

Addis Ababa
April 17, 1977

Dear friends in Christ;

We are sure that by now most of you have heard that Don was killed in Gode. Although we and many around the world feel the tremendous loss of a husband, and father, and a tireless, energetic and obedient servant of our Lord, we feel that God's tender and powerful hand reached down to lead him to his reward that night of March 27. The Somali guerillas who that night thought that they had the power of life and death in their hands were only pawns of our loving Father's will. We feel it appropriate that Don should die and be buried among those whom he loved and served in Gode. The simple but moving ceremony at his grave struck deep into the hearts of the hundreds who were present. Many asked "why leave him here among his murders?". The reply, simply, that these are those to whom he was sent and whom he loves. His death was part of his life and as such we are confident that "my word will not return unto me void". HALLELUJAH!

In relating to you briefly the way that the Lord worked His miracles, we want to share with you not only the peace and comfort, but also the joy of victory that we feel as we are assured beyond doubt that this was indeed His will.

Lyda, Don and Don Jr. were aboard a small chartered aircraft leaving Addis for Gode. The engine was warmed and taxie clearance given when at the last moment we were informed that one of us would have to remain behind in favor of another who had to go to Gode. Lyda got off --- the first of those acts of God of which we are aware.

Don and Don Jr. were to drive a truck from Gode to Addis. However, upon arrival in Gode they discovered that the road was closed by guerilla activity. They then made arrangements with the pilot to come back in a day or two to return them to Addis. As the pilot could not do this, Lyda in Addis began to make the arrangements for their return.

At 1:30 Sunday morning Don and Don Jr. were roused out of their beds by guerillas. Don Jr. was kept under guard on the porch where he was joined by Graeme Smith of World Vision who had come to investigate and help if he could. Don opened the house to those of the guerillas who were intent on looting. After thirty minutes or so the three men were taken to the yard and while standing shoulder to shoulder were fired on from less than a yard away. Don was hit first and fell instantly. Don Jr., realizing their intent to kill, began to run to escape. While turning he saw Graeme shot and fall and was shot at himself as he turned and as he ran but was not hit. He headed for the bridge about a mile away to get help from the army garrison that was guarding the bridge. An army patrol from the bridge must have heard him and began to fire. He then spent the night in a fox hole thinking to be the only one of those in the mission alive. He had seen his father and Graeme both shot and fall. At that range how could one miss! Infact the muzzle flame had enveloped both their chest areas. Graeme also thought that Don Jr. was shot but later, after the guerillas had left, could not find him and assumed he had dragged himself or had been dragged away.

While this was going on at the McClure house, the guerillas had roused Mrs. Smith and her four small children, two German builders, two Ethiopian nurses and an English engineer from their beds and forced them out into the yard where they were making preparations to kill them all. The shooting at the McClure house must have been thought to be resistance as the two groups then began to fire at each other. A modern tower of Babel. Both groups fled but in doing so one man turned and fired indiscriminately at the group and hit Mrs. Smith in the leg causing a nasty flesh wound. Graeme was not even wounded, Don Jr. had received a bayonet wound on the leg before the shooting and minor powder burns on the shoulder, the engineer had a nasty though not serious bayonet wound in the eye, the others were not harmed. Why had God so miraculously saved the rest but not Don? We feel that the answer is clear!

The last passages of scripture that Don read were from the "Daily Light" for the evening of March 26. The next day the rest of us heard God speak in the "Daily Light" passage for the morning of March 27. If you want to share in the victory read those collections of Scripture and together we can say Hallelujah.

Gode and the Gode Project are closed but the seed is firmly planted. Pray for your Christian brothers there as they may face persecution. Pray that they grow in numbers and in the Lord. Your prayers work miracles though you may not see them until you stand at the Throne of Grace with hundreds, even thousands of Somali at your side.

There is no way to thank you for your faithfulness through almost fifty years of service in Africa. Many many of Don's visions have become realities because of your responding in obedience to God's command to "go". You have loved thousands you have not seen and administered to those whose cries you have not heard. You have proclaimed God's love and saving grace to countless with whom you have fellowship only in the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Don would have said this is not the end but the beginning. A time to face the odds with courage, to expand our vision, to renew and redouble our efforts, a time for strength and decisiveness, a time for obedience, a time to hold up the burden of a torn world and see not murders but God's children in need.

Lyda returns to the States shortly to reside at R.D.1, Zionsville, Pa. 18092, while the Don McClure Jrs hope for a new assignment in Africa, as their Surma Project has also been closed.

Together with you in His service,

Lyda and Don Jr.