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Tanzania--'Most Valuable
Farm Tool Is A Donkey'

By Larry Jerden

TUKUYU, Tanzania (BP)--When a visitor asked to see Paul Eaton's agricultural missions project here, the first thing he was shown was a rusted-out tractor, half buried in the ground down the hill from Eaton's house.

"This is your first object-lesson in agricultural missions," Eaton told the visitor. "This is what happens when you try to graft advanced, Western culture onto a primitive, African culture."

"Over there," he motioned across the small pen, "is the most valuable farm tool in the country."

The visitor found himself eyeball-to-eyeball with a donkey.

Eaton, a Southern Baptist agricultural missionary stationed in a remote area of Southern Tanzania, explained why the tractor, after being imported at great cost from thousands of miles away, ended its career in such an unproductive fashion.

"Tractors and mechanical equipment are simply not adaptable here," he declared. "When they break down, the farmers can't get parts. Often the closest parts are in Nairobi, 1,000 miles away, and even if they are available, the farmers around here couldn't afford them. So you see a lot of tractors in Tanzania sitting up on blocks for lack of spare parts."

Eaton also explained that it is difficult to teach mechanics to Africans, not because of lack of intelligence, but because of the tribal background.

"The only way to successfully teach agriculture is to show them what they can do with what they have."

Showing Africans what they can do with what they have is the primary thrust of Baptist agricultural work in Tanzania begun by Doug Knapp, now home on furlough, and carried on by Eaton, who moved there last year from Uganda.

Tukuyu, located not far from Lake Malawi on the southern edge of the country, is in what Eaton called "probably the second richest growing area in the country."

"There are two theories of agricultural missions," commented Eaton. "One is to work with church members--'We've saved them spiritually, now let's give them the means to improve their lives physically, economically.' The other is to use agriculture as a means of witness.

"The pineapple project was part of the first approach. Doug introduced pineapple as a farm product for one church. He began paying the church members to work on the farm with clothes, a 'clothes-for work' program."

What began as a small program has mushroomed into a big business for the area. With success has come problems.

"One problem facing the project now is that the government says we can no longer pay in clothes because it violates the minimum-wage law," Eaton explained. "Also, the clothes we used were imported duty-free to be given away. So, apparently, we will be able to continue only as long as our present supply of clothes lasts, about two years, then we'll have to stop."

But just as the clothes-for-work scheme is ending, there is a need for the project to become viable economically.

"At one time we had as many as 400 people working the fields being paid in clothing," Eaton said. "We can't pay that many in cash and make the pineapple farm profitable. So we are going to have to cut back the number of people working.

"But there are 60 acres of pineapple to be harvested, and in a couple of months, that's going to mean 2,000 pineapples a day to be harvested."

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That's where that valuable donkey comes in.

"Right now," Eaton said, "workers walk out into the fields, pick two or three pineapples, then walk all the way back to the main road and load them on a truck. That's why it has taken so many people. But a donkey cart can haul the load from the field to the road.

"We produce far too many pineapples for the local market to absorb," Eaton said, "so finding a market and getting them there is a major problem. Lusaka (Zambia) would be a possible market, but that involves foreign exchange and presents special problems. Dar es Salaam would be a market, but it's 500 miles away."

Not long after discussing the problem, Eaton learned that a government trucking company was running from Dar es Salaam to Mbeya, about 45 miles from Tukuyu, and returning three to five empty trucks a week to Dar. A company man seemed excited about filling the trucks with pineapples, but that still left 45 miles of bad roads between the pineapples and the trucks.

Eaton was confident that an answer would be found, however, and mentioned Knapp's eventual hope.

"Doug would like to see a commercial cannery in here," he said. "With a cannery your market would literally be the world. I would be pessimistic about a cannery camp out this far, but Doug is the kind of guy who could probably talk someone into trying it!"

The pineapple project is just one of about a half-dozen efforts going in the Tukuyu area. Others include the growing of other crops, experimenting with agricultural methods, and livestock projects including rabbits, chickens, ducks, and cattle.

Of all the projects, Eaton is most enthusiastic about the rabbits. "If I had the time, I would do nothing but raise rabbits. They could do more to help the protein shortage here than any other animal they could raise."

The Africans like the rabbits, Eaton said, "but when they come see ours, all they see is the rabbit house. Why, it's better than the house they live in. It has a concrete floor, wire cages, electric lights, hot water.

"They see all that and think, 'I don't have all that. I can't afford wire.' So they instantly decide they can't raise rabbits. We have to show them how to build a cage out of native materials. Then they can relate and are enthusiastic about the rabbits."

"Why have an agriculturalist here?" Eaton mulled it over. "This isn't a drought area, true. But the best place for an agriculturalist to make contacts is an area of farmers. He speaks the farmer's language and can communicate with them in a way no preacher can."

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers

Adapted from the January, 1976, World Mission Journal

Home Board Adds
Staffer and Missionaries

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board named one staff member and appointed 23 persons to missionary positions in 11 states.

J. T. Burdine of Bismark, N. D., was elected associate director of the board's department of rural-urban missions, effective Feb. 15.

Burdine has served as director of missions for Eastern and Western Baptist Associations in North Dakota and missions director for the Northern Plains Baptist Convention in North Dakota, Northeastern Montana and Northwestern Minnesota.

