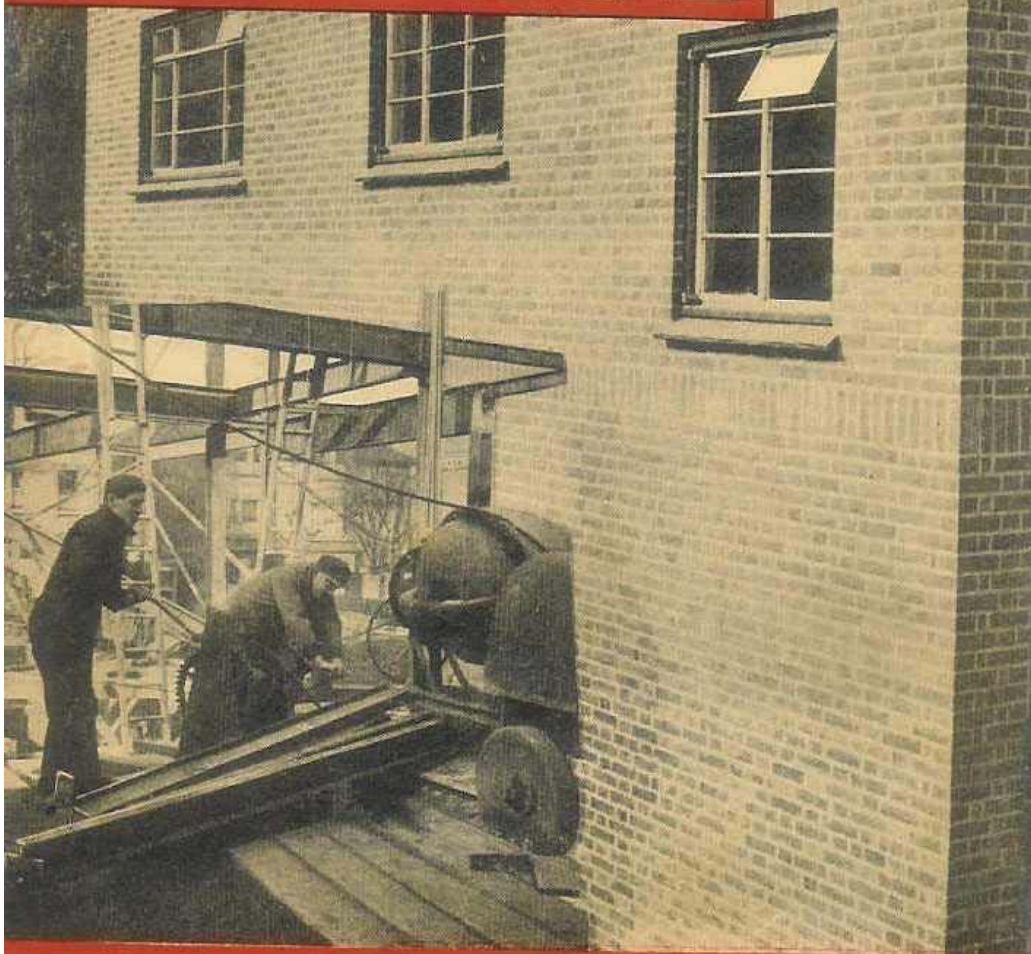


CONCRETE EVIDENCE



of faith that Works

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THE STORY OF THE NEW HOSTEL

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The Story of the New Hostel

We were sitting in the drawing room of our London Headquarters at No. 17 Highland Road. Quite a crowd of us: about 45. We had come to the conclusion some years ago that an organization which humbly and reverently acknowledged God as our “Head, Commander and Guide,” must make it their first business to find out His will and plan in all things. In order to do this, we decided to give the first hours of our working day, from 9: a.m. onwards, to a frank and open discussion of every outstanding problem or proposed new advance; to examine these matters with open Bibles so as to see what God had to say, and finally, to ‘spread them before Him in prayer – for further light when there was still uncertainty, with the faith that receives when His will had been made clear.

On this occasion we were busy discussing mundane affairs. We had outgrown our housing capacity. Co-incident with a large increase on the fields, at our London Headquarters in five years we had enlarged from five to forty-five. Twelve of these were the permanent staff, who had joined us without salary, to further the cause of worldwide evangelization by serving at the home base, living a communal life in dependence upon the Father for daily supplies. The remainder were mostly new recruits for the front line in one or other of the unevangelized areas of the world, who have already passed through Bible Schools and stay with us long enough to ensure their grasp of the principles of work and witness essential for the mission field.

