sister Rowe said this might help them to sympathize with her a little better.

Since we wanted a movie of the trip, when everything was packed and ready to go we staged a goodbye scene. But I am afraid it did not look very real because of the amusement it created--- and we had said goodbye already!

Some of the boys started on a good bit ahead of the rest of us, on bicycles. Then, after a hurried lunch the rest of us got away about 1 PM expecting to spend the night at Kabanga Mission, about 50 miles away. Brethren Eldred Echols, JC Reed, Foy Short, and Stanford went on the truck with Orville Brittell and the native boys that had not gone ahead on bicycles, while Brother Shewmaker and I started last on our motor bicycles. Mine is an American bicycle with a "Whizzer" bicycle motor attached; and his is a British make.

We overtook the truck at Kalomo, 4 miles away, and then passed it again at a farm house about 11 miles from Namwianga. After that the truck passed us again and we stayed behind the rest of the day.

Since there is a good motor road to Kabanga we had easy going on our motorbikes. However, Brother Shewmaker had a little trouble with the accelerator on his bike, and we were delayed about an hour.

The sun set before we got to Kabanga, and darkness came on, since the days are short now; but we had lights on our bikes and kept traveling, arriving at Kabanga about 6:15. There we learned that the truck had already arrived and had gone on to Dambilo Village about 10 miles farther on to the south. Since we were a little tired, and it was dark, we decided to spend the night at Kabanga and overtake the others tomorrow.

Our first consideration was supper. Boyd and Sybil Reese were not at home; but they had told us we would find some food. We did, but not much because the group on the truck had found it first!

However, we made out a good supper. And now we must go to bed and enjoy the beds, since they will likely be the last we will get to sleep on for two or three weeks.

#### ***Thursday, June 3, 1948***

I got up a good while before daylight this morning and went to the kitchen to try to find something to cook for breakfast. I hope Boyd and Sybil don't think they have been robbed when they come home! After making a fire in the stove and getting some water on to heat, I located some oatmeal, salt, eggs, lard, coffee, etc., and started cooking breakfast.

Brother Shewmaker came in before breakfast was ready. After eating we packed the few things we were carrying with us and got on our way about sun up. Since it is winter time in Rhodesia in June, we got a little cool riding along through the tall grass that was wet with dew. But we didn't mind that much. Our greatest concern was to follow the truck track; and this was not always easy to do. After losing the tracks a time or two we came to Inkolola, and soon cycled on over to Dambilo's village arriving at the camp the rest of the group had made about a quarter of a mile from the village, while they were still cooking breakfast.

We were glad to be with the group again, so we relaxed, sat down and rested a while, then took some pictures of the camp, breakfast being prepared, and eaten, etc. There was no hurry about getting away from Dambilo's since the next stop, Pukuma's village, is not far away and generally not a very hard day's journey.

While we were waiting a group of young women and girls and one old woman came out from the village and all kneeled down about 40 feet from the camp. After a while some of the native boys went out and greeted them. Some of us also greeted them in the usual African fashion by saying "Mwabuka" (You have risen) and clapping our hands. The purpose of the visit, we learned, was to get some medicine for colds and beg for the tin cans that had been opened and emptied.

We heard that there was an epidemic of smallpox in the valley where we were going. So it was decided to send one of the boys back to Kalomo by bicycle, and then to Choma by train, to get some serum for use in inoculating people where we go. A boy was chosen, and he was glad to go because he had not been inoculated for smallpox and is a little afraid to make the trip without being inoculated.

Also, chief Simwatachela is afraid for us to go into the valley lest we bring the disease back with us. He wrote a letter telling us that if we did go, not to come back through his country.

About the middle of the morning we were on our way. The truck went ahead swaying from side to side going across the uneven country, bouncing over rocks and across gulleys, and almost disappearing sometimes going down into the dry bed of some little stream and coming out again. There is no road now, only a native footpath, and the going is not very easy. Those on the back of the truck were kept busy trying to hold on and avoiding branches of the trees. Brother Shewmaker and I were content to follow along behind on our motorbikes. Foy and Eldred had been this way before and knew the path. Only once or twice did we have to stop, get out picks and shovels, and do a little road building so the truck could go on. At one place some big rocks had to be removed, and at another, on a hillside, a place had to be leveled lest the truck turn over.

This place caused no real difficulty but when we came to Sizambo River, we were really stuck. The river is not flowing now, but the crossing seemed to be a boggy marsh about 100 yards across, almost impassable for a motorbike, to say nothing of a truck fairly heavily loaded. Foy and Eldred had taken their guns and gone out through the bush hunting; and while waiting for them, the rest of us scouted about a little trying to find a better crossing, but we had to give up.

Foy and Eldred overtook us a little later, with a small klipspringer they had killed, and we decided there was nothing to do but build a road across this marsh. Dinner was forgotten about. We got out

our native axes, went across the river to a grove of trees and cut poles until our hands were blistered. Then we carried them until our shoulders ached. These were for the worst part of the crossing where the water was standing about 6 or 8 inches deep, with soft mud underneath. Then we took the branches that had been cut off the poles and put them in next worst place where the ground is wet and soft. For the rest of the way, the tall reeds were cut, making a roadway; And the reeds were left on the ground, making a sort of mat for the truck to run on.

A little before sundown the road was ready for a trial. Most of the things were unloaded from the truck, and instructions were given for everyone to run behind the truck and push to keep it from getting stuck; because we knew if it ever stopped on that soft ground, our troubles would be multiplied. There was a steep bank on the side where the truck was, and that gave it a good start. With a lot of shouting, and much anxiety Orville stepped on the gas and off the truck went. We could not push because we couldn't keep up! On the far side the truck bounced across the corduroy road we had made, and, to the relief of all, up on dry ground on the far side. It was too late to try to go on to Pukuma. So we decided to make camp and push on in the morning.

#### ***Friday, June 4***

When we arose, about daylight, we found a lot of dew on the ground and on our bed clothes. After taking a few pictures of "rising scenes," and cooking and eating breakfast, we packed in preparation for the trip of 10 miles on to Pukuma. Everything had been carried across the river to the truck on the other side, this caused a little delay. However, we were ready to start about 9 o'clock. The path was better than we expected. After leaving the river we had to go upgrade for a while. After that the country was fairly level for a short distance. Then we started down a long, gently sloping ridge which took us all the way to Pukuma.

We had not gone far until we realized that we were in elephant country. Piles of dung were seen here and there, and we saw several trees the elephants had pushed over. 2 or 3 trees had been pushed down across the path, and we had to do some chopping before the truck could pass.

It seems that the elephants push trees down just for the joy of pushing, and judging from the size of the trees, they must get a good bit of joy from it. One of the trees across the path was about 10 inches in diameter where it broke, about 4 feet above the ground. But elephants push down trees much bigger than this. In fact there are no trees here too big for them to push down, either uprooting them or snapping them off. The natives tell us that if an elephant tackles a tree that proves to be too much for him, one of his fellows will come and help, until the tree is down. So we have decided that if we meet any elephant, it will not help at all to try to climb a tree.

In places where the ground was soft during the rainy season some tracks have been left, and these help us to visualize the size of the elephants.

