

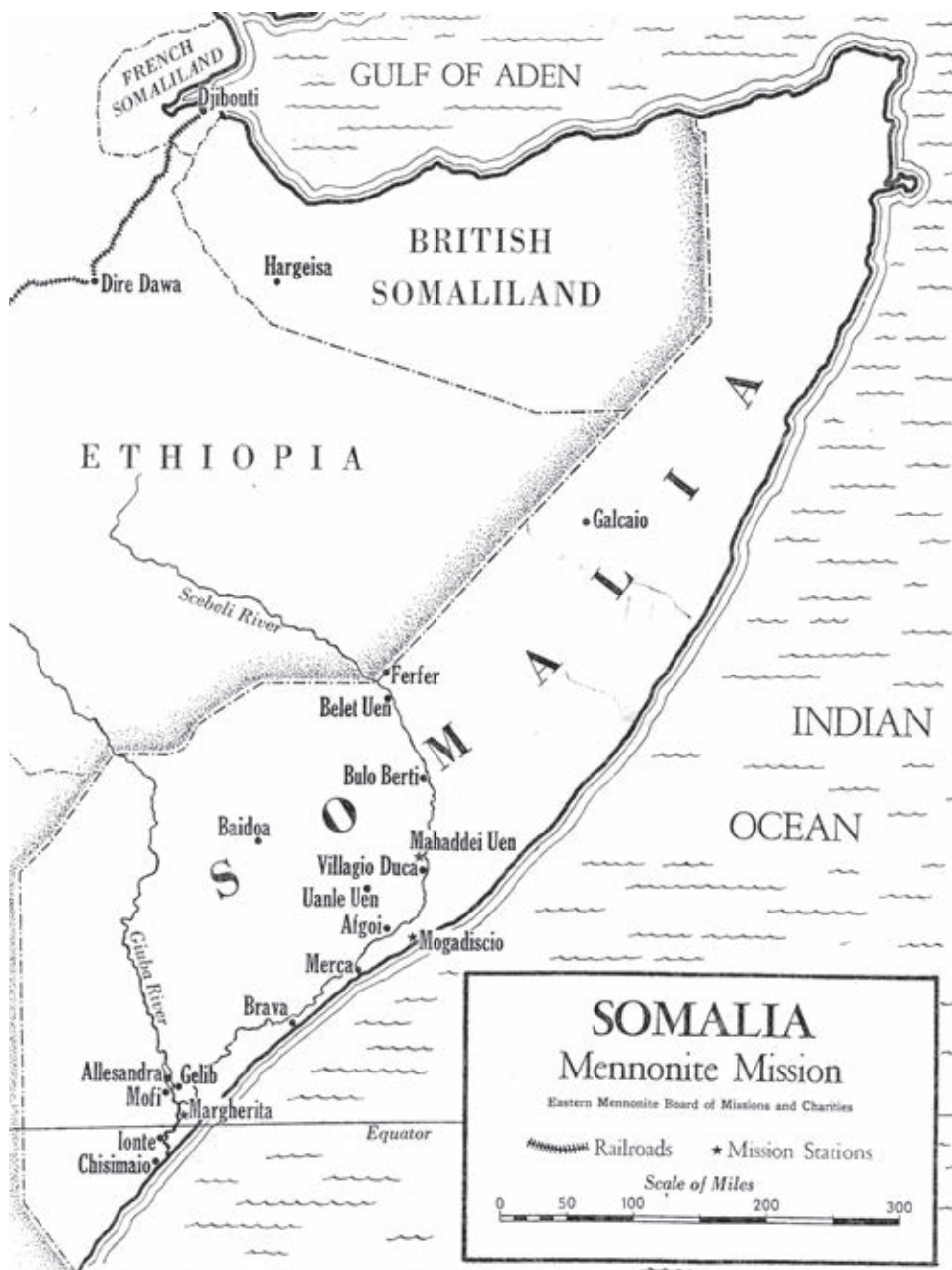
BORN FOR A PURPOSE

A MEMOIR

FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA



IVAN B. LEAMAN, M.D.
WITH MARY ELLEN LEAMAN



Map of Somalia before independence of July 1960

[This map of Somalia came from Eastern Mennonite Mission. Used by permission].



Map of Somalia after the 1960s.

[This map of Somalia is from book by Omar Eby, *Fifty Years, Fifty Stories: The Mennonite Mission in Somalia, 1953-2003*, p.137 (Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House, 2003; published in association with Eastern Mennonite Missions), Used by permission].

BORN FOR A PURPOSE

A MEMOIR FROM
THE HORN OF AFRICA

SECOND EDITION - 2024
(minor revisions)

Ivan B. Leaman, M.D.
with Mary Ellen Leaman

BORN FOR A PURPOSE:
A MEMOIR FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA

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by Ivan B. Leaman, M.D.

Cover Photo: Ivan in Galcaio Hospital in 1965
The blue cover symbolizes the color blue of the Somali flag.

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Dedicated to the memory of
Peter John Leaman

Born in Lancaster, PA, August 24, 1959
Died in Mogadishu, Somalia, March 10, 1960



Peter John Leaman
with his parents Ivan and Mary Ellen Leaman
in the cabin of S.S. Independence after boarding
the ship in New York City on January 21, 1960

CONTENTS

Foreword

Chapter 1 (1932–1959)	Page 1
Chapter 2 (1960)	Page 13
Chapter 3 (1961)	Page 37
Chapter 4 (1962)	Page 61
Chapter 5 (1963)	Page 85
Chapter 6 (1964)	Page 101
Chapter 7 (1965)	Page 109
Chapter 8 (1966)	Page 123
Chapter 9 (1967)	Page 137
Chapter 10 (1968)	Page 153
Chapter 11 (1969)	Page 167
Chapter 12 (1970–1986)	Page 175
Chapter 13 (1987)	Page 181
Chapter 14 (1988–1990)	Page 195
Chapter 15 (1991)	Page 213
Chapter 16 (1992–2010)	Page 229
Chapter 17 (2011–2021)	Page 243
Appendix 1 <i>Martyr Story</i>	Page 263
Appendix 2 <i>Martyr Story</i>	Page 267

Afterword

Author's Page

FOREWORD

What led to the writing of “A Memoir from the Horn of Africa?” How does a boy born in 1932 in the small town of Smoketown in East Lampeter Township of Lancaster County come to write about his life in an obscure part of the world, called the Horn of Africa? What are the bookends of this boy’s life? The first decade of this boy’s life in the 1930s was shaped by his ancestral and spiritual heritage with his forefathers arriving in Lampeter Township 300 years ago, fleeing persecution in Europe. The last decades of this boy, now an old man, were shaped by relating to refugee families fleeing East Africa who came with different cultural and religious backgrounds.

What are the bookends of this boy’s professional medical life? The decade of the 1960s leads this boy, now a fledgling doctor, to go and serve in a healing ministry in the Horn of Africa with his wife. The last decades of this seasoned doctor’s medical life were to give guidance in navigating the medical systems that faced refugees fleeing East Africa.

What were the sources from which this memoir was written? The boy’s mother, interested in family history, instilled in this boy an interest in learning from family stories and ancestral-genealogical research became a hobby. The doctor’s wife, a good letter writer, gave detailed accounts of their life in the Horn of Africa in the 1960s, when she sent weekly letters to their parents in the USA. These letters were preserved and were the main source for the writing of this memoir. The letters and diaries of 1987 and 1990 described those later trips to the Horn of Africa. The family circle letters and the reports from the monthly prayer fellowship of persons who had served in the Horn of Africa plus the many photo albums with captions from the Horn of Africa assembled by the doctor’s wife, all together provided ample sources for the writing of this memoir. The writing began during the Covid-19 pandemic in the late summer months of 2020 and continued until the pandemic was fading in May of 2021. In the following months chapter

seventeen was added with stories of persons who had lived in the Horn of Africa or worked with persons from the Horn of Africa.

Why was the title “Born for a Purpose” chosen? At a very young age, this young boy believed that God, in some mysterious way, had the boy’s life planned, even had planned whom the boy would marry. The boy asked his mother how he would recognize the girl whom God had planned that he would marry. His mother replied that the boy would know when he met that girl. So he waited in expectation of that day. The boy, also at a young age, had a strong sense that God was calling him to be a missionary. He believed that the world could not end until that call was fulfilled. The boy grew to be a man and he found the girl that God had planned for him to marry and he also prepared to become a medical missionary. God led him and his wife to sail for the Horn of Africa on January 21, 1960.

*~ Written by Ivan B. Leaman in May, 2021 (minor revisions in 2024)
from Kirkview 8 apartment in Landis Homes Communities.*

Note: Here is an explanation of the different spellings of the place names in the Horn of Africa. The decision was made to use the spellings that were used in the 1960s when the Leamans arrived in the Horn of Africa and to use the change in the spellings in the late 1980s and in the 1990s. Thus, Mogadiscio became Mogadishu, Chismaio became Kismayu, Gelib became Jilib, etc.

Chapter 1

(1932 – 1959)

Ivan B. Leaman was born on July 13, 1932, in a modest frame house in the center of the small village of Smoketown, along the Old Philadelphia Pike in East Lampeter Township. He was the third child of Ivan Denlinger Leaman and Ethel Maria Barge. Ivan's mother delivered all eight children in this house with no indoor plumbing, with the first six born before the oldest entered school.

Ivan's father had been born in 1906 on a sixty acre farm at the southern edge of East Lampeter Township, along the Pequea Creek. His father was Tobias Groff Leaman and his mother was Hettie Denlinger and Ivan D. was their firstborn. His paternal immigrant ancestor Peter Leman and his maternal immigrant ancestor Michael Denlinger had both arrived in Philadelphia in August 1717 when three ships docked along the Delaware River. These ships carried many German speaking Mennists which created some concern so that they needed to sign a pledge of allegiance to King George of England.

Peter Leman and Michael Denlinger both came from the Emmental area of Switzerland where the Anabaptists had begun to flourish in the first half of the 1500s. When severe persecution developed in the



▲ *Smoketown home*

► *Ivan and Ethel Leaman with their first six children: Lois, Marian, Ivan, Alta, Esther and Ethel*



late 1600s against the Anabaptists in the Canton of Bern in Switzerland, many Anabaptists were forced out of Switzerland and found refuge in the German Palatinate and some lived there for some decades. Then came the offer from William Penn to seek a home in Pennsylvania where there was promise of religious freedom.

In 1717 Peter Leman and Michael Denlinger, the Anabaptist immigrant ancestors of Ivan B. Leaman, each obtained a 300-acre land grant adjoining each other in Lampeter Township (later to become East Lampeter when it was divided into East and West Lampeter Townships). These homestead land grants were four miles south of where Ivan was born 205 years later in the small village of Smoketown. These ancestors for several generations were buried in small family cemeteries on the homestead land but later their descendants were buried in the Mellinger Mennonite cemetery. It is believed that these two immigrant families helped to form the Lampeter Mennonite meetinghouse which later was named Mellinger after a prominent deacon Martin Mellinger, whose farm adjoined the meeting house.

Ivan B. Leaman's ancestors later farmed on a country road, later to be named Leaman Road, which was a short distance west of the original 300-acre land grant. Ivan's third great-grandfather was Benjamin Leaman who had married Catherine Kreider. Although there is no record of formal schooling, Benjamin was a mathematical genius as evident by his math notebooks preserved in the archives of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. He did very well financially and was able to provide a farm for each of his eight sons. His one son, Tobias K. Leaman, married Elizabeth Denlinger in 1843 and they lived in a newly built brick farm house which today is 2249 Leaman Road. Tobias K. died at a young age of forty-one of typhoid fever, leaving his thirty-four year old widow with nine children, ages one to sixteen. This widow was able to keep the farm going with the help of a hired man. Her son, Tobias D. Leaman, took over the farm when he married Susan Groff in 1877.

Tobias D's second oldest son was Tobias G. Leaman, who took over the operation of the farm when he married Hettie Denlinger in 1905. Tobias G. was a strong supporter of Mellinger Mennonite Church. He followed the recommendations of the bishops of Lancaster Mennonite Conference and he and his wife became plain in their dress before they were married. He even adopted the frock tail coat and he encouraged his two older sons, Ivan and Clayton, to also wear the frock tail plain coats which they accepted. Tobias G. served as Sunday School superintendent for many years. His oldest son was Ivan D. Leaman, the father of Ivan B. Leaman, the writer of this memoir.

[Note: You can read more about this family by reading Ivan B. Leaman's article "The Remarkable Leaman Family on Leaman Road" which was published in the October 2019 issue of the *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage*.]

The author's father, Ivan D. Leaman, went to Pequea elementary school where he completed eight grades of education. He was very shy in school but he loved to read and when his grandfather heard him read, he said that he would be a preacher some day. Ivan felt that he was too shy and when later he came under conviction to accept Christ as his savior he hesitated because of the prophetic statement of his grandfather. He did not enjoy working in the fields because the sun gave him a headache. When he was about 19, he was offered a job in the newly established Ezra W. Martin butcher shop at Bridgeport and he found this much to his liking. He was not an outdoors person and when his brother Clayton, two years younger, would ask him to go hunting rabbits, he would prefer to stay indoors reading books.

The author's mother, Ethel Barge, had been born in 1906 in Sterling Township, of Whiteside County, Illinois. Her father was Witmer Barge who had married Ella Esbenshade. They were both members of Strasburg Mennonite Church. Her paternal Barge and her maternal Esbenshade ancestors had both come from Germany in the 1700s and settled in the Strasburg area south of Lampeter Township. These immigrants were not Anabaptist. The ancestor George Barge was Lutheran when he settled in Strasburg about 1750, three miles south of the Leaman and Denlinger land grants. [Note: You can read more about the Barge German ancestry by reading Ivan B. Leaman's genealogical article, "Following the Trail of George Barge" published in the July 2009 issue of the *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage*.] George Barge's grandson Jacob Barge married a Mennonite farm girl Barbara Witmer from Lampeter and they became members of the Strasburg Mennonite meeting house and are buried in the adjoining cemetery.

Ella Esbenshade's paternal immigrant ancestor was Daniel Esbenshade who had come with his two brothers from Germany, all as single men. Daniel married Elizabeth Lefevre, whose immigrant ancestor was Isaac Lefevre, a son-in-law of the famous Huguenot matriarch Marie Feree, who received a large land grant between Strasburg and Paradise. Daniel and Elizabeth were drawn to the faith of their Anabaptist neighbors and they became members of the Strasburg Mennonite meetinghouse and are buried in the adjoining cemetery.

Witmer Barge had gone to the mid-west as a single man and worked in the harvest fields. When he returned to Lancaster County he married Ella

Esbenshade and they then moved to Sterling, Illinois where he rented a farm. Ethel was the first of four daughters born to Witmer and Ella. She did well in elementary school and was the top student in the eighth grade in the entire Whiteside County and her school, Science Ridge, in 1920 received a trophy of a bronze cup with Ethel Barge's name engraved on the trophy cup. There had been four previous trophy winners and since Ethel Barge's name was at the bottom of the cup with no more space for additional names, the school was able to keep the trophy cup and many years later, the trophy cup was given to Ethel and today her son Ivan has the trophy cup displayed on top of a bookcase next to her Sterling high school graduation picture.

When Ethel Barge finished high school, she had a desire to enroll in a two-year Normal School to prepare to be a teacher. At the same time her father was making a decision to move back to Pennsylvania. The farm he had been renting was going to be sold and he was not prepared to purchase it. Also, he was feeling that the Science Ridge Mennonite Church, where they were members, was becoming too liberal. For these two reasons he began to make plans to move to Lancaster County. So their daughter Ethel made plans to enroll in the Millersville Normal School and she traveled alone by train from Chicago and was met at the Lancaster Railroad Station by her Barge relatives. She enrolled at the Millersville Normal School and she began boarding with a Mennonite family in Millersville.

When Ethel Barge's parents some months later moved to Lancaster County, they rented a house on Creek Hill Road in Upper Leacock Township, owned by the Rohrer family who attended Stumptown Mennonite Church. The Witmer Barge family also began attending Stumptown and became actively involved. When there was a need for another preacher, Witmer Barge's name was given and he shared the lot when Elmer Martin was ordained. On weekends Ethel would be with her parents on Creek Hill Road and she began dating. How did Ethel Barge first meet Ivan Leaman? Of historical interest is that they likely first met as youngsters on Leaman Road. When the Witmer Barge family came from Sterling, Illinois to make visits to Lancaster County, they would visit relatives on Leaman Road. Witmer's mother was Maria Kreider, the daughter of Isaac Kreider who had a farm close by and just east of the Leaman farm where Ivan Leaman grew up. So the Barge family from Illinois would visit their Kreider relatives on Leaman Road and also they would visit the Tobias G. Leaman family on Leaman Road, a short distance west from the Kreider farm. Witmer Barge was a third cousin of Tobias G. Leaman through their common Denlinger ancestry.

But how did Ivan D. Leaman later meet Ethel Barge and begin dating? It was the practice at that time for young people to congregate at certain Mennonite congregations on Saturday and Sunday evenings. The Mellinger church in the country and East Chestnut Street church in the city were two popular places for Mennonite young people to gather. Sometimes after the evening service a young man would ask a young woman if he could take her home and that might be the start of a dating relationship. Also, there were girl parties to which young people were invited and sometimes a young man was asked to bring a young woman to a party. Ivan D. Leaman was asked by Vera Denlinger to bring her good friend Ethel Barge to her party. Ivan then developed an interest in continuing this relationship and thus he kept asking for more dates on a regular basis.

Ethel Barge had also been dating another young man who was also a friend of Ivan Leaman. She continued dating both of them which was not an unusual practice for that time. However, Ethel continued dating both young men for quite a long time. She didn't want to hurt the feelings of either young man by breaking the relationship. Finally Ivan told Ethel that she needed to make a decision. She confided with her parents and they gave their approval for Ivan Leaman for which he was happy and they continued a steady dating relationship for several years. This dating relationship began when the Witmer Barge family lived on Creek Hill Road and was likely the place where the engagement occurred.

At some point Witmer Barge bought an eleven acre farm in Strasburg on Miller Street. He began truck or produce farming and had a market stand in the Arcade Market in Lancaster. They started attending Strasburg Mennonite Church where they had attended growing up and had been members there when they had married. When there was interest in starting a mission church in Sunnyside, at the southern edge of Lancaster City, Witmer and Ella began helping with that Sunnyside Mennonite mission alongside David High.

When Ethel Barge finished her two-year Normal School training and received her certification for teaching in the public school, she got a teaching job, one mile north of Strasburg at the North Star School on North Star Road, east of Hartman Bridge Road. This was a public school in the Strasburg school district. The students were from the farming community, mostly Mennonite children and Amish children. During the week, Ethel boarded at the Elias Groff farm also on North Star Road but west of Hartman Bridge Road. Some of Ethel's pupils were Elias Groff's children and she would walk to school with them.

Ivan D. Leaman had developed a desire for more study of the Bible and he enrolled in the six-week Short Term Bible School at Eastern Mennonite School in Harrisonburg, Virginia. This was a vital part for Ivan's spiritual growth and convictions. He took seriously what he was taught at EMS, including the teaching and encouragement to practice the Holy Kiss. When he returned to his Mellinger congregation he began initiating that practice with fellow members at Mellingers. One wonders how that was perceived by his peers at Mellinger's church.

Hearing about Ivan's six-week Short Term Bible School at EMS caused Ethel to develop a strong desire to also get more formal Bible teaching. At an early age when Ethel was growing up in Sterling, Illinois, her Science Ridge Mennonite congregation often had missionaries on furlough from India, such as the George Lapps, who came to speak in their congregation. Ethel, at an early age, felt that someday she might be able to serve as a missionary in a foreign country. Ivan did not encourage Ethel, his engaged girlfriend, to follow her desire to go off to EMS for a formal Bible education. He wanted to get married! As a single man Ivan had been traveling to Columbia on some Sunday afternoons to help in a mission work there. He was helping in Sunday school teaching. After Ivan married Ethel in June 1929 he continued to make these Sunday afternoon trips to help at the Columbia mission. Their first four children were born in the first five years of their marriage and as a family they were attending the Mellinger Mennonite Sunday school and church, only a few miles from their home in Smoketown.

Then in 1934 C.Z. Martin, the pastor and leader of the Columbia mission church, decided it was time to move the Sunday school and preaching to Sunday morning. This presented a major decision for Ivan and Ethel. Should they make the change to give up their regular attendance at the Mellinger Mennonite congregation where Ivan's ancestral roots were for over 200 years? They made the monumental decision to give their church energy to the Columbia mission church which meant a travel of eighteen miles each Sunday. Ivan soon was given leadership in the Sunday school and he shortly was asked to be the superintendent. Later he was asked to be the superintendent of the Summer Bible School which was an evening SBS, extending over a two-week period. This became a very large responsibility as the SBS grew to over 400 children in attendance. Recruiting the teachers was a large task and required contacting young persons from many churches in the surrounding communities, inviting them to be teachers.

Father Ivan continued his full-time employment at the Ezra W. Martin butcher shop at Bridgeport as well as giving much time to the growing Columbia mission church. He believed that he should attend every service at the mission church which eventually would mean attending not just the Sunday morning service but also the Sunday evening service and the mid-week Wednesday evening prayer meeting. During the war years when gas was rationed, Ivan and Ethel and their now seven children would spend all day Sunday at the church so they could be in attendance at both the morning and the evening services. Ethel would pack a lunch and the children would play inside and outside the church during the afternoon. Son Ivan had six sisters and when his sixth sister Mary was born in 1940, he cried because he did not have a brother. But God was good and finally his brother James was born in 1946.

Father Ivan continued his very active involvement in the Columbia mission church and was ordained by lot as a pastor in 1955 at age forty-nine. Thus was his grandfather's prophecy fulfilled that Ivan would be a preacher some day. Thirteen years later in 1968 he was ordained to the role of bishop. Although he always held to his conservative convictions, his leadership was one of gentleness and kindness.

How did Ethel handle her early call that someday she might be a missionary in a foreign country? When Eastern Mennonite Mission was looking for persons to go to Tanganyika in the mid-1930s, someone approached Ivan and suggested that he and Ethel should offer themselves as possible candidates for missionary service in Tanganyika. But they felt that they needed to wait for a call from the mission board leadership. Ethel's sister Alta Barge, six years younger, had married J. Clyde Shenk in 1935 and after a year of Bible training at EMC, they sailed for Tanganyika in 1936. At the farewell service at the New York harbor, father Witmer Barge had a prayer for his daughter Alta and J. Clyde Shenk. In his prayer, he said that he had thought that his daughter Ethel might someday be a missionary to a foreign country but he now saw that his dream was fulfilled in his daughter Alta. When Ethel heard her father's prayer, it caused inner pain as she struggled with the thought that perhaps she had not followed the call that she had felt as a child that she might someday be a foreign missionary. Years later Ethel shared this burden with her sister Alta and she was assured by Alta that God had used Ethel in her faithful service in mission at the Columbia Mennonite mission church.

This was the spiritual atmosphere into which the children of Ivan and Ethel Barge Leaman were born. Church and mission were of paramount

importance in their lives and this was transmitted to the children. As a young child, son Ivan had a temper and he would fight with his sisters. When he had one of his temper tantrums, he remembers that his mother made him sit on the front porch until he calmed down. During a regular Sunday morning service at the Columbia Mennonite mission church when Ivan was seven years old, the pastor C.Z. Martin preached a sermon on the five wise and the five foolish virgins. He ended his message with an invitation for persons to accept Christ. Ivan felt very convicted of his need to respond to this invitation and after the service ended, Ivan went to his father and said he wanted to accept Jesus. This surely made his parents happy and Ivan remembers his mother saying that, after his decision, she saw a big change in his behavior. Ivan was encouraged to tell his Locust Grove Mennonite School teacher, Miss Grace Lefever, of his decision. Ivan remembers how nervous he was to tell her. Many years later at the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the school, Ivan had the opportunity to speak to Grace Lefever who was at the anniversary. She remembered with fondness the time when Ivan had come to her as a seven year old little boy to tell her that he had accepted Jesus into his heart.

Following Ivan's decision, one by one his sisters also would make their decision to accept Jesus. After a period of instruction, this was followed by baptism. This also included the wearing of plain clothing. Ivan's first suit was a plain coat with knickers and black stockings. His sisters wore the covering and their dresses were plain with a cape.

When Ivan was about nine years old, he awoke from his sleep in the early morning hours. This time Ivan had the strong overwhelming conviction that God was calling him to be a missionary. Ivan did not have peace until he got out of bed and went downstairs to find his mother alone in the kitchen, his father

having already gone on to his work. With tears Ivan told his mother of his conviction and the call that he was to be a missionary. She heard her young son's words and then said that this was a very special call and that it was something that Ivan could keep in his heart and that he did not need to tell



About 1944 – Outside Columbia church, Ivan and Ethel Leaman with their four oldest daughters in plain dresses and Ivan with a plain suit, knickers and black stockings

anyone else. She surely would have shared this with Ivan's father. So as the years went along, Ivan did not tell anyone else of this calling. When other boys told of what they wanted to be when they grew up, Ivan would have been embarrassed to say that he was called to be a missionary. So he kept this in his heart.

Ivan from an early age had a strong inner sense that God had a plan or purpose for his life, even believing that God had planned whom he would marry. He remembers asking his mother how he would know which girl God had chosen for him to marry. She assured Ivan that God would show him whom God had chosen for him to marry. From an early age Ivan had a strong anticipation for marriage and when there was much preaching about the "end times" particularly after Israel became a state in 1948, Ivan didn't want the world to end before he was able to marry. Also, Ivan took hope in the simple belief that the world would not end until he had fulfilled God's call for him to be a missionary.

As the years rolled along and Ivan was approaching high school age, he developed the idea that he could fulfill his calling by becoming a missionary doctor. Perhaps he was influenced by reading the "Jungle Doctor" books. Ivan recalls that when he entered Lancaster Mennonite School as a freshman, he wrote down that he had the desire to become a doctor. He did not write down that he had a call to be a missionary. When Ivan told his father of his desire to become a medical doctor, his father expressed surprise that his son had set his aim so high because there were no one else in the family who had ever sought to become a doctor. There were two other boys in Ivan's high school class who also had aspirations to become doctors. It was most interesting that these three classmates, Virgil Stoltzfus, Milton Good and Ivan Leaman, who together graduated from LMS in 1950, all ended up as students in the same class at Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia. These three young doctors also served together as interns at Lancaster General Hospital from 1958-1959.

Ivan began medical school at Hahnemann in the fall of 1954. There were always some beginning medical students who decide after starting medical school, that it was not for them and they drop out. That was true for some beginning students in Ivan's medical school class and it was almost true for Ivan. In his first year of medical school during the first weeks he developed acute anxiety and one day he made a sudden trip back to Lancaster by train where his father met him. Ivan shared his anxiety and after some wise counsel from his parents, he returned to medical school the next day. During the

following months Ivan continued with anxiety and unease about whether he should stay in medical school even though he was making good grades and was in the upper ranks of his class. Then one day Ivan got a note from Eastern Mennonite Mission reporting that his Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta Shenk had directed that \$50 of their missionary support should be sent to their nephew in medical school in Philadelphia. That was like a sign from God that He had placed in the hearts of Ivan's uncle and aunt in far-away Tanganyika in East Africa to think of their nephew in medical school. Sending a gift of \$50 was a tremendous amount of money from a missionary allowance. But it was not the money as much as Ivan seeing this as a direct sign from God that He still had His calling on his life, that he was "born for a purpose"! That was a turning point for Ivan with no turning back!

Ivan had started dating Mary Ellen Eby during his third year in college at Franklin and Marshall. Mary Ellen grew up on a farm east of Strasburg. Her father, Lloyd Eby, had a small dairy farm and was ordained by lot as a pastor at Stumptown Mennonite Church in 1943 at age thirty-one. He had only eight years of education but he became a student of the word and became a very effective preacher and also active as an evangelist. After dating Mary Ellen for some time, Ivan told her of his call and his desire to be a missionary doctor. Mary Ellen told Ivan that she always had interest in missionaries and had clipped the stories of missionaries from the church papers and pasted them into a scrapbook. She did not have a personal call to be a missionary but she was affirming of Ivan's calling and his goal to become a doctor and she was

supportive in every way. They were married in the middle of Ivan's third year of medical school, and in addition to working in a clerical job at a pharmaceutical firm in Philadelphia, Mary Ellen took evening classes in medical stenography. She loved the big medical words derived from Latin. Over the



*Intern Group of Lancaster General Hospital, 1958-1959
Standing, left to right – Richard Ulrich, Joseph Knepper, Virgil Stoltzfus, John Bowman. Seated, left to right – Ivan Leaman, Milton Good, John Kreider, Veronica Cankar, Albert Wolbach, Norman Lewis*

years Mary Ellen was always by Ivan's side and helpful in many ways as a wife and mother of their children and gave oversight to the day-to-day financial operation of the Mennonite mission hospital in Somalia. She trained a young Somali to do that work which he took over when they left the field in 1969. Ivan often said that he could not have done his work as a medical missionary doctor without Mary Ellen by his side.

After completing medical school and graduating in 1958, Ivan began the year of internship in Lancaster General Hospital. That was a good year for preparation for medical missionary work. In those days the interns did a lot of lab work at night when they were on call. They even did the cross-matching of blood for emergency blood transfusions. So Ivan was able to do blood transfusions in Somalia to save the lives of women in situations of blood loss during a complicated delivery. During that year of internship, Paul Kraybill, the overseas director for Eastern Mennonite Mission, had arranged to meet Ivan and Mary Ellen. As Ivan recalls, it was during the several days of the Annual Mission Board Meeting which was at Mellinger Mennonite Church that year when Paul Kraybill arranged to meet Ivan and Mary Ellen at the Joe Myer's Restaurant on Lincoln Highway East. There were more visits including meeting at the Eastern Mennonite Mission headquarters in Salunga. They were being asked to consider going to Somalia to help open a new hospital in southern Somalia in a town called Margherita, the Italian name for the town known by the Somalis as Jamama.

To go to Somalia was a completely new thought for this young couple. In Ivan's mind he had always thought they might be asked to go to Shirati in Tanganyika where there was an established Mennonite hospital. They knew nothing about Somalia. Then signs began to appear that suggested that they ought to consider Somalia as a call for them. One day in one of the doctor's lounges, Ivan picked up a magazine, probably either *Life* or *Look*. In this magazine there was a pictorial article about the Somali people, describing them as one of the most handsome races in the world. Mary Ellen was working in a clerical job at Millersville College and one day one of her co-workers mentioned hearing a speaker talking about Somalia. This co-worker did not know that they had been asked to consider going to Somalia as medical missionaries. It was likely that the speaker was Mr. Modricker, a missionary with Sudan Interior Mission (S.I.M.) on furlough from Somalia. To have these two incidents occur so close together led Ivan and Mary Ellen to believe that God had arranged for these two signs. They now knew that God was calling them to Somalia.

Ivan finished his one-year internship by the end of June 1959. Mary Ellen was expecting their first child in September so they made their plans to leave for Somalia in January 1960 by ship from New York. Mary Ellen delivered Peter John on August 24, 1959. Ivan stayed on working at Lancaster General for an additional five months after his internship. The surgeons at LGH said that Ivan needed to be prepared to do some surgery in Somalia so one of the OB-GYN doctors allowed Ivan to do a C-section under his guidance. Other doctors supervised his doing other surgeries such as hernia repairs and he even was guided in doing a prostatectomy.



Uncle Clyde Shenk preparing boxes for shipment with Mary Ellen and Ivan's sister Mary helping to pack

With Mary Ellen working after their marriage and with Ivan and Mary Ellen being very frugal in their spending, they had only about \$3,000 of medical school debt. By the end of Ivan's internship that debt was completely erased. This young couple, Mary Ellen at age twenty-three and Ivan at age twenty-seven, were able to leave for Somalia without financial debt.

Ivan and Mary Ellen knew that they were going to a Muslim country. Orie Miller was the first overseas secretary for Eastern Mennonite Mission and he was the one who had sensed that EMM should begin a mission in Somalia. He had said that work in Muslim Somalia may require many years of mission work before any visible results. Paul Kraybill had talked about a "Theology of Presence." So this young couple went with that understanding. Ivan also had a sense that they might be called to suffer and in his messages that he gave before they left for Somalia, he often used these words from I Peter 5:10 as a benediction at the end of a service: *"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."* (KJV)

Chapter 2

(1960)

There was a farewell service for Ivan and Mary Ellen with their infant son Peter John at Stumptown Mennonite Church on Sunday evening, January 17, 1960. There was a very large crowd of relatives and friends overflowing the church sanctuary that evening. Ivan and Mary Ellen shared their testimony and Uncle Clyde Shenk had the message. Ivan and Mary Ellen left their homeland on January 21, 1960, from New York City harbor. Again, a very large group of relatives and friends had come by bus to show their support with words of love, singing hymns, offering prayers and finally farewell embraces with tears. As the boat slowly pulled away from the dock, pictures were taken. The ship passed the Statue of Liberty and then entered the vast Atlantic Ocean, headed east, not to see land again until January 28, when there was a stop at Santa Cruz at the Canary Islands off the coast of West Africa.

Ivan and Mary Ellen wrote their first letter from the ship, the *S.S. Independence*, but were not able to mail this letter until reaching land many days later. [Note: these letters were preserved by Mary Ellen's parents and came into the possession of Mary Ellen years later.]