The Critical Moment

At the foundation of the Worldwide Crusade in 1913 by Mr. and Mrs. C.T. Studd, their own home at 17 Highland Road, Norwood, a house of 14 rooms in the suburbs of South-East London, became its Headquarters.

At the Crusade enlarged, the house could not contain both guests and offices, and the little booklet *A Romance of Faith* tells “how Mother Studd jumped over the wall” and took possession of a roomy and strongly-built coach-house next door, No. 19, Highland Road, the type of sturdy Victorian building which will outlast most modern houses. The two stories were in due course transformed by the work of Crusaders into a five-roomed office, a three-roomed equipment store, a men’s hostel, and a workshop.

A third extension had been the call of God to Miss Lilian Gristwood, of Birmingham, to buy a fourteen-roomed house on the opposite side of the road, No. 34, Highland Road, and dedicate it to Him as part of our London Home Base, herself living there with some of the W.E.C. family.

But still we overflowed. We filled our largest room for these daily meetings. We had to divide into two parties for meals and even then, our dining-rooms could hardly

contain us. We were short of room for the entertainment of guests and had nothing suitable for Conferences.

Amongst our Headquarters staff was one whose call had been particularly to the practical side of things, H. Leslie Sutton. After a severe wound in the war and a period at Cambridge University, he had gone out to the heart of Africa, but suffered so much with fever as a consequence of his wound that he only just returned home in time to save his life. He joined us on the staff in 1933, in charge of men candidates and the practical upkeep of the mission buildings. As a result, he, more than any, felt our need of extension and urged it at the meetings, especially that we should build some form of hostel to our own plans. But where? And what about the money?

One the morning already mentioned, in April 1935, once more he raised the question and pressed it.

Now we have a well-understood principle amongst us, that if anyone in the Crusade feels that some special new advance or provision is God's will for the extension of the work, he himself should be the one to obtain it from Him by prayer and faith. It is the age-old principle seen right through the Scriptures, that the man who has the vision is the one to whom God says, "Come now I will send *thee* and *thou* shalt deliver my people." Therefore it is dangerous to keep pressing some new objective of faith in our midst, for the time is sure to come when we turn round as a family and say, "All right, brother. Go to it. Help yourself. Get it. If you have the vision, you also have the promises"!

And so in this case. Almost thoughtlessly we turned to Leslie Sutton and said, "All right then, Suto. If you think we ought to have a hostel and if you are sure it is God's will, TAKE IT from Him. Don't ask us to take it. Take it yourself. You have the promises." And "Suto" (as the natives of Africa called him) took it. He merely said, "All right, I do."

What an empty, flimsy thing faith appears to the eye of the flesh. What power is there in merely a word spoken like this? Is it not works that count, *doing* a thing rather than sitting in a meeting and *saying* that you have it by faith? But God's Word says that every achievement of Bible History was brought into being by one method only—"by faith." That one chapter, Hebrews xi, gathers all the biography of the Scriptures together and says that all those mighty deeds of Moses, Daniel, Abraham, etc., were done "by faith." And the Lord Jesus says to us, "Whosoever shall *say* unto this mountain, Be thou removed . . . and shall not doubt in his heart, he shall have whatsoever he *saith*." Just the power of the *word* of faith.

Two Big Surprises

About three weeks after this conversation, a certain gentleman called upon us. He had never called before, although we knew him by correspondence. He was the owner of a considerable amount of property in the district and had come to ask some small point about the boundary line of a neighbouring house. In the course of conversation he mentioned a certain "Stables" next door to us. "Don't you know," we said, "that these are no longer stables, but a fine office building leased by us?" No, he

did not and was pleased to be taken round them. About a week later he called again and made this remarkable statement, "I have been studying all the property in this area, and I thought it might interest you to know that there are *only two plots of land in the whole district* on which the London County Council will allow a new building to be erected, and one is next door to you on the plot of ground where your offices are, because, having been built as stables, they are not reckoned as a house." In our talk the week previously it had never entered our heads to mention our desire to build. Imagine, therefore, what we felt when we heard him say this. It was unmistakably the voice of God. The Crusade had occupied these houses twenty-two years, during which no such information had been given us. Now, within a month of our entering into a transaction of faith with the Lord for a new building, we were gratuitously informed that the very next door plot was one of the only two in the district available for this purpose. If some of us had doubts before, we could all see now that God was in this thing. Not that such seeing is the faith that removes the mountains. The glory of changing impossibilities into realities belongs only to those who "have not seen, yet have believed."