About half a mile before we came to the village, we arrived at the old campsite where Foy and Eldred camped last year; and it was decided this would be a good place for the camp this time.

We were busy for an hour or two, unpacking, choosing places for our beds, clearing off the rocks, etc., finding grass to put down to afford a little softness and keep our blankets out of the dirt, making

some tables by tying sticks together with bark string, and having the native boys bring wood and water.

After the camp was very well established some of the village people came to greet us, beg for medicine, and to see the truck, this being for some of them, the first time they ever saw any sort of motor car.

From the reports given by the old men, this country is cursed with elephants. They estimated that there must be some 25 or 30 in this community, and they like to come into the gardens at night to feed. In this way much food is destroyed, since it takes a lot to fill an elephant! Sometimes the people have houses in, or near, their gardens so they can keep the elephants out.

Some of the people reported that there are also some lions in the country. We hope none of them decide to raid our camp, because with our "beds" out on the ground under a bush, we have little protection.

Late in the afternoon Brother Shewmaker and Stanford went out hunting, thinking they might see some little buck in some of the garden sites about sundown. They did, and Stanford shot a duiker.

After supper we went to the village for a short service. There are several Christians here most of them were baptized last year.

After the service Foy and Eldred took their guns and the spotlight and went to an old garden down by the river thinking they might find a buck, shine its eyes and shoot it. This form of hunting being common here. When they got to the garden something was there all right. They could hear some noises in the dry stalks, evidently some kind of animal or animals tramping about or eating. However, no eyes could be seen. What could they be? Cattle? or possibly elephants! Well, one is forced to accept such a possibility in a place like this, and that is what Foy and Eldred did. Since one can hardly shoot an elephant in the dark and live to tell the tale, they beat a hasty retreat (at least they said so!) and came back to the camp.

We went to bed, and finally went to sleep thinking what would happen if the elephants decided to visit our camp. And perhaps walk through the middle of it.

### ***Saturday, June 5***

Early this morning Brother Shewmaker and Stanford took their guns and went into some of the old garden sites to look for some little buck. And a short distance to the north of our camp they saw the spoor of a big bull elephant which, from all indications passed there about daylight. It was coming from the direction of the garden where Foy and Eldred were hunting last night. So our suspicions are even stronger now that what they encountered last night was elephants. Brother Shewmaker stepped the distance from where the elephants passed to our camp and found it to be 29 steps.

Orville left the camp early on his bicycle to visit a little in the village and take a look at the country round about.

A little later, Brother Reed and Foy Short took some water bags and a little lunch and started out to walk to the next village, about 8 miles away, to see about the road and river crossings. When they returned they said the going would be fairly easy for both the truck and motorbikes.

Then, about 10 o'clock Brother Shewmaker and I, Onesimus, (one of our African helpers), and a little village boy named Sitali, started out on foot to go to Kankuli, a nearby hill, reputed to be the highest in the whole country.

Sitali seemed to know every path and every foot of ground and took us by the shortest route to the foot of the hill. Brother Shewmaker was armed with a gun, and I was armed with two cameras. On the way we saw many signs of elephants, such as tracks, piles of dung, and trees branches broken off. But none of the elephants themselves were insight.

It took us 45 minutes to walk to the foot of the hill, and then 30 minutes of hard climbing to climb to the top of it. The sides are very steep, and the summit is barely large enough for a big dwelling house. But from the top we got a fine view of all the surrounding country, which must have been several hundred feet lower than we were. To the south we could see across the Zambezi River and over into Southern Rhodesia. And everywhere there was nothing but hills and more hills. Not a very pleasing prospect for a trip on a truck or on motorbikes.

We stayed on top of Kankuli about 50 minutes looking at the country and taking a few pictures, then we walked, and slipped, and slid down in 26 minutes. We came straight back to camp, ate lunch about 1:15 PM and were glad to rest a while.

The little boy who guided us to Kankuli, is a son of Pukuma, the headman of the village. We were told that last year he had a little brother who was out herding cattle one day and mysteriously disappeared. The people looked for him, off and on for three months, but failed to find any signs of him. The general opinion was that a leopard caught him.

After our rest Brother Shewmaker and I went to the village to get a few pictures of the people and things of interest in the village.

Orville went hunting about 3:15 PM and came back saying he had seen some lion tracks not far away.

About 4 o'clock Brother Shewmaker and Stanford were going out again to hunt for duikers and I walked with them past the place where they saw the spoor of big elephant and then on down to the river to bathe and wash some of my clothes. They left me at the river. Lots of water was still standing here and there; and in the sand between the holes of water were plenty of big elephant tracks. Everything was quiet and peaceful but I did not stay any longer than I needed to.

It seems that Brother Echols has become the official cook of the group; and he seems to be able to prepare tasty dishes from whatever materials he may have at hand. For supper tonight we had cassava pudding and sauce made from a wild fruit called "incingas," found in the forest here. It was all "fit for a king."

After supper we went to the village for the evening service. Tonight Orville showed the people pictures illustrating the life of Christ using his epidiascope and 6-foot glassbead screen which he got

recently and my little 110 volt light plant which was located by the young people of various churches in Los Angeles. Orville borrowed it for this trip; and the showing of these pictures was one of the main purposes of his making the trip.

Of course this was all new and strange to the village people. But it is something that attracts and holds their attention when nothing else will hardly; and I feel a lot of good teaching was done and many lasting impressions made.

We went to bed tired and sleepy; and most of us went to sleep in spite of thoughts of wild animals. It seems that we are slowly becoming accustomed to this mode of living.

### ***Sunday, June 6***

We got up early this morning in order to break camp, have church services in the village and be on our way to Bangalali In time to get there before night.

After eating breakfast and packing, we went to the village for the services. It was my turn to speak. We all gathered under the shade of some big trees near the edge of the village, most of the village people sitting on the ground and most of us sitting on native stools. The biggest stool, about a foot high, was used as a table for the Lord's Supper. The service was conducted in the usual way, with native Christians leading the singing, officiating at the table, and interpreting what the speaker had to say.

During the service motion pictures were made of the audience and the different parts of the worship.

It was 12:30 before we got on our way. First, we had to back-track a little until we came to a dim trail beating down another long, gently sloping ridge, which someone had named the 'Avenue of the Elephants.' The only mishap on this part of the journey was that Brother Reed was struck by a pointed branch of a tree and knocked or pushed off the top of the truck. He suffered a little shock but no serious injuries.

After leaving the Avenue of the elephants the main difficulty was found in making three "river" crossings. The first was nothing more than a huge gully. But for the truck to cross, both banks had to be dug off and the bottom filled in. Then with much shouting and pushing the crossing was made.

The next place was the dry bed of a stream, about 75 feet wide, with a lot of big rocks and loose sand in it. The rocky part was made crossable by filling in some holes with small rock and gravel. The sand was covered with branches of tree so that the wheels of the truck would not sink into it.

This crossing is not far from the village. We found plowed ground just by the river.

While we were busy getting the truck across and up the opposite bank, there was a crashing sound in the bush nearby; and we all hurried out into the opening expecting to get a view of a rapidly retreating elephant. It was only a frightened cow!