January 21 – Ivan: “*We are writing in the lounge with the constant sensation of rocking [like a sideways rocking chair because my chair faces the stern]. We each took a tablet [Dramamine] to prevent seasickness.*” Mary Ellen: “*Our stewardess is very accommodating. She brought us ice to keep Peter John's bottles cold. She allowed us to use her hot plate to sterilize the bottles for formula. I am washing out the diapers by hand and hanging them on the railing in the passage way. Some man was asking Ivan a few questions: why the non-wearing of ties and the little white caps. Then later when he saw us, he said, 'No nylon stockings. No. no.' I guess we don't make sense to him! We are spending time reading. Ivan is reading 'The Ugly American' and says it is very exciting.*”

January 22 – Ivan: *“Peter John seems to be thriving on sea travel. He is so good and content. Today we had a drill in which we all put life preservers on and went to the designated life boat stations. Peter John really caused a sensation when we showed up with him also in a life preserver. He looked so funny and cute!”* Mary Ellen: *“I’m reading ‘Sunlight and Shadow.’ I’m enjoying Evelyn Bauer’s book very much; it is appropriate for a time like this.”*

January 23 – Mary Ellen: *“Yesterday we met Roy and Diane Hertzog, the other missionary couple. They have been appointed for a five year term by ‘The Voice of Tangiers’ a Christian radio broadcast. Today Ivan and Roy Hertzog played ping pong and then all four of us played shuffleboard.”*

Ivan: *“Most of the social activities of the boat we do not care to participate in. Mr. Colatta, the assistant chief steward, said to me one day, ‘Doctor, don’t you do anything?’ This was after I declined to participate in a bingo game.”*

January 24 – Mary Ellen: *“Our first Sunday at sea.... We were among eighteen who attended Sunday School this morning. Mr. Adair from New York, touring with his wife had a short message. Ivan has been asked to do that next Sunday.”*

January 25 – Ivan: *“What a balmy day! Many people were out on deck and some went swimming in the pool. I played shuffleboard for several hours in the sun and tonight my face is very red and somewhat sore.”*

January 26 – Ivan: *“We are making many interesting acquaintances. Many are curious about our profession. We are surprised how tolerant and appreciative everyone seems to be...in view of the fact that most of our fellow passengers are Catholic and know that we are going to Italian Somaliland.”*

January 27 – Mary Ellen: *“This traveling is great. We’re meeting many interesting people and eating some interesting food. Ivan likes to try the Italian dishes...but I stick pretty much to the American food. He has a ravenous appetite. He is now reading ‘The Call of the Minaret.’”* [Note: This book was written by Kenneth Craig. In the next to last chapter, *The Call to Interpretation*, Ivan had underlined some of the concepts that they carried to Somalia. Here are some of the concepts: *“Whereas, the ultimate speech of God for Islam is prophecy, ‘sealed’ as the phrase goes, or accomplished, in Muhammed, the speech of God for the Christian is personality—a human life in all the revealing situations, the Person of Jesus Christ in the flesh. ‘Thou shalt call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted, is “God with us.”’ The Christian mission in the world is this task of interpretation. Our duty is to carry over the Word*

which God has uttered, to be the translators of His speech...This interpretation involves a person-to-person relationship...Institutions may provide the framework...But the progress or the contagion of the Kingdom of God is 'soul by soul.' It is our life-task to make bridges into their minds."]

January 28 – Ivan: *"We are now sailing among the Canary Islands. We were given a tour of the 'Bridge' where the steering takes place. We learned that most of the steering is done automatically by a gyroscope."*

The next preserved letter was started by Mary Ellen on February 1, 1960, while riding on a train from Naples, Italy and [crossing the boot of Italy] was completed in the hotel room after arriving in Brindisi, Italy where they would be boarding another ship, the *MV Africa*, which took them on the last leg of their ship travel to Mogadiscio, Somalia. Mary Ellen recounts some of the events after first seeing land at the Canary Islands where they were able to get out of the boat and do a bit of touring. They had also stopped at the Rock of Gibraltar and Palermo, Sicily, for a brief tour at each place before disembarking at Naples, Italy. Mary Ellen reports that Ivan had preached on board the *S.S. Independence* on Sunday, January 31, at the protestant worship service and was introduced in the bulletin as the Rev. Ivan B. Leaman, M.D. There is no record of what the sermon was that Ivan preached.

Mary Ellen refers to two individuals who were very helpful to them in Italy. Not knowing Italian created difficulty, but in Naples a Miss Dunbar, an experienced American missionary returning to Austria, was very helpful since she knew Italian. As they were sitting in the Naples train station, there was one very vivid memory. Miss Dunbar informed them that there was interesting conversation around them. Persons observing them were confused. Seeing Ivan with his Mennonite plain suit, they assumed he was a Catholic priest but who was this woman with him with a small child? And she was not wearing a wedding ring! Ivan became very concerned that they were giving a wrong testimony. Ivan found a jewelry shop in the train station and two platinum wedding rings were purchased and worn until they reached Somalia and then the rings were removed.

They took the train from Naples to Brindisi and there an Italian-American came to their rescue and offered his help to this inexperienced young missionary couple. This man was either an atheist or agnostic. He was gruff in his speech but very kind in his offer to help with getting their luggage unloaded and finding a hotel. *"He told Ivan to keep his mouth shut and let him do the talking, because if Ivan did the talking he'd have to pay too much. He brought us to this very nice hotel...We marvel at the people God uses to help us."*



Peter John with party hat on M.V. Africa



S.S. Independence

In Brindisi Ivan had to see that their large shipment of boxes and barrels got unloaded from the train and loaded onto the next ship, the *MV Africa*, which would take them through the Suez Canal to the east coast of Africa on the last leg of their journey to Somalia.

Mary Ellen's next letter was written in stages, first on February 9 and 10 while sailing on the Red Sea approaching Aden, then on February 11 in the port of the Gulf of Aden. This young couple was inexperienced in travel and the mid-eastern culture of bargaining. Mary Ellen wrote of the day spent in the custom-free port of Aden where one could purchase items at a good discount with the proper knowledge of bargaining. They also did not know that one also needs to bargain for a taxi and the guide that comes along to help the tourist find the items one desires. Ivan had a desire to purchase a pair of binoculars which he did after some bargaining. When it came time to pay the taxi driver and guide, the amount seemed excessive and Ivan said, "*That's too much money. I'm not rich.*" To which the guide replied, "*I know you're not rich. I charge the rich a lot more.*" We fell into the trap. When they got back on the ship and shared of the day's experience, they discovered that Ivan had paid far too much for the binoculars and far too much for the taxi and guide. One fellow passenger laughingly told Ivan that he was a human benefactor! Mary Ellen said to Ivan, "*I think the mission board should give all prospective missionaries a rigorous course in bargaining. Ha!*"

On February 11 Mary Ellen also wrote: "*Ivan is observing Peter John with fatherly pride. During his waking hours he is quite content with entertaining himself. If he tires of his toys, he tries a few acrobatic stunts, such as turning over, and wiggling that little back side of his in the most interesting fashion.*"

On February 12 she wrote: "*Hurrah! We are in the homeward stretch.*" They are now seeing the coast of Somalia and getting a closer view through

the binoculars, seeing fishing villages along the coast. On that day Peter John was invited to a children's party, held in the first class. Mary Ellen took him in a little white suit and he was given a little pointed party hat. A picture was taken of Peter John with his parents sitting on deck chairs. [The parents did not know this would be the last good picture of this happy little boy with his adoring parents.]

On February 14, at 4:00 a.m. the ship docked in the Mogadiscio harbor and this missionary couple needed to disembark by being lowered by a basket into a smaller boat which took them to the land. Wilbert Lind and Omar Eby were in the small boat to welcome them. Shortly after landing and getting their feet on the ground, they were in their first church service with about thirty-five persons, which included about ten Somalis. Besides missionaries, the other white persons attending were persons from an oil company and USAID. The newly arrived couple were given lodging in the guest house with Omar Eby. They had dinner with Wilbert and Rhoda Lind and then, at an evening informal prayer meeting, they shared their testimonies.

In Mary Ellen's February 15 letter she outlined the plans for the next months. After a few weeks in Mogadiscio, they would be moving to Mahaddei for four months of language study under the direction of Carl Wesselhoeft. They would be living in a small garage apartment.

In her February 28 letter Mary Ellen wrote: *"On Friday we finally got our drums, trunks, etc. from customs. Now we're in the process of unpacking them and sorting the items. Some things we will be taking with us to Mahaddei while the others will go to Margherita. Peter John celebrated his six month birthday this past week and to top it all, he cut his first tooth. He contents himself well in his stroller. He sits alone for a few seconds but finds it much more fun to let himself fall back into the bed. Such an action produces quite a few giggles."*

In her March 6 letter she writes that on March 1, *"We took the dusty 260 mile trip to Margherita."* This trip included the Linds. *"Our purpose for going was so that Ivan and the building committee could discuss the present hospital plans and make the necessary revisions which were many... we also got to see our lovely house. It's very nice and seems so spacious in comparison to the living quarters we have had during the last three years."*

The March 6 letter was on a Sunday and Ivan had been asked to preach in the Mogadiscio worship service. He brought a message "The Prayer of the Penitent" using Psalm 51. Mary Ellen wrote: *"During the sermon Peter John up shucked and showered me and himself. I was rather stunned and*

embarrassed. An American lady lost no time in coming to my rescue and we left the place in a hurry. Peter John has not been up to par during the past week. It's probably a combination of teething and the hot weather."

The next day on Monday, March 7, Ivan and Mary Ellen and little Peter John made the trip to Mahaddei about seventy miles north of Mogadiscio where they were to begin language study. But suddenly their concern was focused on Peter John who began to have diarrhea. When the diarrhea became worse on Tuesday, the milk formula was stopped and he was started on Lytren, a Mead Johnson preparation of electrolytes in powder form to which was added water. However, by Wednesday, March 9, when the diarrhea was not stopping and he had a slight fever, his doctor Daddy began an antibiotic and some fever medication but when there was no improvement, and when by evening there was a marked change for the worse, Ivan knew Peter John needed IV fluids so they headed to the nearest hospital fifteen miles away at Villagio Duca [Johar was the Somali name]. This hospital was a small private Italian hospital in the middle of an Italian sugar plantation. Ivan met the Italian doctor and asked if IV fluids could be given to their little son. The doctor indicated that giving IV fluids was not possible but offered fluid given under the skin, called hypodermoclysis. After this treatment was started, the doctor and the two Catholic nun nurses left the hospital to go to their beds leaving Ivan and Mary Ellen with their very sick son all alone in the hospital. There were no other patients in the hospital.

Then began a very painful all-night vigil for Ivan and Mary Ellen. The fluid given under the skin gave no relief and severe diarrhea continued and little Peter John was now whimpering as his body became weakened with dehydration. He was so thirsty and cried until he was given Lytren but the diarrhea continued like a spigot. The parents began to lose hope as they saw their little son crying and in such misery and they began to think that it would be better for him to die and be free from his pain and misery.

Ivan went out of the hospital and looked at the beautiful stars in the African sky. He prayed and wondered, where was God in this painful time? He and Mary Ellen knelt by the bed of their son and realized that their son was dying unless there would be a miracle. They wondered, should they take their son to a hospital in Mogadiscio, sixty miles away. They did not know if little Peter John would survive that trip and also they did not know if IV treatment was available in Mogadiscio. Ivan had just finished his internship in Lancaster General Hospital where he had learned how to make a small

incision near the ankle and find a small vein to insert a plastic tube by which IV fluids were administered to small infants. They were alone in this hospital and had no vehicle. Their only hope was to find a driver to take them the fifteen miles to Mahaddei where one of the missionaries could drive them to Mogadiscio. Without knowing Italian or Somali language, Ivan was able to convey their desperate desire to the Italian doctor and nurse, who were awakened from their sleep. A vehicle and Somali driver took Mary Ellen to Mahaddei. She kissed her little son good bye, believing that he might not be alive when she returned.

David Miller, a widower from Kansas, who had come to Somalia as a builder, provided the needed transportation with a pickup. He and Mary Ellen returned to Villagio Duco to find that Peter John was still living. So at 6:00 a.m. with David Miller as the driver, Ivan and Mary Ellen, with their severely dehydrated son lying on their laps, began the rugged sixty mile trip to Mogadiscio. They wondered, would their weakened son survive the trip. But as they observed the kicking of his legs and his crying, their spirits were raised and they wondered, "Perhaps God is going to perform a miracle."

But when they reached Mogadiscio at 8:00 a.m. and sought out medical treatment in the private Rava Hospital used by the expatriate community, they met disappointment. They were told that it was impossible to give IV fluid to an infant. The Italian doctor and the Persian doctor both declared that such treatment was not possible. So Peter John was placed in a bed in the private hospital and given only oxygen. He lived four hours and died at 12:05 p.m. on March 10, 1960. Peter John entered a new life, a life which knows no pain or thirst. A cable was sent to Eastern Mennonite Mission with these words: PETER JOHN LEAMAN PASSED AWAY IN MOGADISCIO HOSPITAL. SEVERE DIARRHEA. I PETER 5:10.11. The cable was received by Esther Kraybill at 3:40 p.m. at Salunga and this word was conveyed to the EMM staff at the Ephrata Mennonite Church where the large annual mission meeting was in session. Both parents of Ivan and May Ellen were present at that meeting and they were called out to receive the sad news. The message was given to the large audience and many prayers ascended to heaven asking that God would bring comfort to the grieving missionary couple in Mogadiscio.

There was a funeral for Peter John the next day on Friday, March 11, in the Mennonite chapel with Wilbert Lind giving the message. Peter John was clothed in white and laid in a small wooden box and buried in the small protestant cemetery in Mogadiscio, next to the grave of Evelyn Wesselhoeft,



At the graveside service, Ivan and Mary Ellen are standing with the support of Leota Wesselhoeft and Bert Lind who led the service

another “little missionary” who had died in infancy two years before. That afternoon Ivan and Mary Ellen taped a message to their families in America. Their words gave testimony that God was upholding them in their sorrow. Mary Ellen later wrote an article for the *Missionary Messenger*

entitled “A Little Child Shall Lead Them.” In the closing paragraphs she wrote: *“My little son, you have gone from us to return no more. We no longer see your sweet smiles. Although we no longer hear your baby sounds, I know your voice is being heard in heaven’s choir. We called you our little lamb, but now you have been gathered with other little lambs into the arms of the Good Shepherd. I thank God that He not only chose me to be a mother, but that He chose me to be your mother, Peter John.”*

How were Ivan and Mary Ellen able to continue in their missionary journey after such a difficult beginning? They would say that they felt the prayers of many persons. Ivan’s mother wrote that on the day of Ivan and Mary Ellen’s painful ordeal of seeing their little son reach the end of his life, she had felt a strong urge to pray for them. This was a sign that God knew of their anguish and He had placed that call for special prayer into the heart of Ivan’s mother at that very time. That was a reassuring word for Ivan and Mary Ellen to hear. Ivan and Mary Ellen wondered if God’s purpose for Peter John’s birth was fulfilled in his six and a half months of life. They wrote these words in a letter to their friends in the States: *“We had great hopes for our little boy...we thought of the times when he, with the unprejudiced love and faith of a child would touch lives we could not reach. We cannot foresee the future results of ‘God’s mysterious ways’. Perhaps lives will be touched for good by the plucking of our little bud that would not have been touched had this bud blossomed to maturity.”* [As Ivan was writing this memoir, David Shenk recalled and related to Ivan that two of the male clinic helpers at Mahaddei working with nurse Fae Miller had become

believers and requested baptism. At the time of baptism they said that they wanted to take Christian names. The one chose Peter and the other chose John. They were told that these were the names of the little son of Ivan and Mary Ellen Leaman who had died after becoming ill at Mahaddei. What a wonderful affirmation of God's goodness in placing in the hearts of these young men these Biblical names.]

Does grief ever go away? Ivan and Mary Ellen would say that the pain and sorrow never completely go away. Ivan says that for years he carried the feeling of guilt that he was not able to save his son. Mary Ellen in her 80s is still moved to tears when she thinks of Peter John, particularly at the anniversary dates of his birth and his death. [Writing of the life and death of Peter John for this memoir was very difficult and there was delay in the writing of this painful journey.]

The first letter written by Ivan and Mary Ellen after the death of Peter John and the recorded tape done on the day of the funeral were received in the States in early April. The letter and tape described in great detail the illness and death of Peter John. Over the next weeks they received over 160 expressions of sympathy by air form letters and greeting cards from their family and friends and from many persons they did not know. These letters continued to come weeks after the death of their little son Peter John. These letters were very meaningful, not only for the words but for the realization that many were praying.

On April 9 Ivan and Mary Ellen traveled to Mogadiscio with Carl Wesselhoeft. The road, although macadam, was very rough with pot holes and the seventy-five miles took three hours. They had business to take care of but there was also time to go to the beach for relaxation. Also there was a visit to the cemetery to see the grave of Peter John and see the cross that had been placed there with the dates of his birth and death. Flowers had been planted. Mary Ellen wrote: *"Whenever we go to Mogadiscio, my mind is flooded with sweet memories of our first weeks there with Peter John. Being in the guest house especially recalls those times, happy times we had together. And then I see the empty crib, no little head bobbing up and down in it. I just long for the thrills he used to give us."* There was a letter from Ira Buckwalter, treasurer at EMM, reporting of contributions that had been given in memory of Peter John. Ivan had written to Paul Kraybill suggesting that a memorial fund could be established that could be used to buy certain medical equipment.

Somali language study continued with Carl Wesselhoeft as the teacher and this also included visits to the village with the nurse Helen Landis. This



*Language study with Mary Gehman
Teacher: Carl Wesselhoeft*



*Learning language with the help of
Helen Landis, RN while sipping tea
at Mahaddei*

gave opportunity to practice using the language. Sometimes this resulted in being entertained with sitting down and enjoying the very sweet spicy Somali tea. On Sundays there was worship in the Wesselhoeft house with up to ten Somalis in attendance. Ivan shared in the preaching which was interpreted for the Somalis.

In the April 16 letter Ivan wrote of observations of some Somali practices in treating illnesses, particularly in children. They would burn areas of the body where they believed the sickness was. One day Ivan followed a Somali man to watch him butcher a goat and he was surprised to see that when he cut the throat of the goat, a woman carrying a child placed the child under the flowing blood so that the child was covered with blood from head to foot. Apparently the child was sick and this was an attempt to find healing.

Mary Ellen wrote about the experience of how to manage the requests that came from persons who would come to the door, looking very poor and pathetic and pleading for money. The chief of the tribe didn't want them to be doing this, begging for something. Sometimes giving an empty can would satisfy. Ivan writes about the mosquitoes being a big problem but getting nets to sleep under was helpful. There was malaria in the village. The missionaries took an antimalarial pill called Daraprim which was taken weekly. In those years that drug was very effective in preventing malaria before drug resistance developed.

Ivan wrote about the different sounds in Somalia, birds chirping during the day, at night there was the hyenas weird cry and the grunting of the hippos near the river. One night Ivan was awakened by a steady humming noise like a motor running which was very puzzling. To his surprise the next day he was told it was the noise of many frogs. Several times during the daytime, he heard a very loud noise of intermittent crescendo and when he

opened the door he could not determine what this strange noise was. Finally he discovered it was the braying of a donkey.

In early May, Mary Ellen wrote a letter to friends about the experience of Peter John's illness and death. She typed thirty-eight individual letters [There were no copying machines in 1960]. She wrote: *"It was saddening to again relive each of these final experiences as I typed them over and over many times."* On May 8, Mary Ellen wrote a letter to her parents. She mentioned that Hershey and Norma Leaman would be coming to Somalia in the middle of the year. [They would be living at Margherita for a year covering for Victor Dorsch's furlough and also Hershey, as a trained hospital administrator, would be helping in the opening of the Margherita hospital.] Mary Ellen had an interesting request in that May 8 letter for items to be sent with Hershey and Norma's shipment. She wrote: *"I would like you to send my maternity dresses and perhaps one or two nursing bras size three & C. This is an act of faith really."* That faith was realized with the birth of a daughter to Mary Ellen eight and a half months later so she was already in the first weeks of pregnancy when she wrote that request in *an act of faith!*

Ivan wrote a letter long hand (three and a half pages) to his home congregation at Columbia also in early May. He wrote about the church which was meeting in Carl Wesselhoeft's house each Sunday morning. Ivan wrote that one of the reasons to meet in a house is that it would be easier for a Somali Muslim to come to a house for worship rather than to a chapel or church which would be forbidden for a Muslim. At Mahaddei for several years the missionaries met and not one Somali came. *"Then a few were brave and started coming and now about ten to twelve Somalis come quite regularly. In our preaching we need to be very careful that we do not offend. We dare not scoff at their Muslim religion because if the mullahs or Muslim holy men would find out, they would make trouble and drive us out of the country. So we need to quietly and patiently sow the seed."*

Ivan would alternate with Carl in preaching. Ivan of course would preach in English and the message was translated. Ivan wrote: *"It is very satisfying to preach to people for whom God's word is new. There are many rich treasures in the Bible and one feels this in a new way when one observes people hearing it for the first time. It is also satisfying to preach in a country which has a culture similar to Bible times. In Africa one sees many things that reminds you of Bible language---because much of Africa is primitive and its ways of doing things have not advanced much beyond that which is*

described in the Bible. One can see 'two women grinding at the mill' or the shepherd leading his flock to water.'

At Mahaddei in 1960 there were no indoor toilets in the missionary houses. One evening Mary Ellen called Ivan because she had seen a snake in the outdoor toilet. Ivan tried to kill the snake but it got away!

In early June, Ivan went to Mogadiscio with Carl for business and shopping and they were gone for two and a half days. Mary Ellen had chosen not to travel that bumpy road but she asked Ivan to buy potatoes which were very expensive since they were imported. This craving for potatoes was coming from her pregnancy. But Ivan returned from Mogadiscio without potatoes since there were none to be found. What a disappointment!

On June 12 Ivan wrote to his parents telling them of the happy news that Mary Ellen was expecting another little one with the due date of January 16. The plans were that they would go to Shirati for the delivery which would give Ivan an opportunity for hospital training at Shirati hospital under the direction of Dr. Lester Eshleman. Mary Ellen wrote a list of things that they wanted sent with Hershey Leaman's shipment. That included sending a crib.

On June 18 began the final exams in the Somali language learning. At the conclusion of the exams, the Leamans began the preparation for moving from the Mahaddei garage apartment to Mogadiscio. Carl Wesselhoefts would be leaving for the States on July 26. The Merlin Grove family would be arriving in the second week of July and would have a week with the Wesselhoefts for initiation to the work there. On June 26, Ivan preached his final sermon at Mahaddei. His message was on "Peace." For Sunday dinner there was a missionary 'community meal' which included camel burgers, mashed squash, dried corn, a salad made by Mary Ellen with tuna, gelatin and milk, and chocolate pudding and cake for dessert. There was a surprise box that came in the mail from Mary Ellen's parents with a can of 'salted nuts' which was the 'nicest gift'!

On June 26, Ivan wrote that they would be moving to Mogadiscio in two days and they would be staying in the guest house where Ivan Yost was living and managing. They were looking forward to Independence Day on July 1. *"This should be a great day for Somalia. Everybody is hoping that no one starts any riots, as has happened in the past when big crowds have gotten together for special demonstrations."*

The next letters were written on July 5, after the big day of celebration on July 1, the birth of the new nation of Somalia. There was a report of some riots which developed from a radical pro-Egyptian Somali political party.

It was reported that there were several deaths and fifteen to thirty injured in the rioting. On July 1, Ivan and Mary Ellen joined other missionaries in going to the national stadium where the new president, Aden Abdalla, rode in an open car and waved to the cheering crowd. The various units of police and army were paraded along with some military equipment. With uniforms added to the Somali's handsome and noble bearing, it was a very nice display. The thousands of Somalis gathered there would have felt much pride as they saw the display. The Somali people really dressed up for such occasions with very colorful dresses for the women and European suits and ties for the men. Ivan wrote: *"It's a far cry from the way the people of the bush dress. It hardly seems like the same Somalia. Given education and training I'm sure the Somalis could compete with the best of the world's intellect."*

The plans for Ivan and Mary Ellen had now changed. After an EMM deputation visit to Mogadiscio in August, they were now being asked to stay in Mogadiscio for a longer period of time while the Linds were on a leave in East Africa, from the middle of August until the middle of September. Ivan would assume responsibility at the mission headquarters and be in charge of the Sunday worship services. Mary Ellen was asked to teach Rhoda Lind's Sunday school class of children of American families who are living in Mogadiscio working with the US government and other international organizations. There would be English classes to teach and a bookkeeping class for Mary Ellen to teach. In a later letter Ivan said he enjoyed teaching the English class. On July 11 there were two boxes at the post office, one from Ivan's parents and one from Mary Ellen's parents. It only took one shilling (14 cents) for each box to clear customs! What a treat that was to open and find all the goodies packed carefully. Ivan Yost said that he was glad that they were living in the guest house with him for he would benefit also! There was confectioners sugar which Mary Ellen used to make the icing for Ivan Yost's birthday cake.

Ivan's July 18 letter reported the arrival of the Grove family early on a Sunday morning. *"Merlin brought the message only several hours after arriving. He is a gifted speaker...has a terrific sense of humor which I think is a valuable thing on the mission field."* Merlin gave his testimony of their call to Somalia at the Sunday evening prayer meeting held at the S.I.M. headquarters. They would be taking over the boarding school at Mahaddei with only a few days of orientation with the Wesselhoefts! The Wesselhoefts left on July 26 for their long awaited furlough.

In August a deputation from the States had arrived which was Paul Kraybill from EMM and joined by Donald Lauver and Amos Horst, bishops representing Lancaster Conference. There was a missionary conference which began August 9 and continued for four days. All the missionaries came together for fellowship. Ivan had one of the messages entitled, "The Effect of the Jesus Walk in the communities in which we serve." Mary Ellen led the singing for two of the days. A special memory that Ivan and Mary Ellen had of that visit was that Amos Horst asked to see Peter John's grave. That meant a lot to them. Amos shared that they had lost two little sons by death at a young age. He spoke very comforting words to them. The conference ended with communion and was a blessing to all.

The Victor Dorsch family left for Canada on August 22. In later letters there was an unusual story of how the mumps were brought from Canada to Somalia and then taken back to Canada. After arriving in Somalia, the Grove boys had the mumps. After the Dorsches arrived in Canada their son James got the mumps!

After the deputation was gone, the Linds left for vacation and Ivan became "acting director" in charge of the Mogadiscio work. This required many trips into the town to take care of business details. Ivan would leave the mission compound on the scooter and sometimes was gone for most of the day. There was a lot of responsibility on the shoulders of this young couple. They had English classes to teach and Mary Ellen had Rhoda Lind's bookkeeping classes to teach. They were in charge of Sunday services when Ivan was both preacher and chorister while Mary Ellen had Sunday school with the children. Also, on Sunday afternoon there was an Eritrean service of women and children and Mary Ellen would teach with an interpreter, sometimes using flannel graph. Ivan was also teaching a Bible class to three Somali young men.

The big event was to have Hershey and Norma Leaman arrive in late September. They had traveled by freighter to Aden and then they flew to Mogadiscio on a Saturday. Hershey preached the next day in the Mogadiscio chapel and Norma led the singing. Ivan and Mary Ellen were so pleased with the arrival of Hershey and Norma and looked forward to spending the next year together in Margherita. Mary Ellen wrote: *"It's very pleasant having them here with us, Hershey with his enthusiasm and Norma with her calm composed manner. We are enjoying so much being with them-a young couple near our age."* Hershey with his training in hospital administration would be helpful in getting the mission hospital started in Margherita. The reports were that the roof was now on but there was a lot of work still to be done

inside the hospital. It appeared now that the hospital would not be opened until February 1961 when Ivan and Mary Ellen returned from Shirati hospital after the delivery of their baby.

In early October Hershey traveled to Margherita where he was to meet the Linds. He and Bert Lind made a seventy mile trip to a nomadic tribe north of Gelib. Ibrahim Farah, a Somali Christian had invited the Mennonite mission to help his nomadic tribe to settle along the Juba River. Ibrahim had come to faith years before with the help of the S.I.M. mission in Aden. He was a very intelligent man who had traveled the world and spoke four to five languages. Now his desire was to see his nomadic tribe hear the gospel.

Bert and Rhoda Lind finally arrived back in Mogadiscio on October 10 after being gone for seven and a half weeks. Ivan and Mary Ellen were eager to make the move to Margherita and get settled into their house before heading for Shirati Hospital for Mary Ellen's delivery. October 17 was the last letter written that was mailed from Box 2, Mogadiscio. Ivan and Mary Ellen, with Hershey and Norma, were getting ready and packing to move to Margherita, leaving the next day. There was intensive shopping for food and other supplies. Mary Ellen wrote that the shopping for food items at one place was about \$100, buying items that would not be easily available in Margherita. There were thirteen persons at the table in the guest house since the Grove family, Mary Gehman and Anna Lutz had all come in to



Two Leaman couples move to Margherita



Camels on the move

Mogadiscio to see the two Leaman couples before they left. Daniel Stoltzfus had come up from Margherita with a truck which would be used for the move. There were only four people at the out-stations, Helen Landis alone at Mahaddei and Fae Miller, Bertha Beachy and David Miller at Margherita.

The two Leaman couples left on October 18 in the best riding vehicle the mission had, which was a VW van. There was some thought that Mary Ellen

might fly in an ICA* plane. But when that plane might fly to Chismaio was indefinite so she decided she didn't want to stay any longer in Mogadiscio.

The only previous time Mary Ellen had made the road trip to Margherita was the very dusty bumpy difficult trip they had made to Margherita with the Linds, the week before Peter John got sick. That memory was painful but she chose to go by land on this trip to Margherita which proved to be much better, not so dusty and not uncomfortable as that previous one and they arrived in mid-afternoon, after an only seven hour trip. She was so thankful the trip went so well. Dan Stoltzfus and Ivan Yost drove a large Chevrolet pick-up truck loaded with the many boxes of supplies.

The next letter written by Mary Ellen was on October 22 from Margherita. She was writing on the lovely dining room table made by David Miller. He also had made wonderful cabinets for the kitchen and the bathroom. She described the very nice six-room house and wrote: *"It is really a lovely place but sometimes I feel a bit uncomfortable living in such a fine house on the mission field. At first we were having great fun unpacking our things, but after a while we began to feel depressed, seeing all the worldly possessions we had. Again and again I felt twinges of sadness as I unfolded all those sweet little things we had brought along for Peter John. But then that sadness is mixed with a feel of expectancy as I tuck the tiniest of these little garments in a convenient place for the little newcomer."*



The doctor's house in Margherita

In one letter Ivan described their new location as follows: *"It is called the 'Paradise of Somalia' because it was here that the papaya, mango, banana, grapefruit and coconut groves flourish. The land along the Juba River was lush with vegetation and there were many banana plantations operated by rich Italians. There were many small farms along the Juba River which were owned by Bantu farmers."*

*ICA (International Cooperation Administration). In 1953, the Foreign Operations Administration of the USA was established as an independent government agency outside the Department of State, to consolidate economic and technical assistance on a world-wide basis. Its responsibilities were merged into the International Cooperation Administration (ICA).

After the arrival of the two Leaman couples, on a Friday the Margherita missionaries made a visit to a distant village where there was a small gathering of Swahili-speaking people. Later they had plans to go to two other villages. Hershey Leaman knew the Swahili language so he could immediately use that language to communicate. Ivan described the services at two villages on the other side of the Juba River. Hershey spoke in Swahili and the local leader in this small group translated Hershey's Swahili into the local tribal language.

In her letter Mary Ellen also wrote of a Christmas box that they had packed and mailed to the States. There were Christmas gifts for their families. This was the first Christmas of not being with their families in the USA.

Ivan's first letter from Margherita was written on October 26. He wrote: *"We have a very nice house, nicer than anything we have had since we are married. So spacious – kitchen, dining room, living room, three bedrooms, office and two enclosed porches. It is nice to have our mantel clock set up and hear its chimes. Mary Ellen is using her sewing machine for the first time."*

There was much preparation to get the hospital ready. Beds needed to be made and it was decided to make beds from pipes welded to make a bed frame. The bed part was made from heavy canvas with holes punched and metal rings inserted in the holes at the edges of the canvas and then rope was used to tie the canvas to the bed frame. Each wing of the hospital would be able to hold twelve beds and there were two private rooms. Wooden cabinets were made for bedside tables. Small wooden beds were made for newborn babies. The nursing station had nice cabinets and a writing desk. Patient records would be kept on standard size paper chart, as was common in the USA and held in sturdy metal chart holders. There was an operating room and central supply room for sterilizing and storage of surgical instruments. There was a room designated for x-ray but it would be some years before an x-ray unit was obtained. There was a drug room which was kept locked. The out-patient clinic was part of the hospital building which



Ivan helps Fae Miller examine a baby

had two main rooms, one for the nurse to see patients in a sitting position and cabinets for the supplies and medicines used in the clinic. There was an examining room with a table for the patient to lie down for the doctor examination. The out-patients waited outside on a patio.

Mary Ellen wrote about the ICA American neighbors who lived next to the mission compound. They were very helpful and attended the services that were held on the mission compound. She wrote also about the plans for the entire mission group at Margherita to go to Chismaio once a month for a day of relaxation. The beach and the ocean would provide some recreation. Hershey needed to go once a month to cash the mission check.

On November 3 Mary Ellen wrote a letter to each of the parents since Ivan was too busy. He was writing about six to eight business letters for which Mary Ellen was the secretary-typist. The exciting news was this. They had written to Ernie Krenzen, a pilot for MAF (Missionary Aviation Fellowship), to ask if MAF could fly to Chismaio. MAF had never flown to Somalia but the answer was that it appeared that the MAF plane would be able to fly to Chismaio to take Ivan and Mary Ellen to Nairobi where they would stay for about a week at the AIM (African Inland Mission) Rest Home and then they would fly to Shirati to await the delivery. They had received a letter from Dr. Lester Eshleman, welcoming them to Shirati. The date for flying from Chismaio was set for December 2, only a month away. This was all very exciting news. Mary Ellen was also busy sewing the curtains for the house. She was using her sewing machine in Hershey and Norma's house since there were no electrical receptacles installed yet in their house. She needed to sew in the evenings since electricity was available from 6:00-10:00 p.m. when the generator was running. Norma was helpful in giving advice on this sewing project.

The next letter Mary Ellen wrote was on November 11 and she used the typewriter with a carbon paper so there was a carbon copy to send to Ivan's parents.