We now began to watch for the next moving of the Spirit. Obviously money must come from somewhere, and it would need to be an unusual supply. As a Crusade to unevangelized fields we receive many sums for the furtherance of the Gospel, but we did not remember a time in our history when a substantial gift had come specifically for the home base. Naturally, donors wish their money to go direct to the front line. Also we made it quite clear, both amongst ourselves and in the presence of God, that we could only use on a building at home money given directly for that purpose.

Yet it was only a few weeks later that the Lord sent this second provision, as wonderfully as the first. We received the news of the death of an old gentleman. We knew him and his wife. They were always to be seen near the front at our annual meetings. They were great lovers of the work and the looks of joy and thankfulness on their faces, as they listened each year to what God was doing, used to be a special inspiration to the speakers on the platform. Now he had gone to be with the Lord and we were informed that in his will he had left to the Crusade a small house the other end of London for use at the home end, with a sum of £1,200 (\$6,000) for its upkeep! How amazing that at such a moment the very request for which we were praying should have been mentioned in his will. After permission had been obtained to sell the house, we found that the sum available was £2,000 (\$10,000) specifically for a house at the Home Base. Owing to a clause in the will, the money was not available at the moment; but the provision seemed to us so clearly of God that, without deflecting funds, we were able to use an equivalent sum to bridge the period until it comes to hand.

An Unusual Leading

The Lord Jesus explained of old that co-operation between God and man consists in first seeing the Father do things, and then doing them ourselves (John v. 19), a very different method from first doing things ourselves and then asking the Father to bless them. So now our next step was obvious. With land and money so wonderfully provided, we were justified in going forward with the obtaining of estimates. We needed

a three-storied building, with accommodation for sleeping thirty and feeding sixty, and with a room which could be used for meetings to seat up to one hundred. But we discovered that it would cost £4,000 (\$20,000) double the sum we had in hand. What now was to be done? Halve the size of the building? Or what?

Once again we were having the daily meeting. I don't know who made the suggestion, but it came to us with that light and assurance by which, with proper safeguards, we have learned to discern God's will, that we should ask the Lord to send candidates suitable to form "a building team." We often have men with practical knowledge of all kinds of trades amongst the volunteers for the fields. All our work at Headquarters is done on a voluntary basis, as unto the Lord, and in order not to draw off a penny more than necessary from the funds for the fields; so if the Lord would send a candidates' "building team" the work would be done as a labour of love. As wages are half the cost of a building project, this would mean that our £4,000 bill would be reduced to £2,000, the sum we already possessed. All having seen this so definitely as light from God, thenceforward we brought it before Him daily in prayer. But as we look back now on the completed building and realize how little we amateurs grasped all that was involved, we do not think we should have dared to make such an "outlandish" request, if ignorance had not been bliss!

Enter "Uncle Hoppy"

Meanwhile we delved further into practical details. We had one builder in our midst, John Byers, experienced as a bricklayer. One morning he pointed out that we might have a difficulty in obtaining scaffolding. He said that normally a contractor would only use his scaffolding on his own contracts and would not be willing to lend or hire and, of course, we did not want the expense of buying. There were other items to be considered also: the plans, the purchase of the right materials, and necessary equipment such as a concrete mixer. John Byers had one suggestion to make. He knew a Christian contractor in Gravesend named Mr. Will Hopkins and he thought that if he wrote to him, he might hire or lend scaffolding, because he would have sympathy with the object of the hostel.

He sent the letter. A few days later, Mr. Hopkins himself came over to see what we were planning to do. I met him and we had a short conversation together, but I gave no particular thought to the matter. Little did I know that "Uncle Hoppy," as we came to call him, had been deeply stirred. He had come over thinking that our plan was a corrugated iron roofed room for some local mission; but when he heard of C.T. Studd and what the Lord had done these past few years, and what the plan and size of the hostel was to be, he caught fire. I knew nothing of it until some days later, when Uncle Hoppy 'phoned or called, I forget which, to tell the story of some remarkable dealings of God with him.

