



**BAPTIST PRESS**  
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

**NATIONAL OFFICE**  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
Telephone (615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

**BUREAUS**

**ATLANTA** Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041

**DALLAS** Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996

**NASHVILLE** (Baptist Sunday School Board) Gomer Lesch, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,  
Telephone (615) 254-5461

**RICHMOND** Jesse C. Fletcher, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (703) 353-0151

**WASHINGTON** W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

August 21, 1973

California Physician Aids  
Nigerian Baptist Hospital

By Barbara Epperson

OGBOMOSHO, Nigeria (BP)--Nigerians will not soon forget "the Big Doctor who can make crooked arms straight."

During an 80-day assignment at the Ogbomosho Baptist Hospital here, Dr. Jerrold K. Longerbeam, chief of surgery at Riverside (Calif. ) Hospital, won the affection and admiration of missionaries and nationals.

"You need to take your knife and open our hearts and minds to see the depths of our appreciation, Mrs. Tina Oke, the operating room supervisor, told him.

Why was this "Big Doctor" in Ogbomosho?

In August, 1972, Dr. Longerbeam's pastor, Larry Nixon of Magnolia Avenue Baptist Church, Riverside, paid the surgeon's registration fee to attend a medical conference during Foreign Missions Week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

At that conference, Dr. Longerbeam learned of the need for doctors to serve on a short-term basis on mission fields overseas.

Although interested and willing, he never dreamed that within eight months he would be on a short-term assignment in Nigeria treating hundreds of Africans and training others.

With the unexpected absence of the only general surgeon at the Ogbomosho Hospital, Dr. Longerbeam was contacted by Dr. Franklin T. Fowler, medical consultant for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

It seemed God had limited the surgical load--until he got there, that is. So many patients were waiting to see him when he arrived, he wondered if the other missionary physicians, Dr. Martha J. Gilliland and Dr. William C. Gaventa, had been saving cases for him.

The number of seriously ill and the delay in bringing patients for treatment amazed Dr. Longerbeam. He marvelled at those patients who came to him with complete confidence and trust, and he was moved by their charm and friendliness. They in turn were delighted when he greeted them in Yoruba.

Besides treating patients, Dr. Longerbeam led conferences to train Nigerian interns in surgical procedures. One intern even remained for the training sessions during his vacation period.

The staff also profited from his research and knowledge of physiology and pathology. He impressed his co-workers with his patience and the thorough way he dealt with each detail of a case.

Young Nigerian doctors appreciated his willingness to spend hours assisting them in surgery. After watching Dr. Longerbeam assist in preparing a child for surgery, one Nigerian staff member praised the doctor for "even doing nursing procedures."

He will be remembered for his energy to work without rest, his love for the patients and his attitude toward his work.

-more-

Dr. Longerbeam's attitude prevailed even as he prepared to return to the States when he reflected, "This is the greatest experience of my life. I would come again and I wholeheartedly recommend it to other doctors."

Yes, it's no exaggeration. After only 80 days, 118 major surgical cases and 51 minor ones, this "Big Doctor" will not soon be forgotten.

-30-

EDITOR'S NOTE: Miss Epperson, missionary journalist, has editorial responsibilities at the Nigerian Baptist Woman's Missionary Union headquarters in Ede, Nigeria. She was appointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in June, 1953.

BP PHOTO mailed to state Baptist paper editors  
# # #

Plans Announced for \$20 Million  
Baptist Hospital in New Orleans

8/21/73

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--A new \$20 million hospital, tentatively named Southern Baptist Hospital--West, will be constructed here by Affiliated Baptist Hospitals, Inc., operators of two former Southern Baptist Convention hospitals.

Raymond C. Wilson, executive director of the present Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans, has been named executive director of all three ABH hospitals, including the two in New Orleans and Baptist Memorial Hospital, Jacksonville, Fla.

George Mathews, administrator and executive director of the Jacksonville hospital, will become executive coordinator for the proposed New Orleans hospital, which will initially have 200 beds with capability of expansion to 500 beds as needed.

Besides the hospital building, the 14-acre tract will contain the power plant, a medical office building, a parking structure and possibly an apartment house for hospital personnel.

Joe H. Tuten, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., and president of Affiliated Baptist Hospitals, Inc., said the consolidation of the three hospitals under a single executive director could possibly result in interchange of personnel between the hospitals on a loan basis.

ABH was formed after the Southern Baptist Convention voted in annual session in 1970 and 1971 to divest itself of SBC-owned hospitals. The Jacksonville and New Orleans Baptist hospitals were turned over to the board of what was then known as Southern Baptist Hospitals, Inc.

"We try to operate in close coordination with the SBC," Tuten said of the 50-member ABH board. "We want to be Southern Baptist, stem to stern."

-30-