It was not far to the next crossing, which is within shouting distance of the village. This place was not very wide but the banks on both sides were steep. These had to be dug off and reeds cut and put on the sandy places. At last the truck was across, and we got to the village about 4:50 PM.

We chose the same campsite Brother Echols and Foy used last year. The place was cleared off, grass put down for beds, wood brought and a fire started, and water sent for; and we had a new 'home.'

The old headman of the village came out to greet us. After supper the people came out and Orville showed them the Bible pictures as he had done at other places.

We have decided to stay at Bangalali over Monday; and leave Tuesday morning.

### *Tuesday, June 8*

Four more people came this morning for smallpox inoculations. And many people came out to see the truck before it got away.

Brethren Reed, Short, and Echols and five of the boys left soon after breakfast to work on the road. The rest of us remained to attend to the baptism. At the river there were two more confessions, so that four altogether, all girls, were baptized. After the baptismal service we got away from Bangalali about 10 o'clock, in about five miles away overtook the others making a bridge across a big gully about 8 feet wide and 6 feet deep. Big poles were cut and tied together with bark until the truck could cross.

After this we went on South following an old wagon road which the natives called "muguagua wa Bishop" (bishops road). This is an old road which was made and used by some of the pioneers who hauled freight up from southern Rhodesia by ox wagon. It is hard to follow now because signs of it can be seen only here and there.

Two miles beyond the place for the bridge was made we cooked and ate lunch, then went on.

Brother Shewmaker, Stanford, and I decided to go on ahead of the truck, which was making slow progress because of the trees that had to be cut out of the way. However, we were not as good woodsmen as Brother Echols and Foy Short, who were guiding the group on the track; and we got lost by following an elephant trail off to the left.

The people tell us that during the daytime elephants find a thick clump of bushes where they will not be noticed easily and just stand there flapping their ears to keep the flies off, starting off again at night to feed, perhaps in somebody's garden.

When we decided that we had gone the wrong way we back-tracked a little and cut across to where we had heard some shouting, overtaking the truck near the entrance to a sort of gorge, or canyon, into which the trail descended. Water was found, just at the head of the canyon, the first for 12 miles; so we decided to camp there.

Our camp was made just at the side of the trail, in one of the rockiest places I have ever laid down to sleep. There was not a clear place big enough to spread the blankets of one person. We had to take pics and shovels and dig out big rocks as big as a dog and level off the place before we could think of sleeping in there. Then we could hardly get from the trail to our "beds" without stumbling.

Supper was late, coming about 9 o'clock. The boys were not very happy about their food, since no meat had been found. But the hunters had done the best they could.



When I pulled off my shoes to go to bed I was again reminded that they were about finished. But what can I do about it?

### *Wednesday, June 9*

The boys' relish is finished, and they are sitting around silent and sullen. They had expected to feast on meat on this trip, but now they are disappointed.

There was nothing to do but to make every effort to get on to the village where some food can be found. So the boys were encouraged to take their axes, picks, and shovels, and go on to work on the road so the truck could come.

I stayed in camp with Orville and the youngest boy who was put to work shelling monkey nuts (peanuts). After washing my shirt down at the head of the canyon, I wrote a little, and when Brother Shewmaker came in, we went to a high bluff overlooking the canyon and took a few pictures.

It is much warmer here since we have lost considerable altitude; and the trees are larger and more numerous.

All came in from their chopping, etc., about 1 p.m. to eat lunch. Not much progress has been made on the road; but we started on about 3 p.m. Elephant trails are all over the place and the road follows these wherever possible.

The road literally dropped off into the canyon. To make the descent with my motorbike, I disconnected the spark plug, left the engine in gear, and used all the other means I had at my command to keep it from running away with me. Orville was a little nervous about getting the truck down, and I didn't blame him. It took considerable courage to start down the decline. But by putting the truck in double low and using all the brakes, the descent was made successfully, to the relief of all.

At the bottom of the canyon we are in different country. Besides being on a different level, the country is different otherwise. The vegetation looks more tropical, being thicker and greener.

The stream runs down the canyon, and the ground is soft and muddy in places. Unfortunately our road crosses this stream several times. The first crossing the truck went right across, by having a good start before the soft ground was hit; but that's the second crossing is stuck. This delayed us some and we saw we would not get out of the canyon before nightfall.

Brother Echols went ahead and chose a campsite, about the only one available, and started preparations for camping. We got to this place about 5 p.m. having made only two miles for the day.

The campsite is at the side of the stream, under some big trees, not a very desirable place to stay the best we could find. The animals have polluted the stream so much that the stream-bed is discolored, and the water smells as if it were coming out of a stable.

Supper was a little late.

We passed the time discussing the possibility of finding another way back home, because we all feel sure we could never get the truck back up and out of the canyon the way we came.

I suppose we should cast lots to see who sleeps on the outside tonight!

### *Thursday, June 10*

Several miles down the ridge we found a dead bull kudu, which seemed not to have been dead very long. The Kudu had been killed in a fight, presumably with another kudu bull.

Two of a kind had met, and something in their animal nature told them that both could not exist, that there was not room for both of them in this country. So one must be sacrificed. In a way this symbolizes the raw, wild condition of the country we had entered, where it is generally the fittest that survive.

We left the Kudu where it was and made our way on down the trail. It was not long until we came down into a valley, then to a clearing, and finally to a garden where an old man and his wife were harvesting their crop. They showed us the path to the village, which was a mile or two farther on. It was a joy to be able to ride our motor bikes again. And it took only a few minutes to reach the village.

I will never forget the feeling that came over me as we approached the village. Crossing the hills from the Africa that we knew was like going through a door into the past about as if it was hundreds of years ago. Here was the "Darkest Africa" we had ever seen. And perhaps the fact that the sun was setting and the shades of night were coming on added to the gloom of the general situation.

At first the village seemed to be deserted. We stood for a while looking at huts, in their squalid surroundings. The goat houses, made of poles in the form of Indian teepees, were just at the edge of the village. And next to them were the cattle kraals made of long poles with the tops leaning outward, so as to make it difficult for lions to enter.

While we were standing and looking at the village, there were no doubt several pairs of eyes peering out from the dark interiors of some of the huts, scrutinizing us even more closely than we were the village. For, after a while, the headman came out, clad in nothing but a loin cloth, and greeted us. Then two young men came out, dressed in dirty looking skirts and with feathers in their hair. They were reserved, and acted as if they would've been about as happy if we had not come.

However, we had come and there was nothing to do but make the most of it. And perhaps this required about as much effort for us as it did for them. The truck arrived, and we were shown where the water hole was. So we decided to camp between it and the village. It was nearly dark so we made our beds on the bare ground, since grass seemed to be scarce.

Our first concern, after choosing a campsite, was to get some food for the native boys. But the people did not seem interested in selling us anything. When asked if they would sell us a sheep, they said they did not have any, although we had seen some. It seemed like a boycott.

But we were not to be outdone. If the people would not sell us any food, then we would see that they would not get the dead Kudu which one of the villagers had already gone to see about.

