

The Allan Slaters Describe Their Work In Zambia

FEB. 3 1971

(Editor's Note:— Although this letter was received by St. Marys friends several months ago it is still felt to be of such real interest that it is very worthy of publication.)

Kalulushi Farm College,
P.O. Box 5,
Kalulushi, Zambia.

Dear Friends:

This letter will come as a complete surprise to many of you. Yes, we really are in Zambia. Last March we applied to The United Church of Canada for an overseas appointment in Agriculture. Shortly thereafter we were called to Toronto to meet Mr. John Woods, Director of Kalulushi Farm College. Mr. Woods offered us a three year contract to train men to be ranch managers. The next few months were spent in passing the Board of World Mission's screening process and attending an orientation program in London, Ontario. Finally on Sept. 18th we boarded Air Canada to London, England, then on to Nairobi, Kenya and arrived at Ndola, Zambia, on Sept. 20th.

To those of you who are meeting us for the first time via this letter I will tell you something of our background. We are farmers from near St. Marys, Ontario where Allan operates a dairy and beef farm with his brother David, and his father Ray. Our share of the responsibility has been turned over to them for the next three years while we fulfill our desire to work abroad. Allan is a graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College and I am a graduate of Macdonald Institute, Guelph. We have four children: Ann 8, Bill 6, Sarah Jane 4, and Stewart 1½.

Kalulushi Farm College was, until June 1970 associated with Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, Kitwe, Zambia. Now the farm has its own Board of Directors and like Mindolo is associated with the World Council of Churches. The Government of Zambia supports the college fully and granted the land for its establishment in 1966. The teaching staff is recruited mainly through the World Council of Churches. The staff at present comes from United States, Ireland, England, Holland, Denmark with ourselves being the only Canadians.

3-Year Course

The courses offered to the young Zambian men are an Agriculture Course with training in horticulture and pig and poultry management. This course is designed to train practical young farmers who if successful, will be offered a state settlement farm or be assisted to return to their family farm. This is actually a three year course. In the first year they are paid student wages to work and learn in the farm gardens and with the pigs and poultry. In the second year each student is given a garden plot to grow and finance his own crops. He also has his own chickens. The produce from these enterprises he sells to the College's Central market. The third year they are placed on their settlement farm and work it with some supervision.

Ranch Management

The other main course at present is a ranch management course to train men for positions on State or private ranches. This is a one year course. Plans are underway to start a ranch tenant scheme to train farmers to become successful tenant ranchers. The Government is planning to provide ranches of approximately 3000 acres each, for farmers who successfully complete this course. These 2 ranch courses are the courses which Allan is associated with. He shares the responsibility with

for the wives of students. The main goal of this course is to prepare the women to share in the work of the farm and become partners with their husbands.

Now a word or two about life in rural Zambia. Actually we are situated in the "hub" of Zambia: "The Copperbelt." We are twenty miles from Mufulira where the national mine disaster occurred in October. If you are looking on the map don't forget that Zambia is the old Northern Rhodesia. If you look just south of the Congo you will probably find Kitwe or Ndola. Kalulushi is 10 miles west of Kitwe or 50 miles northwest of Ndola. The farm is 6 miles south of Kalulushi. The children ride the city bus into Kitwe to go to school. Ann is in Grade 3 and Bill in Grade 1. This will probably be the shortest school year that they will ever experience as they start summer holidays again on Dec. 4!

Start At 7 a.m.

The hours of work are probably the biggest adjustment that we have had to make. It hasn't made much difference to Allan as he always did get up early. Everything is in full swing by seven o'clock in the morning. Ann and Bill catch the bus at 6.45 a.m. and start school at 7.40. They are back home again by 2 p.m. If one goes shopping you leave around 7.30 as all stores are open by 8 a.m. and then close up from 12 'till 2 for lunch. The days have lengthened since we have been here but even so it is dark by 6.30 p.m. The sun rises about 5.30 a.m. This is of course spring here and even though the rainy season has not started the trees are in full leaf and the flowers are blooming. Seasons make little difference as far as the gardens are concerned as irrigation is used so crops can be grown all year round. We are enjoying cucumbers, tomatoes, green beans, etc., fresh from the gardens. We buy all our vegetables, eggs and poultry through the college market. Our fruit is grown in our own backyard as we have many banana trees, strawberries, mulberries, lemons and peaches.

Our home is a three bedroom brick bungalow. It remains quite cool even now when the mid-day temperatures reach the nineties. Actually the climate so far resembles July and August in Ontario except it always cools off in the evening. None of those hot sticky nights when you just can't sleep.