It turned out that on his return home he fell sick and was a week in bed. There God spoke to him. Of all businessmen we have met, we know no more faithful witness for Christ than he. Each building contract he accepts, when he first arrives at the site, he holds an open-air meeting, often by himself, distributing tracts and asking God's blessing

on the job. On issuing recently an attractive circular concerning houses to be erected on a new building estate, he added that a truly happy home can only be experienced when Christ is in the centre. But such methods also stir opposition and at the time of his illness, his affairs were in a bad way. Certain authorities, opposed to his testimony, had been putting difficulties in the way of a big business transaction and the matter had to be referred to higher authorities. If the case were decided against him he would be ruined and even as it was, he had gone far enough into the transaction to involve himself in a grave financial situation. On top of all this, there was a building depression at the time and he was only employing some 10 to 20 workmen, instead of 60 to 100.

In this condition of things, God spoke. Mr. Hopkins' own account of that experience was: "At this time we had secured a large contract and God said, 'The Hostel or the contract.' For a week I completely lost the use of my legs. And God said, 'See how dependent you are on Me. Will you give your skill and time for Me?' Of course, I obliged, Amen." This simple statement involved the loan of scaffolding and concrete mixer, the undertaking of the oversight himself, the production of the plans by his architect, and the obtaining of all the right materials at cost price without profit to himself. In the fact of his own difficult situation, he would put God's work *first* and trust Him to look after his own affairs. This was the amazing substance of his communication to us. What could we do other than what all the saints of God had done when confronted with His wonderful works, fall down and worship and stand up and praise? Here, within a few weeks had come "out of the blue", land, money, guidance for a building team, contractor, architect and the supply of proper materials.

The Building Team

An unexpected delay followed. The plans were drawn out by Uncle Hoppy's architect, Mr. Lucas, himself a lover of the Lord. They were submitted to the London County Council. This body are rightly most particular about all buildings in the London area and take their time in making their investigations. At length, the reply came back. The plans were rejected for some fault in the sanitary system. Second plans were drawn and submitted. Further delay and second rejection. This time it was a question of the angle of light for the windows. For the third time plans were drawn and this time, passed, the whole negotiation taking a year. The cost of these plans alone, if we had had to pay, would have been round about £200 (\$1,000). During these months also, we received a great deal of the necessary legal advice and help in negotiations concerning leases, etc., from an old friend of the W.E.C., Mr. Theodore Roberts, a well-known London solicitor, all of which he undertook free of charge as a brother in the Lord.

But now we saw God's way in the delay—for all apparent set-backs in the will of God are merely invisible advance, only from our angle of sight we cannot see the progress at the time. If the plans had been passed earlier, the building team would not have been there. After this further year, when we were all ready to build, without our making an effort or appeal to get anyone we had with us a team of 12 men, candidates for various fields. Of these, actually, six were experts in various phases of building. Three were experienced builders: Wilfrid Watt, Frank Miller and John Byers. Of these, Wilfrid

Watt, a nephew of Mr. Hopkins, was more than a builder. He had received training which fitted him as a foreman and was able to take oversight of the building under the general supervision of Leslie Sutton. Three were carpenters: Davy Davies, Martin Davies from Vancouver, B.C. and Phil Dyer. Six were amateurs who had to jump from office desks and behind counters to girder climbing, hod carrying, digging, concrete mixing and what not. Some of their own testimonies will tell their experiences later in our story.

The Supply of Specialists

The work began in January, 1937. Foundations were dug, including basement space for a central heating plant and bakery.

Mr. Hopkins thought it was wise to build with steel girders, so deep concrete supports were placed to carry them. Then the girders themselves arrived *L400* (\$2,000) worth, the heaviest weighing nearly a ton. I well remember the first lorry load on a typical English February day. None of the team knew how to handle steel girders. Load after load arrived and I used to go and look at the huge things lying on the ground, 200 of them, and felt like getting the February weather inside as well as out, when I wondered however and whenever these things would be erected by folk who knew nothing about it.