Ivan wrote of his experience in his first delivery in Somalia which Mary Ellen typed in Ivan's words: *"After almost a year of not doing medical work I had been eager to get into that kind of work again and I certainly did this week. I told Fae (Miller) that I wanted to go along with her on one of her home delivery cases, particularly a first baby delivery since they are usually more difficult. I was interested in seeing the problem one faces in home deliveries. Fae had been telling me the difficult situations one needs to work under with poor lighting, poor delivery table (sagging bed) and many*

times poor cooperation from the patient's family and relatives. So this week I went with Fae on a delivery case, the wife of a rather important man in Margherita. The husband's father is the highest Muslim judge in the country; he is in Mogadiscio. The labor seemed to be progressing normally but slowly. Finally after making several return trips to the house in anticipation of delivery, we began to suspect some abnormal cause for the slowness to deliver. After a thorough examination I discovered that the head was in a posterior position. Finally I realized that I needed to put on a forceps to bring about delivery. This I did which proved to be very difficult. It was a mid-forceps delivery which ordinarily in the States only obstetricians do, and it is usually done with the patient in deep anesthesia. We had no anesthesia, of course. After the forceps were finally in position, we were then able to deliver the baby in about fifteen minutes. I think I'll always remember this first delivery in Somalia since it was the most difficult I ever needed to take care of. I am thankful the mother and baby seem to be doing fine. I've been helping in the clinic and have seen some unusual cases, things we rarely see in the States. One of our school boys developed tetanus following an injury in which a foreign body was embedded in his foot. We do not have the facilities to care for him so we took him to Chismaio. We are hoping and praying everything goes well with him since he is very sick. He's the son of the Margherita's postmaster. Do pray for us as we face many new and difficult experiences in the medical work." Note: In the following letter the word was that this ten year old school boy had died in the Chismaio hospital.

The next letter of November 15 tells of a frightening experience that Mary Ellen had. One night about 2:00 a.m. she awoke when she heard someone at the foot of the bed. She gently touched Ivan to awaken him and when he asked what she wanted, she squeezed his hand tightly and said "Tug," the Somali word for thief. After both lay quietly for awhile and did not hear anything, Ivan turned on the flashlight and saw that the thief had fled, but there was evidence that he had been searching in the hankie box on the bureau and in Ivan's pants pockets. The thief had entered the house by the back door which had been left unlocked by mistake! After that they made sure that the doors were locked at night.

The next letters on November 23 were hand written with Ivan writing to his parents and Mary Ellen to her parents. They both wrote about the migrant bugs that had invaded their house. Those bugs were not harmful but a nuisance and traveled in great droves entering and invading anything in their way including the houses. Sweeping away the bugs were soon replaced

by more bugs. The bugs eventually disappeared. The other big news was the fact that Hershey Leaman's shipment finally had arrived. In this shipment was the crib that Ivan and Mary Ellen had requested. Mary Ellen described it with these words: *"It is so very, very nice. We're delighted with it."* She also wrote: *"We're counting the days now until we leave and it seems the time can't come too fast for us. It's so very hot here now and we're looking forward to changing climates."*

Mary Ellen also wrote about the Thanksgiving meal which included a five pound canned ham which was a gift from the ICA wife. The meal would be a station event with everyone contributing something. The neighboring ICA family, Billye Sue Abercrombie and her husband would be joining the missionary group for this special meal. The other very special news was that the mission compound now would have a good supply of fresh water. Up to this point water had to be brought by barrel on a donkey cart and pumped up into another barrel from which the water flowed by gravity into the houses. All water was boiled for drinking. Recently the ICA had two wells drilled on the other side of the town and then connection was made to the mission and the ICA compound. This would become a great asset for the opening of the hospital. A large water storage tower was later built on the mission compound.

The last letter Mary Ellen wrote was on December 1, the day before they were due to fly from Chismaio. Mary Ellen had packed three suitcases, one each for Ivan and Mary Ellen and one for the new baby. She could hardly wait to get to Nairobi and wrote: *"I just want to plain do nothing for a while."* Most of the mission station wanted to come along to Chismaio to see them leave by MAF plane for Nairobi. The next letter Ivan wrote was from the AIM Rest Home. His description of leaving from the Chismaio airport on December 2 was most interesting and is worth quoting: *"We drove out to the airport which was just a shed with an adjoining grass roof where the passengers can wait. We could hardly see a landing strip. One Somali was there to guard the place. We waited at the little airport hardly trusting ourselves to believe that MAF would come. After only a half hour of waiting, we heard the faint drone of a plane. We saw a small plane—our hope that this would be MAF—and it was! Ernie Krenzen circled the field and landed. Then the Somali guard got all excited and said that the plane was supposed to circle the town of Chismaio to let the police know a plane was landing. So Hershey, Norma and I got into the plane with Ernie and we buzzed low over the town and then went back to the airport. Soon the*

police came and checked the plane. Everything seemed to be alright until they knew we were leaving the country. Then they said we had to go back into the town to have our passports checked and stamped. So we started out in the car. I had thoughts of our being detained for several hours. However, we met a car coming to meet us which hailed us to stop. They questioned us to what the plane was, what it was doing and who we were, etc. After we told them, they said everything was alright and we could go back to the plane and leave. Then we discovered that we were talking to the governor of Lower Juba. We were thankful that there is good relations between our mission and the local officials."

Ivan and Mary Ellen were strapped in the back seats of the four-seater MAF plane. Ernie Krenzen was a big man and before he took off he leaned over the controls and prayed for a safe flight. This was a comforting moment, particularly for Mary Ellen for whom this was her first plane ride. They discovered that Ernie was a member of The Defenseless Mennonites of Kansas. As the plane flew from the dry barren areas of Somalia and parts of eastern Kenya and reached the green fertile cultivated areas of Kenya, Ivan and Mary Ellen felt that they were flying over another world. Landing in Nairobi found them in a beautiful modern city.



Mary Ellen prepares to board MAF plane for Shirati

They stayed in the AIM Rest Home until December 10 at which time they would be flying 195 miles by MAF to Shirati, Tanganyika to await Mary Ellen to give birth to a new baby. The trip by road from Nairobi to Shirati was 350 miles and would have taken a day to travel by land. By air it was slightly more than an hour. In the AIM guest house they had opportunity to meet missionaries from other missions and could hear the joys and sorrows of other missionaries. To know that they were not alone in the task of missions and that they face many of the same problems united them in a real Christian fellowship. Mary Ellen enjoyed not having to cook and they found Miss Zaffke who managed the guest house to be a kind soul. Attending a large Baptist worship service on Sunday morning, they heard a very scholarly message from Tom Houston, the Scottish pastor. Ivan wrote

that the emotions of worshipping with a large group of Christians almost brought tears to his eyes. In the evening they went to the Nairobi Chapel to hear Dr. Wintler, a physician in Nairobi, bring a message. On Monday they went down town to shop in very modern buildings.

While in Nairobi, Ivan and Mary Ellen prepared a form letter to be sent to friends and relatives and congregations which gave a report of their first nine months in Somalia and thanking those who had given gifts, in particular gifts for the memorial fund for Peter John which had been established at EMM to provide money for equipping the mission hospital at Margherita. This was copied on one hundred and fifty air forms and mailed from Kenya.

Ivan and Mary Ellen flew by MAF plane to Shirati on December 10 as planned, which was a one hour and ten minute flight, much shorter than an all-day trip by road. They discovered that Shirati Hospital was a busy place at that moment because two surgeons from Nairobi were there doing specialized surgery, one was a plastic surgeon and the other an eye surgeon. They had flown into Shirati a few days before in a small plane. Mary Ellen wrote on December 14 that they were staying in the nurses' house with two nurses, Elva Landis and Anna Martin. Ivan was quickly involved in helping at the hospital, assisting Dr. Lester in an emergency operation for an ectopic pregnancy. He was enjoying getting back into medical activity again after being away from medical practice for about a year.

Ivan and Mary Ellen were staying some days relaxing down along Lake Victoria at a cottage near the leprosy colony. This cottage was Elsie Cressman's home since she was in charge of the leprosy work. The cottage was often used as a vacation place for missionaries. It was two miles from the Shirati compound. Daniel Wenger, who was in Pax service, was helping Elsie in the administrative part of the leprosy work. The leprosarium was a busy place with many of the leprosy patients working at various jobs even with their deformities. On Sunday there was a worship service at the leprosy colony. Daniel Wenger was the moderator. Ivan had a short message translated into Swahili and then into Luo. Lester Eshleman had the main message. This service was unusual in that the missionaries had a large part of the service. Usually the Africans are in full charge of the service. There were over twenty different tribes represented in this leprosy colony.

On December 23 they moved back to the nurses' home. On December 24 all the missionaries were eating together, a total of about twenty-eight persons. The meal was smoked ham (wild boar), candied sweet potatoes, fresh pies and carrots, jello salads, fruit cake and homemade candy. On Christ-

mas Day there was a special service in the Shirati church and Ivan was asked to sing in a male quartet with Maynard Kurtz, Donald Mellinger and Daniel Wenger. Mary Ellen wrote that she was happy for an aluminum chair she had borrowed because the seats in the church were cement and without backs. Mary Ellen received



Mary Ellen outside Shirati church

a Christmas card from the Marketing Research Department of Smith, Kline and French where Mary Ellen had worked in Philadelphia. In the card was a note that this year instead of exchanging gifts, they were giving to a special Christmas fund of \$200 which went to EMM for the hospital equipment fund in memory of Peter John. Ivan wrote: *"We still think of him very much and it brings sadness."*

Chapter 3

(1961)

On January 2, 1961, Ivan and Mary Ellen began the new year with both writing a letter to their families. They wrote about the visitors who had recently arrived at Shirati. One was the visit of Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta and their son Danny. Uncle Clyde and Elam Stauffer were headed for Bukiroba for a ministers meeting. The other most unusual guest the previous week was Dr. Irvin Moon, from Moody Institute of Science, who had done several Moody films on science. One was the “Red River of Life” showing the marvels of the red blood cells and giving the Old Testament spiritual application of “the life is in the blood.” He had flown in with Ernie Krenzen and the new MAF pilot, Gordon Marshall. Dr. Moon sat down and had tea with the missionaries and talked about his view of mission in these days. He was now making a world tour taking pictures for a new film.

Mary Ellen’s due date was January 16, but since Peter John had come early there was anticipation for the arrival of this new baby at any time. As the days went by and then past January 16, Ivan was becoming extremely anxious. He knew that the baby was breech and he was fearful that things might not go well with the delivery. He did not share that in his letters, but Mary Ellen was aware of his anxiety. Dr. Lester and Lois were very understanding and willing to stay close by Shirati, but did consider going to a nearby village where he could be called when Mary Ellen’s labor would begin.

On Saturday evening, January 21, Ivan and Mary Ellen were playing a word game, probably Scrabble, with the nurses. Then came bed time and at 1:20 a.m. Mary Ellen began with contractions and woke Ivan to say, “*I believe this is it.*” Ivan examined her and thought she was four centimeters dilated. Ivan called Elva Landis who was on call and she attempted to call Dr. Lester and Lois by telephone, but no connection was made so a messenger was sent by foot to call Dr. Lester. Meanwhile Ivan and Mary Ellen

started walking to the hospital. Shortly after arriving at the hospital and being put in a bed, Mary Ellen had a strong desire to push and she asked Ivan if it was okay and he said yes. Suddenly she said she felt something and on examination, one of the legs of the baby was seen so she was quickly put on the delivery table. While Dr. Lester was trying to get the instruments ready with his back turned, suddenly the baby was born with Ivan catching the breech. He described the delivery as *"greased lightning."* Lois helped Mary Ellen to sit up so she could see the new baby, which was a healthy seven pounds and two ounce beautiful baby girl born at 3:00 a.m. She was named Deborah Jean. The happy parents said she looked different than Peter John. Her nose was different and Ivan wrote that she had his ears and her hair was dark, not blond like Peter John. Ivan told Mary Ellen that he had adopted her as a sweetheart but said, *"Not to worry since the affection is on a different level."*

In the weeks before the labor and delivery, there was some thought that a C-section should be considered since Mary Ellen had a double uterus and it was a breech presentation. Ivan and Mary Ellen had talked about this. *"We both had the faith, although it probably wavered at times, that God would work everything out since He knew our situation and how very much we wanted another baby. So we really praise Him for dealing so graciously with us."* The plans were that they would stay at Shirati for two weeks, spend one week in Nairobi, and then the baby and Mary Ellen would return to Somalia by air. Hershey was driving to Nairobi and he and Ivan would be buying medical supplies to take back to Somalia.

Mary Ellen's letter of February 3 told of Ivan's busyness in the medical world. At times he was the only doctor on the Shirati station and did the medical rounds in the hospital. He also taught five class periods of anatomy in the nursing school because Alta Weaver was in Nairobi for medical tests. There were plans for Ivan to join a medical safari with Dr. Lester followed by a hunting trip which was one of Dr. Lester's enjoyments. Ivan would be gone for four days. Dr. Harold Housman would be the doctor on the station. Ivan's memory of this trip was that he went by motorcycle to Nyabasi, riding behind Leroy Petersheim. He joined the medical safari with Dr. Lester and then they went on the hunting safari which was a new experience for Ivan. [A zebra was shot and Dr. Lester offered the skin to Ivan which was used for years as a floor covering in their Strasburg home until discarded. This did not fit the image that the Leamans desired and their son David didn't like it.]

The next letter by Mary Ellen was written on Sunday, February 12 from the Nairobi guest house of the C.M.S. (Church Missionary Society). The A.I.M. guest house was full of their missionaries who were being evacuated from the Congo because of the civil war conflict there. Mary Ellen wrote that the C.M.S. guest house was very nice and they liked the atmosphere even though it had some of that British reserve. That letter also described that on February 10 Ivan and Mary Ellen with their little daughter Deborah *"left all the dear folks at Shirati. You should have heard the Shirati people exclaim over her (Deborah) when I had her ready for her plane flight. She looked like a little dolly."* They flew by MAF piloted by Gordon Marshall and landed

at Kisaka, where they were welcomed by Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta and had an overnight stay there. Velma Eshleman was living with the Shenks until her house was built. Naomi Smoker and Mary Metzler were also visiting at the same time so all the bedrooms and office were filled with guests and Clyde and Alta needed to sleep in a little trailer that they used for village evangelism.

In Ivan's letter to his family he described the landing of the MAF plane at Kisaka. The air landing strip was on a hill and Gordon Marshall had never landed there. As he approached to land, there was a strong tail wind that day and at the last moment he realized he was going too fast to land so he pulled up and came around to make another landing and all was well. Uncle Clyde, watching the approach to land the first time, said his heart was in his throat. The MAF pilots are well trained and are revolutionizing travel for missionaries.

After a very pleasant visit and overnight stay at Kisaka, they left Saturday afternoon at 4:40 p.m. to fly to Nairobi where Gordon Marshall had arranged for the Leamans to stay at the C.I.M. guest house. At the guest house they met a missionary couple who had fled the Congo by the name of Stam. He was a nephew of John and Betty Stam, missionaries who were martyred in China, whose story they had read while in high school. On Sunday morning they went to the Nairobi Baptist Church with their three-week



Newborn Deborah leaves Shirati by MAF plane

old little daughter. She behaved well and one man said: “you’d have thought she was a doll, for the little noise she made.” After the service, some people gathered to ooh and aah over Deborah and say how sweet she was. *“And indeed she is sweet! I just wish you could see her big, bright eyes; they’re so expressive just like Peter John’s were.”*

The next letter was written on February 17. Ivan and Hershey were busy buying medical supplies to take back to Somalia overland. Norma and Fae Miller had come along with Hershey to Nairobi for a brief break from Margherita. Ivan and Mary Ellen discovered that there was a problem in having Deborah put on Mary Ellen’s passport. There needed to be an official birth certificate from Dar es Salaam to do that. Mary Ellen was concerned that she may have to stay in Nairobi several weeks until they could get that birth certificate. However, they asked if she could fly to Mogadiscio with baby Deborah and go to the American Embassy there and have the passport amended there after getting a birth certificate from Dar es Salaam. The lady at the American Consulate said that a three week old baby would not try to overthrow the government! However, the Italian Consulate said that a hospital birth certificate from Shirati should be obtained and so Dr. Lester had that sent to Nairobi. All was set for Mary Ellen to fly to Mogadiscio with Deborah which she did on February 21 by Alitalia airlines. She was staying at the Lind’s and awaiting Ivan and Hershey to come from Margherita in a few days. At the last mission conference, she and Hershey had been selected to do an audit of the mission books.

On February 25 Mary Ellen wrote that she was awaiting the arrival of Ivan and Hershey and getting very eager to see her husband. She wrote that she was being treated like a queen by the Linds. Deborah was doing well but Mary Ellen felt that she was not getting enough breast milk and she began to supplement with Lactum, a milk substitute. Hershey and Norma, with Ivan, arrived in Mogadiscio on February 28. The two Leaman couples stayed in the newly renovated guest house. Ivan was busy purchasing more medical supplies in Mogadiscio. Mary Ellen wrote: *“He is extremely busy now with hospital affairs. It’s almost overwhelming but I’m sure God will provide the necessary wisdom and strength for this. We need your prayers and encouragement especially at this time.”*

On the evening of March 3, the Linds and the two Leaman couples all went to the beach for some recreation. There was a game of croquet on the beach and then some went into the water. Mary Ellen stayed on the beach and entertained Deborah with some solos. They were planning to leave for

Margherita late afternoon the next day, which was a Saturday, and arrive around midnight. Mary Ellen was feeling pity for the men who would need to prepare sermons for the next day.

The next letter said that they did not arrive until 2:45 a.m. on Sunday. It was a pleasant time to travel in the cool of the night but everyone was tired on arrival. Mary Ellen said their house was a mess when they arrived and they had the decision of hiring a house helper. David Miller had a house boy named Hassan but he was not very reliable and he would often



Hershey and Norma visiting with village friends

take off without warning. He wanted work and pled with Ivan and Mary Ellen to hire him so after some long talks they decided to hire Hassan.

Mary Ellen wrote a letter on Sunday, March 12. She wrote that the mission group would leave at 8:00 a.m. for a village Swahili service south of Jamama. Then there was an English service

on the mission compound at 11:00 a.m. for all who wished to attend which included at times Somalis and the ICA Americans. Then in the afternoon they would leave at 3:00 p.m. for another village service at Mofi where there was a boat crossing. This was where Tabitha lived. Then in the evening there was a short evening service for the missionaries and any Somalis who chose to come. Hershey and Ivan would alternate in speaking, with one doing the sermons for the village services and the other doing the 11:00 a.m. service. The following Sunday the order would be reversed. This meant that every Sunday both men would need to prepare a message. Hershey, knowing Swahili, could speak in that language in the villages and when Ivan spoke in English, Hershey would need to translate. This was a very busy Sunday. Mary Ellen said she chose not to attend the village services.

In this same March 12 letter Mary Ellen wrote of the sad feelings she had on the anniversary of losing Peter John the year before. She wrote: *"We do thank the Lord for His upholding power in this experience. We are so grateful for His goodness. He sent Deborah to us, yet the happiness she brings us is a very real reminder of the joy Peter John brought us, so I cannot forget the heartache of losing him."*

Mary Ellen wrote about the pleasures of opening boxes that were sent from her home. She mentions in particular the cereals, pretzels, nuts, canned chicken and ham as being especially appreciated. She described the busy activity of planning for the opening of the hospital in three weeks which will include an “open house” on March 30 with invitations to local officials and dignitaries. She was feeling the pressure of all the preparation and all the correspondence related to the medical work. In those days she did the typing for Ivan.

In the March 15 letter there was description of being invited to the Egyptian closing school program. They were treated well and given prominent seats for this occasion. Ivan was given a seat beside the local District Commissioner. The program was planned to demonstrate the strong Muslim ties that the Egyptians had with the Somalia community, almost like political propaganda. The Egyptian teacher and his wife both teach in the school. The Egyptian woman was very pretty and also was pregnant and expecting her child in four to five months. She invited Mary Ellen and Norma to her home after the program. It felt good to have this contact. She had expressed a desire to see Mary Ellen’s baby. Mary Ellen wrote: *“We are glad we can be friends with some of these Egyptians because there are others who cause opposition to our mission. So you can see that this friendly contact is good because it may aid our public relations.”*

In the March 22 letter Mary Ellen wrote about Ibrahim Farah, the Somali man who came to faith years before in Aden where the S.I.M. had a mission before the opening of Somalia to missions. He knew many languages and spoke English very well, including idioms. He had a vision of bringing the Gospel to his nomadic tribe [called the Bartiri]. Ibrahim wanted to settle some of his tribe and was directing the building of a village along the Juba



Jamama Hospital in Margherita



*Official opening of Jamama Hospital
on March 30, 1961*

River about eighty miles north of Margherita. Ibrahim was asking for help from the Mennonite mission in this project. There had been several visits to this beginning village and Ivan and Hershey made a visit a few days before this letter. The eighty mile trip was over very rough roads and took six hours. Mary Ellen wrote: *"We are all quite interested in this, although it will take time, prayers, money and personnel. At times Ibrahim becomes rather impatient in waiting for a definite action. The home board is trying to discern the Lord's will in this."*

The official opening of the hospital was on March 30, 1961. It was named Jamama Hospital, using the local Somali name for the town. There had been three patients admitted to the hospital the day before. One was a woman in labor who

was not able to deliver. On examination Ivan felt that the baby was no longer living and he had to use forceps to deliver the stillborn baby. The other two patients were a man who was diabetic and a man in congestive heart failure. [Ivan remembers that the man in heart failure was very swollen with



First hospital patient with severe congestive heart failure.

edema but responded well with treatment so that was a good outcome to be thankful for]. The official opening went well with about 250 persons who came for this event. There were speeches by Ivan and Hershey Leaman and Fae Miller, the nurse. The local District Commissioner and a representative of the Governor of Lower Juba gave speeches. David Miller, the builder, spoke and handed the keys of the hospital to Hershey as the administrator of the hospital. There was a ribbon cutting ceremony at the front door to the hospital by the governor's agent. Bert Lind had the closing speech and a prayer of dedication. There were tours of the hospital which had two wings, one for women and one for men. There were two private rooms. There was an operating room. The newly arrived nurse, Anna Lutz, was in the OR, gowned and masked. Ivan was in the Central Supply explaining the big autoclave.



*First staff for Jamama Hospital:
Fae Miller, RN; Ali Osman,
nurse-dresser; Hershey Leaman,
hospital administrator;
Ivan Leaman, doctor*

Although the hospital was deficient in some aspects [no x-ray yet] there was much appreciation for this new hospital.

On April 5, Mary Ellen wrote: *"Ivan definitely has his work now and I sometimes find myself waiting for dinner until 2-2:30 in the afternoon. That happens on busy clinic days. The hospital is really the big talk in the village. It seems that everyone is now coming with their chronic complaints thinking that this American doctor can do wonders."*

Ivan wrote: *"These have been very full days for us with hospital work but they*

have been days of satisfaction and happiness in doing what I like to do very much—that is, medical work." Ivan also wrote that he showed a filmstrip of Christ's death and resurrection to about thirty-five students. He did the narrative for the filmstrip. The students seemed to listen well and he was glad for this opportunity to present the gospel. This could be done without offense at times such as Christmas and Easter because it was known that these were special Christian holidays.

The next big event to get ready for was the annual missionary conference which was planned to be held at Mahaddei from April 18-21. Bert Lind wrote to ask if Ivan would take charge of the communion service. He was not so happy to be asked to do this as it would be a new experience for him. Mary Ellen was not eager to make the trip with her little three month old daughter because of the bumpy rough roads. She had painful memories of that first trip to Margherita with Peter John after which he had gotten sick and then had died. However, at the same time she did not want to stay alone now at Margherita if Ivan went to the conference. Ivan also had doubts as to whether he should make the trip because he had a critically ill patient in the hospital. This was a ten year old boy with tetanus. The boy could not swallow. Drinking water made him go into spasms. He was treated with 100,000 u of tetanus anti-toxin I.V. and also was being given fluids by IV. The boy was conscious but was being given some sedation. At one point he asked if he was going to die. His mother at first had doubts about the hospital but when she saw the care being given, she changed her mind. Just before the planned trip to the conference at Mahaddei, the boy began to

improve after being on IV fluids for eight days. He was now able to take liquids by mouth. They decided it was the Lord telling them it was alright for Ivan to go to the conference and leave the boy with tetanus in the care of Ali Osman, an employee who was trained at the Nazareth hospital in Ethiopia in their dresser training program. Ivan would be gone for eight days from the hospital.

The Margherita mission group left on Sunday evening April 16 for the trip to Mogadiscio, arriving there at 2:30 a.m. on Monday and they needed to arouse Bert Lind for the keys to the guest house. The group stayed in Mogadiscio for that day and left for Mahaddei that evening. The conference was for four days with messages based on John 17. "Oneness with Christ in Witnessing" by Ivan; "Oneness with Christ in Suffering" by Hershey; "Oneness with Christ in Communion" by Merlin Grove; and "Oneness with Christ in Glory" by Bert Lind. Ivan had charge of the communion with Hershey assisting with the emblems. Mary Ellen wrote that Ivan conducted it very nicely.

After these days of inspirational messages, the group traveled back to Mogadiscio on Friday evening and stayed there through the weekend and Monday. Ivan was asked to have the sermon Sunday morning. He and Hershey had business of buying medical supplies on Monday. They were able to get small pox vaccine for Deborah at the ICA headquarters. The group left for Margherita that Monday evening at 8:00 p.m. and arrived home at 3:00 a.m. The trip was rough and tiring but Deborah withstood the trip better than the adults. She slept most of the time while traveling. The first thing Ivan did on arriving back to Margherita was to go to the hospital and check on the boy recovering from tetanus. He was now beginning to walk but was very stiff. Ivan wrote that fifty percent of tetanus patients die so they were very thankful for his recovery.



Ivan does hernia surgery on new operating table



First patient to have hernia surgery on new operating table

Meanwhile the folks back in Lancaster County were interested in this new medical mission in Somalia. A fund had been established in memory of Peter John and persons and Sunday school classes were contributing money for medical equipment. At Stumptown, Nora Shaub's and Kendig Miller's Sunday school class gave money for operating stools, forehead lamps and a portable orthopedic table. At New Danville, Jay Garber's Sunday school class of about fifteen men contributed \$700 for the purchase and shipping of an operating table.

On May 3, Mary Ellen wrote a three page hand-written letter which contained expressions of gratitude for the nice dresses for Deborah that had been sent by Ivan's sister Lois Garber, Aunt Ethel Leaman, and Elva Bare. Martha Myer had sent a very nice crib spread. *"All these expressions of kindness make us feel more keenly our great responsibility to God and those whose prayers and gifts have made it possible for us to be here."* She said that Ivan was in the outpatient clinic three days a week. From these clinic visits often come the in-patients for the hospital. The boy with tetanus was recovering but had a setback when he lost his balance and hit the back of his head on a cement walk. He had a violent reaction with headache and vomiting which was a concussion but he did recover from that fall.

The big problem at the mission compound was the lack of dependable water supply. Wells dug on the compound only produced salt water. The ICA had dug some wells on the far side of the village for the use of the village with pipes that brought water to the mission compound to supply the water tower. However, at times there was a breakdown in the pumps. So water needed to be brought by a tank truck from a distant well or by donkey cart from the river. It was a problem for the hospital to have an unreliable water supply. There were barrels at the missionary houses to collect rain water but these were only useful during the rainy season. All water for drinking needed to be boiled as was true for the milk. This was done over charcoal stoves. If the milk boiled over it made quite an odor which Omar Eby had described as "a morning sacrifice."

In May Ivan continued to be busy in the clinic three days a week with 50-60 patients seen by either Ivan or Fae. They were finished by 1:30-2:00 p.m. In the hospital Ivan started treating bilharzia patients with an IV medication called Fouadin which required having the patient in the hospital in the mornings. Bilharzia was caused by the *Schistosoma hematobium* parasite that caused infection in the urinary bladder, often diagnosed by blood in the urine. Children often got the infection by playing in the irrigation canals at

the banana farms along the river. The IV treatment extended over several days. Mary Ellen wrote about a neurotic woman who would come repeatedly saying she needed medicine or she would die that night.

Hassan, the house boy for Mary Ellen, was learning how to do his work better but he developed an infection on his right arm which Ivan treated and recommended that he soak his arm in warm water and rest his arm. Mary Ellen had many dishes to be washed which he was able to do. After some days of soaking his arm the abscess opened and drained and he recovered.

Mary Ellen and Norma made plans to begin a sewing class, something that Viola Dorsch had done in the past and it was expected that they would continue although Mary Ellen felt inadequate for this. Sixteen girls showed up for that first class at which time the rules were explained.

There was the unusual experience when Mary Ellen absentmindedly locked both sets of keys in the office. This was a challenge for Ivan since he could not enter through a window because there were bars at the windows. He finally solved the dilemma by going through a trapdoor in the master bedroom and walking across the ceiling to reach the office room at the other end of the house. He then cut a hole in the ceiling of the office to let himself down into the room. Then a trapdoor was made in that ceiling. Ivan enjoyed telling that story of how he solved that dilemma.

Ivan wrote about another unusual but very special experience when a young Somali man came late one evening to talk with Hershey and Ivan. He came with Daniel Stoltzfus and told them in broken English that he now has a new life. He said that he was in darkness but now he believed in Christ. He had worked for the Pax boys in Torda, located some miles south of Margherita. This Pax unit which began in 1955 was an agricultural demonstration experiment using a pair of oxen for plowing. This was where Chester Kurtz, Allan Brubaker, Marvin Musser, Ivan Yost and Daniel Stoltzfus had served in alternate service. This Pax agricultural demonstration experiment had closed down in 1960. This Somali young man said that one of the Pax boys had given him the Gospel of John which he had been reading and one night he was “eating the word” and now he “is in the light.” He had recently been employed at the hospital in housekeeping and laundry. At the beginning of the hospital, there was no laundry room but that came later with a sink which made scrubbing clothes easier.

In a May 24 letter Mary Ellen wrote about witness in a Muslim country: *“We need to be content with giving a silent witness of the Gospel most of the time. Someone of us said, ‘Why aren’t we more bold? Are we afraid*

of persecution?’ It’s not that; it’s just that the Muslim is not won to Christ that way. They oppose Bible teaching in the school and if we would insist on it, they would withdraw their children, so we could hope to accomplish nothing that way.”

In Ivan’s letter of May 24 he talked about the hospital. There were now five employees. Hershey had helped in setting up some administrative procedures such as what fees to charge. Most clinic patients paid one to two shillings which was fourteen to twenty-eight cents. Hospital patients paid Sh. four per day (fifty-six cents). Operations were charged from Sh. 50-100 (\$7-\$14). Ivan said they were happy with the response of the people to pay.

One Sunday night there was a very unusual situation where many of the missionaries on the compound suddenly about 10:30 p.m. became very sick with vomiting and diarrhea. Ivan was awakened by the night guard who reported that Daniel Stoltzfus was very sick. Ivan found him lying on the concrete pavement outside the door of his garage apartment. He was vomiting and in great distress and thinking he was going to die. Then there was a call from Hershey and Norma’s house reporting that Norma was sick. Hershey was mildly sick. Ivan with Hershey went to the house where Fae Miller and Bertha Beachy were living. Before Ivan knocked at the door he knew that the same problem was in that house because he heard the flushing of the toilet. Ivan realized that this must be acute food poisoning, probably staphylococcal in origin. He went to the hospital to get an injectable medicine for vomiting which he administered to the suffering ones. Ivan came back to his house and told Mary Ellen what was happening and suggested that they prepare themselves. So they got buckets and placed them next to their bed and lay down waiting! But the vomiting never came. The missionaries had all eaten together on Sunday evening and for dessert there was a delicious coconut cream pie. That was the likely culprit for it had been allowed to sit outside of the refrigerator for most of the day which allowed dust with bacteria to settle and grow in the pie. Everyone who was sick recovered by the next day. Why were Ivan and Mary Ellen spared? The pie apparently was contaminated on the other side of the pie from the pieces they ate!

On June 8, Hershey and Ivan, with Daniel Stoltzfus, set out to visit Ibrahim Farah who had invited the Mennonite mission to help his Bartiri nomadic tribe to settle along the river north of Gelib, at a place Ibrahim was now calling Noleye, meaning “life.” They found Ibrahim at Af Madau, some distance from Noleye. When they reached Noleye, most of the tribe had left the village. Because of a lack of rain they had needed to go in search

of grazing and water for their cattle. EMM had expressed interest in this new opportunity for service in Somalia and had suggested that Don Jacobs, who was working on his doctorate in anthropology, should make a trip to the Bartiri tribe to evaluate the situation. Bert Lind had invited Hershey to come to Mogadiscio to discuss this new project so Hershey and Norma left for a week in Mogadiscio.

With Hershey away, Mary Ellen was needed to help in the clinic doing what Hershey had set up for patient record keeping. Out-patient clinic was being held on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Records were being kept on cards and filed by number. Each patient was given a number and when the patients come for repeat visits, the card was found in the file. A new patient needed to be given a number and a card started. Mary Ellen was helping with this and also serving as receptionist and letting five or six patients inside at the appropriate time. She found that she enjoyed doing this and after Hershey and Norma would leave Somalia, she would need to take on some of the administrative work that Hershey had been doing. When Mary Ellen was at the clinic, Deborah was at the house and Hassan would keep an eye on her and notify Mary Ellen if Deborah needed her. Also, there would be half hour breaks at the clinic, allowing Mary Ellen to come to the house to feed or bath Deborah, etc. The household routine was very well established and Hassan was able to go ahead with what was to be done.

June 20 was election day in Somalia and Mary Ellen wrote this description: *"They voted as to whether the constitution was acceptable to them or not. Most of them cannot read or write. They had an interesting way of voting. If one was voting yes he placed a slip of paper in the white box. If he was voting no he placed a slip of paper in the black box. In order to prevent anyone from voting the second time, an ink smear was put on one of the hands – an ink that would not wash off for several days. The SYL (Somali Youth League) is the party in power and they are in favor of the constitution. However, those belonging to the opposing party GSL (Greater Somali League) would probably oppose it. This party is pro-Egyptian and for the most part is anti-American."*

Mary Ellen wrote that there were three young Somali men who professed faith in Christ. On Monday evenings, Ivan was meeting with the young man who had been working with the Pax boys. Together they were reading through the Gospel of John. They read in both a Somali translation and in English. This helped Ivan in the Somali language and helped the young Somali man in learning English. Two of the Somali young men did

the translation of the worship messages into Somali for the services held in the missionary house in Margherita. One of these was one of the teachers in the mission school.