Allan's work being mainly with cattle involves such jobs as dipping the entire herd of 325 once a week for tick control. The other common jobs are identifying calves, branding, dehorning, castrating, and being his own veterinarian. For variety there are things like fighting bush fires and driving five bulls home from Kitwe - that's fourteen miles. OAC grads might be interested to know that one of the first directors of this farm was Jim Stockton. He is still in Zambia and has a church in Ndola.

We will be very glad to hear from any of you who feel inclined to drop us a line. If all goes as planned we hope to get this type of letter out twice a year. Now may we wish you all the very best for 1971.

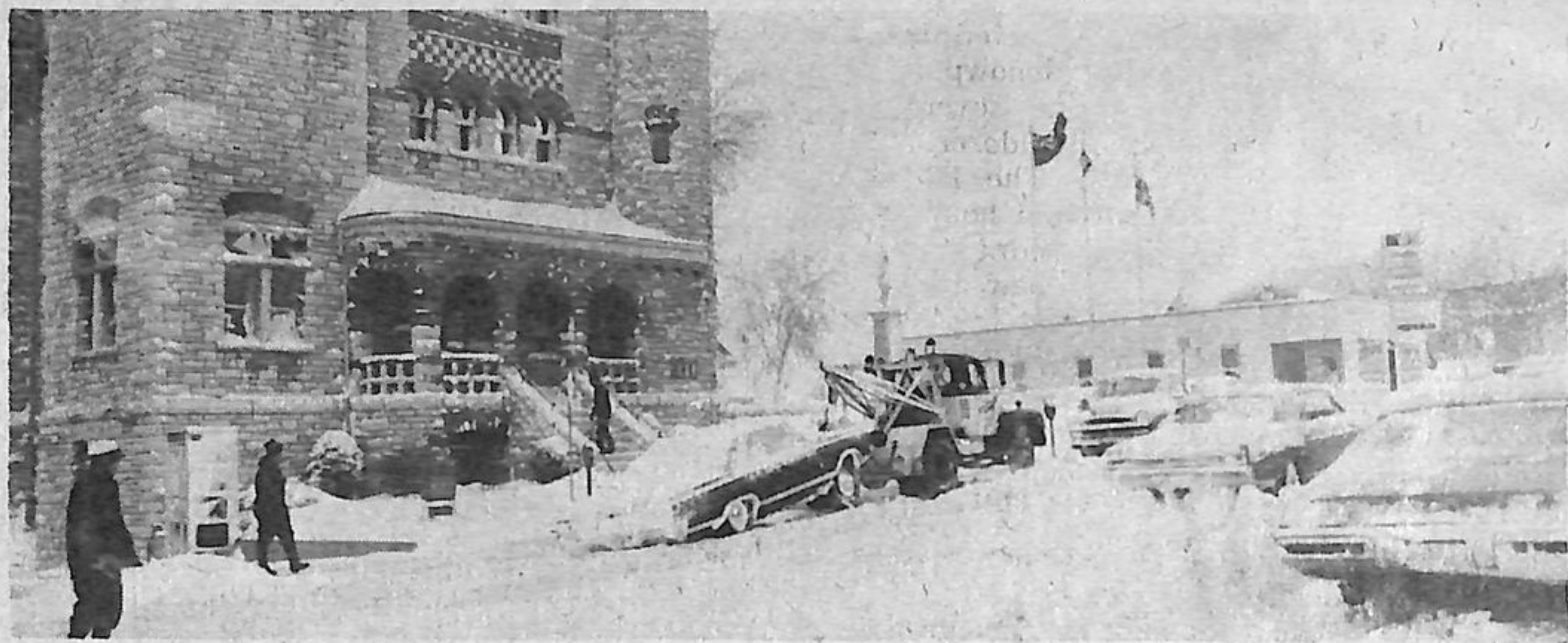
Sincerely,
Allan and Bev Slater,
Ann, Bill, Sarah Jane and Stewart.

"And now, gentlemen," said a congressman during a speech in the House, "I want to tax your memory." "Gad," exclaimed a colleague, "why hasn't

During A Lull in the Storm



WHEN THE SNOWMOBILE CAME INTO ITS OWN — Here's Pete Newton and one of the machines which were of such a great help in many situations.



FROZEN AND STALLED VEHICLES WERE PLENTIFUL and during lulls in the storm many were "rescued" by service trucks.



NEITHER STORM NOR SLEET HALTS THE L.C.B.O. — The figure on right is Andy Hoe on his way to work Wednesday morning.



Jan. 27 1971
SPRUCE TREES ON WELLINGTON ST. SOUTH after one night's blow.