Either that week or just after a new candidate arrived. He was from Canada and had come by a roundabout route, first visiting relatives in Ireland. His name was Kenneth Cairns. We asked him about his work before he went to a Bible School and he told us among other things that he had experience in erecting steel girders! The Lord had sent him just at the right moment and this was to happen four times over when specialised jobs needing skilled workmen appeared. Under his oversight, the girders were all in place in a month. The derrick was a 33 ft. pole. "My people by mistake (wrote Mr. Hopkins) had sent a huge lifting pole which I considered altogether too big to handle. However, I thought, 'It is here and we will try to erect it.' After much effort we did manage to get it into a sloping position and then, were completely stuck. We could not move it and to be of use, it must be upright. So, I stopped all effort and simply asked God, if He wanted this pole used, would He help us to get it upright. Then we tried again, and it flew up. Just no trouble at all."

After the girders came the brickwork: 70,000 bricks were used. At the same time, the encasement of all the girders in concrete to comply with the L.C.C. fire regulations was carried out, a big job, 120 tons of concrete being used in the whole building. Fireproof floors were also laid. "These are always constructed by specialist firms (writes Mr. Hopkins). After much fearfulness, we designed a floor and carried it out. We repeated this on both storeys. They are completely successful."

Then came the second miraculous provision of skilled workers. The electric lighting system had to be planned and installed. None of the team were electricians. But at that very time, two more brethren joined us as candidates for the fields, Michael Lishmund and Leslie Seaman. Both were electrical engineers and thus able to plan and install the whole system.

A First-class Job

It was a beautifully dry summer and in their desire to get the work done, the team exceeded all customary hours and continued from 8 a.m. right on till 8 or 8:30 p.m., especially in the case of the “bricklayers” and “labourers”.

From the beginning, one of their special objectives had been to do a first-class job, which could stand examination from experts and meet with their approval, so it was interesting to watch the reactions of the official inspector of the London County Council. His visits were weekly at least. He had power to order any alteration he liked and should he disapprove of the work, he could both make it very awkward and very expensive. Naturally, in his position, and quite rightly, he had been used to keeping a careful look-out for shoddy workmanship. But as the weeks passed, he became more of a friendly adviser than a critic. He said he had not seen a more solid job done and that this semi-amateur and wholly volunteer team doing the work for Christ’s sake put in such thorough work that he did not feel the need for having such a watchful eye as usual.

Towards the end of the summer, Mr. Hopkins was anxious to get the roof finished before the arrival of the autumn rains and lent us two of his own trained workmen. With their professional aid, the roof was one and completed by the end of August.

Forty steel window framers were now put in position and about 400 panes of glass, mainly by Fred Lyons and Martin Davies, although neither had been glaziers by profession.

One of the most expert jobs was the plastering of the inside walls. Wilfrid Watt volunteered to do this, but Mr. Hopkins thought that we had better engage plasterers, as Wilfrid had already so much on his hands with the general oversight. This was done locally, some of the team acting as “plasterers’ mates.” The job took a month. The impression made on these men by the cheerful fellowship of their strange mates came to our ears by a chance conversation. Each Saturday, the team with others of the home base staff, went out to hold an open air meeting in the streets of Norwood. At one meeting, a member of the audience was overheard to say, “I don’t believe in all this. These fellows are hypocrites.” But a woman standing next to her was heard to answer, “Whatever else they may be, they are not hypocrites, for my husband is a plasterer and works with them and says they live as they preach.”

The plumbing and sanitation was another expert job, for it included a central heating system, a hot water system, two bathrooms, two shower baths, five lavatories and eight wash-hand basins. For this, we had the Lord’s third special provision in David Barron, a plumbing and hot water expert. He was learning French in Paris and returned to take on this big task. With the help of Fred Lyons of the home base staff and later, Bill Huggan of Canada, he completed the whole of it. A wonderful piece of work for these three to have carried through.

The Interior Finishings

By January, 1938, just a year from the commencement, we were ready for the interior painting. We were in the usual situation—without a house decorator. Just previously, however, we had received a letter from the island of Borneo, from the secretary of the Borneo Evangelical Mission, an Australian organization. They stated that they had no British Headquarters and were writing to ask if we would undertake for them the testing of an English candidate. This we gladly did. He arrived at Headquarters in January, Trevor White, by name. Amongst other things, we asked him what his previous work had been, before he went to Bible School. The answer is obvious—a house decorator! From top to bottom, he went with his brushes, distempering most of the walls, papering the large hall, and painting all the doors and wainscottings in the way by which these experts can make plain deal look like oak! In much of this, he was assisted by Billy Swift. The distemper and brushes had been the gift of one of the oldest friends of the Crusade, Mr. John Govan, of Belfast.