The next letter of June 28 described the rains which had come and now the grass was green. The milk lady came and said that now there would be more milk. Eggs had also been scarce and small so Mary Ellen fried four for breakfast instead of two. She wrote of a “day off” and the group all went to Chismaio except Fae Miller who would watch Deborah so Mary Ellen could go. Chismaio was an old city with many old crumbly white buildings. It reminded one of the Middle East. It was a good day with interesting shopping especially at the famous Indian shop where they sell “everything.” After shopping they went to the beach and had a picnic lunch of baked beans, frankfurters, bread, potato salad, date bars and cheese. There was time in the water. Mary Ellen enjoyed the day thoroughly and wished they could do it more often.

In this letter Mary Ellen also described an Arab wedding to which she went with Fae. It was an affair strictly for women. It was actually a wedding for five young girls and went on for seven days. These were arranged marriages and Mary Ellen was appalled that these girls could be married at a young age of thirteen. She was told this can be a very frightening experience since some do not want to get married. There was a lot of dancing with drums beating. The women were really dressed in rich-looking brightly colored clothing, far different than the black clothing they wear in public. The women really let their hair down as they fling their hair about. Everything was very loud with much commotion so that it made one’s head spin. After this time of dancing, they brought out the young brides with their eyes closed and they were helped in a dance by another person. Others brought coins and touched them to the bride’s forehead as a blessing and the coins were placed in a basket. Mary Ellen wondered whether there was love and happiness in these marriages. She was glad she was not brought up in this culture and didn’t have a wedding like this.

The five letters in July reported that the rains had come making travel very difficult and the mail was delayed in coming because of muddy roads. The rains, of course, were good for the people with gardens and they were busy in their gardens. The rains also brought less activity in people coming to the hospital and clinic. That brought in less income making it difficult to have sufficient income to pay the employees. There were very challenging inpatient medical situations for Ivan to handle. There was always a lot of

lab work in checking for bilharzia in the urine and hookworm, ascaris, and amoeba parasites in the stool.

The rains had created a lot of wet areas which attracted ducks and Ivan and Hershey went duck hunting in the swampy ponds near Margherita and they were successful in bringing ducks back for cleaning and filling the freezer part of the kerosene operated refrigerators. This was a nice addition to the meat diet.

The next two months of August and September were set to bring many changes in missionary personnel in Somalia. The biggest change for Ivan and Mary Ellen was the anticipation of the leaving of Hershey and Norma. The plans were now in place for Hershey and Norma to leave in early September to go to their more permanent assignment at Shirati where Hershey would assume the administration of the hospital there. Hershey was eager to “go home” to Shirati since he had gone there in 1953 as a single fellow to serve in an assignment with MCC/PAX. Following that experience Hershey had gone on to college and then trained for hospital administration. Ivan was not looking forward to having Hershey leave since he was a great encourager in giving advice and help in opening the hospital at Margherita. Hershey, with his humor and good nature, was a great asset for congeniality on the mission team. Mary Ellen wrote: *“Things will seem dull without them around.”* Norma was now expecting the birth of their first child in January and she would be flying from Mogadiscio to Nairobi and then on to Shirati by MAF plane. Meanwhile Hershey would drive the mission Chevrolet pick-up truck loaded with their household and personal things to Kenya and then on to Shirati. Ivan had interest in going along with Hershey to Nairobi so he could buy the needed medicines at a much better price than in Mogadiscio.

The other change in missionary personnel was that the Dorsch family was returning from Canada but they would not immediately be coming to Margherita for Victor to assume station leadership. They would be staying in Mogadiscio for Victor to be interim mission director while the Linds would be on vacation in Kenya and East Africa. Ivan was not looking forward to having the heavy responsibility of the hospital plus having to assume station leadership and be responsible for the Sunday worship services. There were two very capable missionary women at Margherita, Fae as the nurse and Bertha as a teacher, and either of them would have been capable of leadership but in the 1960s there was still the culture of male leadership.

The other new missionary personnel that were due to arrive were Harold and Connie Stauffer and Harold and Barbara Reed. Harold Stauffer was to

be mission business manager and Harold and Barbara Reed would possibly go to Hargesia to open a new location for Mennonite presence in northern Somalia. Miriam Leaman as a nurse had also recently arrived in Mogadiscio. She would be coming to Margherita later to provide the much needed nurse leadership to supervise the hospital nursing care. She and the other new missionaries would first be in language study in Mogadiscio.

The hospital work had to go on without adequate nursing supervision. There was a severely burned little girl admitted in early August. She was kept alive with IVs and amazingly she stayed alive for some time and even began to take nourishment by mouth. Most of Ivan's waking hours were spent in the clinic and hospital. The work load was very heavy and Ivan asked for prayer in his letter written to his family in the States. Then in mid-August Ivan developed an infection in his right eye which was tearing continually and his right eyelids became swollen. Mary Ellen would wash his eye and put in an antibiotic eye ointment. He tried to rest his eye as much as possible and he put on an eye patch. On August 20 she wrote: *"The doctor could not rest very long. Tonight they called for him at the hospital for a woman was brought in who has been bleeding off and on for three months and was quite weak."* She was having a miscarriage. Several hours later another burn patient was brought to the hospital but this was not so serious and after treating the burns she was sent home. The severely burned little girl was not doing well and wasting away and when the end was near her father took her home so she could die in their hut. A baby with diarrhea and dehydration was brought which reminded Ivan of Peter John. But this baby was saved because he could make a small incision at her ankle to insert a tubing to give IV treatment. A woman was brought who was severely anemic and needed blood. Ivan did cross-matching on six volunteers and one man had the right blood but at the last moment he 'chickened out.'

In early September Ivan was preparing to travel to Nairobi with Hershey in the Chevrolet pick-up truck and the Linds were traveling in the Land Rover. The two vehicles were traveling together. Mary Ellen packed clothes for Ivan and tried to put in a lot so he would not need to do much washing of clothes. She had taken over the hospital and mission books from Hershey. She was responsible for paying the hospital employees and the mission workmen and taking care of any other business transaction. With Ivan gone there would be very little work in the hospital so he had told Ali Osman and Shirwa, the two men who worked in nursing in the hospital, that they could help with the cleaning of the hospital. With Hershey and Ivan

leaving, there were only three women left on the Margherita station: Mary Ellen and little Deborah with Fae and Bertha.

On September 4, Monday morning, the two vehicles left for Nairobi only to return that night because of bad muddy roads due to heavy rains. They were covered with mud from head to toe. They had gotten stuck in a mud hole about seventy miles from Margherita near Af Madou and it took several hours to get out of the mud hole. They decided it was best to turn back. They started out again on Wednesday morning and made it through to Nairobi. Ivan wrote from Nairobi that he was staying in the CMS guest house. He had developed blurred vision in his infected eye and was able to see an eye doctor who referred him to another specialist. He was told he had a keratitis (inflammation of the cornea) and conjunctivitis. He was started on an eye drop to dilate his pupil, given Chloromycetin antibiotic eye ointment and a prescription for a sulfa drug to take for a month. He was hoping and praying that he would not have permanent eye damage.

There was an important event that occurred in Nairobi when Ivan was there. He went with Hershey Leaman and Don Jacobs to the large stadium to witness the official homecoming welcome for Jomo Kenyatta who had been released from prison after nine years. There was a very large crowd which they estimated to be 100,000 people. They were the few white people among the cheering Africans. It was an orderly celebration even though the cry was to take back the land which the white people had taken from them. The cry was Uhuru! (meaning Freedom). Some speakers were very radical but Jomo Kenyatta spoke with moderation. His delivery reminded Ivan of evangelist George Brunk. The emotions at this meeting reminded Ivan of a mass revival meeting. Ivan heard that there was a spiritual revival movement in Kenya at all levels of Christianity including Catholics.

Mary Ellen received a letter from Ivan in Nairobi saying that there were repairs needed on the Chevrolet truck and he was responsible to see that it got done. Ivan said that they would be delayed in returning to Margherita. He was very busy not only doing the important medical purchases but he had requests to do buying for other missionaries, even an order for Tanganyika. He was asked by someone if he was on vacation and he said it was not a vacation when he was here without his wife! Meanwhile, Mary Ellen had a scare when Deborah became sick with a fever of 102.6 and she had vomiting. Fae thought she may have malaria and gave her an injection of chloroquine. But then she became quite lethargic and Mary Ellen was quite worried and felt like crying. But when Bertha came in and Deborah heard

her voice, she popped her head up and sat up which gave Mary Ellen a sense of relief and she wrote: *"Did my heart leap for joy."* Deborah had a restless night but was better the next day. Fae gave a second injection of Chloroquine and she seemed back to normal. It was not known if she had malaria since the hospital lab did not do malarial smears. During the Leaman's time in Somalia, the entire family took weekly Daraprim, an anti-malarial preventive medication and they never had any clear episode of malaria. They also slept under mosquito nets.

Ivan and Hershey and Dan Stoltzfus arrived back in Margherita on September 24, so Ivan was gone and separated from Mary Ellen for almost three weeks. She wrote: *"If someone had told me before he left that he would have been gone so long I would have felt the separation almost impossible. But I lived one day at a time and for the duties and trials of each day, the Lord granted grace and strength so that I could bear them."* Ivan had quite a story to tell of the difficulty in their return from Kenya. After they entered Somalia and were about sixty miles from Margherita they got stuck in the mud and Hershey and Ivan had to sleep on top of the truck cab which was a crowded uncomfortable sleeping place! Dan slept inside the truck. The next day they got out of the mud and they decided to go back to Belesc Coganie, which was the Somalia customs check point. They stayed there one night and then started out again and this time they traveled and drove into the bush at times, avoiding the muddy road. They finally crippled into Margherita with a broken spring [the third one on this trip] and with no brakes from a broken brake line from driving through the bush.

There was another unusual story about this trip. Don Jacobs had been traveling with Ivan and Hershey back to Somalia because he was going to do an anthropological study of the Bartiri tribe, before EMM would begin helping Ibrahim Farah in his desire to help his nomadic tribe settle along the Juba River. However, Don had the misfortune of taking his wife's passport rather than his own so when he got to the border check point, he was not allowed to proceed and had to go back to Nairobi to get his passport. The rains were continuing with the roads to Mogadiscio uncertain and Hershey was eager to get out of Somalia and be with his pregnant wife at Shirati. He was able to get on a Rogers Oil Company small plane to fly to Mogadiscio on October 4. Don Jacobs flew into Mogadiscio but when rains continued it became clear that Don would not be able to do the Bartiri tribe study now. It would have to be postponed which was disappointing for Ibrahim Farah.

In October little Deborah continued to bring much happiness to her parents. She was a very patient child and her mother marveled at her happiness and contentment. She would walk around her playpen and after taking her hands off the railing would stand alone for a short time. Her Daddy and Mother made a game of it with encouraging words and laughter and when she plopped down gracefully on her sitter, she giggled as she entertained her parents. They were having a lot of fun with her and she enjoyed all of this activity.

The annual missionary conference was held in Mogadiscio on October 12 and 13. The difficulty for the Margherita folks was the travel to Mogadiscio, leaving on Sunday, October 8 and arriving at 3:00 a.m. on Monday. Mary Ellen described it as an extremely rough travel and it took thirteen hours whereas a good trip took about seven to eight hours. At many places there were very deep ruts from the truck traffic. The Land Rover was not high enough for them to drive in the ruts so driver Ivan would often drive with one wheel on the high side and one wheel in the rut. This made for very tilted driving. Sometimes the wheels would slip off and go into the ruts and the vehicle would be hung up with the wheels off the ground. This happened two or three times and the Land Rover needed to be pulled out. The entire trip was very wearing and it took a day to recuperate. Mary Ellen described the conference as inspirational and she really enjoyed the messages. Ivan had the first one, entitled, "Prayer in the Life of the Missionary," Merlin Grove had the second entitled, "Prayer in the Life of the Muslim" and Victor Dorsch had "Prayer in the Life of the National Church."

The big concern was: where were the Linds? They were expected back from their Kenya vacation, having left Nairobi on Friday, October 6 and were planning to arrive in Margherita on Saturday, October 7. The fear was that they might be stranded somewhere in the muddy road. A telegram came to Mogadiscio on Wednesday from Osman at Margherita, stating that a bushman had brought a note from the Linds stating that they were stranded about sixty miles from Margherita. Word was sent to ICA in Chismaio who sent out a vehicle to find the Linds and help them. Another telegram arrived in Mogadiscio on Thursday saying that Rhoda and the children were safely at Margherita and that Bert had been able to get the vehicle out of the mud hole. This family would surely have a story to tell of being stranded on the road for about six days. Here is part of the story that Mary Ellen heard from Rhoda Lind and wrote in one of her letters: *"The Land Rover that had been sent from Chismaio to help the Linds could only get within several miles*

of them. So Rhoda and the children walked several miles, walking in mud almost to their knees. Miriam, the second Lind child, was the pluckiest of the three. The other two were fretting and fearful and she'd say, 'Stop it. Don't you know that this is the thing we need to do. God is with us.'"

The next story of difficult traveling on Somalia roads was this letter written by Mary Ellen on October 19. She described the return trip to Margherita following the missionary conference in Mogadiscio. They left Mog on October 17, Tuesday morning at 5:30 a.m. and did not arrive in Margherita until 3:30 a.m. Wednesday morning, a trip of twenty-two hours. She wrote: "*Any more trips like this and I think I will have grey hairs. There were bypasses off the main road because of water holes and we drove extra miles and bounced over more bumps because of this. We had stopovers too. Shortly after we left Mog we got into a fog and a muddy road. A couple of cars ahead of us were stuck so we turned around, retraced the miles we had driven and then went off into a sand bypass. Out on the main road again we met the Linds coming toward us; this was about thirty-five miles from Mog. And of course we had to stop and talk and find out about their experiences, which could probably fill a book [Some of this was recounted in the previous paragraph]. And so, after we had talked with the Linds, we proceeded on our long wearisome way. We next stopped at an Italian store and bought sandwiches and soft drinks. After that it was a continual bumping and winding on roads that we'd call cow paths. But our bumping ceased when we got a flat tire. Somewhere we thought Dan [Stoltzfus] had gotten ahead of us [He was driving another mission vehicle]. So Ivan, Shirwa and Ali [two hospital employees] who had also gone to Mog, got out to change the tire without proper tools. It would have taken them forever had not Dan been behind us. The sound of his truck was very welcome, especially when we thought he was preceding us. There were proper tools in that truck so the tire eventually got changed. And the next stop was at [Mudun] the halfway mark, where we ate and had the tire patched. And then came the real adventure in our journey, although I was in no mood for it. In order to bypass a water hole we drove into the bush where there was no road, just car tracks. For every couple feet that we drove we had to stop and decide where to go next. We made no headway so we set out to find the road from which we had turned off. It had grown dark and the place was so desolate. Was I glad when we reached the main road again. We had spent at least an hour wandering around in the bush trying to find our way, all to no avail and then we ended up where we had started from. That day there had been rain between Mudun and Gelib so we found*

ourselves sliding in mud, practically getting stuck. If we wouldn't have had a Land Rover we couldn't have made it. We had to pull Dan a couple times [His truck apparently was not four-wheel drive]. I thought I would be a nervous wreck by the time we got here. Dear little Deborah took the trip well considering everything but Ivan and I did not like it that we had to make such a trip with a baby. It seemed so foolhardy. We just thank the Lord that we got here safely and in one piece - A real missionary story!"

The Victor Dorsch family returned to Margherita on October 20 after their furlough in Canada and their time in Mogadiscio covering for the Linds until they returned from their vacation. Joy and Deborah quickly connected although Joy was about one and a half years older than nine month old Deborah. She was really happy when Joy came to visit her. Mary Ellen wrote that one day after Joy had left the house Deborah cried as if her heart would break.

Another important event was the visit of Don Jacobs who flew into Mogadiscio on October 19. He came to Margherita with the intent to visit the Bartiri tribe with Ibrahim Farah. His plan was to do an anthropological study of this tribe. Unfortunately he was not able to visit the Noleye village with Ibrahim because of the rains and impassable roads. He did his research by interviewing Ibrahim and some of the nomadic tribe who had come to Margherita so Don had opportunity to ask questions of them also. He then returned to Mogadiscio with Ibrahim and spent a few days there while he completed writing his research report for EMM. Raymond Martin arrived in Mogadiscio on October 21 and he joined the language study class in Mog. His service assignment was to help with the Bartiri tribe project.

After Ivan returned to Margherita, he became very busy in the hospital. The evening the Dorsch family and Don Jacobs arrived, Ivan was doing an emergency surgery on a man with a strangulated hernia which took three hours. Ivan wrote that it was rewarding to be able to save someone's life by this surgery. He said that his eye was somewhat of a handicap in that he found it more difficult to thread a needle. His right eye had not shown any improvement as far as the blurred vision. He was thankful that he had one good eye. This was the first operation on the new operating table that had been purchased with money provided by Jay Garber's Sunday school class of New Danville. The man recovered after a period of uncertainty which caused Ivan and the patient to rejoice with Alhamdulillah [Praise the Lord].

One of the sad experiences recorded in the October 29 letter was the discovery that Mary Ellen's good house boy had been stealing money from

us. This was a big disappointment since Mary Ellen had trusted him and he was doing a good job. This led to Hassan losing his job and Mary Ellen began teaching a young girl Adei how to do the house work. She didn't know English so it was a good challenge for Mary Ellen to use her Somali.

Mary Ellen's letters of November gave a description of Ivan's busy schedule. With all of the rains there were more mosquitoes and with that more malaria. A four year old boy was brought unresponsive with cerebral malaria and Ivan hardly expected him to live through the night but he went to the hospital at 3:00 a.m. to check on him and found him improved and he had regained partial consciousness. The child continued to improve. Mary Ellen wrote: *"To see someone so near death respond to treatment is really witnessing a miracle. Of course there are those patients who do not respond to treatment and cannot be helped. However, we pray that in all of our contacts, God will use the care and interest to spread His love in the hearts of the Somali people."* A woman was brought who had been in labor for two days. The relatives thought the baby was dead but Ivan and Fae heard a fetal heart beat which was very rapid. The woman was uncooperative and needed sedation and was given ether before anything could be done. Forceps were applied and a living little boy was born. Ivan was extremely busy seeing patients in the clinic and coming for dinner at 2-2:30 p.m. and then later in the afternoon he would go back to the hospital to do laboratory work and usually did not get in for supper until 7-7:30 p.m. The hospital was booming with twenty-six admissions in twenty-four days. Ivan and Ali Osman were doing most of the nursing care so he was looking forward to the coming of another nurse who would assume some of the responsibilities that rightfully belong to nursing. He was also expected to take his turn in preaching and his sermons were often prepared "on the run" because his schedule hardly allowed any time for it. Mary Ellen would go to the hospital in the afternoons to count and record the clinic money and to check to see that the clinic cards had been properly recorded.

The letters of December 8 and 10 told of the extreme flooding that had now come to the Lower Juba area. The Schebelli River that usually ended in a swamp had now joined the Juba River at various places between Margherita and Gelib. The one place was near Mofi, so it was very difficult to get to Mofi. This was something that had not occurred in forty years. Roads to many villages were cut off which created a big emergency. The U.S. responded by sending some military persons from Germany with helicopters to give assistance. The helicopters were dropping bags of corn.

The helicopters were parked at the next door ICA compound. This created a lot of excitement for everyone and there were many persons who came from the village, walking past the Leaman's house to see these helicopters. Here is an interesting observation that Mary Ellen wrote: *"I wish you could have seen our dear little Deborah. She was supposed to be in bed sleeping. The helicopters had just landed and people were trekking noisily past her bedroom window. So she pulled back the curtain and stood in her bed watching the people. Little Miss Curiosity stood watching and holding the curtain in one hand. As a result a lot of people flocked outside her window and laughed and talked to this little white baby. Of course she loved it and responded very readily and they seemed to like it too. I had a lot of fun in standing behind the scene and observing it all."*

There were also military doctors sent with this relief mission. Very interesting for Ivan was to meet one of these doctors, a Dr. Miller, originally from Harrisonburg, VA where his father was president of Madison College. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania the same year as Ivan graduated from Hahnemann. Dr. Miller had a wife and six month old child in Germany and Mary Ellen thought he may be having a siege of homesickness. Ivan relished the opportunity of talking with another doctor.

In Ivan's letter of December 27, he told about an Italian man who some weeks before had been brought to the hospital with abdominal pain. Appendicitis was a possible diagnosis. Two American military doctors were next door at the ICA compound and Ivan asked for them to see him. They also examined him and thought it might be appendicitis. The man's wife was in Chismaio and since these doctors were flying to Chismaio they agreed to take him along. And so it was that the helicopter landed right at the front door of the hospital.

Ivan also wrote of the tragic end to the American military relief effort to the Lower Juba region. They had started using boats on the Juba River to deliver food and medicines to the villages that were isolated. Near Gelib, the current swung the boat around and swept it down the river and it hit a cable causing it to overturn and a medical assistant, an African-American, was drowned. He had been in the U. S. Army for twenty years and was six months from retirement. He had a wife and five children. What a sad ending for this American military mercy operation. We heard that Dr. Miller was on this boat that had overturned but he could swim to shore. He helped to arrange for taking care of the body of the drowned man which was found some days later.

Ivan wrote of the arrival of Helen Landis, who was eager to help in the hospital nursing which was a great relief for Ivan.

Mary Ellen's letter of December 27 described the Christmas celebrations at Margherita. The missionaries gave a program in the school. She wrote: "*We sang several songs and Ivan gave a talk on, 'What Christmas Means to Us.' We were glad for this opportunity of sharing the 'good news' with the Somalis. Lots of people came and the room was very well filled. Several people said they thought it was a good program. Some thought they would like to study the Bible but others said, 'No, you wouldn't want to study the Bible.'*" The missionaries had their own "Family Christmas Dinner" eating by candlelight, and followed with a gift exchange and singing carols. On Christmas Day there was a service in the morning with the believer group. Ivan brought a message. A meal followed and there were about fifty to fifty-five persons crowded into Victor and Viola's house. That was quite a group to feed but Viola was very calm about it all. There was spaghetti and meat, tea and bananas. A simple meal but everyone seemed to enjoy it very much.

Chapter 4

(1962)

On January 1, 1962, Mary Ellen wrote that the next day she and Ivan would be going to Chismaio with the Dorsches and Helen Landis for business and a diversion. She was eager to see how Deborah would react to the ocean since the last time she was a bit fearful of the waves. That evening they would celebrate New Year's Day by eating at the best restaurant in Margherita. They would be having Ethiopian food, injera and watt which usually was ordered when the missionaries ate there. Dan was planning to drive to Mogadiscio also the next day to take the truck to David Miller so that he would have it for building at Villagio Duca, where the mission middle school was to be built. The main road by way of Gelib was closed to Mog but Dan would use the sand road that was made by Rogers Oil Exploration Co. This road was a temporary road that could be used by small vehicles and Land Rovers. The road follows a sand hill for about fifty miles before it joins the main road beyond Gelib.

The next letter by Mary Ellen on January 7 told a different story. Dan was not able to get very far with his intended trip to Mog. He was taking along Hassan Imberwa and his family with furniture. This family was moving to the area of Villagio Duca to help David Miller in the construction of the new mission middle school. But the truck was overloaded and had a broken spring so Dan turned back and returned to Margherita. Dan decided to go on the trip to Chismaio with the rest of the missionaries. They went in two Land Rovers. The trip to Chismaio would be different because the bridge between Margherita and Zunguni was not able to be used due to the flooding so they made the trip by way of Torda on a road that followed the north side of the Juba River. At a certain point closer to Chismaio, they were able to cross the river by a small ferry which could take one or two vehicles at a time.

After the day in Chismaio of business and shopping and a picnic lunch on the beach, the two mission vehicles headed back to Margherita. They reached the ferry before 4:00 p.m. and Dan in his Land Rover was able to cross the ferry just before 6:00 p.m. However, the ferry crew refused to let the second mission Land Rover, in which the Leamans were riding with the Dorsch family, to cross on the ferry because it was now 6:00 p.m. No amount of talking could persuade them to take them across. So Ivan and Mary Ellen and little Deborah with the Dorsch family had to find lodging in Chismaio for the night. They first had a meal at an Italian restaurant and then the Italian man who owned the ferry arranged for these Mennonite missionaries to sleep at the Catholic mission overnight. The women slept on the nun's side and men slept on the priest's side. Mary Ellen did not sleep well due to the mosquitoes and being in a strange place. The next day they crossed on the ferry and

returned to Margherita by twelve noon. Victor and Dan then repaired the broken spring on David Miller's truck that afternoon and Dan left the next morning with the Imberwa family.

On Sunday January 7, Mary Ellen wrote that she went along to the service at Malaili in the morning and to Mofi in the afternoon which required a long boat ride to reach. At Mofi they saw the results of the flooding and took pictures, some of which made beautiful pictures with coconut palm trees overhead with water beneath. It was quite a sight to see where the Schebeli River was gushing into the Juba River at Mofi. This area would not recover for a long time from the flooding.



Flooding at Mofi

On January 17, Ivan reported that after he gave his daughter Deborah her smallpox vaccination she had a rather severe reaction, with fever and a swollen arm. She did recover slowly from that reaction. Mary Ellen reports that, *"She's now walking all over the place. She looks like such a dear little mite."*

In the January 18 letter Mary Ellen reported that, *"The Egyptians have been stirring up trouble. We are glad for contacts we can have with the Egyptians through the hospital and would hope that it will be the means of breaking down barriers between us. Recently an Egyptian lady gave birth*

to a baby boy in the hospital. She and her husband seem very nice. They invited us to their home this week. Some of the Egyptians do seem eager to have us visit them and I've been in a couple of homes already."

On January 24, Mary Ellen wrote: *"Well, our little Deborah has now passed the one year mark. She's such a little chatterbox, rolls her little tongue around in such an interesting way. I used an angel food mix for her birthday. She had a chance to stab her finger in the icing on her birthday but we saved the cake for eating until the next day at weekly tea time. I brought in the cake with the one candle and we sang happy birthday. Her performance was so sweet. She felt shy at first and buried her face on her Daddy's knee. She got two little barrettes from Joy Dorsch and they really add to her hairdo, making her look more like a little lady."*

In the letters of January 24, Mary Ellen reported that there were two normal deliveries in the hospital which brought pleasure to Ivan since usually the hospital deliveries have been complicated ones. Ivan wrote that in the past several weeks there was agitation in the village against the mission. It was hard to accept but the reports kept coming that the two most important employees in the hospital were causing much of the trouble by giving information to the agitators. The one hospital employee who had become a Christian was facing opposition and threats of him being killed. There was communion with the believers on Sunday and Victor had the preparatory message and Ivan had the communion message.

Osman, a Somali who was one of the teachers in the mission school, had a strong desire to study the Bible and he was accepted into the Bukiroba Bible School in Tanganyika along with two other Somali believers from Mogadiscio. They were all making preparations with getting passports for this school to begin about March 3. A later letter tells of the disappointment that after the hasty preparation for Osman to travel to Nairobi and shortly after his arrival there, the word came that the Tanganyika church was delaying the opening of the Bukiroba Bible School until August. There would need to be a decision about what to do for the three Somalis who had made that trip to Nairobi.

There was a very positive experience with the hospital employees when they were invited to the Leaman house for an evening of games. This was an enjoyable evening with games, coffee and freshly baked cookies. Ivan and Mary Ellen said to each other: *"Why didn't we do this before? We need to be careful that we become so involved in our work that we forget the personal touch."*

The next letters of February 9 and 15 told of the arrival of the deputation from the USA which were Paul Kraybill, Raymond Charles, and Orie Miller and his wife. They were all planning to come to Margherita for a visit but Orie and Bert had made a visit to Hargeisa and their plane flight back to Mog was delayed because of fog and so they did not come to Margherita. Mary Ellen was disappointed that Orie and his wife were not able to come since she had the guest room prepared for them. Raymond Martin, a young man who was being assigned to work with Ibrahim Farah on the Bartiri tribe project, had come on this trip from Mog. Also Abdi Dahir, a believer from Mog, had come along and he stayed in the Leaman's office room which was the coolest room in the house. Mary Ellen was busy with preparing some of the meals for the guests.

The February 15 letter tells of the trip to Mog. The plans were to leave early Monday morning, February 12, but at 1:00 a.m. there was a call from the night guard: "Doctor." Mary Ellen thought: *"Oh, no, why can't we be allowed to get some sleep."* This call was because an Egyptian lady had been brought to the hospital in labor. These folks had wished for her to deliver in the mission hospital although Ivan had thought that he might have suggested and arranged for them to consider going to Chismaio for the delivery because of his plans to go to Mog for the mission conference. After discussion with Victor about the situation, for good public relations with the Egyptian community, it seemed best that the trip to Mog be delayed until the woman had delivered. Medically, it was the right decision. Fortunately the labor progressed well and the baby was delivered at 5:00 a.m. After a few hours of observation, the mother and baby were able to be discharged and by 8:00 a.m. the trip to Mog began, only four hours later than had been planned. Ivan wrote in another letter that it was a mental relief to get away from the hospital responsibilities for a short time. Some of the stresses were the reports that the Egyptians were creating opposition and this was being supported by some of the hospital employees.

The four day missionary conference in Mogadiscio was from February 13-16. Mary Ellen's letter indicated that there would be forty-two persons present for the missionary conference which included the parents of Merlin Grove and the wife of Orie Miller. The messages of the conference in Mogadiscio were "Preparing for the Labour" by Harold Reed, "The Labour" by Victor Dorsch, "Labourers Together" by Merlin Grove and "Labourers Together With God" by Ivan. There were also messages by the deputation. Raymond Charles was thoroughly enjoying this opportunity to visit the

missionaries in Somalia. Mary Ellen wrote that Paul Kraybill, "*pulled me in for some secretarial duties.*" Paul was writing reports and recommendations for Somalia and Mary Ellen and Miriam Leaman were both typing stencils so that copies could be made for everyone at the last evening of the conference. During the conference Deborah had constipation in spite of being given prune juice. This made Deborah more fussy and this was stressful for the parents. This improved after the conference.

After the conference, Ivan and Mary Ellen had some extra days in Mog some of which was to do the audit of the mission books and for Ivan to do some medical buying. They made their trip back to Margherita on Thursday, February 22. Raymond Martin drove them in the VW van along with Helen Landis and Dan Stoltzfus. He drove them to within one hundred kilometers of Margherita where Victor met them in a Land Rover to take them the rest of the way through the sand detour. The main road was still closed. Raymond Martin then returned to Mog and would later come to Margherita in the Pax Land Rover.

On Saturday, February 22, Ivan and Mary Ellen had to appear in court for the trial of their former house boy Hassan. They were dreading this trial and wished they had never reported the theft. Instead of swearing, Ivan said that they would affirm and that was not easily understood. The trial did proceed and Hassan was found guilty, which he denied in court although he had earlier confessed to the police. He was given a five month suspended sentence. This whole incident had created a lot of village false chatter: that the Leamans were wanting him to convert to Christianity and when he did not convert, they had charged him falsely with this theft. Mary Ellen wrote: "*One needs to learn to love the Somalis despite their pride and deceit – a hard thing for me – because I want to live and work with people I can trust.*"

Mary Ellen wrote on March 1: "*We are having a wedding here on the compound this coming Saturday. (The local elder's oldest daughter) is getting married to a thirty-five year old man. We are planning a wedding ceremony similar to our own. (The local elder) and his wife had been in Tanganyika a few years ago with Victors and had witnessed a wedding there. We are providing the wedding gown for (the bride) and her sister who will be the bridesmaid. Four of us women went downtown and bought some white dress material and white headgear. Viola [Dorsch] made the dress which looked quite nice. Most of the planning has been done by (the local leader). After the ceremony there will be a small feast of rice and coconut, sponge cake and tea.*"

On March 2 Rogers Oil Exploration Company began drilling for water on the mission compound. This was something that had been talked about for a long time. Previously a hand-dug well had reached only very salty water. The hope was that a deeper well might reach fresh water but it did not, only salt water.

On March 8 was Id, the big Muslim holiday that ended the month of Ramadan. During that month of fasting, a good Muslim was not to eat or drink from sunup to sundown. The Id holiday was very festive and children would go from door to door expecting a gift, much like the Halloween celebration in the USA. Mary Ellen would give cookies, candy or a tin can. The mission persons were invited to the District Commissioner's house for speeches and eats.

Ivan and Mary Ellen had received word that an MAF plane would be flying from Nairobi to Chismaio on March 20 bringing Dan Wenger and Jim Shelly. They wanted to visit Somalia before returning to the States. The plans were that they, with Dan Stoltzfus, would travel overland through Somalia to Ethiopia, which would be quite an adventure. When the Leamans learned of this MAF flight which could take them to Nairobi, they began plans for a vacation in East Africa. Mary Ellen wrote in the March 9 letter: *"The thought of a change is refreshing. We are eagerly looking forward to these weeks of rest."* The next letter was written on March 22 from the CMS (Church Missionary Society) Guest House in Nairobi. The MAF flight from Chismaio was slightly less than three hours, which was quite a contrast to the two day travel by road. Mary Ellen wrote of the first two days in Nairobi of shopping, reading and sleeping and the luxury of a tub bath. Ivan had a visit with the eye doctor in Nairobi and he reported that there was some spread of the keratitis on the cornea but that the spread seemed to have stopped. Ivan had read an article in TIME magazine about a new experimental eye medication for viral infections of the cornea. He wanted to write to Dr. Ripple to see if that would be available.

Ivan had been planning a trip from Kisumu, in western Kenya to Kampala, Uganda by the lake steamer on Lake Victoria. However, those plans changed when Hershey and Norma Leaman arrived in Nairobi after a vacation at the coast near Mombasa. They invited Ivan and Mary Ellen to travel with them in a newly purchased VW to Shirati. There was also a hearty invitation from Uncle Clyde Shenk to visit him and Aunt Alta at Kisaka. So they enjoyed another week in Nairobi area and did some things with Hershey and Norma. Little Larry was a *"sweet little fellow and giggled and he cooed to*

Deborah.” Because there were no accommodations at the CMS Guest House, the two couples needed to stay three nights at the Limuru Conference Center about twenty miles outside of Nairobi and at a higher elevation. It was very interesting to be there because there was a Peace Conference with delegates from all over Africa and Europe. Don Jacobs was the moderator. Although the Leamans were not part of this Peace Conference, they met various delegates such as Elmer Neufeld with MCC in the Congo, S. J. Hostetler from Ghana, Edwin Weaver from Nigeria and Daniel Sensenigs from Ethiopia. Deborah was enjoying the out-of-doors and became very excited at seeing various animals at Limuru such as sheep, chickens, a rabbit and a dog. She made Oh’s and Ah’s when she saw them.