It was a hard decision to make. But it seemed there was nothing else to do but to unload the truck and take lanterns and flashlights and try to find the way back to the kudu. This would be difficult after dark but we had to have food for the boys. Brother Shewmaker and I stayed at the camp to help prepare supper and the rest went back to get the Kudu. They found that it had bled on the inside that the meat was in fair condition. The native who had gone back looking for it had failed to locate it.

We had supper ready when the group returned. All of us were very tired. So as soon as we had finished eating, about 10 o'clock, we went to our hard beds, hoping that the new day might bring the solution to some of our problems.

### ***Friday, June 11***

We slept a few hours last night in spite of the hard beds. When the sun came up and flooded the valley with sunlight the scene was not quite as depressing as when we arrived last night.

Before we had breakfast, the village people started coming out to our camp. Several had pumpkins and milk to sell. One even had a sheep! Some no doubt came to see the motor car, and some to see the white people. They presented an interesting and strange spectacle, walking in single file along the path to our camp. They all had on their best attire, which in each case was very scanty; Although in some cases it was quite colorful. Most of the young men were wearing store bought clothes! This consisted of two pieces of cloth, one red and one blue, about a yard long and a foot wide, tight around the waist and covering the hips, and another about 4 feet long and a foot wide used as a loincloth. It seems that these are worn only on special occasions! The main dress of the women was a small sort of apron behind, and a smaller one in front, and nothing else except perhaps some beads around the waist or neck, and a piece of bone about 4 inches long stuck through the nose. These pieces of bone vary in size from a pencil to that of one's little finger. The small children wear nothing at all.

We did not quite understand why the people were bringing so many things to sell, since they seemed so indifferent last night. Perhaps since it was already dark they just did not want to be bothered. Perhaps, now they were afraid that we would report their inhospitality to the government. Or perhaps they were wanting to trade for the meat we now had. Anyway, we got all the food that was needed; and most of the pumpkins had to be taken back to the village. The sheep was bought for about \$1.50, and kudu meat was traded for the other things that were needed. The meat was already beginning to smell; but that makes little difference with most of the village people. They say that they do not eat the smell anyway!

I took advantage of the situation for getting a number of shots with the movie camera. Many showed a lively interest in the truck. Orville obligingly lifted the hood to let them see the engine. When he blew the horn, some started to run. And when he started the engine, some *did* run! Nice action for the movie camera.

Many of the older men could hardly get over the fact that a motor car had come into the country. While sitting around, talking about something, one would suddenly change the subject, And remarked, "A motor car in our country!" Likely, they will never feel secure again, now that they have seen what unusual things can happen. And, to tell the truth, we were about as astonished as they

were, that we ever got the truck there. (Note: Later we were even more astonished that the truck ever got out of the place). For years to come these people will likely point out to friends the way the truck came, the trees that were cut, and the rocks that were rolled out of the way.

Some of the men and boys had been away in the towns, or at the coalmines over in Southern Rhodesia, working for the white people and becoming more or less acquainted with the white man's ways and machinery. These were the heroes of the hour, as far as the village people were concerned, and took pride in pointing out things of interest to the people and attempting some explanation of them. I am sure they learned more about us than we did about them.

After the people had scattered, or gone back to the village, Stanford Shewmaker, who had been wandering about with his .22 rifle, looking for something to shoot, came into the camp, somewhat excited and saying he had seen a big mamba [snake just a short distance away, near the path the people travel between the village and the water hole. He said he was afraid to shoot at it lest he merely wound it and it attack him. And in this he acted very wisely. These snakes can outrun a horse, and they are deadly poisonous. A bite will kill a person in 15 minutes. Some of the others got shotguns and rifles and went back to shoot it; but by the time they got to the place the snake had crawled up into the thick branches of a small tree. One of the natives, who generally have much better eyes than we have for such things, was the first to see the snake and point it out to those who had the guns. They shot it but did not kill it; and the snake managed to crawl into a hole in the big tree that was nearby.

The African people have learned how to protect themselves against the snakes, animals, etc. in their country. You will hardly find one going on a trip through the bush without taking a club, a spear, or a small axe.

After breakfast, which came about 9:30 to 10 o'clock, Orville, Brother Shewmaker and I got on some bicycles and started to Sianzovu's village, which was about 7 miles away. One of the native men went to show the way. We had been told that the path was like a highway. And it was in comparison with other paths in the country. But in places it was so rocky we had to walk and push the bicycles.

As usual, when we arrive at the village, it was almost deserted. The people had disappeared, again thinking that we were tax collectors. However, we sat down and waited. Before long someone appeared from somewhere and greeted us. Then the word got around that we were only missionaries, and it was not long until a good crowd had gathered around.

We took advantage of the opportunity for preaching to them. We sang a few songs in their native language, and then Brother Shewmaker and I both spoke for a short time, using Orville as an interpreter. After that Orville spoke for a while. The people listened attentively and seemed friendly.

We had wanted to visit Mulola village which was 7 or 8 miles farther on, and one of the largest villages in the country. But we were told that smallpox was very bad there. Many people had died, we were told, and their bodies were left just where they were, while the people had fled to the mountains to try to escape the disease. So we decided not to go.

After the service, we bought two roosters and started back to camp at Siawaza's. Just after leaving the village we crossed the river and climbed a high bank overlooking the river. From there we could see down and around a bend in the stream, where some herd boys were with a few cattle. Suddenly, and half jokingly, our guide shouted at one of the boys. We looked in time to see them scattering. It seems that one of the little boys was getting his dinner directly from one of the cows!

It was about 4:30 PM when we got back to the camp; and we were a little hungry, since we had had no dinner.

As the natives had predicted, the mamba had come out of the hole and died. It measured about 8 feet long. Mambas are very small, considering the length; and their heads are quite small. One of the boys begged for the head. He will likely use it and making some concoction for treating snakebites. The natives said they were glad the snake was killed because it had troubled many people who made daily trips to the waterhole to get water. For supper we had roasted sheep, green peas, pumpkin, macaroni and cheese, custard and tea. It all tasted very good after a day so filled with activities and so devoid of any dinner.

About 7 o'clock the people came out to see the Bible pictures Orville had to show them. It was evident that they could see most that was in the pictures, since some of the people would point to things they saw and make remarks about them. For many, it was no doubt the first time they had ever heard the story of the Savior.

### ***Saturday, June 12***

We got up fairly early this morning, since there is not much point of lying on a hard bed after daylight. Also, Orville wanted to take a little trip to explore the road to Nyanga's Village via Siameja. He and Foy and brother Reed got off, on bicycles soon after breakfast. Orville hinted that he might like to ride my motorbike. But I did not say anything, since I have learned already that is easier, in this country, to push (and sometimes lift) a bicycle than it is a motorbike.

Brother Shewmaker, Stanford, Brother Echols, and I remained at the camp. The sun shone warmly, during all the middle part of the day; and everything was quiet and peaceful. Stanford entertained himself by wandering about the place with his .22 rifle and a native boy, shooting at birds. Brother Shewmaker and I went to the village to get some motion pictures. There was not much action to be found. But we got the picture of a young boy milking a cow, the hind legs of which had been tied so she would not kick. Then there was a flock of goats walking through the village and the young woman grinding small grain, like millet, between two rocks.