From 1962 through 1968, Burdine served pastorates in Florida, Indiana, Alabama, Kentucky and Alaska. A graduate of Stetson University in Deland, Fla., he earned both master and doctor of theology degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Missionary appointments included 15 career missionaries and 8 missionary associates.

Bill and Sandy Warnock of Kingsland, Ga., were appointed pastoral missionaries at Waikiki Baptist Church, Waikiki, Hawaii. A graduate of Georgia Southern College in Statesboro, he earned the master of divinity, master of religious education and doctor of ministries degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N. C.

William Robert and Lorna Sims of Houston, Tex., were appointed to a missionary pastorate of El Portal Chapel Calif. He was in full-time evangelism at Wildwood Christian Ranch, Gillette, Wyo., in 1974, and prior to that, was associate pastor and mission pastor for First Baptist Church, Lake Jackson, Tex., from 1969-74. He is former pastor of churches in Burleson and Galveston, Tex.

A native of St. Louis, Mo., Sims is a graduate of the University of Houston and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

George Sadler Jr. of Atlanta, will serve as a missionary of the Home Mission Board's department of cooperative ministries with National Baptists, directing a Seminary Extension Center in Tampa, Fla.

A native of York, S. C., Sadler is a graduate of Claflin College, Orangeburg, S. C., and earned the master of divinity degree from Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta. He has been a pastor, assistant pastor and special education teacher in Georgia.

William and Margaret Perkins of Birmingham, Ala., will be missionaries in cooperative ministries with National Baptists directing Birmingham Baptist Fellowship and coordinating activities between National and Southern Baptist churches.

Perkins, an Atlanta native, is a graduate of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, and Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta. He has been pastor of Third Baptist Church, Hampton, Va., since 1971.

Mrs. Perkins earned the master of arts degree from Wellesley College in Massachusetts and has taught school in Washington, D. C., Talladega, Ala. and Newport News, Va.

Fleet and Wanda Belle of Prichard, Ala., will coordinate joint National and Southern Baptist activities in Mobile, Ala. Belle, a graduate of Dillard University in New Orleans, La., earned the master of divinity degree from Howard University in Washington, D. C.

Autry and Irene Brown of Bolivar, Mo., will serve in Colorado as state consultant in Christian social ministries.

Brown, who holds a doctorate in education from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, has been a psychology teacher at Missouri Baptist College, St. Louis, and at Southwest Baptist College, Bolivar, Mo. He served pastorates in New Mexico, Colorado and Louisiana.

Jim and Genie Kerr of Elkins, W. Va., will direct Christian social ministries in the Charleston, W. Va., area. He has served as pastor of Elkins Southern Baptist Church.

Both the Kerrs are graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He holds a master of divinity degree and she holds a master of religious education degree.

Jim and Laura Morgan will serve in Charleston, S. C., as associate director of Christian social ministries. A graduate of Southern Seminary with a master of religious education degree, he has been director of church community weekday ministries for the Charleston Baptist Association. Before that he directed the Charleston Baptist Mission Center.

He has also been education director of churches in Kentucky, Georgia, Virginia and North Carolina, and was youth and recreation director, 1960-65 for First Baptist Church, Charlotte, N. C.

Missionary associates include Leonardo and Maria Rodriguez, Jr., pastorate at Antiquola Baptist Mission, Corpus Christi, Tex.; Ruben Lopez and Aurora Hernandez, pastorate of Mision Bethel Bautista, Robert Lee, Tex.; Mrs. Benny (Cathy) Garcia, director of the weekday program at Friendship Center, Albuquerque, N. Mex.; James Alexander and Nancy McAleece, missionary associates in Christian social ministries, pastor-director of Chelsea Baptist Chapel in Massachusetts; Patricia Reed, coordinator for Woman's Missionary Union activities between National and Southern Baptist churches in Oklahoma.

The status of Peter and Mary Kim, associate pastor of the Korean church of San Diego, Calif., was upgraded from student status to full time missionary associate.

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900-Mile Trip Gets The Job
Done for North Carolinian

Baptist Press
1/9/76

MEMPHIS (BP)--Mark Johnson of Ahoskie, N. C., believes strongly in the value of the Royal Ambassador (RA) boys magazines published here.

That's why the 25-year-old RA counselor at Creech Memorial Baptist Church, Ahoskie, hitch-hiked 900 miles to Memphis to pick up the magazines for his boys at the Southern Baptist Convention's Brotherhood Commission.

Johnson learned that his periodicals order hadn't been placed, so he closed the meeting of his RA boys group on a Wednesday night with a promise that he would have the new magazines by the next weekly meeting.

And he did.

While in Memphis, Johnson also picked up the order for other RA chapters and their leaders in his church. Then he hitched a ride with a Brotherhood Commission staff member back to Interstate 40 for his return trip to Ahoskie.

Johnson acknowledged that he had considerable hitch-hiking experience as a former Air Force man, thumbing 500,000 miles in 49 states and two provinces in Canada.

While at the Brotherhood Commission, he also placed an order for magazines for the next quarter. He plans to see if postal employees will deliver them before hitting the pavement again.

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