While in Nairobi, Ivan and Mary Ellen received discouraging words about the current situation in Somalia. There had been suspension of the mission activity by the Somalia government. The trouble began when a young Somali Christian began passing out Christian literature that Bert Lind had given him. The American ambassador contacted Bert and was quite upset by all of it. The Mahaddei clinic was closed but the clinic at Margherita was still operating but the hospital was closed. The schools were not in session at this time. S.I.M. mission was not affected by this action against the Mennonite Mission.

On April 2, began the overland trip to Shirati with Hershey and Norma taking Ivan, Mary Ellen and Deborah in a recently purchased VW van. Deborah could sleep in the middle seat between her parents. Traveling with them were two African pastors from the Brethren-in-Christ mission in Rhodesia. Elam Stauffer was driving a small VW car and with him were missionary David Clemenhege and a third African pastor from Rhodesia. These African pastors wanted to visit Tanganyika Mennonite Church. The travel provided beautiful views of the mountains, the dairy farms and the tea plantations and seeing little towns on the way. The mileage between Nairobi and Shirati was 390 miles and half was a paved road. The road in most parts was very good. The most rough travel was the last thirty-five miles between Tarime and Shirati. At the half-way point the group stayed overnight in Kericho. The two Leaman couples stayed at The Tea Hotel, sharing a cottage with two spacious bedrooms and a shared bath. Each bedroom had a fireplace in which the house attendant built a fire to chase away the dampness and coolness of the rainy night. It might have been difficult for the USA parents of these couples to imagine these plush accommodations in the heart of Africa. The two couples had their evening meal and their breakfast at

the hotel. Ivan's memories of that stay in The Tea Hotel included the much fun-loving laughter provided by Hershey. It was a special privilege to travel with Hershey and Norma on this vacation.

The few days at Shirati included Ivan giving a short morning devotional to the hospital staff and making rounds with Dr. Lester. Ivan also gave a short message at the morning prayer meeting at the church. It was good to share some of the Somalia experiences with the church here so they could be in prayer. They had meals with Dr. Lester and Lois who had a very attractive way to prepare meals. They also ate with Hershey and Norma and with Alice Reber and Anna Martin.

They flew to Kisaki on April 7, Saturday morning, by MAF. At that point Aunt Alta was alone. There were radio communications between the other mission stations in Tanganyika with plans for Kisaki also. African Research Foundation (ARF) was placing a strong transmitter at Shirati so they could contact Nairobi at any time for medical consultations. Ivan spoke to Dr. Michael Wood, head of ARF in Nairobi, asking if there would be any possibility of similar radio transmission to Somalia. He suggested that Ivan make official application for such radio communications. When they arrived at Kisaki, Uncle Clyde was at Musoma for a church committee meeting but he came to Kisaki Saturday evening. On Sunday morning Ivan was asked to bring the message and he spoke from Galatians 5:1 "Freedom from Slavery." On Monday afternoon there was a special meeting where Ivan shared about the situation in Somalia. This was a good opportunity to call for prayer for Somalia. Ivan did visit the dispensary at Kisaki and was able to give some assistance to the young African in charge, helping to make some diagnoses and recommended treatment.

On Tuesday, Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta drove them to Bukiroba which took about five hours to go sixty-five miles so that gives an idea of the condition of the road. They were able to visit with some of the Robert Keener family. Robert was teaching at the Secondary School at the time. They also visited the girl's school where Rhoda Wenger and Grace Gehman were teaching. In the evening there was a picnic supper and then at about 8:00 p.m. they were driven to Musoma where after a brief greeting of the Elam and Grace Stauffer family, they boarded the Lake Steamer to travel to Kisumu, Kenya. That was an all-night ship ride, arriving at 7:00 a.m. They took a taxi to the Kisumu Hotel where they had arranged to meet Martin Franz and his wife, a German missionary family, who were with the Canadian Assemblies of God. Ivan and Mary Ellen had first met this couple two years before on

The Africa on the way to Somalia. They seemed overjoyed to see the Leamans as they rarely got guests. They gave up their only bedroom for the Leamans to sleep in. The Franz couple had two boys born since arriving in Kenya, twenty month old Peter and two month old Mark. There was no mention in the letter of what the conversation was between these two couples but surely there was the remembrance of little Peter John that Ivan and Mary Ellen lost a few weeks after arriving in Somalia.

The next morning Martin Franz drove the Leamans to the Church of God mission on the other side of Kisumu. Ivan and Mary Ellen had met the Goodricks of this mission at the CMS Guest house only a few weeks before. When they had heard that the Leamans would be in the Kisumu area, they invited them for a visit. Mary Ellen wrote of this visit: *"This mission is located in a lovely setting, surrounded by towering trees, flowers and well kept lawns. Their buildings are the most elaborate I've seen in any mission. Walking into the hospital was like walking into one in the States. On the Goodrick station there are nearly twenty missionaries and on the station on which the hospital is located there are even more. The Goodricks are engaged in Bible School work and they also train Africans in leather work. We had an interesting experience. We met eight young Somali men, half from Mog and half from Hargeisa, who were attending a tannery school in Kenya, and were brought by their instructor to see the leather craft work at the Goodricks."*

The Goodricks took the Leamans to Kisumu to meet Martin Franz who had offered to take them to Kericho. The roads were bad from rain and mud so they arrived late at 10:00 p.m. at The Tea Hotel. Cold platters were brought for all to eat. They had a tour of a tea plantation the next day. After the stay at Kericho, the Leamans returned to Nairobi by a small bus. *"In reviewing our travels, we figured that we had stayed at ten different places. It was interesting enough, although it meant a lot of packing and unpacking suitcases. It'll be good to be settled again. Deborah travels very well and has a hearty appetite these days. She's so active and is never still except when she's sleeping."*

In Mary Ellen's April 16 letter from the CMS Guest House she related a story to her mother that she previously had never wanted to share. Mary Ellen had taken two wrist watches to Somalia, a gold Hamilton wrist watch, which was a sixteenth birthday gift from her parents. The other wrist watch that she had taken to Somalia had no sentimental value but when the stem of that watch was missing she had asked her mother to find a stem at a jewelry

shop in the States. Mary Ellen's mother had asked about the Hamilton wrist watch so Mary Ellen told this sad story: *"I never wanted to tell you this because I felt that my watch (or I) met with such misfortune: my watch was stolen about two weeks after we arrived in Somalia – due to my carelessness. On our first trip to Margherita we had stopped at the half way mark, where there is a little restaurant, and we got something to eat. Afterwards, I washed my hands as Ivan poured water from a jug for me. He suggested that I take off my watch so that water wouldn't splash on it. I did and I left it lying...having forgotten about it. We hadn't driven far at all when I suddenly missed my watch. We promptly turned around and drove back to the place where I had left it. But it was gone and of course no one there knew anything about it ??? I felt bad that I had been so thoughtless. Yes, I have many bad memories of that first trip to Margherita...the loss of the watch almost nothing in comparison with our loss which followed."*

The next letter by Mary Ellen was written from Mogadiscio on Easter Sunday, April 22. They had arrived by commercial air flight on April 19 and were staying for a few days in the guest house on the mission compound. The mission activity was practically at a standstill. At the church service only Americans came to attend the worship service. Somalis were not supposed to attend. Ibrahim Farah had recently married a beautiful young Somali woman from Jigiga, Ethiopia. She was from his Bartiri tribe and although not a Christian she respected him for his religion. Ibrahim took the mission group out to eat at a restaurant. The mission group had gone together to buy wedding gifts which was a two quart aluminum tea pot, a service for six of stainless steel tableware, two Turkish towels and a round tray. They seemed very appreciative of these gifts.

Ivan and Mary Ellen returned to Margherita on Wednesday, April 25, accompanied by Raymond Martin and nurse Miriam Leaman. That trip was very eventful. First, there was a broken spring due to having too heavy a load so after repair of the broken spring, Helen Landis' two heavy trunks were sent back to Mog. The big problem was later when the Land Rover got stuck in the mud shortly before the sand detour. There were no tools but the hands to dig the vehicle out of the mud. Sticks were gathered to put under the wheels to give traction and after about an hour of this tedious work, the vehicle was out of the mud and able to continue traveling, at times through terrible water holes, but somehow they made it with thanks to God for bringing them safely through in sixteen hours!

The hospital had been closed for some weeks by the government order but shortly after Ivan returned to the medical work, a woman was brought who could not swallow. On examination it was discovered that she had a very large abscess next to the tonsil. This woman needed hospitalization for IV fluids and antibiotic injections so after presenting this need to the local authorities, permission was given to admit this woman for treatment. The woman recovered with the treatment and the abscess was drained. Ivan never had a similar case and it seemed providential that this unusual case presented at that time which allowed the hospital to reopen. More patients were then admitted and no questions were raised as the hospital quietly reopened.

Nurse Fae Miller was preparing to leave for furlough and there were many farewell meals in her honor. One of the meals was at the local restaurant for a meal of “injera and watt.” This meal ended with Ivan being called to the hospital to care for a forty-five year old woman. The woman’s cervix was fully dilated but the baby was not coming down and it was thought the woman had a transverse presentation so it was decided to do a C-section, the first for Ivan in Margherita. All three nurses were in attendance plus



After prayer, Ivan begins C-section surgery



Ivan delivers baby by C-section



◀ *Nurse Fae Miller resuscitates newborn baby*

▶ *Parents with C-section newborn
“Alhamdulillah”
“Praise the Lord”*



someone else had a camera and took a series of pictures to document this rather historic event. At first the baby didn't breathe but Fae worked with the new born baby boy and finally he gave out cries. The mother and baby were doing well and there were praises to God. The family was very happy and it was hoped that this would help to restore good community relations.

After the hospital was closed by government order, the employees had been laid off temporarily. The two highest paid hospital employees, of whom reports were heard that they had been giving aid to the anti-mission agitation in the community, stirred up trouble again by going to the District Commissioner and demanding that the mission give them severance pay so they could leave their employment. This all occurred while Ivan was on vacation so Victor Dorsch had to take care of this severance settlement, which was not a pleasant task. These two employees left a few days after the Leamans returned, but before they left they came to all the houses to give their farewells. This was all very sad because these were two promising young men who had begun as key employees in the hospital. The Leamans often have reflected on whether they could have handled the situation in a better way. Ivan did have a nice contact with the one former employee some months later and visited him at his place of work in Mogadiscio, which Ivan remembers that he was working at the TB hospital.

Clinics were very small at this time, averaging only twenty to thirty patients a day. But the good in this was that this gave nurse Miriam Leaman a chance to become oriented in clinic work before being flooded by too many patients. It would take time for hospital activity to build up again but that also was a good thing so there could be profiting from past mistakes and changes could be made more easily. Helen Landis and Miriam were taking advantage of this time to reorganize things. There was a medical staff meeting with discussion on how to operate the hospital more efficiently.

The church services on Sunday continued as before. The national believers from Jamama and from some villages began walking to come for the worship services in the Dorsch house. Osman usually translated for these services. These times of worship were important for these national Christians. One Sunday Ivan had the message that day on the tabernacle worship of the Old Testament. He illustrated it with some drawings. After the service there was a shared common meal provided by both Viola and Mary Ellen.

Deborah was learning some local language. When someone appeared at someone's door, one announced the presence by saying "Hodi" so Deborah has started using that word when she came to a door. She had taken a great

liking for dolls. Ivan's sister Mary had sent a doll which she had made and it was interesting in watching Deborah "mothering" the baby doll.

On May 23 Ivan wrote a letter to his brother James who was approaching his sixteenth birthday. He wrote: *"Dear James, I guess you will be getting your license to drive. This will be one dream come true. I'm sure you have other dreams, too. I feel the Lord has been very good to me in bringing my dreams to fulfillment, that of having a wife and family and of serving as a missionary doctor. As you trust God, your dreams will be realized also according to God's plan for your life."*

In that May 23 letter Ivan described a very unusual and sad medical situation: *"Last night a lady was brought who was in labor and had delivered a baby except for the head. The baby was dead when they brought the mother. The baby had an abnormally large head filled with water (called hydrocephalus). We needed to put the woman to sleep with ether to perform an operation on the baby's head to let the water out so we could remove the baby. The woman is doing well and the family is pleased. We do praise the Lord that we can help in these difficulties."*

Mary Ellen's letter of May 24 gave more details of the hospital work. Hospital activity had increased since the end of the Muslim Arafo holiday. She gave greater details of the delivery of the hydrocephalic baby from the



Kadiga Barre was a key employee as a nurse aide



Hassan Barre, a brother to Kadiga, becomes a valued employee. Here Hassan poses beside a boy who has been cleared of intestinal ascaris worms after medication.

Arab woman. She stated that there were several cases of severe dysentery treated in the hospital. A new hospital employee was Hassan Barre who had been a house boy first for Norma Leaman and then for the mission women. He was hired to be the translator for Ivan and to be trained as a lab technician. He was showing much enthusiasm for hospital work and Ivan was finding it a pleasure to teach him. His sister Kadiga was working in the hospital as an aide in nursing. Abdullahi Sidi was to be trained in Central Supply, learning sterilizing and operating room (OR) techniques. The mission had made up a uniform work contract which all employees needed to sign. This contract was based on the Somalia Labor Code which gave rules for pay, holidays and hours of work, etc.

In the May 28 letter Mary Ellen talked about the frustration of learning the Somali language. She said she was tired of just getting the gist of what people say. She wanted to be able to carry on an intelligent conversation. She was going to the village frequently and was hoping these contacts would help her with the language. She visited an Arab lady who had been to the Leaman house one time. Deborah enjoyed these visits also and as they visited, they attracted quite a following of children when Mary Ellen had her along.

In the letter of June 10 Mary Ellen described the flower bed which she had helped to develop. There were two oleander bushes and two hibiscus bushes which were producing lovely red flowers. There was a fransy pansy (frangipani) tree. A big exciting development was that Victor had installed telephones in the mission houses and the hospital. These phones were the old style with crank handles with a code of a certain amount of rings, long or short, for whom the call was intended. These phones had been donated by someone in the States. This was a great addition and saved many steps between the doctor's house, the nurses' house and the hospital. Deborah would become quite excited and run to the phone when it rang. The hospital activity was booming with five deliveries in the past week but one was a stillborn. One of the deliveries was of an Italian woman and another was the wife of a prominent man in the village. There were no little beds for babies so the hospital was using a small crib bed from Viola, a basket that had been used for Deborah and a blue bath tub.

The letter of June 27 by Mary Ellen gave a detailed account of an unusual admission of two patients to the hospital. Here are her words: *"Today about noon two burn patients came to the hospital. This really was of great concern to all of us because these two burn victims were Ibrahim Farah and Raymond Martin. After some delays they were finally able to*

get to Noleye a few days ago with the intention of getting things started in the way of building. Today was to have been the day when building began. They had the workmen all lined up. Early this morning they were pouring gasoline from a large container into a smaller one. In the process some gas sprayed in the direction of a nearby kerosene lamp, causing a flash gasoline fire which enveloped them. Raymond's clothes were on fire and he rolled on the ground to smother the flames but finally ripped some of his clothes off. He received severe burns of both arms. Ibrahim's one foot is severely burned. Of the two, Ibrahim is suffering the most pain. Ivan judges the burns are second degree (and maybe some third degree). Raymond and Ibrahim drove from Noleye to Margherita over seventy miles of bumps and once they were stuck and had to dig themselves out which must have greatly added to the pain of their burns. Raymond tells of how they talked and sang as they drove, each trying to be encouragement to the other. After they arrived here, their burns were cleaned and dressed. That was a long, tedious procedure. They are occupying hospital beds in the ward. Already they have had some visits from some of their Somali friends. The way Raymond talks, this experience seems to have great spiritual significance for him. He said that he knows why this happened—so he could learn the book of Philippians. He mentioned one verse in the book of Philippians which speaks of the suffering of Christ.”

On July 2, Ivan and Mary Ellen traveled to Mogadiscio with Victor and Viola. Before leaving the hospital work, Ivan had redressed the burns of Raymond and Ibrahim and he was pleased with what he saw and was hopeful that skin grafting would not be necessary. The reason for the trip to Mog was so that the men could meet as the recently formed mission council. Merlin Grove and Harold Reed reported that they had a good visit with the Somalia prime minister on July 2. The prime minister said that the mission must not do anything that would arouse public sentiment against the mission. He said that the Somali government was happy to have the mission in Somalia but that if much reaction develops against the mission, the government would need to stop the mission for the peace of the land. But of course the mission believed that it was the extremists and radical Muslims, stirred up by the Egyptians making propaganda, which was causing the trouble and not the general public. Ivan wrote: *“Please pray that we would be given wisdom to move as God directs.”* The prime minister promised that by July 5 word would be given about the reopening of the mission schools and that permission was received on July 5.

Mary Ellen wrote two air form letters to her parents on July 11. She reported that after the mission council meeting they had traveled to Mahad-dei and had a good visit with the Wesselhoeft family over the weekend. On Monday July 9, they headed back to Margherita, a trip that took seventeen hours due to mud, bumps and detours. In the July 11 letter Mary Ellen reported that several months ago Ivan had read in TIME magazine about a new eye medication that was reported to be useful for corneal viral infection. He had spoken to Dr. Morris, the eye doctor in Nairobi, about this new treatment. He was not aware of the new medication but at Ivan's request he wrote a description of Ivan's eye infection which Ivan mailed to Dr. Ripple. To Ivan's surprise, Dr. Ripple had mailed the new eye mediation to Ivan and advised that this new eye drop be administered while under the observation of an ophthalmologist since there could possibly be some complications. It so happened that the Harold Reed family was traveling overland to Nairobi for vacation and were leaving from Margherita on Wednesday, July 11. Ivan spoke to Victor Dorsch and asked if he could travel with the Reeds and start the new eye drop medication in Nairobi under the observation of Dr. Morris. Victor agreed to that proposal so Ivan was on his way to Nairobi on July 11, traveling with the Reeds.

In Ivan's letter of July 16 written from Nairobi, he said that he had taken a room at the YMCA and had started the new eye drop treatment on his thirtieth birthday on July 13. While in Nairobi he planned to do medical business and to learn of new medical advances. It was medically refreshing for Ivan to be in Nairobi. He said he would be ordering an x-ray unit for the Margherita hospital since it had been approved by the mission council.

Unknown to Ivan, on that same Monday afternoon at 4:30 p.m., July 16, a very tragic event was occurring in Mogadiscio when Merlin Grove was stabbed to death by a zealous Muslim. This was what Mary Ellen wrote to her parents two days later on July 18 from Mogadiscio: *"On Tuesday morning at 11:00 o'clock, Viola called me on the telephone, asking if I would come over right away. She said she was calling the others together too. When I went over and heard the message that Harold Stauffer had sent via police radio to Chismaio, I was smitten. We had a prayer service right there. What a consolation to be able to call on God. We then decided that we should go to Mogadiscio. Helen (Landis) felt she should stay because there was a very seriously ill man in the hospital and it was felt that Raymond should stay too so she would not be alone on the station. At 1:15 p.m. we were on our way to Mogadiscio. We arrived after twelve hours at 1:30 a.m."*

After arriving in Mogadiscio, the Margherita people heard the full story. On Monday evening, July 16, Merlin Grove and Harold Stauffer were in the church office registering students for the opening of the middle school which would be opening in Mogadiscio as a temporary location until the middle school construction was completed at Villagio Duca. An older Somali man had entered the area outside the main mission office where Merlin was registering students. Without warning this man pulled a dagger which had been concealed under his clothing and he stabbed Merlin repeatedly. The students were frozen but Harold Stauffer, who was inside the office, when he heard Merlin's screams immediately ran for help. The man pursued Harold. In the meantime Merlin's wife, Dorothy, was walking up the driveway to see what had happened. Harold told her to run, but she couldn't get away and the man stabbed her and then he continued to pursue Harold but he was able to get away. After Dorothy was stabbed, she was able to walk into the Stauffer house and said to Connie, Harold's wife, "I've been stabbed. Merlin is dead. I might die too, but I am willing to die for these people."

Dorothy Grove was taken to Martini Hospital where an Italian surgeon performed a four hour operation. Providentially, there was also an anesthesiologist doctor who happened to be in Mogadiscio. Dorothy was extremely low before surgery with no blood pressure but this doctor was able to begin blood transfusions which saved her life. She came through the surgery quite well. Anna Lutz had come from Mahaddei and was assisting in giving nursing care. There was also a nurse from SIM who helped with bedside nursing. When Miriam Leaman arrived from Margherita, there were then three missionary nurses who gave twenty-four hour nursing care. There was a suggestion from SIM that Dorothy be transferred to Nairobi for care but the doctors at the Martini Hospital felt that she should not be moved and especially not in a small plane.

When Harold Reed and Ivan received word in Nairobi about this tragic event, they immediately made arrangements to fly to Mogadiscio by MAF plane which they did and arrived in Mog at 5:40 p.m. on Tuesday. Ivan had been given word by phone for some medicines that were needed which he brought from Nairobi. After Ivan talked with fellow missionaries, had seen and talked with Dorothy and had talked with the doctors caring for Dorothy, he was satisfied with the care she was getting and agreed that she should remain there. The hospital was running low on IVs and some medicines that were needed so Ivan was arranging for these things to be sent from Nairobi.

SIM had helped in the arrangements for Merlin's funeral which had been held on Tuesday, July 17 at 4:00 p.m. The folks who were able to attend said it was a wonderful service. One of the songs was, *"Lift Your Glad Voices."* Merlin's body was laid to rest beside Peter John. Mary Ellen wrote to her parents: *"Please do not worry about us, because we are in the hands of God and He will not permit anything that is not in His will. Do pray that this will open the hearts of other Somalis to God's love and pray for the guilty one."* Ivan wrote to his family: *"I want to assure you that God is giving us peace and there is no feeling of panic on the part of the mission group. In the [Somalia] government paper there was full description of the tragedy with a strong condemnation of the religious fanaticism that led to this stabbing. The American embassy said that he felt the government was courageous in its statement in the paper."* However, the Egyptian's mosque in Mogadiscio was blaring out the message that the Somalis should not forget how Christians killed Muslims during the Crusades!

In the July 24 letters, the report was that Dorothy was improving. Ivan was checking in on her four to five times a day and was in consultation with the Italian doctors. The Mennonite nurses continued to provide twenty-four hour nursing care for Dorothy. Ivan helped to arrange for a chest x-ray. There was a collection of fluid below



Victor having a Bible study class. After Merlin's death, there was a definite increase in the numbers of Somalis who requested Bible classes, particularly in Mogadishu.

the diaphragm that was drained by needle by one of the Italian doctors. On Sunday morning, six days after the tragedy, Harold Reed and Harold Stauffer had an interview with the Somalia Prime Minister. He was very sorry for the tragedy and expressed his sympathy. They were doing an investigation to see if it was an organized plan. They had given warnings to all of the mosques that such religious intolerance should not exist. He offered police protection when the mission opened the school in Mogadiscio. When Merlin's son Bruce heard of the good interview he said, "This is why Daddy had

to die, so the government would be softer to us.” Everyone was marveling at the courage and maturity of the Grove children.

By the end of July, Dorothy was showing steady improvement, so it was decided that Ivan could return to Margherita. There was an MAF plane that had brought three Tanganyika single missionary women for a visit in Somalia and after a stop at Margherita, the plane picked up Helen Landis who would help Miriam Leaman in providing nursing care for Dorothy. This MAF plane provided a way for Ivan and his family to return to Margherita by plane at the end of July. Since it was a six-seater plane, Bertha Beachy and Anna Lutz were able to also travel in the plane. Mary Ellen and Deborah were squeezed in the back two seats and with suitcases so they had limited view out the windows. Bertha and Anna in the middle two seats enjoyed picking out familiar sights. Ivan sat in the seat next to the pilot and had the best seat for viewing the sights. The plane ride was only one hour and forty-five minutes, a big advantage from road travel. Anna Lutz traveled on to Nairobi for her vacation. This left Ivan alone at the hospital without his mission nurses. However, he was very thankful for Kadiga Barre and her brother Hassan Barre who were so good to work with.

After Dorothy was able to be discharged from the hospital in August 3, Helen Landis returned to Margherita. The plans were for Miriam Leaman to stay in Mogadiscio until September 10 at which time she would be going on vacation so Ivan would have only one mission nurse for some time. Dorothy improved steadily and was able to leave Mogadiscio on September 17. Her sister had come from Canada to accompany her home. Dorothy said that before Merlin’s death, they had ordered an organ to be sent to Somalia and it was now at Salunga. She asked if Mary Ellen would be interested in it and she definitely was so Harold Stauffer instructed Salunga to send it with the next shipment. Mary Ellen was very eagerly awaiting the arrival of the organ. Victor and Viola had left on August 20 for a three-week vacation and then they were to have a three-week period for Swahili language study. This added to the responsibilities for Ivan and Mary Ellen at Margherita. In addition to the medical work, Ivan would have to give leadership to the worship services. Mary Ellen, in addition to overseeing the hospital finances, had the responsibility for the station books and also to teach Victor’s arithmetic class. The clinic receptionist clerk had left to go to Mogadiscio so this meant that Mary Ellen was spending many mornings at the clinic as the receptionist. She was glad to have Fatuma as a very good house helper so she was free to spend time at the clinic.

Mary Ellen's September 5 letter reported a very tragic and sad event. That morning Ivan was called from the breakfast table to go to the hospital because a thirty year old Italian man, Ugo Fagan, was brought in at 8:00 a.m. He was a banana plantation employer and at 7:00 a.m. he had been attacked by angry Somali employees who had been laid off. He had been struck by a machete at the back of his neck at the base of his skull and was bleeding profusely when he arrived at the hospital. Ivan tried to save his life and started an IV and was able to give a unit of blood but the bleeding was too severe and he died at 9:00 a.m. This caused great commotion and many people gathered at the hospital, including many Italians, policemen and Somali government officials, including the Governor of Lower Juba. Ivan remembered this Italian man who was killed because he had previously brought one of his Somali employees who had asthma. He had seemed like a good person who had interest in the welfare of his employees. He had been in Somalia for ten years and could speak Somali. This was a tragic happening for the Italian community who numbered two hundred persons in Lower Juba. A memory that Ivan recalled was that he heard one of the Somalis say "Ilahai wa joga" which means "God is here." That underscored the Muslim thinking that all events, good and evil, come from God. Some days later Ivan and Mary Ellen attended the funeral for this man at the small Catholic chapel at Ionte. It was a very large funeral with about one hundred Italians. Somali government officials had attended which included the District Commissioner and the Governor. The burial was in Chismaio. Ivan and Mary Ellen prayed that this tragic happening would show the need for God.

In the beginning of September, Raymond Martin had brought Lena Horning to Margherita. She would be taking Bertha Beachy's place as teacher. Everyone was happy to welcome Lena, this very nice person. Raymond had received the nickname "Bash-Bash" which means "plenty." It also can be used as a greeting and Raymond had used it a lot so the Somalis gave him this nickname and the missionaries were now using it also. Bash-bash was spending a lot of time in the village talking to Somali men and so he was learning the language much faster than most new missionaries. He was excited about his assignment for Noleye and was always eager to return to that nomadic settlement along middle Juba. The Chester Kurtz family had arrived in Mogadiscio and Chester was asked to stay in Mog for now to help with the Middle School program. Eventually they would be giving leadership to the Noleye project. They had a daughter Marianne six months younger than Deborah so Mary Ellen was eager for them to come to Lower Juba for Deborah to meet her.

The medical work kept Ivan busy with only Helen Landis as his nurse. He had been scheduling surgery and a recent operation was a hernia repair which proved to be very difficult because there had been a previous repair and this caused a lot of scar tissue to deal with. Ivan had done a spinal anesthesia but because the operation was so long the spinal effect wore off and Helen Landis needed to give ether anesthesia. Ivan did not have trained persons to assist him so Helen was trying to give instructions to the untrained Somali assistants while at the same time giving ether anesthesia. Needless to say, everyone was relieved when the four hour operation was over. The patient did well post-operatively.



Two new born babies: Miriam Leaman on the left with a Somali baby and Helen Landis on the right with an Italian baby

It was good to have Miriam Leaman return from her vacation so there were now two nurses for the very busy hospital and clinic work. Mary Ellen's October letters told of the increased activity at the clinic with at times up to ninety to ninety-five patients a day, with many Arab patients coming from Chismaio. She was still helping as the clinic clerk but was hoping to train someone to do that work. There were more admissions to the hospital. Ivan was doing more surgery which included hernia repairs and hemorrhoid surgery. Abdullahi Sidi was still being trained in Central Supply, operating the large sterilizer, and assisting in surgery.

In October Ivan was having rather severe pain in his chest which was aggravated by coughing. He thought it might be pleurisy. It persisted for several weeks so when he was in Mogadiscio for mission council meeting, he decided to see a doctor. On examination, the doctor determined that the pain came from the liver so it was believed that he had hepatitis. Some weeks earlier, Ivan had operated on a man with a liver infection so he may have been infected with hepatitis at that time. Many years later, blood tests in the USA revealed that he had a past history of hepatitis B. Fortunately his hepatitis B infection never progressed to develop into chronic hepatitis.

In Ivan's October 24 letter, he reported on the hospital work. The mission board wanted the medical work to operate in the black. That was a challenge but increased activity was bringing in more income. There still

was no x-ray although that had been approved two years earlier. A number of things had delayed the purchase - the mission closure, Merlin Grove's death and now the mission board was advising to hold off the purchase until finances improved at the home office. Mary Ellen was in charge of keeping the record of the medical statistics and the income. In her October 31 letter she reported that October was a record month with sixty-three admissions to the hospital, seventeen of which were for bilharzia treatment. There were two deliveries. There were ten operations, five minor and five major. Ivan called a surgery major if it required spinal anesthesia. There were 1,400 outpatients seen. The total income was 4,000 shillings (seven shillings per dollar). Mary Ellen wrote that the hospital was operating in the black which was better than anticipated.

On November 21 Ivan began an operation on a woman whom he thought had an ovarian tumor. However, he was surprised to discover that she had a fibroid uterus. After much contemplation, he made the decision to do a hysterectomy which was a first for him. This was a long operation, three to four hours – and everyone was feeling weak by the end. Mary Ellen wrote: *“But God was with them and we are grateful that the woman has done well post-operatively.”*

Beginning in December 1962 the post office address changed from Margherita to Jamama, the Somali name for the town. When the mission hospital was opened in March 1961, it was named Jamama Hospital so that was noteworthy that the mission hospital led the way in using the Jamama name!

Ivan wrote a letter on December 20 and here are his words: *“Christmas is a happy time [but] there is a feeling of sadness as we realize that we can not share the happiness of our Christmas with our many Somali friends. The [local believers] will all be invited here for Christmas day when we will sing, worship and eat together. There is a question whether we should have a Christmas program this year knowing the past difficulties. We can never forget that our presence here is a “thorn in the flesh” to many people. This is why we feel sadness at Christmas time, but then isn't this what Christ experienced in this world. He loved the world and yet was rejected by it. Our happiness needs to be an inner peace as we personally experience the joy of Christmas and we trust that will be felt by others.*

We are so busy these days so that we are beginning to count the days until vacation. [We plan to be gone from January 23 to February 23.] We get so many people who come from a long way, many from Chismaio. Many have chronic complaints of abdominal pain. This usually requires lab exams

of stool and urine. The frustrating thing is that the people from Chismaio could have those tests done there. And yet we can hardly turn them away. I would rather care for acute illnesses and emergencies. We had one such case two days ago. A lady was brought who had been in labor for some time and she had only an arm delivered. This means the baby is in a transverse position and almost always requires a C-section. We closed the clinic and began preparation for a C-section. When I opened her we found that the lower uterus was very black and getting ready to rupture. After delivering the baby which had died some hours before, I knew we should do an immediate hysterectomy or the woman would die of infection. So we did this with God's help and I say this humbly and sincerely. She was on the operating table from 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and we were all exhausted and also had not had any dinner. Since the operation the woman seems to be doing well. She was still on IV fluids and had a tube draining her stomach. My evenings are usually taken up with helping with laboratory work. Hassan Barre is trained now to do most of it but I have to help him, particularly after surgery since he usually is my assistant in surgery. Abdullahi Sidi is doing a very good job in his work as chief operating and sterilizing technician. He often serves as a scrub nurse or a circulating nurse. Helen Landis has done a good job in training him."

Mary Ellen's letter of December 27 gives a detailed report of how Christmas was celebrated by the Margherita mission family in 1962: "On Saturday evening [December 22] at 7:00 p.m. a program was held in the school. We as a group sang several songs and James and Shirley sang as a duet. Lena read the Christmas story in simple English and then Victor told of the various ways in which we celebrate Christmas and why. The District Commissioner and another high-ranking official were present for the program. They asked permission to speak afterwards and expressed appreciation for the program and gave their Christmas wishes to us. On Sunday we as a mission group had our "family" dinner. It was held at our house again this year. We had the traditional ham which was a gift from [Mary Ellen's parents], baked potatoes, baked beans, muffins with real butter and home-made jelly, olives, carrot strips, red beet eggs, jellied cranberries with whipped cream and walnuts on top. After supper we exchanged gifts. On Monday we had a party for the mission employees. There were out-door and in-door games. We played three-deep, volley ball, tug of war, and relays. Afterwards we went to the restaurant for the Ethiopian meal of injire and watt. There was a lot of laughter and fun. On Christmas Day we had the Christmas service

and feast for the [local believers] and for those who attend our services. There were forty including the missionaries. Victor moderated the service and nationals spoke and we sang many carols. The meal was rice, goat meat, beef, bread, mangoes, cookies and tea. We missionaries caroled for each other on three different nights. The last night the rest surprised us by having an anniversary party for us. The sixth anniversary symbol is metal so we received nails, iron tablets and a padlock (very clever).”