Back in camp, I read a while, then went to the waterhole to wash my socks, and to some nearby trees to find some incingas to eat.

Brother Reed returned, alone, about 5:15 p.m., with a very bad report of the road. In places, there were so many elephant tracks, made during the rains and dried hard now, that one could not ride his bicycle. In other places there were so many rocks that the bicycles had to be picked up and carried. I think Orville is glad now that he did not take the other motorbike!

Orville and Foy stayed behind awhile to hunt guinea fowl, but they had no luck.

After supper we heard the drums being beaten in the villages; and some of us went to see what was happening. We found a group composed of young people and a few women. While one was beating the drum others were shuffling their feet about a little, or merely walking about, keeping time somewhat with the drum. It was nothing like some of the wild dancing we had heard of. Perhaps our presence had something to do with this. We understood that the men were having a beer drink.

We are beginning to feel really concerned about our next move. It seems that it would be impossible for the truck to go back the way we came down. The road to Nyanga via Siameja is so rocky that a truck would not go that way, without wings! We cannot hope to go right on down to the Zambezi River and then follow along the banks to Kanchindu, because at this time of the year the river is high with the water backed up the little streams that run into it, thus making the crossings too deep for a truck. Again, the natives say that at some of the streams there are high cliffs of rock. So we cannot consider this route. And what we would like to know is, which way are we going. I think we have never before appreciated so much the joke about the drunk man, who, when asked the road to the courthouse, thought for a few moments and then, not being able to collect his thoughts enough to give a sensible answer, said, "there ain't no road to the courthouse!"

Brother Shewmaker and I might push our motorbikes back up to Bangalali and then be on our way to Kabanga. But we dislike the idea of returning back and leaving the rest of the group. Then, we understand that when we get to Kanchindu we will find a motor Road. And that is only about 48 miles.

### ***Sunday, June 13***

After breakfast we started rolling up our blankets and packing things in boxes so that we might be able to break camp and be on our way soon after the church services. The people had been told to come early, and gathered about 9:30. We chose a place to sit, in the shade of some trees; while the women sat on the ground on one side of us and the men on the other, forming a sort of semicircle. As usual we sang some songs in the native language. Then Brother Echols preached. After that we had the Lords supper.

It would be hard to describe the feeling that was in the hearts of most of us. Here was this group of truly heathen people but people for whom Christ died just the same as he did for the rest of us. Our purpose and our desire was to give them the word of life, and I am sure we were all willing to do anything we could to save them. Yet questions came into our minds. Could such people be really converted by listening to one or two short sermons which no doubt sounded foreign and strange to everything they had ever heard before? If one came forward and asked to be baptized could we feel that he really understood what he was doing? And if some should become Christians in such a place as this with no one to give them further teaching and encouragement, what would become of them?

Perhaps the feeling could best be described as one of helplessness. It was as if we were standing as spectators at the side of a torrent which was carrying luckless mortals to an inevitable doom while we were seemingly unable to do anything about it. More such trips could be made perhaps regularly, and schools might be opened to teach the people to read, thus enabling them to read and study the

Scriptures for themselves. But as it is we can hardly hope to conduct any systematic program in this area.

No one answered the invitation. But perhaps the next time they chance to attend a religious service they will be able to listen a little more intelligently and to react a little more favorably, until the seed has taken root enough to grow. Here is a big area with many people and practically nothing done toward taking them the gospel. It is our prayer that more workers and more means in the near future will help to remedy this situation.

With the service over, we felt that we had done what we could, and we set our minds and our hands to the one great task before us; and that was to get back home again. A local guide had agreed to show us the way to Nyanga by a path which would miss the rocky country at Siameja's; and we were very thankful. Some other man would join us early in the morning and help us with the chopping; but today they are having a beer-drinking and cannot go with us.

Loading the truck and making final preparations for leaving took considerable time. For one thing, water had to be boiled and the small water tank filled, since water may be very scarce the way we are going. We were on our way again about 12:30. Some chopping and moving of rocks had to be done. There were stretches where Brother Shewmaker and I could ride our motorbikes a little. But this was disappointing because we soon came to rocks where we had to walk and push the bikes. Then we would come to a smooth place and try again, but with the same luck. We would hardly get the engines started until we came to more rock.

The path to Siameja's was followed until we came to some big baobab trees, and there we turned off to the right in a more easterly direction. An old riverbed was soon reached, and the best we could do here was to follow elephant trail. It was very good that a local guide was directing us, because these trails went all over the place, in all directions; and without someone who knew the country we would have been lost.

It seems that we are getting more and more into elephant country all the time, since the tracks are thicker and bigger. Some are about 16 inches in diameter.

Better time was made than expected but about 5 PM, some two miles from the baobab trees, it seemed that we had gone about as far as we could without exploring a little to find a way to go, or else making a way. So the truck was stopped just in the elephant trail, and we pitched camp.

Some water was brought to replenish our supply, beds were made, and the supper was prepared since we had no dinner, we ate a big supper and then went to bed with guns handy in case some uninvited nocturnal visitors should appear. We are not yet altogether accustomed to sleeping in such places; and even a mouse moving about in the dry leaves will attract our attention.

### ***Monday, June 14***

The beer drink at the village must have ended yesterday because the men who promised to help us chop arrived at our camp early this morning. We are all glad to have this help, and especially since they are men who know the country. So we hope to make some good time.

Before we started work, someone noticed a honey bird; and we thought there might be some wild honey near. These birds are small, about like sparrows, and it seems sometimes that they lead people to honey, so that when the honey is exposed, they can get some for themselves. The bird was followed; and sure enough a hive of bees was discovered in a baobab tree not more than 40 yards from our camp. The native men chopped in and got some of the honey, but they said most of it was too high for them to reach. Likely they intended to come back later and get the rest of it! After some exploring, it was decided that the best way to proceed would be to the right, across a little ravine, up a hill, then down across a Mupani flat. But first a road had to be made to the top of the hill. Some trees had to be cut, but the greatest difficulty was clearing the rocks away. In fact, at the top of the hill the rocks were so big and so well embedded in the ground that it was decided that the simplest thing to do would be to just let the truck bounced across them. This idea worked all right, and we were on our way again.

Before long we came to an old village site, and started going down country to the river. Some of our helpers said that they heard an elephant trumpet in the direction we were going, perhaps two or three miles away. We went on and came down to the river, which is only a dry bed now, and in the sand saw the tracks of some of the elephants, including a baby elephant. This was not very comforting, since we know that a mother elephant is more likely to attack than those without any young ones. The natives said they were in the forest just to the right of us.

However, we could not worry about elephants just then. There was a river crossing to think about. The sand was so loose and deep that the truck could not cross as it was. For a part of the way there were rocks. Some of the big ones were taken out of the way, and holes were filled with gravel so that the truck could get over this part of the crossing. Then the loose sand was covered with branches of trees. When everything was ready we all pulled, or pushed, and the truck got across.