Meanwhile, the floorings were completed, of various materials, according to need. Oak blocks were used for the large dining-prayer-room, a patent cement-like dressing for the kitchens and linoleum for the upstairs floors. Phil Dyer, meanwhile, who is a cabinet maker, had been spending all these months in Mr. Hopkins' workshops preparing the 40 wood frames for the steel windows, also making all kinds of cupboards for the kitchen, scullery, bathrooms and landings. In these, he was helped by Clifford White and Henry Isaacs. The doors came from a large modern house in Sevenoaks. Uncle Hoppy had secured a contract there and before the construction could be commenced, this house had to be demolished. They were thoroughly substantial, complete with locks and handles.

The cooking problem was solved by the transference of two "Aga" cookers to the hostel, one a gift from Miss Gristwood's house, No. 34, and the other, a gift from a Christian friend to Mrs. Grubb in No. 17. These cookers are of the patent modern heat-preserving kind, which will cook for some 40 people daily at the cost in fuel of L12 (\$60) a year.

How the Furniture Came

Now, there remained one more important item—the furnishing. The money had already been exhausted in the erection of the building. Indeed, we had gone back to the Lord on several occasions for further gifts and had received sums amounting to L120 (\$600). In addition, a few household gifts had been received: a lovely blue-tiled fireplace for the prayer-dining-room; a grand piano; a wall clock; cutlery for 60 or more people; a picture of the Cross triumphing over all emblems of the kingdoms of this world, by Charlton Smith, our honorary publications editor. One friend gave the loan of some furniture, being herself abroad on missionary service.

But, the crowing gift came at the end and came in a way which was signal proof of God's approval and took us back direct to the day, some two years previously, when Leslie Sutton had said by faith, "All right, I'll take it." When there still remained the big

margin of the interior fitting up to be completed, Leslie Sutton received a gift of £300 (\$1,500) for this purpose. It was he who two years before had had the chief burden and had spoken that word of faith which seemed so much foolishness to the mind of the flesh; and now, when the whole building was complete, the final gift to fit the hostel for use was given directly to him. With it, he supplied the complete equipment. The main feature has been the furnishing of the dining-room with six tables, the tops inlaid with linoleum so that they need no tablecloths, with folding legs to facilitate their removal after meals; and a set of 100 tubular steel chairs which, besides being very strong, slide into each other in remarkable fashion and can be packed away in small compass when not in use. Thus, the dining-room can be transformed in a few minutes into a meeting-room.

The Team Scatters

Thus, by September, 1938, the building was completed within and without, 18 months from the commencement. During its erection, some members of the team sailed for the fields, their places being taken by fresh volunteers and most have now reached their destination: Frank Miller, Leslie Seaman, Martin Davies and Willy Purves are in the Ivory Coast; Albert Dean, accompanied by Frank, but laid down his life within a few weeks, through the bite of a snake; Davy Davies in the Congo; David Barron in Senegal; Jack Lenny and Cyril Holloway in Liberia; Kenneth Cairns, William Tennekoon, Bill Huggan, amongst the Outcastes of India; Norman Kennedy in Portuguese Guinea; John Firth, Ted Clyne and Bill Swift in Colombia; Clifford White, Stanley Wood and Henry Isaacs are learning French in Paris; Wilfrid Watt has returned to work for the Lord in his uncle's business; John Byers to the building trade in the north; Phil Dyer to help in his father's business; Michael Lishmund has joined a brother mission in India; Trevor White is having medical training as further preparation for Borneo; Fred Lyons and Fred Anthony remain, as before, on the Headquarters staff. A very significant proof that these were indeed the Lord's provisions for "such a time as this" has been that since that date, we have had with us nothing approaching a group of men able to put up such a building.

Inside Information

We may wonder what some of these young fellows felt like when suddenly transported from an office desk to the top of steel girders? Willy Purves, younger brother of Jock Purves, speaks for them all when he writes:

"The team consisted of twelve young men, hale and hearty, as ready to preach Christ by building as by preaching. The spirit of *bon camaraderie* and unity coupled with joy was evident from the beginning. Six of us were entirely unskilled in building. We were willing to learn, but we had never built anything more than a snow house and we all looked to God to give us the wisdom to execute the work as if done by experts.