Chapter 5

(1963)

The next letter written was January 2, 1963. On New Year's Eve, Ivan and Miriam were in the hospital for a delivery and came to the house just before midnight. Shortly after midnight, Lena and Miriam sang "We Wish You a Happy New Year" outside our bedroom window. They with Deborah then accompanied Lena and Miriam to the Dorsch house to sing for them. In the January 9 letter, Mary Ellen announces to her parents that she is pregnant with a due date of beginning of August. She gave the detailed itinerary of their vacation plans of leaving on January 23 with an overland trip to Garissa, then to the Mombasa area, then to the Mt. Kilimanjaro area, then to Amboseli Game Park and then to Nairobi and driving back to Somalia about February 23.

The next letter was written from Jamama on January 23. Ivan had delayed leaving today for vacation because Lena had been sick and he didn't want to leave until she showed improvement. She was much improved on January 23 so the plans were to leave the next day which they did. They had a good road trip and made it in two days to Mombasa with the only trouble being two flat tires. Ivan had practiced repairing flat tires in case he would need to do that. On this trip when he had a flat tire he was able to get to a garage for repair before he had the second flat!

The next mail to Mary Ellen's parents was a post card mailed from Shelly Beach, three miles south of Mombasa. The beach and ocean was the big attraction as a vacation spot but they traveled into Mombasa every day crossing the ferry. Mombasa was a good place to buy curios at a good price. On Sunday they attended the Mombasa Gospel Tabernacle with a varied audience of Africans, Indians and white persons. When they left Mombasa they drove through a large national game park where they saw a lot of elephants. One crossed the road just ahead of them. Deborah was very

excited at seeing the elephants and quickly learned the name. Ivan said she was quite a chatterbox.

The letter on February 3 was written by Ivan from Marangu hotel at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro. Ivan had a desire to climb this mountain but had not found anyone to climb with him. That was likely good because of the fact that he had hepatitis recently, and his physical condition may not have been the best. They did drive up as far as they could which was at 9,000 feet. The mountain is 19,565 feet in elevation.

In the hotel Ivan saw a large group of Egyptians who may have been there for a conference. Ivan thought that they may be mapping a strategy for Africa. From observation in Somalia they have a zeal to spread Islam but the motivation may be more political than religious. Ivan also referred to the recent changes in Somalia where the government was considering changing the constitution so that the religious clause may be modified to make it unlawful to propagate any religion other than Islam. Ivan was planning on flying from Nairobi to Mogadiscio on February 11 with the MAF plane which was flying Orrie Miller for the Somalia mission council meeting. Since this was such a crucial time for the mission in Somalia, Ivan didn't want to miss this meeting. He would be leaving Mary Ellen and Deborah at the A.I.M. guest house in Nairobi for a few days. Ivan arrived back in Nairobi by MAF after a few days in Mogadiscio for the mission council meeting.

The next letter was written on February 14 from Nairobi. Mary Ellen described the visit to Ngorogoro Crater where they saw many animals such as elephants, gazelles, wildebeests, hyenas and zebras which Deborah called "Deborahs." It was very rainy and cold in the log cabin which was not pleasant. However, the meals in the lodge were excellent. In the February 19 letter Ivan was busy buying medical supplies and Mary Ellen was doing shopping. This was how she described a most frightening experience in town: *"I lost Deborah. She slips away from me so easily when I'm in stores but usually she waits outside the store. Today she went wandering up the street and when I came from the store she was nowhere to be seen. I walked up the street and down the street and asked in every store whether they had seen a little girl, but no one had. I finally retraced my steps and then I found our little blondie in the arms of a lady. Deborah was quite calm although the lady was ready to take her to the police station. I was quite near panic. I so feared she had run into the street. My heart offered many prayers of thanksgiving when she was found."*

Ivan and Mary Ellen, with Deborah, arrived safely back in Jamama on February 24. They did have another rather frightening experience at Garissa, a custom point in Kenya on the way home. They arrived at Garissa at 9:00 p.m. and a policeman came out and pointed his gun and spoke in a very gruff voice asking who they were. Ivan gave their identity several times and then more police came out and they were friendly. There had been disturbance a few days before with fighting between Somalis and Bantus. This area was a contested area. Somalia would like to claim that this northeastern part of Kenya should belong to Somalia. They slept the night in their Land Rover vehicle and felt safe under the protection of the Kenyan police. They then had a problem with the Somali custom place which was Belesc Cogani. Because the Land Rover was full of things from Nairobi, Ivan was told he needed to drive to customs in Chismaio that night even though the customs there would not open until the next day. But Ivan knew the customs man in Chismaio and went to his house and he was able to unload the things at the custom place and told to come back another day to clear from customs. So they all were able to sleep in Jamama that Saturday night.

The next day on Sunday was a day of rest but also was special because the portable organ that Merlin Grove had ordered had now arrived in Jamama and Mary Ellen had great enjoyment and relaxation playing the organ. She was very pleased with the sound and appearance. Mary Ellen would think of Merlin Grove when she played it. After two days at Jamama, they then headed for Mogadiscio on Tuesday afternoon for the annual missionary conference. Miriam stayed at Jamama to keep things going at the hospital. On Thursday evening at the conference Mary Ellen led the singing and Ivan spoke. The theme of the conference was "Learning of Christ." Mary Ellen wrote that the fellowship and messages meant a lot to her.

Leota Wesselhoeft had delivered baby girl Carol in a Mogadiscio hospital the day before conference started. She had a fast delivery but the midwife was not able to deliver the placenta and she lost a lot of blood. Carl was trying to find the obstetrician but it was difficult to arouse him at that hour but he did eventually come and deliver the placenta. She had lost a lot of blood and Carl said she looked quite ashen when she came from the delivery room. Barbara Reed had chosen to have her delivery at the Jamama hospital and had made plans to travel with the Leamans to Jamama. Some had expressed concern about her having the baby on the way but Ivan had sterile supplies along in case that happened. But the travel to Jamama was uneventful. Barbara's due date was two weeks away but the baby came

about a week early. Barbara had a very fast delivery of a six and a half pound baby girl Gwendolyn on Friday, March 8. Mother and baby were discharged to the Dorsch's house where she was staying. Barbara's husband Harold had traveled from Mogadiscio with Victor and arrived the next day on Saturday, March 9, and imagine his surprise when Barbara met him at the door of the Dorsch house holding the new little daughter.



Barbara Reed holds new daughter Gwendolyn with son Galen and daughter Grace standing guard

While Ivan was in Nairobi, he had arranged for Dr. Morris, his eye doctor, to come to Jamama on the MAF plane that brought the Dorsch children home for the Easter vacation, the weekend of March 29. The plan was for Dr. Morris to do cataract surgery on Saturday. Dr. Morris was a former A.I.M. missionary. However, in March Somalia broke off diplomatic relations with Britain due to conflict over the Northern Frontier District of Kenya which was heavily populated by Somalis and which Somalia felt should be part of Somalia. For this reason the British embassy felt that Dr. Morris should not travel to Somalia. This was a big disappointment since about twenty-five patients were hoping for cataract surgery.

Ivan was caring for an Indian lady who, after delivering two weeks before, had developed muscular weakness all over her body. This was a rare situation and Ivan remembers the case as Guillain Barre syndrome. She eventually recovered.

The Mennonite missionaries now had Russian neighbors who moved into the houses next door that had formerly housed the American ICA workers. The word was that the Russians may develop a collective farm in Lower Juba and may open a meat processing plant in Chismaio. Mary Ellen went with Viola to visit the four Russian women neighbors and Viola took a pan of hot rolls as a gift. The Russian women were friendly. Mary Ellen wrote that Deborah was not at home much



Viola Dorsch, Mary Ellen Leaman, Catherine Kurtz with their three daughters Joy, Deborah, and Marianna

since she was spending a lot of time playing with the other little girls on the compound, Joy Dorsch and Marianna Kurtz. Ivan had bought a monkey for Deborah which was providing entertainment. He would make a funny noise, sounding almost like a chicken.

On Easter weekend of March 29, the MAF plane did bring the Dorsch children home and also brought Dr. Dorcas Stoltzfus who wanted to visit Jamama since she had been asked to replace Ivan as the doctor at Jamama when they go on furlough in 1964. Gordon Marshall, the MAF pilot, stayed over the weekend. An Arab boy had brought a lot of shrimp which Mary Ellen did not know how to prepare but Gordon did know how so they were put into a bucket of boiling water for ten minutes. The whole station met for a delicious shrimp meal, served cold in their shells. Mary Ellen had prepared a hot sauce. Gordon had been asked to bring a selection of fresh vegetables from Nairobi which was a great treat.

There was an unusual accident on the day that the MAF plane came in to land at the Jamama airstrip. Chester and Ivan went to meet the plane and Fatuma, Mary Ellen's house girl, went along. On the return trip, apparently not aware of the danger, Fatuma jumped off the moving Land Rover truck and was knocked unconscious. She was semi-conscious for a day or so in the hospital but thankfully she did recover completely.

On April 29 Dr. Lester and Lois Eshleman came on the MAF plane that had come to return the Dorsch children to the Mara Hills missionary children's



Lester and Lois Eshleman, pictured on far left after Sunday morning worship. Chester Kurtz on far right. Deborah held by friend Osman and her playmate is held by her father, the local leader.



Fatuma, the much loved house helper with Mary Ellen and Deborah

school. Dr. Lester came to help with surgery and Lois was able to give some training in how to give anesthesia with an ether machine. There was an Arab lady who needed a hysterectomy and all seemed to go well with the surgery and anesthesia but some time after the surgery she suddenly went into a cardiac arrest and had no pulse. She was given an injection of adrenaline and then had a pulse but her pupils were dilated which was a sign of brain damage. She was kept alive all night by artificial respiration but by morning the doctors explained to the family that there was no hope for survival so after a prayer, the artificial respiration was stopped. Ivan reported that it was a very touching moment. The Arab family accepted it very well and later that morning the mission family went to the Arab home to express condolences.

In April the mission family faced a very difficult time when it was found out that one of the mission nurses had entered into a marriage arrangement with a Muslim young man. After consultation with the EMBMC home office, it was decided that the nurse would need to terminate her mission assignment and come to the USA to spend time with her family. The nurse was very sorry for her action and confessed that she had made a mistake by putting human love before God's love. The medical missionary team was saddened to lose a very good nurse who had a very compassionate relationship and had bonded well with Somali people. Paul Kraybill was in Europe and was able to fly to Somalia to help work through the details of the termination of the missionary nurse.

Paul Kraybill flew to Noleye by chartered plane to visit the place where Chester and Catherine and daughter Marianne were living. That was a very difficult place to live because frequently the roads were closed due to rain. After Paul's short visit to Noleye, the plane brought Paul and the Kurtzes to Jamama. Paul said he was happy to visit the mission team at Jamama and to find that the morale was good, that everyone was busy in their work and not ready to give up even with the big disappointment in losing one of their good nurses. The mission school enrollment was the largest ever. (The local leader of the believer group), with some financial assistance, was able to enroll three or four of his daughters in the mission school. He rented a two-room house near the river and his wife was with the children during the week. The local leader's home with his fields and gardens were at Zunguni about ten miles from Jamama.

On June 21 Ivan and Mary Ellen with Deborah were invited to the banana farm of an Italian family whom Ivan had treated at the hospital. It was beyond Torda. They were served a very good Italian meal. It was

quite a farm operation with bananas as the main crop but there were also other fruits such as papayas and lemons and other fruits which were new to the Leamans.

In the July 5 letter, Mary Ellen reported that Hassan Barre would be leaving his hospital work to go to Johar Middle school. He had been a great employee in the hospital as Ivan's translator but also helping in doing the laboratory work in the afternoon which was primarily doing examination of urine and stool specimens, looking for the parasites that cause so many of the illnesses among the local people. Another good employee, Mohamed Salim had begun working with Ivan as translator and learning the laboratory work. But there was concern that Mohamed Salim who knew five languages might be hired by a German company who was looking for someone as a translator who knows many languages. This company would be able to pay a far higher wage than the mission hospital could pay.

In early July a six-day old Arab baby was admitted with tetanus. New-born tetanus was caused by unsterile cutting of the umbilical cord and was almost always fatal. Ivan admitted the baby and began treatment although the outcome would likely be death. This baby and the Somali woman watching him were given one of the private rooms in the hospital, a room which was the closest room to the doctor's house. The mother of the baby needed to stay at home for forty days so another woman was watching the tetanus baby. Treatment was begun with anti-tetanus serum injections and sedative medications were given to lessen the spasms. Fluids by IV were started and then tube feedings were given. The baby did not die although there were many times when he would stop breathing and manual resuscitation by pressure on his little chest would revive the dying child. In the middle of the night if this happened, the woman watching the child would tell the night watchman. He would immediately turn on the generator. When the lights came on, this was the alert for Ivan to go directly to the hospital and revive the baby. This happened so many times that this little Arab baby became the miracle baby who was brought back to life perhaps ten times. There was much gratitude to God for this miracle.

And then came the next miracle on August 2. Mary Ellen was at the end of her pregnancy which Ivan had determined was another breech presentation. Ivan had decided that they should plan for Mary Ellen to have this delivery at the Jamama Hospital and Mary Ellen had accepted that decision. It did not seem right for Ivan to leave his responsibility for the medical care of the Jamama people. Ivan did not have the anxiety that he had experienced

before Deborah's birth at the Shirati Hospital. Because Mary Ellen had a breech presentation, Ivan had warned her that if there was rupture of her membranes that she should immediately get off of her feet to avoid having a prolapsed cord. So what was the miracle on August 2?

On the afternoon of August 2, Mary Ellen with Deborah and Viola Dorsch with Joy, Lena Horning, and Miriam Leaman went into the village to visit in an Arab home at their invitation. Mary Ellen had debated about going along but since she was feeling well, she decided to accompany the others. After a nice visit with eating a lot of cake and zamboozies and drinking a lot of tea and juice, Mary Ellen got up to leave and after giving good-byes, there was a sudden rupture of her membranes, leaving Mary Ellen very embarrassed. The Arab women were very understanding. Miriam stayed with Mary Ellen while the others hurried back to the mission compound to notify Ivan. He immediately left his volleyball game and he with Victor brought the Land Rover into the village to bring Mary Ellen to the hospital where she was immediately put in a bed in the private room next to the room where the little Arab baby with tetanus was being cared for.

About an hour or so after being put in bed, Mary Ellen's labor began at 7:00 p.m. Ivan was giving close attention to his wife. A few weeks before, Ivan had gone to a Somali barber shop in the village and he had picked up an American magazine, either *Life* or *Look*. In this magazine was an article that was giving information on the importance of monitoring the fetal heart rate during the contractions of labor. Having just recently read this article, Ivan began to listen for the fetal heart rate and discovered that during contractions, the fetal heart rate would drop down to about eighty. This told Ivan that there was a prolapsed umbilical cord so shortly thereafter they moved Mary Ellen onto the delivery table and wheeled her into the operating/delivery room. The delivery table was adjustable so Ivan was able to tilt the table so that the head was lower than the feet in the hope to reduce the pressure on the prolapsed umbilical cord. Ivan examined Mary Ellen and discovered that this was a footling breech, meaning the legs were ahead of the buttocks. In recent days Ivan had read the obstetrical textbook to review the procedure in delivering a breech presentation. Ivan knew that the baby needed to be delivered soon so he began a manual extraction by pulling on the baby's foot and in this manner was able to hasten the birth. After the legs and body were delivered, Ivan needed to turn the body sideways to deliver the big shoulders and then he needed to rotate the body back to a face down position so the head could be delivered and the baby was born

at 10:27 p.m. Usually anesthesia is needed for a breech extraction but Ivan said that Mary Ellen was wonderful and cooperated perfectly and did not need any anesthesia.

Mary Ellen wrote to her parents on August 5 and these were the words describing that moment of 10:27 p.m.: *"I said, 'Alhamdulillah' knowing my part was finished. Viola was with me during the delivery. They told me it was a boy and remarked how big he was. But I did not hear him cry. I did not know what thoughts were going through my husband's mind."* Ivan saw that the baby was white and appeared lifeless. His immediate feelings was a readiness to accept whatever God would bring at this time, knowing that medically he had acted promptly according to his best knowledge. Then Ivan noticed a flicker of life when the baby moved and he worked fast and with more hope and after a short time the baby uttered his first cry and after a short pause he cried again. Mary Ellen wrote: *"This was music to my ears. He was laid on the table and cried lustily."* Ivan said: *"Mary Ellen, we can certainly thank God for he was almost gone. In our hearts are continued prayers of thanksgiving to God for this miracle baby."*

The baby weighed nine pounds and fourteen ounces. He was named David. Mary Ellen wrote: *"David has been doing very well for us. To our knowledge he's not lost any weight. He's a hungry little fellow. I'm breast feeding him and hope I can continue doing so for awhile. According to the scales, he takes about four ounces at each feeding. He's a content baby. We think that this little son is the image of our first born. How we appreciate having Peter John's day-old picture taken at LGH so we can compare our two sons. But as we see the similarities, we are touched again with memories and feelings of sadness. Yet we are reminded too that God has dealt kindly with us."*

What was Deborah's reaction to this new baby? Mary Ellen wrote: *"She says, 'It's my baby.' She guards him with a jealous care. Everyone has been very helpful. Fatuma is doing her part well. She prepares our breakfasts and dinners and Lena and Viola have been providing our suppers. Either Miriam or one of the hospital nurse aides has been bathing the baby and Miriam bathes Deborah and gives me a back rub every night. As for my husband, he's busier than ever. I wish sometimes that he could have more time with us, but then I realize that his work is in the hospital. The night I delivered there was no sleep for Ivan and Miriam. Following my delivery another woman in labor was brought to the hospital. This, too, was a complicated case - a prolapsed cord and a brow presentation. It was quite unusual to*

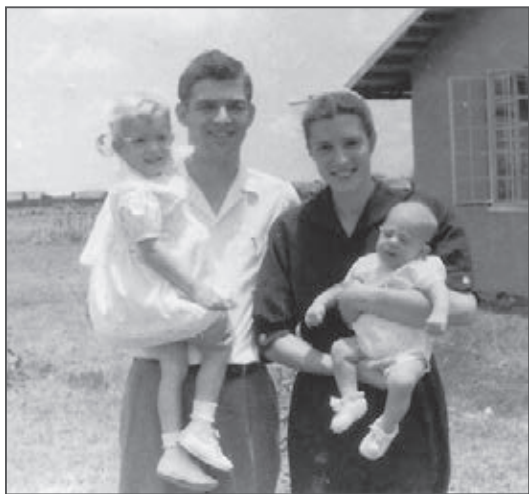
have two such cases in one night. Ivan could not hear a fetal heart. The [Somali woman] did not progress. It was a matter of checking her frequently all night. Around five or six o'clock in the morning Ivan felt that he should try to deliver the baby so the general condition of the woman would not worsen [Ivan probably needed to use forceps]. The baby was a stillbirth. My heart went out to this lady as I lay there listening to my own baby, very much alive and crying."

The next night Ivan had another difficult case which was a man with a strangulated hernia. The man's general condition was not good. He may have had hepatitis so he was a high risk for surgery. Ivan said he would make a decision by 9:00 p.m. about this emergency herniorrhaphy but fortunately the hernia had reduced spontaneously after an enema and Ivan could go to bed for a needed night of sleep!

The good news was that Fae Miller had returned from furlough and flew by small plane to Jamama on August 14. It was so good to see her and welcome her back to the medical work. Mary Ellen's letter of August 14 reported that David was a very content baby and Deborah found her little brother very interesting. Lena gave Deborah a poem which was so good and Deborah liked to have this repeated to her and Mary Ellen posted it above the bed:

"I am the sister of him and he is my brother,
But still he is too little for us to talk to each other,
So every morning I show him my doll and my book.

But every morning he is still
too little to look."



*Ivan and Mary Ellen with Deborah
welcome newborn David with gratitude*

In mid-August the mission council had met to discuss the Somalia government demand that the mission needed to allow the teaching of Islam in our schools. The mission council was unanimous that as a mission we could comply with the government request. The final decision would be made by the EMBMC board and prayer was requested that God would be honored in all of this. As a mission it was felt

that without compromising Christian principles and the witness, to stay in Somalia and to continue to share in fellowship with the national church was the right decision. Ivan wrote in a September 4 letter that a recent very meaningful experience was the communion and foot washing service with the local believers. James Dorsch was baptized at that service. Three of the national believers were baptized recently which needed to be done secretly.

In the September 4 letter Ivan reported that the medical work kept them busy. They were seeing a lot of TB patients. In fact in the previous two months there were thirty new TB patients, many with far-advanced TB. They were given streptomycin injections three times a week and also oral medications. After a month of streptomycin injections they would be given oral medications for a month and told to return. In some patients there was amazing response to treatment. One man gained sixty pounds in several months.

Ivan reported that they had a delegation of special visitors on September 3: The Regional Medical Director for Lower Juba, the local District Commissioner, and three WHO officials. They seemed to be impressed by the mission hospital work even though the facilities were not fancy. In this letter Ivan said that when he is overworked and too tired, he



Ivan in clinic with Mohamed Salim as translator



Ivan in hospital with nurse Miriam Leaman and Kadiga, nurse aide



Ivan in Jamama village on house call

can lose his patience. He wrote: *"This is the greatest adjustment a missionary needs to learn, that of being patient and even-tempered under stress and fatigue. This is where we lose our testimony. This is where we need to pray and need your prayers that our spirits may remain 'Christ-like in crisis.'"* Clinics were busy and on one Saturday there were ninety patients. Ivan would see most of the adult patients and the nurse would see the children. Of course there were injuries. One week there were three head lacerations requiring suturing and a man came with a broken leg and he was sent to Chismaio for x-ray. The hope was to have an x-ray within a few months. A used x-ray had been ordered from a doctor in Mombasa but that would require it being shipped from Mombasa.

There were worship services to be planned for. When the Dorsches were on vacation in Kenya, that meant more responsibility for the others. One Sunday evening Mary Ellen was in charge of the service. She planned an object lesson using candles. She had a large candle to represent Jesus and small birthday candles to represent people as lights in the world. She prepared the presentation in Somali language which she read and then gave it in English.

In the beginning of October the missionary conference was at Mahaddei and Mary Ellen wrote that it was very inspirational. The Leamans were happy to see David and Grace Shenk who had arrived in Somalia at the beginning of August. Mary Ellen wrote that the Shenk's daughter Karen and Deborah were alike in their actions and features although Karen was dark and Deborah was blonde.

When the Leamans returned from the missionary conference, Ivan immediately became very busy again in the hospital with a lot of lab work that kept him working until 10:00 p.m. after taking a bit of time off for supper. Then there was surgery to remove a malignant tumor from a man's eye and the next day after coming for supper at 7:15 he was called back to the hospital for a fracture case. Ivan and Mary Ellen were feeling that they could use two doctors here at Jamama. Dr. Harold Housman was hoping to come to Jamama to do eye cataract surgery.

In November there were two tetanus patients. One was an eight year old boy who developed tetanus eight days after an injury to his right toe. The other was another case of newborn tetanus. Both seemed to be doing well with treatment. There were also six deliveries in that month which was a record. One was born looking lifeless, but nurse Miriam and Ivan both worked with the newborn baby for five to ten minutes before he really cried well. The father observed all of this and he was very grateful. He said

that God was with the doctor and the nurse. That baby was doing well and one would not have guessed that he was so near death. However, the sixth delivery was complicated with what was probably a premature separation of the placenta. The baby was delivered as a breech and did not breathe well after delivery and then died later.

A three-year old girl had been brought to the hospital also in November. She had a snake bite to the head. The family had delayed bringing her to the hospital for some time and when they finally brought her, the top of the head was infected and ulcerated, with the size of the ulcer almost the size of a saucer. This required a long stay in the hospital and after the infection was healed, a skin graft was done. The family had left her in the care of the hospital and she was cared for by Miriam for many weeks until the family returned to take her home.

A most unusual rare medical case was being treated in the Jamama Hospital on November 22 during the exact time that President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. A young boy was brought to the hospital on that Friday evening with acute severe abdominal pain and with bloody stools. On examination Ivan felt a mass in the left lower abdomen. Ivan made the diagnosis of intussusception (telescoping or prolapse of one portion of the bowel into another section of the bowel). Ivan had never seen a case of intussusception but this seemed to fit the textbook diagnosis. Treatment was usually surgery but Ivan was hesitant to do surgery not knowing if he could do that successfully. He read that an alternative treatment would be to use a high pressure enema. Usually this would be done with a barium enema under x-ray control. Jamama Hospital had no x-ray but Ivan decided to try the procedure of a high pressure enema without x-ray. He inserted a large thirty cc Foley catheter into the boy's rectum and filled the thirty cc balloon with water to make a tight fit in the rectum. He then attached the Foley catheter to another tubing attached to an enema can. He then filled the enema can with water and held the enema can high above the boy allowing the water to flow into the boy's lower bowel. While he was holding this can high above the boy, he received the word of President Kennedy being shot. Victor Dorsch had been listening to the radio and he had received the word within minutes of the shooting. The word was brought to Ivan while he was holding that enema can high above the boy while nurse Fae Miller was standing by the bedside. Ivan remembers that his hand was shaking with the news of the shooting in Dallas, Texas. He did not know how long to hold that enema can high above the boy but after some minutes he lowered the

can and he discovered that the boy was dramatically cured! The mass in the abdomen was gone and the boy had no pain! This was truly a miracle and much praise was given to God.

In the December 20 letter, Mary Ellen told of hosting the out-of-town believers after the Sunday worship service. In addition to the local leader, Hassan and Tabitha were invited to the Leaman house for the noon meal. Tabitha carried little David on her back with a cloth holding him close to her body. He really liked it and it kept him happy and content while Mary Ellen was busy in meal preparation.

The December 29 letter gave a detailed description of Christmas celebration in Jamama. Mary Ellen wrote that *“Each Christmas is better than the last. On Christmas eve we had the traditional ‘family’ dinner at the Dorsches’ house, with roast chicken and filling, cranberries, mashed potatoes, peas and carrots, homemade bread, red and green jello, and cookies of all sizes and shapes and tastes. After supper came the gift exchanges. This year we caroled for the Germans [The Germans were building a road from Chismaio to Gelib and had made their base in Jamama and had their compound of houses on the other side of Jamama from the mission compound]. As the singing of ‘Silent Night, Holy Night’ broke the nightly stillness of their little world, two by two they came from each of the houses. By the time we had finished this song, most of the Germans had gathered with our group outside and then one verse was sung in their language. We were invited inside where we had coffee and cake. We talked and sang a few more carols. It is difficult to say who enjoyed the caroling most – they or us.”*

On Christmas Day we had a special program and a Christmas meal for the national believers and their families. Ivan was asked to have charge of the service; he planned an interesting program, in which many participated, some of whom we had never heard from before. Besides special music, several gave testimonies of what Christmas meant to them and the local leader gave a message on Christmas. The Christmas meal was in the Leaman’s house, with each of the three houses cooking two kilo of rice and two kilo of meat, made into marak or broth. Mangoes and Somali tea completed the meal. We fed about forty-six people. Everyone was squatted on the floor, except for the cooks. Four to six people gathered around one bowl of rice and marak. The accepted custom was to eat with one’s fingers from the shared bowl. It was an interesting sight.

On Friday afternoon was the employee Christmas function. Out-door games were planned. There was somewhat a spirit of rivalry (in fun, of

course) in the tug-of-war with hospital versus the school. Then we all enjoyed a meal of injera and watt at the restaurant. This spirit of rivalry was expressed at the end of the meal when Ivan chose to have a hospital employee interpret his speech instead of the school employee who interpreted Mr. Dorsch's speech. Each professed loyalty to his own side, but there was a lot of laughing and joking with it.

Instead of a Christmas program, the mission had a New Year's eve program for the school and the community. Victor had a speech. Lena had a poem and there were several musical numbers. Victor and Viola and Ivan and Mary Ellen sang "Ring Out Wild Bells" found in *Songs of the Church*. Victor showed slides and there were refreshments. The District Commissioner gave a closing speech thanking the mission for the service that was being given to the community. He seemed very supportive of the mission for which thanks was given to God.

Chapter 6

(1964)

On Saturday, January 4, 1964, the MAF plane landed in Chismaio, bringing Paul Kraybill and Donald Lauver, the deputation from the USA. The plane also brought Dr. Harold Housman who had come for the long anticipated cataract eye surgery in the mission hospital. The MAF plane flew to Noleye so that the deputation and Bert Lind could view the work of Chester and Catherine Kurtz at that isolated and difficult place. The plane then returned to Jamama that evening bringing along the Kurtzes. The mission houses were full that weekend but everyone had a place to sleep. Bert, Daniel Lind, Gordon Marshall and Harold Housman were hosted in the Leaman's house. After church Sunday morning, there was a special meal planned by the mission employees for the mission and their guests. This meal was in a beautiful setting under the shade of mango trees along the Juba River. Mary Ellen described the meal this way: *"We had the most delicious rice, marak and goat meat I've ever tasted. Groups of four to six people ate from one dish with their fingers while sitting on mats. This is the first time that Paul Kraybill had eaten a Somali meal and this is his fifth visit in Somalia. We felt that it spoke well for our employees that they could work together to plan something like this."*

The MAF plane with Gordon Marshall left on Monday taking the missionary children to Nairobi and then on to Mara Hills mission school in Tanganyika. On that same day at Jamama Dr. Housman, with assistance from Ivan, began to do twenty-one eye surgeries from Monday to Saturday, except Friday. Twenty of these were cataract extractions. To do this much surgery at Jamama Hospital was very unusual. It pushed the staff to keep up with the linens, laundry and sterilizing as well as the usual clinic work, but everything went remarkably well. There was a great team spirit and everyone seemed to have great enjoyment seeing the hospital full of eye patients. This

had a good impact on the community. There were expressions of appreciation and some of the patients gave speeches, thanking Dr. Housman and the mission for making this possible. With Dr. Housman's guidance, Ivan was able to do some cataract extractions with good success. This was the type of service that Ivan was hoping could continue in the future since giving sight to the blind brings much gratitude. Some high government officials visited the hospital during that week of eye surgery. Dr. Aden Farah, the head of the Somalia Department of Health, happened to be in Lower Juba and he made a short visit to Jamama.



Dr. Harold Housman did twenty cataract eye operations and was thanked by the grateful patients

The missionary conference began on Sunday, January 12, with a communion service. This was followed by a Somali-type meal with the national believers. This large group meal was on tables set up in the garage which worked well. The theme of the conference was "Let Us Go Unto Perfection." On the days of the conference the Mission Council met in the mornings. In the afternoon there were children's meetings and in the evenings were the inspirational sessions. Some of the decisions made with Paul Kraybill were that Victor Dorsches would be going on early furlough in August and Harold Reeds would be moving to Jamama to replace them during their furlough. Anna Lutz would also go on furlough in August and Fae Miller would go to Mahaddei. Paul Kraybill was strongly advising that a dresser-type training program be started at Jamama. Ivan wanted to visit Ethiopia on the way home to gain some ideas on how to improve the medical work at Jamama.

Deborah had her third birthday on January 22. Mary Ellen planned a party with a few invited guests and had a decorated cake and ice cream. Fae and Miriam came to the party along with Joy Dorsch and little Fatuma, the girl who had a snake bite to her head which had required a skin graft. She had become a cute little attraction on the mission station. In family worship

that morning Deborah had asked her Daddy to pray for her birthday. She proudly would hold up three fingers.

On Thursday, January 23, Ivan was asked to go to Chismaio to help Dr. Urqhart to do a hysterectomy. Miriam was to go along to assist in the surgery. Dr. Urqhart was the Canadian doctor working with the American company that was enlarging the port at Chismaio. He had been doing some surgery in the government hospital but he later had an operating room built on the artificial island which had been developed for the port expansion. Ivan was happy to have another doctor to consult and collaborate with on difficult medical or surgical cases. There were times when Dr. Urqhart would come to Jamama to help in this way.

In early February, the Leamans were invited to go on a hunting trip to Af Madau along with Chester Kurtzes and David Miller. Viola kept David but Deborah and Marianne went along. That was a memorable experience. Most of the group slept on the ground one night as they camped near Af Madau. Catherine and the two little girls slept in the Land Rover. The group slept under the stars and it was a most unusual night because there was movement of nomads with their camels during the night and to hear the tinkling of the camel bells was most delightful. There was also some truck traffic during the night and there were questions from the truck drivers as to what this group was doing camping outside in this isolated area. Ivan had shot a guinea fowl which was dressed and was cooked all night for breakfast. The next day the men went hunting and they did get an oryx which was a reward for this hunting trip. The group saw other gazelles and three giraffes.

After the hunting trip Ivan and Mary Ellen went to Mogadiscio to meet Dr. Dorcas Stoltzfus who had arrived in Mogadiscio on February 1. Dorcas would be replacing Ivan at the Jamama Hospital while the Leamans were on furlough for a year. They spent February 3-13 in the Mogadiscio area introducing Dorcas to government officials and they visited the Martini Hospital where Dorothy Grove had surgery. They also visited a brand new hospital built with Common Market funds. At that time there was no staff for the new hospital. During this time with Dorcas they made a visit to Johar and Mahaddei and helped Anna Lutz in the clinic for a few days. After arriving in Jamama, Dorcas was introduced to the hospital and she soon became acclimated. She had two deliveries soon after arrival but the second one was complicated by a tear between the vagina and the rectum which would require a long stay in the hospital. Dorcas liked surgery so she would do well. Mary Ellen was such a good support for Ivan which included typing

letters to drug companies thanking them for their donations to Christian Medical Society which were then sent to Ivan for the Jamama Hospital. Ivan told Dorcas he felt sorry for her that she would not have that kind of support without a helpmeet. Mary Ellen also had been doing the recording of the hospital finances and preparing a report for the Mogadiscio mission office plus preparing a report for the local medical office at their request. Miriam Leaman would be doing that during Ivan and Mary Ellen's furlough.