On down the river a short distance we came to a waterhole, where the elephants came to drink. The water was so polluted that we could not use it, even if we boiled it. But we dug some holes in the sand nearby, and were able to dip up enough water to help a little. Some of the boys discovered that there were some little catfish in the water. So he took time out for playing awhile. Most of us took off our shoes, rolled up our trouser legs, waded in, muddied the water, and tried to catch the fish. Only a few little ones were caught, but we had some fun anyway. Likely we would have had even more fun if, just at that time, a group of thirsty elephants had appeared.

Not much farther on we found a place where we decided to camp. It was in a thicket of small trees with little rocks on the ground, but we did not think we would find a better place.

Brother Echols and Foy decided they would like to see the elephants, and took one of the native guides with them to take a look. They were not disappointed. Sounds could be heard on three sides of them, where the elephants were breaking branches from the trees. Then they sighted a big bull elephant! The elephant also sensed them. It was holding its trunk straight out in front of it, trying to catch their scent and was waving its big ears back and forth. The guide, to make sure, picked up a little dust and let it run out of his hand, to see which way the air was moving. Sure enough it was moving in the direction of the elephant, so that their scent was being carried toward the elephant.



They lost no time. The guy said, "We stink," that is, the elephant "smells us," "Let us get out of here." And they did.

### *Tuesday, June 15*

When we awoke this morning, all was quiet and peaceful, with the elephants perhaps many miles away. We got out at daylight because Brother Shewmaker and I wanted to start as soon as possible, in the hopes of getting to Kanchindu, about 30 miles away, by noon, and perhaps on to Masuku Mission by night, as we had been told that this was about 35 miles from Kanchindu. With a fair path we thought we could make good time on our motorbikes, and that when we got to the motor road the going would be easy. We filled up our gasoline tanks from the barrel on the truck, left our blankets to come on the truck, took a tin of sweetened condensed milk, a little salt, sugar, tea, cheese, and a bag of water, and started as soon as we could after breakfast, with John Scott, who had had enough of our "valley trip."

The path leading away from the camp looked good, and one of the native guides said it was not far to Nyanga's village. We should, he said, just follow the main path, down to the river, up, across the ridge and down to Nyanga's. So we set out in high spirits, telling the others goodbye and hoping that they might soon get out of this mess. From now on we will have to let them tell their own story.

We had not gone far until our hopes of making good time were blasted. There were the usual rocks, brush, trees across the path, etc. But it was when we came down to the river dry bed that our troubles really began. There, we were lost! The main path disappeared; and instead there were dozens of elephant paths going in all directions.

After looking in vain for what we might consider the main path, we had finally to disregard all the paths and navigate, just going in the general direction of the village and following the path that happened to be going our way!

We followed the river bottom country for a mile or two, then climbed up into the bush. Here, there were no paths; so we just went through the forest. Once we heard a crashing sound off to our left; but we did not stop, or go to investigate. On top of the ridge, tracks began to appear. However, they seemed to lead nowhere.

After a short time John heard a rooster crowing, to the relief of us all. He went off in the direction of the crowing, and found two little boys near some of the people's gardens. These gave directions, so we could go on toward the village, and also called an old man to go along with us. However, after crossing a sandy riverbed, and going through some gardens, we came to a path where we could ride our motorbikes again; and then we left the old man. Nevertheless, he followed. He had worked some among white people, and he wanted his tip!

It was 11:40 a.m. when we came to Nyanga's village. The place was almost deserted; but we managed to make a fire, get some water and make some tea. Sianyanga was in the village and came to greet us. We started on about 1 p.m., with little hopes of reaching Kanchindu before night. The path was good for two or 3 miles, and we sailed along on our motorbikes. But after passing Siacaba's village, we got into the hills where the path was steep and rocky. It was impossible to ride. In some

places it was difficult even to push the motorbikes. Our water supply was rapidly dwindling; but near the top of the mountain, we found a spring with a tiny stream of water running out of the ground dared to drink some of it, unboiled, since we did not know where we would find any more.

Near the foot of the mountain, a fairly good path was found, so that the motorbikes could be ridden again. Fair progress was made, and we came to Muuka's gardens about 4:45 p.m. We knew then it would be impossible to reach Kanchindu before tomorrow.

A group of women were sitting near a hut and a storehouse for grain, near the edge of one of the gardens. When they heard our hardluck story, one of them obligingly offered us a dish of meal, which we gladly accepted. At the village, we found a campsite, and then were able to buy a chicken and seven eggs to cook for supper.

Wood was scarce, and grass was even more scarce; but we made the best camp we could. The headman had his wife to bring us some water and a pot to cook the chicken in; and we started cooking supper. The sweetened condensed milk tasted good in hot water; and the chicken and the cornmeal mush was not bad, even if we did not have any salt! However, my main concern was drinking water. By using the little kettle Brother Shewmaker brought along, I managed to get enough water boiled to fill the water bag, then waited for it to get cool enough to drink!

Going to bed was the next problem, since we did not have any bed-- not even any blankets. The headman gave us a big bundle of grass, but it was wet and rotting on the inside. We used what we could, by spreading it out near the fire, a little pile for me and a little pile for Brother Shewmaker, as near to the fire as we dared put it. We knew it would be cold and that we would have to sleep near the fire, if we slept at all; but just how to do this we did not quite know. I put on a pair of pajamas I brought along, to use in case of need, put my clothes back on over them; and we both lay down to try to get a little sleep.

### ***Wednesday, June 16***

it was a little too cool for our comfort last night, as we expected. When the fire died down, we got cool, woke up, put some sticks on the fire, got warm, and went back to sleep again. So it went all through the night.

Another thing that hindered our sleep was the noise in the village. An important villager died some time ago; and the ceremonies in connection with the burial are just being finished. Several people came in from the surrounding villages, so that there were many people present, even though several remained in their gardens during the night to keep the elephants out.

The people, especially the young men, were dressed in their best and most colorful clothes for the occasion. There was some dancing in the village, as well as beer drinking. But the thing that disturbed us most was the blowing of whistles. These were made of the horns of the little animals. A hole was cut in each, so one could blow across it, as one does a flute or fife, and produce the sound. Each person participating in this had a whistle of different pitch, and it was evident that no pains had been taken in tuning these whistles with one another. The din that resulted is easy to imagine. At times it reminded one of a flock of geese, quarreling with one another. At other times, when the number of

whistles had decreased, the results reminded us of someone trying to play an old dilapidated accordion, with only three notes sounding and two of them out of tune!

This went on until dawn. At times the whistlers would get tired and lie down to sleep for a while; and the noise would die down. But then they would wake up, one by one; and it would start all over again. Altogether we slept about two hours during the night.

After eating the leftovers from supper last night and filling the water bag, we had the headman find us four boys to help us up the nearby mountain. The people told us that the path ahead of us was worse than the one over which we had come from Nyanga's. We could hardly believe it; but soon we were to find out that it was true. We left Muuka about 8:00 a.m., and were at the foot of the mountain in about 30 minutes. Here we saw what the people had been talking about. There before us was a fairly high and steep mountain (at least too high to be called a hill) literally covered with boulders from the bottom to the top. I think one could go all the way, stepping from one boulder to another, without touching the ground at all. Pushing the motorbikes up this place was out of the question. So the boys cut long poles and tied one to each of the motorbikes. Then, they lifted them up on their shoulders, clear of the ground, and started the tortuous ascent. They pulled and struggled, stopped and started again, until the skin was rubbed off their shoulders. Finally the top was reached, to the relief of all. But the relief was only temporary!