"A hole for the basement and deep foundations for the walls was dug. This meant heavy work with the pick and shovel on the London clay. We sometimes sang, 'We'll

fling the world away and go Crusading,' and it seemed that we were flinging it away, but in shovelfuls. We sang much, for we were happy. We became known as 'Suto's hoboos.' "The basement walls were then commenced by the three 'bricklayers' and 'fed' by the others. One got used to unloading lorries of bricks and handling them by the chain method, where three were thrown from one man to another. There were many spills, but we soon became adept.

"Lorry after lorry of steel girders in a variety of sizes and weights arrived. The Lord protected us from all accidents during the dangerous work of unloading them. The actual building together of the 200 pieces of steelwork was quickly begun. I had been detailed by the foreman to lend a hand aloft to bolt the first-floor girder beams into position. Little did I think that this job of steeplejack was to be mine for the whole of the assembling of the steel framework and I was greatly surprised when told to continue on the third floor and roof trusses. To put in the highest beams meant climbing the long steel stanchions by hands and knees to the top. Martin Davies went up one stanchion and I its neighbour. We passed the first floor, second floor and on to the top, there to cling until the ponderous steel beam, to be placed in position, swung up, grazed our heads and then remained ready to be lowered on to its position. The whole structure swayed in the wind and I began to feel giddy and sick with the height. I was clinging tightly, hands and feet and did not relish the thought of loosening my hold to clamber on to the loose beam. To descend was defeat, but God's power can do the impossible and believing this, and that the text, 'He will not suffer thy foot to be moved,' was for me, I clambered on to the beam, manoeuvred it with my knees and bolted it into position. Never again, on the whole job, did the height fear return. Daily, I was climbing, straining, balancing and lifting and the Lord enabled me, to Him is all the praise."

On the other hand, it took some grace for the old hands to work shoulder to shoulder with greenhorns and bear their well-meaning blunders! Frank Miller reveals their feelings when he writes:

"From a technical point of view, the work was to me, quite ordinary; of course, and the things which thrilled others, were just natural to myself and others who have followed the building profession. I must say that my first impression of the scheme to build a large place in steel, etc., with such a 'motley crew,' was not a very hopeful one. I could imagine all sorts of things going wrong. Thus, perhaps, the outstanding thing to me is the accomplishment of such a task under the scheme of voluntary labour. I can say that I am as proud of that job as anyone could be and I am glad to have had a part in it.

"In the midst of practical labour, one learned some deep spiritual lessons. Here is an example. Most people have a jealous care of the work they are doing. I had and when I saw some spoilt by another worker just as enthusiastic, but not accustomed to the task, I felt like saying what I felt. But God rebuked me, saying, 'If you cannot bear seeing these things at home and rise enough to help the other man and overlook your own interest, how can you every hope to lead a raw native church with all their irritating affairs?' Since being out here, I have had reason to thank God for that valuable lesson.

"I doubt if ever such a spirit of fellowship and wholeheartedness has attended any building before. Very often during the longer days, we began to increase the pace tremendously. I know that in times like that on an ordinary building, the inevitable result would have been high words and ultimate explosion; but there is was all in the fun of

joyful service for God and souls. Hard work, humour, wonderful fellowship and a united aim to glorify God in the building were all evident.

“Above all, as I look around now, I see the other chaps scattered here and there on the mission field and the days of work together come back with delightful freshness. The God who helped us then as a team of builders in steel and bricks, will help us in the greater building—the spiritual church of God in these needy lands.”

Many had to learn the salutary lessons of taking upon themselves “the form of a servant.” John Firth, who was being trained before his call for the position of manager of a cotton mill, says that in the course of six months, “I helped or rather laboured at carpentry, digging, laying drains, concrete and cement mixing, wheeling the barrow, carrying cement in buckets, painting the doors and skirting boards with their first coats, laying and setting screeding boards, and helping the electrician”! Norman Kennedy, who became the team’s cook, writes:

“While at H.Q., the most difficult lesson I had to learn was *the willingness to be the servant of all*, but Hallelujah! I learned it while doing the cooking for the boys.

“Not having a suitable trade for the construction of the hostel, I had a share in various sections of the work, labouring, carpentering, bricklaying, and the remarkable thing was that whatever job I had, or whomever I was working with, whether the hours were long or short, one can honestly say that the joy and peace in the heart remained unchanged. The secret of real joy and peace is only found inasmuch as we are literally the servant of all.