The Jamama hospital had been without x-ray and after approval to purchase one, Ivan had found that a used x-ray unit was available from a doctor in Mombasa. This x-ray had been bought and was shipped to Chismaio and delivered to Jamama in mid-February near the end of Ivan's first term of service, but there was a problem of getting an x-ray engineer to Jamama for the installation because of border conflict and potential of war between Somalia and Kenya. MAF was not able to fly at this time and the x-ray was sitting in the Jamama Hospital ready to be installed. That would need to wait. It was installed after Ivan left for furlough.

What kind of send-off did Ivan and Mary Ellen have before leaving Jamama? The mayor of Jamama had arranged for a meal of injera and watt at the big restaurant in Jamama on March 7. The invitation was for 7:30 p.m. but this was delayed until 9:00 p.m. because of a big emergency at the hospital. Around 5:00 p.m. there had been a very bad accident on the road beyond Jamama. A truck had overturned with many people riding on top of the loaded truck, a type of accident that too often happened. The driver had been driving too fast and he had ignored the pleas of the people to slow down. Three critically injured men had been brought to the hospital. One of the injured was a brother to one of the nurse aides of the hospital. He had



Employees of hospital gather in Leaman house to give farewell

a fractured skull with bleeding from the ears and a fractured elbow. Another man had a fractured neck and was paralyzed from the neck down. Ivan and Dorcas worked hard to do what they could do to hopefully save their lives. Ivan and Mary Ellen finally went to the restaurant leaving Dr. Dorcas and Fae to care for the injured. After the restaurant meal, Ivan returned

to the hospital to find that the man with the fractured neck had died and the man with the fractured skull was dying. This was a very sad way to end Ivan's experience at the hospital.

Two days later on March 9, the employees of the hospital had a farewell meal for Ivan and Mary Ellen with the usual favorite menu of injera and watt. Later that evening friends came to the house, bringing love gifts for the Leamans. On Sunday evening the fellow missionaries had a farewell party and Lena had made a special cake decorated with a Somali map and the words, Hurry Back. Ivan and Mary Ellen had both spoken in the service that evening sharing their thoughts on leaving. The following morning on March 10, they left for Mogadiscio and it was a good trip of only eight hours. Before leaving Mogadiscio, Ivan and Mary Ellen visited the grave of Peter John on March 11, four years to the day that their little son Peter John was buried. That was a sad memory but they also were rejoicing that God had blessed them with two more children: Deborah, three years old and David, seven months old.



Ivan and Mary Ellen visit grave of Peter John on March 11, four years after his burial

Hassan Barre had come in from Johar Middle School to say goodbye. He had been Ivan's right hand helper at Jamama and he had ambition to become a doctor. Abdullahi Sidi had traveled to Mogadiscio with Ivan and Mary Ellen. These two young men had come to the airport to say goodbye along with most of the missionaries in Mogadiscio plus Harold Reeds and Dave Miller who had come in from Johar. There was quite the round of saying good-byes before getting on the plane with their arms loaded with luggage and children!

In the previous weeks, Mary Ellen had been busy packing and preparing for the travel to the States while leaving the travel plans to Ivan. These were the plans he had arranged for them. They would be flying from Mogadiscio on March 13 by Egyptian Airlines to Aden and then flying to Ethiopia to visit the Mennonite medical work there. Then they would fly to Rome, Italy and from there to Frankfurt, Germany. Ivan had ordered a little VW which they would pick up in Frankfurt on March 25. They had plans for

two weeks of travel in Europe. Their plans were to travel south through the Black Forest to Switzerland and then to France and Luxembourg on their way to the Netherlands. They would be shipping the VW from Rotterdam to New York City. Ivan and the family would cross the English Channel by boat, visit London briefly, and then travel by the Queen Mary, leaving on April 8, from Southampton, England to sail to New York City.

Mary Ellen wrote on March 17 from Deder, Ethiopia and then from Rome, Italy on March 24. She described the visit to Ethiopia with good details. After flying from Mog to Aden, they had one night in a hotel in Aden. The next day they flew on Aden Airways to Djibouti where they had a wait of two hours until they boarded an Ethiopian Airways cargo plane and flew to Dire Dawa where they were met by Dr. Joe Burkholder. They stayed overnight with Nevin and Blanche Horst who were stationed in Dire Dawa. The next day they traveled seventy miles overland to Deder where Dr. Joe Burkholder was the medical director. The mission hospital in Deder was about the size of the Jamama Hospital so that was a good place to make comparisons and learn how that hospital was operating with a dresser-type training program which Ivan has been encouraged to start at Jamama Hospital on their next term of service.

After leaving Deder they traveled to Dire Dawa and flew on March 19 by Ethiopian Airlines to Addis Ababa where they were met by Daniel and Blanche Sensenig. The next day Daniel drove them to Nazareth where they visited the larger Nazareth Hospital where Dr. Rohrer Eshleman was the medical director. On Sunday morning Ivan was asked to speak briefly at the Nazareth congregation and also to the group who worshipped at the Nazareth Bible Academy where Chester Wenger was the director. Chester Wenger introduced Ivan as a Somali and Ivan acknowledged that introduction by saying he was proud to be thought of as a Somali. Ivan referred to Nathanael who, when he heard about Jesus, wondered what good could come from that place. Ivan said, "Perhaps you're thinking the same thing about Somalia." The Bible Academy students really laughed at that remark. Ivan went on to say that good can come from any place because of what Christ has done for the people there. He then told about some of the Somali believers.

From Addis they flew on March 23 by Ethiopian Airlines with stops at Asmara, Cairo and Athens. From Athens they flew on Olympic Airlines to Rome, Italy. In Rome they toured some places including the Vatican City. In all of these travels David and Deborah proved to be good travelers. Deborah acted in a very independent way and when she was offered help to go

up and down steps on the airplane she would emphatically say, "I can do it myself!" She was always delighted to see the different rooms they stayed in. Little David just smiled his way into people's hearts.

After an overnight stay in Rome, they flew to Frankfurt, Germany where Mary Ellen wrote that they were able to "fold their wings" since the rest of their travel to reach the USA would be by land and sea. In Frankfurt, Germany they picked up a little VW, called "the bug," which provided their travel through Europe to the Netherlands. There they crossed the English Channel by boat and after a few days in London went on to Southampton, England. On April 8 they boarded the Queen Mary to sail to the New York City harbor. The five days on the Queen Mary crossing the Atlantic in April 1964 was not pleasant for the Leamans as was the crossing of the Atlantic in January 1960. That voyage was a southern Atlantic route and the Queen Mary voyage was a northern Atlantic route which was cold and stormy and many passengers had sea sickness including Mary Ellen. At one meal Mary Ellen had sudden nausea and she left the table abruptly leaving Ivan alone with Deborah at the dining room. Many other passengers were also doing the same, leaving their tables as the ship rocked back and forth.

At the New York harbor, the Leaman and Eby families welcomed their missionary children back to the USA and eagerly hugged Deborah and David. Deborah could now meet her grandparents that she had heard about and had looked forward to seeing. Ivan and Mary Ellen with their children settled into life on the Eby farm. A single-wide mobile trailer had been placed just behind the farm house. This was an ideal arrangement for the furlough, giving privacy but also closeness to the loving care of Mother Eby and also experiencing the wonderful atmosphere of farm life. Shortly after settling into life in Lancaster County, there was a trip to New York City to pick up the VW bug which had come by freighter from the Netherlands. This little car served the Leamans very well on their furlough. After driving many miles on furlough, they sold the car for more than they had paid for it, so this proved to be a good investment.

Ivan had arranged for a time of medical education refreshment at Lancaster General Hospital from July to December. He was an unofficial resident for the second half of 1964. During that time he gained more experience in surgery including a time with Dr. Paul Ripple, the friendly loquacious eye doctor. Dr. Ripple prided himself in training missionary doctors to do cataract eye surgery. He taught Ivan the same procedure of cataract extraction that he had taught Dr. Harold Housman at Shirati Hospital some years earlier

and which he had performed at Jamama. These were the days before the lens implants. Dr. Ripple arranged for Ivan to speak at the Auxiliary to the Lancaster County Association for the Blind. This Blind Auxiliary gave the funds for the purchase of a complete set of surgical eye instruments for Ivan to take with him to Jamama where he would be able to perform cataract eye surgery during his second term. The other service that Dr. Ripple did for the Leaman family during this furlough was to do corrective eye surgery on David for his strabismus (cross-eyed condition) that he was born with. David had a dominant eye so he needed to wear an eye-patch for some years to cover the dominant eye so that the other eye could develop good eye vision.

During that experience at the Lancaster General Hospital, Ivan was also able to connect with Dr. Fred Wampler. Fred had been in medical missionary service in India under the Church of the Brethren. They both were on furlough and were now serving in a refresher residency training at LGH. Dr. Stephen Lockey, chief of the allergy department at the hospital, had come up with the idea of collecting good used medical equipment to send with these missionary doctors to be used in the twenty-five bed Mennonite mission hospital in Jamama, Somalia and in the seventy bed Church of the Brethren mission hospital in Dahanu, India. This was a very successful idea and Ivan was able to receive good used hospital beds which were shipped to Somalia. These beds would be much appreciated since they were adjustable for head elevation. There was a featured article in the *Lancaster New Era* which pictured Ivan and Fred with some of the donated equipment.

Shortly after arrival in the USA, Mary Ellen discovered that she was pregnant. Everything went well during the pregnancy. At the end of the pregnancy, Ivan and Mary Ellen were invited to a party at the home of one of the surgical residents of the Lancaster hospital. Shortly after arriving home from the party, at the Eby mobile home trailer, Mary Ellen developed labor pains so they immediately returned to LGH where their son Jonathan was born on December 19. He was a vertex (head) presentation which made the delivery a normal delivery as compared to the two breech deliveries in Africa. God was good to the Leaman family in all of these experiences.

Chapter 7

(1965)

Ivan and Mary Ellen were asked to share of their missionary experiences in their home churches as well as in many other churches. They gave illustrated slide presentations which more clearly showed the culture both of the nomads and Somali people who lived in towns. The slides also pictured the medical work in the hospital and clinic. Mary Ellen wrote for the *Missionary Messenger* in which she describes her experiences this way: *“Walking along the path to the Jamama village, we greet and are greeted by the smiling faces of women, friends and strangers. Daily our lives touch the lives of Somalia’s women who have been sobered by suffering, yet sparkle with mirth in the face of adversity, women who struggle for a daily existence, yet whose faith in Allah is unquestioning, accepting both good and bad as coming from His hand. These are the women among whom we have been ‘called to be sent.’ To these we have been called to communicate the love and understanding of Him whose love, for the most part, is yet unknown to them.”* Here is the testimony that Ivan wrote for *Youth Messenger*: *“The other morning I was in the doctors’ lounge at the Lancaster General Hospital preparing for an operation. A conversation developed with a surgeon I had not seen for four and one half years. After my telling briefly about our living in Somalia, he said this, ‘How is it that you fellows who come back from missionary service are all so happy. There must be something to it.’”*

At the end of their year furlough and before returning to Jamama Hospital, Ivan and Mary Ellen were asked if they would consider going to a remote area many miles north of Mogadiscio. They would live in the town of Galcaio situated in a vast surrounding area of nomadic life. There was an extreme drought in that area and many nomadic families were suffering from famine and illness. Dan Wert, a trained registered nurse, was asked to go to Somalia for a short period and to work alongside Ivan at the Galcaio

Hospital. So they agreed to form this small medical team and Hersi Ahmed, a young Somali man who was a believer, was recruited to be part of this team as translator and assistant.

There was a farewell service for the Leamans at Columbia Mennonite Church on May 2 at 7:00 p.m. Victor Dorsch came from Ontario, Canada to give the message. Victor and Viola were the pioneer missionary couple at Jamama in Lower Juba. Victor was the overseer at the Jamama station. In addition to being the spiritual leader, he was also a master mechanic and a general fix-it person so he was invaluable in keeping the infrastructure working to keep the station and the hospital running smoothly.



Ivan and Mary Ellen welcomed son Jonathan, born at LGH, on December 19, 1964, who joined Deborah and David in this family, now ready to leave the USA for another four years in Somalia

The following day on Monday evening, May 3, Ivan and Mary Ellen with now three children, Deborah age four, David not quite two and Jonathan at age four months, boarded a plane in New York and had a six and a half hour flight to London arriving at 9:40 a.m. There was a twelve hour lay-over in London with hotel accommodations provided for part of that time. The next flight was from London to Frankfurt, Germany and then the flight to Nairobi, Kenya was seven and a half hours. It was quite a challenge because David didn't want to sleep and the parents had to pace the floor to try to keep him from crying. Finally he fell asleep and was placed on the floor in a bed they prepared for him. At times Deborah was also restless and wanted to cry so the parents were busy taking turns trying to quiet their crying children, not wanting to disturb the other passengers on the plane. When they finally arrived in Nairobi on Wednesday morning at 9:00 a.m., the parents were very exhausted, not having slept well on the planes. Hershey and Norma met them and welcomed them back to Africa. Norma recognized the fatigue of Ivan and Mary Ellen so she took the two oldest children and the parents went to bed. They had reservations at the Mennonite Guest Center, which was a first for them. The

children enjoyed the atmosphere of the Center, with a large lawn and swings and having other children to play with helped to keep them entertained. Mary Ellen wrote to her parents: *"The travel ordeal loomed before me like a mountain but now so quickly it is history and we thank God for His protection and help during those hours."* After the brief rest at the Mennonite Guest Center in Nairobi for a few days, the next flight was to Mogadiscio on Saturday morning, May 8. Bert Lind had a letter for Ivan in Nairobi asking him to have the message on Sunday morning.

Mary Ellen wrote from Mogadiscio on May 11: *"The children are doing well. Deborah spends hours at Rhoda Lind's house playing with her girls' dishes and I suppose pestering her a lot. David does not always know quite what to do with himself. Jonathan squeals and kicks and laughs and is a most cooperative content little fellow."* She wrote that it was good to be back in Somalia again and see their Somali friends. Osman, the friend from Jamama, came by to see them and couldn't believe that they had another child. The plans were for Ivan to fly to Galcaio by Somali Airlines on Friday, May 13, to investigate the medical needs in the famine stricken area. Mary Ellen and the children would go to Johar to be there while Ivan was in Galcaio. She felt that would be more relaxing since there would be more space and other children to play with. The Chester Kurtz family was there and David and Grace Shenk would be returning from vacation shortly so Deborah would have Marianna and Karen as playmates. Then it was discovered that the Somali Airlines plane was full for the Friday flight to Galcaio so the new plans were for Ivan to travel overland for a two day trip, going north along the Shebelle River, passing through Belet Wen and then along a road through desolate nomadic land towards Galcaio. The Somali government was providing a Land Rover with a driver for this trip. Mary Ellen didn't envy him but Ivan seemed eager for this adventure since he would get to see more of Somalia's countryside.

Ivan later wrote of this experience in an article, "A Mustard Seed" published by *Missionary Messenger* in November 1965. *"It was with a spirit of exhilaration that I was making this trip to Galcaio with a Somali believer as my companion. We were to lay the ground work for a special medical team that was first envisioned by Paul Kraybill several months earlier when the news of thousands of nomads starving in this barren region of Somalia reached the Eastern Mission Board office. This spiritual imagination to enter a new mission frontier was like a mustard seed of faith. Our mission's offer to provide sorely needed medical personnel to the famine area of Galcaio had been gladly accepted by the Somalia government. This same Somali town*

just several years earlier had witnessed to its ardent Islamic faith when a zealous Muslim sheik had led a group of sheiks in tearing down stone pillars which marked a proposed mission compound [this was the experience in 1962 of another mission organization]. The town was only being true to its name, Galcaio, which means 'to drive out the infidel.'"

Ivan wrote: *"We were just halfway to Galcaio from Belet Wen when we drove into Dursa Mareb. After lunch at a small Somali tea shop I waited outside. The crowds gathered and excitement began as we exchanged Somali greetings. Someone in the crowd with fierce intensity asked if I believed in God. In my broken Somali, I said that I believed in God even as they did; that God is very powerful, above us all, and that He is truth. But this did not satisfy my zealous Muslim questioner that I could not be anything other than one of the Christian infidels. Hostility seemed to grow in his face and the crowd was caught up in the mounting tension. At this point our Somali driver, who knew better than I the danger of such conversation, came and told the crowd to scatter. We went on our way and I pondered the intense religious fervor of the people of this area. Could the mustard seed find root in Galcaio? We were not long in Galcaio until it was evident that perhaps the soil was being prepared. Many came stating their desire to have the mission locate in Galcaio. Times have changed we were told. Some students in our schools at Mahaddei and Johar were from Galcaio."*

After the initial two weeks of exploration of the medical needs in Galcaio, Ivan flew back to Mogadiscio and he sent his report to Paul Kraybill. It was decided that Ivan with his family would be able to serve in Galcaio for another six weeks since Dr. Harold Housman was available to come to Jamama and cover the medical work there until Ivan finished his service in Galcaio. Dan Wert, a registered nurse, had been recruited to serve with Ivan in Galcaio and he flew to Mogadiscio. The third member of the medical team was Hersi Ahmed, the young Somali interpreter, who was a graduate of the Johar Intermediate School. He was very valuable as an interpreter and adviser. Ivan was fortunate to have met a young American couple who were serving with Peace Corps as teachers in Galcaio. They were going on vacation on June 12, returning the end of July, and they offered their furnished rented house to the Leamans. This was ideal since they also could use the young Somali house helper during the time they were in Galcaio. All they needed to do was to pay the house helper's wages. What a blessing! So on June 11 the Leamans flew to Galcaio with Dan Wert and Hersi. Dan Wert and Hersi were given the doctor's house next to the hospital to live in.



▲ *Bedside exam by Ivan*

► *Galcaio medical team of Daniel Wert, RN, Dr. Ivan Leaman, and Hersi Ahmed, translator*



Ivan wrote: *“Our days as a medical team were taken up with caring for patients in an overcrowded hospital, crowding two or three sick children in one bed. Almost no sanitation, lack of screening against flies, and inadequate nursing care faced us like insurmountable obstacles. But lending our hearts and hands to the task brought satisfaction as we saw very ill patients recovering in spite of the obstacles. Dan Wert gave direction and supervision to the nursing care of the more critically ill patients. He organized the operating room which hadn’t been used for more than a year and gave assistance as we undertook a few operations.”*

Ivan wrote: *“We saw the stoic, unflinching acceptance of suffering and death. Into my examining room one day came a tall, handsome Somali and his wife, each carrying a child too weak to walk. They told without emotion how six of their nine children had died in recent weeks and how they would have come sooner had they not feared that their other children would die on the way. As I looked into the face of this tall Somali, I saw the proud submission to the will of God, which is Islam.”*

One evening Ivan was sitting in a tea shop talking quietly to a young student of the town. They discussed the invitations the mission was receiving to come to Galcaio with a school. As they talked, suddenly the student said, “Did you know that the sheikh who killed your fellow missionary in Mogadiscio was from Galcaio?” Another time Ivan was talking to a group of men in a tea shop. They said that they wanted the mission to come to Galcaio with a school and a hospital. But if you come, they added, you must leave

your religion behind. Ivan's response was, "When I was a small boy I felt that God was calling me to be a missionary. When I grew older, I studied to be a doctor and then God called me to come to Somalia. Therefore, I believe that God called me here and if I would leave my religion behind, that would be like leaving my heart behind, and I could never do that."

Mary Ellen and the children accompanied Ivan and the medical team to Galcaio on June 11. She wrote weekly letters to her parents with copies to Ivan's parents. She wrote six letters for the six weeks that they were together in Galcaio. These letters gave her personal and very descriptive impressions of Galcaio. In her first letter on June 14, she said, "*Greetings from Galcaio, the village of stone.*" Most of the houses in Galcaio were made of stone. Jama, the houseboy of the Peace Corps couple, had the house cleaned for the Leamans when they arrived. Mary Ellen described the house. It had four rooms: a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom and a living-dining room. Each room opened to a sandy courtyard which was an ideal place for the children to play. Mary Ellen remembers this interesting encounter with a Somali nomad passing by their house. There was a door from the courtyard that opened to the street. One day when this Somali nomad walked by, he looked into the courtyard through the open doorway and saw the children in the courtyard. He stopped and made an unusual comment about the children which made Jama, the house boy laugh. Jama reported that the nomad said, "Oh God, please don't take my skin from me!"

Mary Ellen wrote that people were constantly passing by the house and some would stop by to visit, a few women and quite a few young men students. Some little girls would come and play with Deborah which she enjoyed very much. One day these playmates brought their mothers and Mary Ellen found them to be reserved but very friendly. One day a young Somali fellow came with a scowl on his face and he chased the children away and said, "They will interrupt you and perhaps throw stones at you." Mary Ellen wrote that she had no fear of that. One day they walked through the marketplace and they had quite a following of children. She wrote that in the first two weeks in Galcaio, God had been very good in providing very good experiences.

July 1 was Somalia's Independence Day and since it was a holiday Ivan did not need to work in the hospital. So they went to observe the celebrations which included games of running races, high jumps and a tug of war. One evening they were invited to the Governor's house for refreshments. It was a gathering of the Somali elite of the town plus the foreigners which in addi-

tion to the Americans included four Russian men. Thirty women were invited but Mary Ellen said they stayed behind the scenes. One day Ivan and Mary Ellen, with the medical team, went to visit the nomadic settlement at the edge of town. They were able to see how the USA donated powdered milk was prepared each day and distributed. The Somali nomads were surprised that the Leamans could speak some of their language and that their children had Somali names.



Deborah having fun recording three Somali boys singing



Dan Wert and Deborah watch milk preparation at a feeding station



Malnourished Somali child drinks milk eagerly

Ivan and Mary Ellen had a small worship time on Sunday evenings with the mission medical team. One young Somali man had inquired of Hersi as to who were these people who came bringing medical help and what did they represent. To their surprise this young man came one Sunday evening to be part of the worship time. There was a young Somali believer who had come from Belet Wen where S.I.M. had a mission. He had come to visit his family in Galcaio. But they did not welcome him and refused to have anything to do with him. They had even confiscated his clothes which he had brought with him, refusing him entry into the house where he had left his clothes. He was trying to work on a reconciliation through others of his relatives.

The six weeks went by quickly and the Leamans began the preparation of packing and moving again but this time to Jamama which they were now quite eager for. Deborah in particular was looking forward to joining her missionary girl playmates at Jamama. However, Mary Ellen wrote that

they'd miss Galcaio and recognized that life in Galcaio was more relaxing than it would be in Jamama. They flew to Mogadiscio on Saturday, July 24, and two days later they flew to Chismaio where Victor Dorsch met them. Dan Wert shared at the Thursday evening prayer meeting of his experiences serving in Honduras and the Leamans shared of their Galcaio experiences on Sunday evening.

The next four days the Housmans and the Leamans lived together in their Jamama house. Mary Ellen wrote on Sunday, August 1: *"Miriam Housman had a generous heart and made this communal living a lot of fun. Their family used one bedroom and the office for sleeping while we used the other two bedrooms. She took care of our meals for the first few days until we could get a bit of unpacking done and catch our breaths. Harold and Ivan did two cataract cases on Friday. Ivan does not want to get involved in surgery for several weeks until he gets his bearings in other phases of hospital work. He scheduled the two cataract cases because he wanted to work with Housman before he left. On Friday evening we had a Somali meal in Victor's house in their honor. Housmans left early Saturday morning for Chismaio where they were boarding an MAF plane. We miss them, although it is nice to be in our own home by ourselves...well, not quite by ourselves. Dan Wert is living in our office. He eats his meals with Dorsch's and us. He is a real boost to the hospital work and we are glad to have him here."*

Since Dan Wert was free for the next six months, Ivan had asked permission from Paul Kraybill for Dan to serve at the Jamama hospital until the end of the year. Although it was not mentioned in any letter, Ivan remembers how anxious he was when he returned to Jamama, recognizing all the responsibilities he would have again in assuming the administration of the hospital. Mary Ellen got involved again in the hospital bookkeeping. She wrote that Miriam Leaman had things in excellent condition so it was no problem stepping into that work again. Some Somali friends came by to greet the Leamans, including their former house girl Fatuma who now had a four month old daughter. She wanted work with the Leamans again so Mary Ellen was faced with a decision. Barbara Reed's house boy, Abdulcadir, had been hired by Miriam Housman and he was doing good work so the decision needed to be made, which one should she hire.

In the next letter on Sunday, August 8, Mary Ellen mentioned that though it was a Sabbath, it was not much a day of rest for them. Ivan had to preach as well as take care of hospital duties. He preached on "The Holy Spirit and His work" using verses from John 14. That afternoon Mary Ellen and

Viola were planning to do visiting in the village. There was now a Peace Corps couple living in town. They came to Somalia single. The first year she taught in Mogadiscio and he in Belet Wen. They then married and were now assigned to teach English in the government school in Jamama. They were very social and were making quite a few visits to the mission compound.

The Leaman children were adjusting well to Jamama. Deborah was given her own bedroom, the room off the living room which was next to the office bedroom of Dan Wert. One afternoon at siesta time, Mary Ellen heard Deborah talking to Dan through the wall. Deborah had been calling Dan a "tourist." One day Deborah was asking something of her Daddy at the table and when he didn't respond, she asked if he had a blind ear! Ivan became the fix-it man for the little portable organ that the Leaman's had in their house from their first term. It was not working well when they returned to Jamama so one day Ivan took the organ apart and cleaned the reeds and then it played beautifully.

One night during the last week of August there was an old Somali man who came to the Leaman house at night crying for help. This man was from Galcaio, but his son lived here. He was not able to urinate because of a large prostate causing obstruction. So Ivan did his first prostatectomy in Somalia. One of the urologists at Lancaster General Hospital had shown Ivan how to do a suprapubic prostatectomy. In this operation an incision was made in the lower abdomen, the bladder was opened and the finger entered the bladder and then entered the urethra and with the finger a break was made through the capsule of the prostate which was then shelled out and removed. Ivan was able to successfully do this operation on this old Somali man and he removed a very large prostate. To prevent bleeding from the cavity where the prostate had been, a large thirty cc Foley catheter was inserted and then the end of the catheter was pulled tightly and taped to the side of the leg to maintain pressure. There was good recovery and the patient was able to be discharged about two weeks after the operation. The old man from Galcaio was very happy with the results of the operation after five years of straining to urinate with only dribbles of urine at a time. It was very interesting that this man came all the way from Galcaio for help. Ivan was thankful to God that the man was helped since things do not always go well in hospital work.

In early September the shipment came from the States after being four months on the way. There were some personal items for the Leamans but the large part of the shipment was hospital equipment. Unfortunately there was a lot of damaged items including an upright scales. Also, glass was broken

in cabinets and cupboards. There was a hydraulic table that had a broken part but that was able to be repaired. Ivan used this table for delivery but it also was used to transport patients. No mention was made of hospital beds coming on this shipment but there were adjustable hospital beds that came from LGH. Those beds were a great improvement from the canvas beds that had been made for the opening of the hospital. This shipment also had two bales of relief clothing some of which were very nice clothing. Mary Ellen and Viola were sorting and distributing them to families they knew. The missionary children had fun dressing up in some of the clothing just for fun.

On September 10 a man was brought unconscious to the hospital. The diagnosis was not clear whether it was meningitis or cerebral malaria but he was treated and by the next day he was talking. That week there was a normal delivery and a stillbirth due to a prolapsed cord. There were two more admissions to the hospital on September 11, a boy with a broken arm and another with a hand infection.

The nurses and doctor met with all the employees to give the employees an opportunity to air their feelings and to give the mission medical staff a chance to remind the employees of some things they need to know. The spirit of the meeting was good. There were now fifteen employees and there was appreciation for the good job most of them were doing. The last week of September new contracts were prepared for the employees. Most

of the employees accepted their new contracts without complaints except one girl who usually did complain. She was told her work was finished if she didn't sign the contract so she finally did sign.

There was an opening for another employee. There were four applications and one was Abdulcadir, Mary Ellen's house helper. He was the best of



Hospital and clinic employees at the end of 1965 with Dan Wert and Ivan on the left and nurses Rhoda Buckwalter and Anna Lutz in front

the applicants so he received the job. He was a good worker for Mary Ellen and she was sorry to lose him. In his letter of application, his closing sentence said, "Another reason I want to work at the hospital is that wash-

ing dishes is not advantage (advantage) at all.” So Mary Ellen was able to hire Fatuma again as her house helper although she now was a mother with a small child.

On October 21 Ivan did his first cataract alone. The following week Mary Ellen’s letter reported that the eye surgery patient was doing well despite not following orders to stay in bed. He got out of bed to go to the bathroom and also was found prostrating himself on the floor in a Muslim prayer. When Ivan changed the dressing the next day or so and checked his eye, he found that the eye looked good. He said that was something to tell Dr. Ripple!

On a Friday night in early November there was a goat barbecue. One of the hospital patients gave Ivan a goat as a gift. One of the hospital employees butchered it for them and it was barbecued on an improvised grill behind Victor’s house for a station get-together.

One of the hospital employees was reading the Word on his own and then he requested private classes. Ivan’s right hand man also requested Bible classes. Victor was having private classes as well. Some Sundays there was good attendance at the morning worship service. These were encouraging signs of the Spirit’s work.

In an October letter Mary Ellen first mentioned that Ivan had developed an infected ingrown toenail on one of his big toes. It had been a problem for weeks. It was impossible for Ivan to wear a shoe so he wore a sandal. It was so painful that if one of the children came running to him he had to be careful that they did not step on his toe! He did soaking of his toe but he realized that he needed an operation on his big toe. They were planning to go on a leave to Nairobi at the beginning of the next year and Ivan would need to see a surgeon in Nairobi. In late November Ivan had a visit of high level Somali medical dignitaries. Ivan had met Dr. Elmi, the head of the Ministry of Health in Mogadiscio, at one point and he invited Dr. Elmi to visit the Jamama Hospital when he made a visit to Lower Juba. So on Monday afternoon on November 29, Dr. Elmi along with the local District Commissioner, the local doctor and the Regional Medical Director visited the hospital and then they came to the Leaman house for coffee and cookies. There was no mention in the letter what impressions were expressed by these visitors.

In early December Hershey and Norma Leaman with the children came for a ten day visit. The Swahili-speaking believers were happy to see Hershey and Norma again. There was quite a crowd at the Sunday service on December 5 when Hershey brought the message. Hershey had come to do an evaluation of the hospital and develop goals for the future. He had good

suggestions for improvement and innovation. Hershey felt strongly that there should be some type of public health program and a dresser-training program. That week the hospital was very busy with five deliveries, all boys. An Italian lady from Chismaio gave birth on Tuesday. The next day Ivan had a call to go into the bush twelve miles away for a woman who had been in labor for four days. Unfortunately that baby was a stillbirth. Then there was another delivery later that day. On Thursday afternoon Ivan and Hershey went to bring in the daughter of (the local leader) who delivered the next day. Early Saturday morning the wife of the WHO malarial control agent in Jamama delivered the fifth boy.

Before Hersheys left, a farewell party was planned for Dan Wert who would be leaving on the same MAF plane on Saturday, December 11 that was bringing the Dorsch children home from school. The men had gone on a hunt, leaving after the Thursday evening prayer meeting and staying overnight in the bush. The hunt resulted in a water buck which provided steaks for an outdoor supper on Friday evening. The steaks had good flavor but gave the jaws an exercise. There were two cakes, one for Hershey's birthday and one had "Bon Voyage" written on it for Dan. He had been a great asset to the hospital work during his time at Jamama.

The week before Christmas which was on Saturday was very busy. On December 19, the Sunday before Christmas, for the evening service there was an all music program. Ivan and Mary Ellen with Deborah sang a new carol from the children's song book. Deborah knew the first verse by memory so the parents kept their voices low as Deborah sang. The Dorsch family sang a song. All the missionary children and the national children which Lena taught in Sunday school sang two songs. A national men's quartet sang and also the single ladies sang together. After that service, David managed to lock himself in the office. Someone came and said that David was locked in the office and was saying "Hodi, Hodi." The keys to the office door could not be found so Ivan went into the attic from the trapdoor in the master bedroom and walked across the ceiling in the attic and let himself down through a trapdoor in the office. David got a bang out of that!

The week of Christmas was busy. On Thursday evening there was a program for the evening school students. The Leaman family sang a song, the Dorsch children sang a song, Lena and Rhoda had a dialogue explaining some of our Christmas traditions, Victor had a short Christmas talk, the concluding feature was the singing of carols with organ accompaniment. On Friday evening was the restaurant meal of injera and watt for the employees,

followed by games in the school. Christmas was on Saturday and at noon the missionary family was together at the nurses' house for a meal followed by a gift exchange. On Sunday after the service there was the rice and marak meal with the national believers.

That week on Friday while Ivan was doing x-rays, the generator went on the blink. Ivan went to the generator house to find that oil was coming out under the door. He called Victor and they worked at taking the generator apart. It was discovered that they needed a part for repair which needed to be ordered from Nairobi. So kerosene lanterns were needed for the rest of the week.

On Monday morning at 7:00 a.m., December 27, the entire mission group, except Rhoda who stayed behind to keep things going at the hospital, left for Mogadiscio and Mahaddei for the missionary conference. Because of the size of the group, a bus was rented. The trip to Mog took twelve hours and then continued on to Mahaddei arriving at 11:30 p.m. Mary Ellen wrote that the conference was good and she felt spiritually renewed. In the morning sessions each station had a panel discussion and in the two evenings David Shenk and Ivan each had a message. There was a communion service on Thursday.

Chapter 8

(1966)

The Jamama group left for home on Saturday, January 1, 1966, except for Ivan who flew to Hargeisa. He planned to visit the nursing school there as well as make other medical contacts. Ten days after the missionary conference, the Leaman family was planning their leave in Nairobi where Ivan and Hershey would be finalizing their proposals for improvements for Jamama Hospital in preparation for a dresser-training program and public health teaching.

Ivan arrived back in Jamama Saturday afternoon on January 8 and he brought the part sent from Nairobi to Mogadiscio which was needed for the generator repair. He helped Victor with the repair which was completed by 9:00 p.m. Finally there was electricity after being without for about two weeks. Ivan reported that he had an interesting trip to Hargesia where he met Kadiga Barre who was in nursing school there. He also visited other parts of Somaliland, traveling overland with a young Somali who was a graduate of the Johar Middle School and now was studying at a German technical institute near Hargesia. He traveled to the port city of Berbera. Ivan was to bring the message on Sunday morning.