For several miles there were so many rocks that only occasionally could we ride our motorbikes for 100 yards or so. Then came a gently sloping hillside, again literally covered with boulders, averaging about 18 inches in diameter. There was a "path" through all of this, perhaps good enough for goats, but not for pedestrians pushing motorbikes. The boys had turned back, and were not there to carry the bikes this time. So there was nothing to do but stop and roll the boulders out of, and away from, the path until the motorbikes could be pushed through. It was beginning to get hot by this time; and without proper food and rest for 24 hours, the strain was beginning to tell on us.

We finally got through and went on our way, riding now and then, but still walking and pushing most of the time. One thing that we left behind was a clearer path than the native people had ever had before, through this country. And no doubt, every time one walks along there, he will be reminded of a couple of "innocent" white people who once went that way, pushing and carrying two astonishing motor vehicles, about as practical over terrain like this as two empty barrels!

About 10 or 11 o'clock the Zambezi River came in sight, with the so-called valley between us and the river. This is somewhat of a misnomer, as the hills and rocks go almost to the water's edge.

After another hour, or hour and a half, the rocks were finished, in the sand began. But we could tell that we were coming near to a village. This proved to be a very long village, near the river just before we came to the old mission station, called Kanchindu.

Kanchindu was a welcomed site. No missionaries have been stationed here for several years. But still it was a reminder of civilization. A native teacher and a native preacher are both stationed here and are supervised by the Methodist mission across the hills at Masuku. Also, this was a welcomed place, because of the motor road that led to Masuku Mission, and then on to Choma. Our troubles, we thought, were over.

It was 1 PM when we arrived at Kanchindu. We boiled some eggs, made some tea, got out some of the cheese we still had, and ate lunch.

At 2:30 we were ready to go on, expecting to reach Masuku, said to be 35 miles away, by night. However, the teachers said we could not make it, and gave us the names of some villages along the way where we might stop and spend the night.

Since the water level in the river was high, the small side streams were backed up, and just at Kanchindu the motor road was underwater. However, the teacher helped us again, by pulling us across the water in a huge, dugout canoe. We thanked him very much for all his kindness, got our motorbikes started, and were on our way, feeling very hopeful of making good time in getting out of this place.

It was not very long before Brother Shewmaker had some engine trouble. Later he had a puncture. We had told John that he was on his own now, and that it was wholly his idea to come along with us. We were going to let our motorbikes out, and he could keep up if he could. But now John was ahead of us! The road was good; and while we were going we did make good time. However, it was about sundown when we reached Siatwiinda's village, which the people said was 8 miles from Kanchindu, but which we found to be about 15. John was there waiting for us; and we decided it would be the best place we could find to spend the night.

The people soon realized our plight, and proved themselves to be good Samaritans. They brought us three bowls of mush, already cooked, and two dishes of greens for "relish." Then, we asked to buy a chicken, and they gave us that. It really tasted good. But another surprise, equally pleasant, was yet to come. The headman had a village store there. So he went and brought out a big piece of canvas, for making down a bed, and all the brand-new blankets we could ask for! Our camp was made in the middle of the village, because the people said there were elephants in the country and that one had come into the village and pushed a house down, just a day or two before.

After supper, the people were called together around our camp for preaching. Brother Shewmaker and I both spoke for a short time using John as an interpreter. Then, after talking to the people for a while we were both very glad to crawl into the bed that the people had prepared for us.

### ***Tuesday, June 17***

I was up at 5:15 a.m. this morning and started boiling some water, so we could leave with a full water bag. The chicken we cooked last night was re-heated and eaten for breakfast. Then we got started as early as we could.

It was quite cool for while. The road was good, except for elephant tracks which made it rough in places. By 10 o'clock we had made about 15 miles, and come to another village. The road led through wild country; and it was reassuring to see, now and then, the car tracks of Dr. Garrod who went down to Kanchindu from Choma, not long ago.

At the village we saw a woman from whom we bought some peanuts. Then we saw some men who told us it was not far to Masuku Mission. Later, however we learned that they were lying, because

they thought if they told us the truth we were trying to get some of them to go with us and help push the motorbikes!

Soon after leaving the village we came to a really big mountain. No doubt this was the one the people at Kanchindu told us about, and which we thought we had passed already! It was really a mountain, and not just the big hill. Riding the motorbikes was again out of the question. All we could do was to walk and push, stop and rest a while, then push a little farther. This took considerable energy, and also a considerable amount of water from our one water bag.

By 12 o'clock we were only a little more than halfway up the mountain, and the water was nearly finished. We looked for a spring, but this was in vain. We had no food, except the peanuts and a little cheese; but these were not very appetizing. We did find some wild fruit, some of the red, finger-like incingas, like we had seen in the valley, and, in the absence of anything else, we were glad to get them. They supplied a little nourishment, and a little moisture. We ate all we cared for, and then decided to take a drink from the water bag before going on. Only a little water was left; so it was divided among the three of us, cup by cup until it was finished. We did not know when we would find any more water. So we determined to press on and try to find some before too long.

The next few hours were the most trying of the whole journey. This was the hottest part of the day, and we had no drinking water. The tangle of hills that lay ahead were tortuous. And, in our weakened condition, to push our motorbikes across these hills was the most strenuous labor. All in all it was a never-to-be-forgotten ordeal.

When we reached the top of the high mountain we came to at first, we had a lovely view back to the south, the way we had come. We could see all the way back across the Zambezi River and the "Valley", and into the hills of Southern Rhodesia on the other side, perhaps 60 miles away. But we did not tarry long. Our thoughts were on the hills in front of us -- and water.

After climbing the mountain, the descent on the other side was not so long, and the hills were not so high. But they were just as steep, in fact so steep that in most cases we could not coast down the other side on our motorbikes, for fear of an accident.

The road went right across nearly all the hills. It did not follow the sides of the hills as we had expected. Sometimes we would see a peak in the distance, and trying to figure out on which side the road would lead us. But eventually we would find ourselves on the very top of that peak. As brother Echols remarked later, the person who laid out this road must have been an ex-roller coaster man!

Down one hill and right up another, in a seemingly never ending procession! Thus we pushed on for hours, with the calves of our legs aching, and using every ounce of strength we had. If we had had our usual food and rest during the past two days, the situation would have been different. As it was it took a lot of will-power to keep going.

We were so tired and weak, and the hills were so steep, that, on the ascent, we could not go more than 50 or 60 feet without stopping to rest. When I thought I had gone as far as I could, I might see a little shade four or five steps ahead; and I would try to get to that. Then I would stop, lean on my motorbike, shut my eyes, and let the world go by for a minute or two. Then I would go 20 or 30 steps

more. When I got to the top of each hill, we would stand our bikes up in the road, and lie down on the ground, flat on our backs, for about five minutes. Then, down the hill, and we were ready to start all over again.