“A striking example which will show the spirit of the team is as follows: I was booked for a week-end’s meeting in Kent and Uncle Hoppy was to take me there by car. However, before going there, we went to U. where Uncle Hoppy had some workmen to pay. We arrived ten minutes after finishing time and as soon as we entered the shop, there was nothing but grumbling because they had to wait ten minutes; in fact, they asked to be paid for the ten minutes. On the hostel at times, we were working steadily from 8 a.m. until 8:30 p.m. and not once did I hear one word of complaint. Truly, ‘the love of God is shed in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.’”

Finally, one used to the lumber camps and backwoods of Canada, Cyril Holloway wrote:

“Since launching out on a missionary career, I have learned that many things fall to ones lot, apart from simply teaching the Word of God. And yet, each contributed to the furtherance of God’s kingdom.

“From Canada, I journeyed to London Headquarters. It was nearly 4 o’clock when I arrived on the scene at 19, Highland Road. Men were scattered throughout a framework of girders, some painting, other tightening bolts and still others beginning to lay the first few courses of the outer wall. Knowledge that I was a new candidate caused many shouts of welcome and without hesitation; many offers of work were extended to me.

“Next morning, I donned my working clothes and joined the happy brigade. In days gone by, I have worked among many groups of men, in lumber camps, saw-mill crews and government road gangs, but never have I worked in a group for so long a period in which dwelt such a spirit of unity and willing co-operation, so that when a decision was made to work extra hours, instead of murmuring complaints, the opportunity was gladly embraced.”

Obedience Rewarded

One last reference must be made, with his permission, to “Uncle Hoppy”. That God might have the glory, he allowed us to tell the story of the Lord’s dealings with him when business was at such a low ebb and of the grace given to obey. In effect, the Lord had said to him, “Never mind the condition of your own affairs. You look after My business first, and then you have my promise that I will look after yours.” Two years had passed since that transaction took place between himself and the Lord and what had happened? Contract after contract had come in, until 200 men were being employed where there had been 10; and, best of all, the difficulties connected with that big contract had been settled absolutely in his favour by the authorities. He had “observed to do” whatsoever the Lord had commanded him and the promise had been amply fulfilled to him, “then thou shalt make thy way prosperous and then thou shalt have good success” (Josh. i. 8).

The New Hostel in Use

I returned to England in February, 1939, after a year’s absence. I had left a shell of a building. I came back to a hostel brimming with life. Absence made the change startling, from bricks and pipes and plaster to colour and warmth and homeliness; and I examined its finished and furnished condition with reverence and thankfulness. As I went from bedroom to bedroom and saw the fresh appearance, coloured walls, paintwork, furniture; the white-tiled bathrooms; the lino’d passages; the busy kitchen with cookers, plate-racks, cupboards, hatchways; and above all, the beautiful dining-prayer-room, a model of efficiency and attractiveness, I felt I was on holy ground. I feel the same whenever I am in it. Here are faith and love visible to the eye. All speaks of God, of His faithfulness, which supplied the materials and of His love which inspired the workmanship.

The first weekend-end after my return, I was present at the second Hostel Conference. Thirty-seven guests had come from all parts of England, Wales and Ireland to share in the Lord’s bounty, spiritual and physical, in what may truly be called the Lord’s house. Seventy were sitting down to meals and one hundred and twenty afterwards packed into the same room for several of the meetings. Some were fresh reinforcements for the fields; many others co-workers by prayer, self-sacrifice and witness in their own home towns; others, that week-end began a new life in the power of the Spirit.

This was the consummation of the hostel vision. As I stood before that audience for the first time, I looked into the future and saw the steady stream of Crusaders flowing into every remotest tribe where Christ is still unnamed. I saw also, hundreds in the homeland, quickened in zeal and faith and power, as together at these week-ends, we

examine the secrets of a life of “power with God and with men,” within the building whose very stones cry out to us that these things are so.

For this purpose also, have we issued this little booklet to the glory of God and inspiration of His people and we ask each reader to regard this as our personal invitation to you to come yourself and spend a few days at the hostel as the Lord’s guest.

Details of the week-end conferences, usually the last Saturday afternoon and Sunday of each month, can always be obtained from our magazine, *World Conquest*, or from

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