About 2 o'clock we came to the dry bed of a stream that runs during the rainy season. We stopped and went in opposite directions in the hopes of finding a damp place in the sand where we could dig for water. But this was hopeless. The stream had been dry too long.

About 3 o'clock Brother Shewmaker had a puncture. We could almost have cried! We did not have the energy to take the tire off, find the puncture, and repair it. We could have lain down on the ground, gone to sleep, and forgot about the whole matter. But we knew we had to try. Finally we managed to patch the tire and get it back on the bicycle. And then I wanted to test the valve to see if it was leaking. But my saliva was finished. I could not find enough to cover even the end of the small valve stem.

After crossing about a half dozen more hills, Brother Shewmaker stripped some bark from a little tree, for us to chew in order to get a little moisture; but the bark was bitter and there was not much moisture either.

John had gone on ahead. I suppose he had decided to try to get out of here alive, even if we did not! And, honestly, I did not feel too sure about it at all. Surely, we were in about as good a condition for a sun-stroke, as we had ever been; and I could not overlook the possibility. I would have given \$10.00 for glass of water, or even a juicy head of lettuce.

However, relief came at about 4 PM. John had found a damp place in some sand in the bed of a small wet-weather stream, dug for water, and found it! No water was ever more welcomed. We would drink a little, then rest a while, and drink again, until we were full. Then I filled the water bag, and we started again, up-and-down, up-and-down.

We went on, in the hopes that the top of the next hill would bring us in sight of Masuku Mission. But the top of each hill was a disappointment.

For perhaps two hours after we found the water, the dry, thirsty feeling remained in my mouth; and I would take a mouthful of water now and then, just to wash the feeling away.

Darkness came on, but we kept going. We thought then that the top of the next hill might reveal the lights at the mission, or we might hear chickens crowing, or some other sounds to tell us we were near. But no lights were seen, and no sounds were heard.

Up-and-down we went until we came to the top of another hill, and we decided it was no use. There was no mission in sight; and we were exhausted. So there would be our "camp" for the night. I was ready to stop. The day that had passed was the hardest I've ever seen or ever hope to see. I am sure that, considering the conditions, the exertion of the day was at least as much as it would be to walk and carry, say, a 100-pound bag of sugar for 10 miles under normal conditions.

At the close of this day we did not have a warm supper and a soft bed waiting for us. What little food we did have, peanuts and a little clump of cheese, our stomachs would not accept. So we had a drink of water, and were thankful to have that.

We searched in the dark for enough wood to make two little fires, one at our heads and one at our feet, and to keep them burning all night. There was no fear of elephants. They have better sense than to come into a country like this. We left them when we entered the mountains. But there might be a lion or a leopard come by. The fires would keep them away, as well as keep us warm.

Generally we try to find a little grass to sleep on. But this time, for me, grass was a luxury. I spread a piece of canvas down near the fires, not worrying too much about the small pebbles underneath, then lay down and went to sleep.

### ***Friday, June 18***

We arose early and were truly thankful to be able to stand up. With the ever-present malaria in our system, exhaustion and exposure might have brought an attack of fever. But, not counting the exhaustion, weakness, and hunger, we seemed normal. Before the sun came up we were on our way, without any breakfast of course, and feeling confident that we would soon arrive at the mission.

For the first few miles it was down one hill and up another, just as it was yesterday. But then we began to see Masuku trees on the sides of the hills near the road! We knew the mission must not be too far away, since it was named for these trees. So our hopes rose considerably.

A little farther on we met a native man, walking, the first we had seen since we got into the mountains, because the natives had a shortcut, and do not follow the motor road. He told us we were near the mission, and that again gave us renewed hopes.

After another mile or two the hills were almost finished and we could start riding our motor-bikes. This enabled us to make much better time. Then we met a group of natives who told us that the mission was just ahead, on the next hill. And sure enough it was.

John had arrived just a little while before we did. He said he had gone as far as he could then had lain down to sleep by the side of the road, without any fire, because he did not have any matches. And now, he said, he felt as if he were recuperating from some long illness. We wondered what he would have been feeling like if he had had to push a motorbike, instead of a bicycle across those hills.

It was just tea-time, or 10 o'clock, when we arrived at Mr. Foster's house. He and his wife were not slow in understanding the situation, as the Methodist people have schools over in that country, as well as at Kanchindu Mission. Mrs. Foster quickly prepared some nourishment. Brother Shewmaker took tea, but I was content with a glass of cold milk and a piece of cake. However, since we had been without proper food for a little more than three days, and with practically no food at all for about 30 hours, I could not eat the cake. But there was no difficulty in drinking the milk.

In our conversation with Mr. Foster, we learned the truth about the distance we had come. From Kanchindu to Masuku was 52 miles, instead of 35, as someone had told us. And the distance across

those endless, tortuous hills was 22 miles! We calculated that the place where we lay down and slept must be about 10 miles back.

Mrs. Foster got busy in preparing lunch, while we shaved, and talked for a while about our trip. Mr. Foster seemed interested in knowing just what we were doing over in the valley, which the Methodists claim as their territory. We explained that we had crossed the escarpment from Kabanga Mission to look over some of the country opposite Kabanga. The way was difficult. So when we heard there was a motor road from Kanchindu to Choma, we decided to try to return by the way of Kanchindu. Then we assured him that we were not planning to settle there, at least not soon!

After lunch, we were offered a nice soft bed, on which to take a nap; and we accepted without hesitation.

The rest was refreshing. Then, we started on to Choma, 35 miles away, to wait for a train to Kalomo. The road was lovely. There was a little sand here and there; but that was no special trouble. There were no hills and no rocks; and we could ride, and ride, and ride. We felt as free as two birds just let out of the cage!

Choma was reached without any trouble to speak of; and we were told there would be a train before very long and that we could ride, if we would drain the gasoline out of our motorbikes. This was easily arranged. Then we went to the hotel to get some sandwiches, and got them just in time to get on the train.

The train ride, 40 miles to Kalomo, was uneventful. At Kalomo, we poured the gasoline back into our motorbikes and rode out to Namwianga, arriving after everyone had gone to bed.

We learned that Foy Short had left the party the next day after we had, crossed the hills back to Kabanga, and that Boyd Reese had brought him to Namwianga. Seeing that Brother Shewmaker and I had not arrived, he was able to give the folks some idea of the difficulties we must be having. So they were not much surprised to hear our story when we arrived.

All could notice a considerable loss of weight in Brother Shewmaker and me. Otherwise there were no visible results of the ordeal we had been through.

Brother Shewmaker went to his house, and I went to mine. I had a lot to tell, but knew it would keep until the morrow. So I lost little time in going to bed.

*Later*

It took about three days for us to catch up with our sleeping and eating. Fortunately our appetite was good! And we were glad to be able to feel normal again.

About a week after we arrived, the rest of the party got in, with the truck. They were about as exhausted as we were. And we are all agreed that the next trip into the Zambezi Valley should be by foot, by pack donkeys, or by helicopter, but preferably by helicopter!

THE END