The Leaman family flew to Nairobi on Monday the next day and that same afternoon Hershey had arranged an appointment for Ivan to see a surgeon who would do a first stage operation of removing the toenail on Tuesday morning. The doctor wanted to hospitalize Ivan but he preferred to stay at the Mennonite Centre. After that first surgery Ivan stayed in bed for four days. He was discouraged by the slow progress of a subsiding of infection. The next stage of surgery was planned for February 1. The English surgeon, Mr. Hicks, would have desired to do the second stage surgery after four to six weeks but Ivan felt they should not extend their leave that long. They did extend the leave until February 8. The surgeon had consented to do

the surgery under local anesthesia so Ivan would not need to be hospitalized. Ivan wrote on Sunday, February 6, two days before their MAF flight back to Somalia. There had been a severe flare-up of swelling and inflammation of the big toe after the second operation which was a destruction of the nail bed. Ivan had concern but the surgeon felt that they could return to Jamama as long as he could stay out of hospital work for some days. After arriving in Jamama on Tuesday, that same night Ivan was called to the hospital to see someone. He began to help in the clinics and discovered that he felt better when he was up and walking.

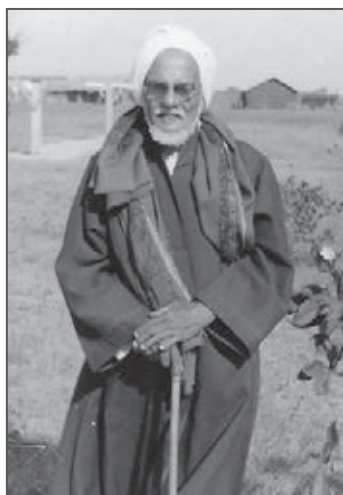
In her February 24 letter, Mary Ellen had this interesting report of the children. While she was busy in the office Viola took Deborah with her to the village. Deborah was very fond of Viola and said she wished that Viola was her mother! Mary Ellen wrote: *“Deborah was such a big helper for me last night. She bathed David, got him ready for bed and read his stories. I told Ivan at that rate I’ll soon be able to retire.”*

On February 22 the mission group was invited to attend the inauguration of the new mayor of Jamama. After that ceremony there were some distinguished visits to the hospital. They were the ambassadors from Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia and their wives who toured the hospital. One of the wives took a special liking to Deborah.



▲ Ivan doing cataract surgery

► Arab man after cataract surgery



On February 23 Ivan did his first cataract surgery for quite some time. He felt it was successful and planned to do another cataract surgery that week. The word was spreading and more were coming to have cataract surgery. One lady came with an interesting story. She didn’t have the money

to have the surgery when Dr. Housman was here in July but she had come now with Sh 100 (fourteen dollars) wrapped in a cloth and asked if she could have the surgery now! But there were other medical needs. A man had a leg ulcer which would not heal until the overlying scar tissue was removed. On the morning of March 4, a woman was brought in shock because she had delivered at home and had bled all night from a retained placenta. She was given IV fluids and was responding.

In a March 10 letter Mary Ellen reported that on a visit to the village she met Arab women who were of the family that had the baby with new born tetanus who had been treated in the hospital several years ago and had to be resuscitated many times. These Arab women reported that the baby, now two and a half years old, was living in Mog and doing well. They had pictures of the little fellow and he looked very healthy. What a miracle! In March of that year another newborn baby was admitted with tetanus. The clinics in March were busy, with 100 patients seen one day. On that day the doctor and nurses did not eat until after three o'clock.

The big news in the March 17 letter was that the Jamama mayor had given the mission permission to dig their own well near the river at the other end of the village. Also, Jim Shelly had received verbal permission for the mission to have inter-station radio. That seemed almost too good to be true!

The month of March was a very busy month for the hospital activity. In addition to the usual medical work there were two emergency operations, one was a near to rupture appendix and the other was a hernia with complications. And then there was a very unusual event when a Somali man was brought who had been shot in the abdomen by a town's policeman over an argument. He was brought to the mission hospital. This brought many people who gathered outside the hospital. His condition was stable but Ivan thought he needed surgery and didn't feel qualified to open his abdomen, not knowing what he would find. So word went to Chismaio, asking for the Russian surgeon to come to Jamama to do the surgery. The Italian doctor and the Chismaio medical director came and said that the Russian doctor wanted the patient to be transported to Chismaio. So the patient was loaded on the back of a pick-up truck. An IV had been started and as Ivan recalled, it was kept running during that trip to Chismaio. Ivan had prepared two units of blood cross-matched to be used for the surgery. The Russian surgeon used local anesthesia and he opened the abdomen and did the repair of the damage done by the gun shot. Ivan and the Italian doctor both scrubbed in and were assistants in the operation. That was a most unusual operation with three

doctors, working together but not knowing each other's language. As Ivan remembers, the man recovered.

Not all medical procedures go as desired. After a cataract operation which Ivan did, the eye became infected and needed to be removed. This was so unfortunate and the family could not understand why the eye needed to be removed. Ivan explained that the infection could spread to the brain causing death. It took a lot of explaining and finally the chief of the tribe was able to persuade the daughter to sign permission for the removal of the eye.

At the end of March, John R. Mumau, former president of Eastern Menonite College, came with his wife on a visit to Jamama. They were taken to the recently dug well and there were movie pictures showing them observing the water being pumped from the well. There were three services on Sunday and the missionary group was blessed by their visit. Mary Ellen prepared a Sunday meal for the Mumaus and the national believers. The whole missionary group gathered for a simple meal at the Leaman's house in the evening. At the evening service the Mumaus shared of their world travels. Deborah and David wanted to show "Uncle Mumau" the pet kudu so they brought the pet animal into the living room.

The next visitor to Jamama was Paul Kraybill, the overseas EMM director. He was with the Jamama mission group the weekend of April 9-11. His bedroom was the Leaman's office. On Sunday, April 10, there was a communion service with the national believers. Each one desiring communion shared a testimony before the communion which was special. After the service they all ate together. This time the rice and meat had been given to the nationals for the meal preparation and Mary Ellen wrote that the rice was so nice and fluffy, much better than the sticky rice if she had prepared it. In the afternoon Paul Kraybill spoke of his travels and observations among the various EMM mission locations.

This same weekend of Paul Kraybill's visit coincided with MAF bringing in Ken Schlaer, the radio technician, from Nairobi on Monday, April 11. The installation of radios for inter-station communication was a dream that was now being fulfilled. After installing the radio at Jamama, Ken Schlaer went with the MAF plane to Mog and then to Johar and Mahaddei to install the radios there. Ivan and Victor had gone to Mog with the MAF plane for mission council, leaving the women alone at Jamama. It was fun for Mary Ellen to man the radio at Jamama with the men being absent. Ivan didn't seem so far away when she could talk to him by radio! The Dorsches left for their month vacation in East Africa leaving Mary Ellen also with the

responsibilities of the station bookkeeping which was no easy task. She would be at the radio three times a day with SMM4, the call letters of the Jamama station.

With the MAF plane coming and going from Jamama, at times Gordon Marshall needed to stay overnight and he would sleep in the Leaman's house, using the bedroom adjoining the living room. The children called that room, "Gordon's room." He was a fun loving and optimistic person and the Leamans enjoyed hosting him. The Leaman children were bringing a lot of joy to their parents. David was having a lot of fun pretending he was Jonathan. He would say, "I'm 'onathan', just pretending." When they had quava sauce for dessert, he liked to say, " 'onathan's cereal, just pretending." The children would play together and Deborah would be the mommy, David the daddy and Jonathan the baby. They could get along very nicely if David wasn't upsetting Deborah by riding into her with his tricycle. Mary Ellen wrote: "*David was thoroughly disgusted with me one day when I disciplined him. He said, 'Me not like Mommy, me like Jesus.'*"

The hospital did have charges for the care of people which by USA standard was very small. But they would also care for very poor people "maskin." At the end of April there was a very pathetic situation of three "maskin" persons from the same family admitted to the hospital. A twelve year old girl was admitted with tetanus contracted from a female circumcision, a few days later her baby brother was admitted very edematous and malnourished and then the father was admitted very ill in a confused state of mind due to his illness. They all were responding to treatment. Catholic Relief Service had given food which could be used for the poor patients. Mary Ellen wrote: "*The poor we have with us always, as Jesus said and we do what we can to help them.*"

But then there also were the wealthy patients that were being cared for. A French lady, whose husband worked for the Paul Smith Construction Company doing the port renovation in Chismaio, was pregnant. She delivered a fine healthy boy and Mary Ellen was providing her meals during her confinement. There was also a Brazilian woman and several pregnant Italian women anticipating delivery at the Jamama hospital.

Ivan had a most unusual medical emergency in early May. As he recalls, a young Somali man came to the clinic because he was unable to urinate. On examination Ivan diagnosed that he had acute peritonitis and suspected a ruptured appendix. He needed surgery but when he was given spinal anesthesia, his blood pressure dropped and Ivan could not operate until the blood

pressure was stabilized. When Ivan made his surgical incision, he discovered that the abdomen was full of pus. He called in the family to show them what he found so they could understand the gravity of the situation. Ivan suctioned two pints of pus before he could remove the ruptured appendix. The man was placed on IV fluids and treated with antibiotics. There was much thanks to God for the miracle that he survived. He was on IV fluids for many days until his intestines began to work and then he was finally able to leave the hospital. When Ivan was on furlough, he had ordered a water still and then he was able to begin the preparation for Jamama hospital to make their own IV fluids. He taught one of the Somali men how to measure the appropriate amount of sugar and salt to add to the distilled water. The IV fluids were sterilized in the large sterilizer heated by a pressure kerosene stove.



The young man after recovery from ruptured appendix and peritonitis. The number of IV fluids needed before he recovered.

The other joy that came to Ivan was to have a hospital employee ask for Bible study. Previously another employee had been studying the Bible but had discontinued for a time because he was fearful of how his wife's family would react if they knew he was studying the Bible. But he told Ivan he wanted to begin the study again but would try to be cautious. Mary Ellen wrote that it was

like Nicodemus coming to Jesus by night. Victor also was having Bible studies. There was the beginning of a special worship service planned and led by the local believers. Ivan went to one of the meetings and there were nine young men and one young girl. Two of the men were the ones with whom Ivan had recently begun Bible studies. Abdi Guri, who had come from the Johar school and had become a good hospital employee, spoke on John chapter eight.

Dr. Urqhart, the Canadian doctor, who had been the doctor for the port construction project had now started his own private practice in Chismaio. With the support of a rich Somali deputy he had a small clinic-hospital. His specialty was surgery and he was quite competent. He and Ivan would consult and assist each other with difficult cases. Sometimes Dr. Urqhart

would bring a patient to Jamama to do surgery and Ivan would administer ether anesthesia. He was willing to come to Jamama if Ivan called him to help with an emergency. Ivan could handle some emergencies himself.

In May he had a man with a strangulated hernia that needed immediate surgery. There was a five-year old child who swallowed a shilling and it was stuck in the upper esophagus. Ivan tried to remove it with his finger and with an instrument. He x-rayed several times and then discovered that the coin had passed into the stomach so that ended that emergency! In early June Ivan did another cataract extraction but the woman was not cooperative during the surgery and moved at inappropriate times. Unfortunately that surgery also resulted in an infection of the eye.

The sad news was that the pet Kudu disappeared. After Mary Ellen stopped feeding him by a bottle, he would wonder away but stayed around the compound and would always come back. Then one day he did not return. The family was sorry to lose him because he was a lovable pet. Mary Ellen wrote: *"We could have bought a monkey several times since then, but I am not eager to have a monkey around; there is enough little "monkey shining" around this house."*

Grace Shenk with her two daughters, Karen and Doris, came by plane to Chismaio about the middle of June. She came to Jamama to await the delivery of their next child. David came overland by road. It was the mission policy that if a husband wanted to be with his wife for her delivery, he needed to pay his own transportation so David came by the cheaper public transportation. Was that a strange mission policy? The Leamans enjoyed having David and Grace at Jamama and certainly Deborah loved having Karen as a girl playmate near her age.

Ivan continued to be very busy at the hospital, one day coming for lunch at about 3:00 p.m. and then coming for supper at after 9:00 p.m. On that afternoon he did his second prostatectomy which required nearly three hours. Then he was up most of the night assisting a woman in difficult labor. Ivan said he was glad that not every day was like that or he would soon wear out! Then he got a call in the middle of the night to bring a woman from the village who was in labor. There had been rains and the roads were very muddy and Ivan feared to take the Land Rover so he walked to the woman's house. He discovered that her labor was not too far along so he walked her to the hospital. Mary Ellen called that "shoe leather express."

June was a record month for eight live births. There was border strife between Kenya and Somalia and Kenya closed the border at the end of June.

This was a big problem for Ivan since he ordered a lot of medicines from Nairobi and he hoped that this border closing would not last long.

In early July the wife of the judge in Chismaio delivered but only after a difficult delivery. The baby was a face presentation and the cord was around the neck twice. During the labor the fetal heart would slow considerably during contractions and Ivan was considering doing a C-section but then “God intervened” (Mary Ellen’s words) and she then delivered normally. Dr. Urqhart wanted to do two surgical cases at Jamama with Ivan giving the anesthesia, the one was a tonsillectomy and the other a hernia repair.

Grace Shenk was past the due date for her delivery and David wanted to get back to Johar for school. David tried to encourage her labor by walking Grace rapidly around the school flag pole. He would take Grace by the hand and made her walk the circle with him being on the inside of the circle! Since Grace was ripe for delivery, Ivan started an IV Pitocin drip and the labor began and progressed normally after the Pitocin was stopped. She delivered a healthy baby boy on Saturday evening on July 16. He was named Jonathan Clyde. Shortly after Grace’s delivery, Ivan needed to give



Sidi with x-ray which is helpful in diagnosing TB

his attention to a hospitalized Arab women pregnant with twins and Ivan suspected a placenta praevia. She began bleeding again and Ivan knew he needed to do something to save her life so Sunday morning he did a C-section and two living males were delivered, each weighing slightly more than three pounds. The one twin died the next day and the other required a lot of care with feeding.

Fatuma, Mary Ellen’s house girl, had been missing a lot of work and in the middle of July when she came to work, Ivan was struck at how tired, thin and ill she looked so he asked her to come to the hospital for a check-up. He discovered that she had TB. She had been trying to hide her illness by taking sporadic treatment from a pharmacy in the village. She never coughed so Mary Ellen didn’t suspect the illness. She of course was not able to continue working for Mary Ellen. She would need to take TB treatment faithfully for at least six months and perhaps for a year. Taking sporadic treatment from the pharmacy in town was usually Streptomycin injections and this was a

common practice. This was likely what Fatuma had been doing. This was a very bad practice because it would lead to Streptomycin drug resistant TB. In the clinic Ivan would give Streptomycin injections three times a week for a month and also with that he would give oral tablets of ionized combined with another TB drug. He encouraged treatment for at least six months. Mary Ellen needed to find a new house helper and she hired Hawa Hilole. Several years earlier Hawa had worked in the hospital laundry and then she left to get married and went to Mogadiscio. She now had a three year old daughter but was divorced. Mary Ellen was pleased with her work.

Toward the end of July, Grace and her little brood left by plane from Chismaio. Ivan and Mary Ellen did some shopping and then they had a fright. Victor had given Joy's passport to the Leaman's to show to one of the officials in Chismaio. After doing that, the passport was put into Mary Ellen's woven handbag. There was no money in the handbag. She left it in the front seat of the Land Rover while the children were in the back seat. She and Ivan went into a shop. Mary Ellen was not in the shop for long but when she came out the handbag was gone. Immediately the Leamans spread the word of a missing handbag and Ivan offered a reward. Fortunately a little boy was found with the handbag within fifteen minutes and it still had the passport. An older boy had found the little boy with the handbag and Ivan gave him a reward. Mary Ellen breathed a prayer of relief with thanks to God for helping them to find the handbag with the passport so quickly. She wrote: "*Chismaio is full of poor people and beggars.*"

At the end of August, Ivan had the courage to do another cataract operation after the poor results of the last two several months ago. This patient was having eye pain from pressure behind the cataract and Ivan felt compelled to operate. They took special precautions with the sterilizing of the instruments and the nurses, Anna Lutz and Rhoda Buckwalter, prayed extra hard that morning for this surgery. The surgery went well.

The nurses' house was close to the Leaman's house since they now lived in the renovated apartment next to the garage. The Leaman children liked to go to the nurses' house and both Rhoda and Anna were good with the children and when one was off hospital duty they would read to the children.

In the September 9 letter Mary Ellen wrote: "*Hospital work continues to bring the expected as well as the unexpected. Last Friday night there was emergency surgery which kept Ivan and the nurses up most of the night. A young woman was brought with a tubal pregnancy that had ruptured. She had been ill for six days, was weak from loss of blood and was a poor risk*

for operating. God surely had His hand in that surgery and the fact that she is living now and making a good recovery is nothing less than a miracle. She had stopped breathing during the operation and artificial respiration had to be applied. On Tuesday morning Ivan did another cataract operation.”

Ivan and Mary Ellen visited the home of Fatuma, Mary Ellen's former house girl. She had stopped coming to the clinic for her TB treatment because she was “tired of injections.” They wanted to encourage her to continue the treatment. They did not find Fatuma at home for she had gone to Mogadiscio for a visit. They gave their message to the mother and she said that Fatuma would return and come to the hospital for her treatment. Her little daughter was on TB pills because her TB skin test was positive.

One evening Jonathan whammed his head on the door frame and had a small gash that bled a lot. He needed two sutures and after he was bandaged he was the same active, mischievous little self. The bandage around his head added to his spunky look. When Grace Shenk was there, she said she could hardly keep from laughing when she would see Jonathan with his little mischievous grin. In the September 15 letter Mary Ellen wrote: *“Jonathan and David had their clothes muddy even before breakfast, somewhat to their mother's distress. Now the two little tykes are in the office as I write so interruptions are frequent. Jonathan is rolling his ball across the desk and David is in the box where we keep our newspapers. After breakfast before he went to the hospital, Daddy made his rounds with the kisses. When he came to Jonathan, he stopped and looked at him. Jonathan looked up expectantly and quickly chirped an irresistible little ‘Me.’”*

On September 16 Victor spent a lot of time working on the x-ray machine. The x-ray machine was shocking people getting the x-ray as well as the person operating the machine. Victor grounded the electricity more which reduced the shock considerably. It was felt that there was a defect in the control box. To call in an x-ray technician 500 miles away in Nairobi was not easy so it was good to have someone like Victor with his mechanical skills. Bert Lind had come to Jamama to discuss with Victor about renovating the garage to make a meeting place for worship services.

Although Mary Ellen had no official assignment, she did many tasks behind the scenes. Ivan often said he could never have done his medical work without the good support of his wife. One major part of her life of service was being a good mother to the children. She also served the other missionaries. In her September 21 letter she described some of her activities. She had typed four stencils for the school paper. She had also typed five

examinations for the teachers that week. The next week she would help in entertaining fellow missionaries who were coming to Jamama for mission council. She had arranged the office to accommodate two cots in that room which David Shenk would share with another council member.

The September 30 letter described the activities of a busy happy week. David Shenk had come a few days before mission council to prepare for the erection of a windmill at the new well next to the river at Jamama. He had become an expert in the erection of a windmill on each of the mission stations at Mahaddei, Johar and Mog. Now he was preparing for the erection of one at Jamama. These USAID windmills had been lying in the Mogadiscio port and had not been used. The Mennonite mission was given permission to use them if they could erect them. David Shenk had designed a way to use an A-frame by reading his high school physics book. He determined that these windmills could be erected by the use of a large pipe A-frame. The windmill was assembled on the ground and then a cable was attached to the top of the windmill and then attached to the top of the A-frame. With the use of a winch, the windmill was slowly erected. It took many men to work together for the erection of the forty foot high windmill. There was rejoicing when the windmill was safely erected. One evening after the council meeting there was a celebration by the serving of a windmill cake. It was cleverly designed with straws and a pinwheel at the top.

Newly arrived missionaries, Ken and Elizabeth Nissley, had come to Jamama. Ken had come for the mission council meeting and Elizabeth, as an RN, spent time with Ivan to get some pointers in ways that she could be helpful as a school nurse at Johar. She also watched a cataract operation which went well. The other newly arrived missionaries were Allen and Erma Brubaker. Mary Ellen enjoyed having them in the house as Erma was a fun loving, vivacious person.

On Sunday there was an impressive communion service. After a preparatory message by one of the elders, each person gave a testimony. This was followed by the communion message and then communion and foot washing. Mary Ellen was pleased that her children sat through the more than three hour service.

Mary Ellen's new house girl Hawa Hilole had bilharzia (urinary schistosomiasis). She was undergoing the series of intravenous treatments which were making her sick. She had only received five of a series of the usual twelve to fifteen IV treatments. So Ivan wanted to try a new oral medication which he had received. This drug was called Ambilhar. Ivan remembers

that this new oral treatment revolutionized the treatment of bilharzia. Then Hawa announced that her brother had died in Mog and she wanted ten days off to go to Mog. So Mary Ellen was needing to train another house helper. She later discovered that Hawa had married in Mog so Mary Ellen needed to continue training the new girl in the house work.

In the October 6 letter Mary Ellen wrote that new contracts were offered to the hospital employees. There were now sixteen employees, four were part-time. Six of the employees were *“one with us in faith.”* She wrote how fortunate they were to have such a congenial group of employees. Mary Ellen was very busy with end-of-the month reports. Something new was added to her bookkeeping responsibilities. Now there was a payroll tax. Employees earning more than Sh 200/00 a month needed to pay income tax on earnings above the Sh 200/00. Every quarter the tax with a report needed to be submitted to the government. Also, she needed to prepare a monthly report for the mission office in Mog.

The October 14 letter had a description of Somalia’s national “Flag Day” holiday on October 12. The mission school was asked to have part in the celebration so the teachers, Martha Lutz, Helen Ranck and Elsie VanPelt were very busy in getting the students prepared for their part of marching, giving speeches and singing. There also was a play. At the end of the mission school performance, the District Commissioner gave a speech and told the community how fortunate they were to have such a good school.

In the October 19 letter, Mary Ellen described what she saw from the office window as she was typing. Anna Lutz was sitting on her front porch with a book in her lap and David was squatted beside her while Jonathan was running back and forth. Deborah and a little Somali playmate were sitting nearby brushing their teeth with little sticks in Somali fashion. Deborah had quite a few Somali neighbor playmates and often they played on Dorsches swings. Viola said she had a lot of fun listening to them communicate – an interchange of Somali and English. Mary Ellen was interrupted from her typing because she had an invitation to go to Deborah’s “house” where she served Mary Ellen some exotic things - “corn porridge” and “olive squash.” She thought she was too busy to go, but she needed to remind herself that she must take time for things that are important to the children. Soon after that, Deborah and David were contentedly playing school by themselves in the living room. Viola had started having a kind of kindergarten with Deborah and she was learning to draw a square, circle and triangle. She also had borrowed a book of “Fairy Tales” from the Dorsch

house and Mary Ellen was enjoying reading these exaggerated tales which she hadn't read for years.

The Leaman family went visiting in a neighboring village to visit the family of the man who had the emergency appendectomy some months ago. They were invited to another house where they were given a gift of four pigeons. The long wings were plucked so that they would not be able to fly back to their former home. Ivan had the project of building a house for the pigeons. He contracted for a man to dig holes for four posts on top of which the pigeon house would be installed. Quite a project and the hope was that it would be worth it!

The November 4 letter reported that Jim and Gloria Shelly had come to Jamama to await Gloria's delivery. Jim said that this was a chance of a lifetime for him to see the birth of their baby. The baby girl, Joanne Marie, was born on November 15 weighing eight pounds and one ounce. The baby was born face up which required a larger episiotomy and she had a retained placenta which required Ivan to do a manual removal without anesthesia. But Gloria said that she felt better after this delivery than she did after her first delivery. That would have made Ivan feel good since Gloria was his cousin.

The November 24 letter said that Ivan's pigeon house was now sitting on top of the four posts behind their house. Bert had helped Ivan to build the framework on which the pigeon house was placed. Ivan was given a gift of three more pigeons, a big one and two squabs.

The December 1 letter told of the last issue of the *Equatorial Reports* which was the mission school newspaper. Mary Ellen had typed the stencils for it. In this issue there was an article on the Jamama Hospital. One of the students had interviewed Ivan and wrote the article. *The Somali News* recently had given special recognition to this mission school newspaper which was a boost to the students' morale.

The December 8 letter reported that the hospital continued to be filled to capacity. There was no end to the work and it taxed one's physical endurance to the limit. There were quite a few critical patients including a boy with tetanus who required a nurse to stay by his side to help when his spasms almost would overcome him. Sometimes Ivan needed to be called several times during the night. One night his temperature went to 107 and Ivan gave little hope for his survival and then he died one night. Ivan said that this was a blessing because he felt that the boy would have had brain damage after all he had gone through. Mary Ellen wrote: "*There are numerous other cases one could tell about. God brings many opportunities to us each day*

through the medical ministry. Pray that we may be given the physical and spiritual strength to endure."

The December 22 letter told of the visit that Mary Ellen had from the Somali woman who had delivered in the hospital the same night that she had delivered David. She also had a prolapsed cord due to a brow presentation but sadly her baby was a stillborn. Mary Ellen wrote: *"She seems to have a warm spot in her heart for us, especially for Ivan who, she says, was like her father when he stayed by her bedside the night of her labor."* That letter also told of the visit of Henry Garber who was accompanied by Clarence and Lois Keener, Henry's daughter. Although blind, Henry wanted to "see" all that he could and asked to be taken to Chismaio so he could "see" that place. They also had a visit to Mofi where they had a meal with Hassan and Tabitha.

The next special visitor was Elam Stauffer who came on December 21 on the MAF plane that brought the Dorsch girls. The Leamans were happy to host him in their house for a few days before they would all leave to go to the missionary conference which was to be held at Johar. Before leaving for conference the Jamama folks had a Christmas supper on December 24 and the Christmas program and feast with the believers was on Sunday, Christmas Day. The Jamama mission group with Elam left by rented bus on December 26, which was the tenth wedding anniversary for the Leamans. Ivan had given Mary Ellen a hand-painted camel skin vase as an anniversary gift.

► *Missionary Conference at Johar at end of December 1966*

Standing from left to right: Harold and Barbara Reed, Ken and Elizabeth Nissley, Victor and Viola Dorsch with son Jim, Ivan and Mary Ellen Leaman, David and Grace Shenk, Allen and Erma Brubaker, Jim and Gloria Shelly, Bert and Rhoda Lind with son Daniel, Elam Stauffer, guest speaker. Seated from left to right: Helen Ranck, Martha Lutz, Bertha Beachy, Lydia Glick, Fae Miller, Mary Gehman, Elsie VanPelt, Anna Lutz (hidden). Twenty-four missionaries and eighteen MKs.

Chapter 9

(1967)

After the conference at Johar, Mary Ellen wrote this in her letter: *“Conference was so rich and so full. Our thoughts were centered on the book of Ephesians. Each morning prior to the message we met in small groups to discuss some part of Ephesians. These proved to be times of real openness and sharing. God spoke to us through Bro. Stauffer’s messages. One among many things which impressed me was the thought that ‘God meets us at the point of our need.’ Too often we are not willing to admit that we have needs and allow God to meet us. Our conference was concluded with a meaningful communion service.”*

Mary Ellen and the children returned with the others to Jamama on Monday, January 2, 1967. The morning after she arrived home she discovered that all the pigeons were dead. She had heard a shuffling noise during the



night. She wondered if it was a snake that killed the pigeons. Ivan had stayed in Mog to do some shopping mostly for medical supplies. He returned on January 6 in a new looking public bus. With him came Lydia Glick and Martha Lutz. Lydia had come to administer Somali language tests, written and oral. She had brought a Somali girl along to help in administering the exam. The Leamans dreaded taking the exams and wrote that they did not do well.

The mission did not have a special Christmas meal for the employees since it was Ramadan, the month of fasting. So on January 20 the employees were invited to the restaurant for the traditional meal of injera and watt. After the meal Ivan showed slides and movies in the school. The employees enjoyed this very much and some of the hospital patients came for the showing also. Ivan also was asked to add a new dimension to his work. He began teaching a weekly hygiene class to the seventh grade. The text that was used was called *Birth and Growth*. The hospital work was booming again. On January 16, twins were born, a boy and a girl. They were about three pounds and seemed healthy. The next day there were two more deliveries. Anna Lutz loved caring for the mothers and the babies. On January 19 there was a radio contact with the Shenks at Johar who were concerned because their baby son Jonathan was ill with vomiting and diarrhea for a few days. On the following day he was much better so it was a relief to get that news.

On Wednesday, January 25, Paul Kraybill, Donald Lauver and David Thomas, the deputation from the States arrived in Chismaio by Somali Airlines. Paul Kraybill shared the exciting news that EMM had purchased a property seven miles from Nairobi as a location for the missionary children's school. It had been the home of an English general and his wife. He described the property as beautiful and spacious. On Friday the group all left for Mogadiscio except Ivan. He had a woman in labor who was fully dilated but not having good contractions so he had to stay behind and hopefully come later by bus. He would miss the first day of mission council which he was sorry for but he said, "I guess the Lord has some reason for keeping me here." The women with the lady in labor refused the use of forceps. Finally Ivan went to the uncle's house in the village and asked him to come and sign permission for the use of forceps. The uncle agreed and so Ivan could go ahead. He applied the forceps and it was a difficult delivery but the baby girl appeared healthy.

After the woman delivered, a boy was brought in who had been bitten by a crocodile. Two boys were bathing at the river and the crocodile came for one of the boys and when the other boy came to the rescue he was caught

in his lower body by the crocodile jaws. How he escaped was not written in Mary Ellen's letter but perhaps the other boy poked him in the eye (?). The boy survived without any broken bones but as Ivan remembers he had small teeth bite cuts on both the front of his lower body and the back of his buttocks and upper thigh areas. Ivan had to first suture the multiple teeth bites on one side of his body and then turn him over to suture the multiple bites on the other side. There were a total of 133 sutures required! Was this the reason the Lord kept him in Jamama? Ivan then planned to fly to Mog by plane from Chismaio for the mission council meeting.

More crocodile stories followed. While Ivan was in Mog a little girl was brought to the hospital after she had been bitten by a crocodile. She had been to the river with her water pot on her head when she was attacked and grabbed by the jaws of the crocodile. Fortunately for her the water pot fell on the crocodile's head and she was able to get away. Anna Lutz, the only nurse on duty, had two places to suture on the girl's body. Then on Ivan's first day back, a man was brought who had been attacked by a crocodile. His one hand and wrist were badly mangled and he had a compound fracture of his wrist. The Somalis had a strange belief that certain people had the ability to call a crocodile to attack someone, such as their enemy.

Ivan had a memory of another unusual accident which occurred along the river but the story did not appear in any of the letters. Two boys were at the river and they caught a large fish. The one boy took his machete and swung it to cut off the head of the fish. He missed the fish and hit the back of the other boy's hand, causing a severe injury. The metacarpal bones were cut through including all the major tendons leading to the four fingers of the hand. That was quite a challenge for Ivan. He got out an anatomical picture of the tendons of the hand which he lay next to him as he was doing the needed repair. He was able to suture together each of the severed tendons. As the hand healed it appeared that Ivan had successfully sutured each tendon. This was another instance of God's hand on Ivan's hand in his work!

Jamama had been operating with only one missionary nurse who was Anna Lutz after Rhoda Buckwalter needed to leave. That was sad for all of us because Rhoda was very much loved by her fellow missionaries and the patients in the hospital. Paul Kraybill was able to recruit another nurse to fill in for a short time. This was Becky Longenecker and she arrived on February 9. It was great to have another nurse available and we soon found Becky fitting in very well into the mission family and in the hospital work. The second week after Ivan returned, the hospital had become very busy.

On February 7 there was an emergency C-section on the daughter of Musa, the believer from Malaili. She was brought in a very serious condition and that surgery was done with much prayer. The next morning she was much improved. The baby did not look good at birth but seemed to be holding on thus far. On February 17 Ivan was asked to go to the bush to bring in a woman who had been in labor for five days. Becky Longenecker went along which was a new experience for her. The woman had a greatly distended bladder and could not be catheterized and needed to have a needle aspiration of the full bladder which resulted in over a quart of urine. The baby was already dead. The woman's condition was very low but she rallied and was recovering. Then on February 20 at 3:00 a.m. another call came to bring a woman from Torda who had been in labor for three days. That baby also did not live. The woman was going into shock but she also was recovering. Then on February 21 a woman came in and she had a perfectly normal delivery and Ivan barely made it to the hospital. That was a wonderful change after so many complicated deliveries.

On Saturday February 18, Allen and Erma Brubaker came by Somali Airlines to Chismaio. They had come to Jamama to await the delivery for Erma for their third child. It was good that Allen could arrange his work at Mahaddei so that he could come to be with her here. Erma immediately made herself useful and offered to sew name tags on the clothes for Deborah when she goes to boarding school later that year. Also, Elsie had made a lovely Sunday dress for Deborah. *"Elsie is such a good seamstress; she can put together a dress in no time."* On February 22 Orie Miller and Jim Herr of the Herr's Potato Chips, members of MEDA, were due to fly into Mog.

Jim and Gloria Shelley came to Jamama on March 3 and they stayed with the Leamans in their guest room. Jim was planning to arrange for the contract for the building of the new clinic building. A Dutch architect had drawn the plans for the building which Ivan was pleased with. He felt a new clinic building would be a great improvement from the present small clinic in the one end of the hospital.

In Mary Ellen's letters, she often would give reports of the hospital activity describing the unusual operations or deliveries, which might give the impression that this was where the most time was spent. However, the vast majority, probably eighty percent of the medical activity, was in the outpatient clinic where at times up to 100 patients were seen on a busy clinic day. The patients were seen by either the doctor or the nurse and the appropriate lab tests and treatments were prescribed. The lab tests were mostly

urine and stool examinations looking for parasites. The bilharzia eggs were found in the urine and the eggs of the hookworm and the ascaris (round worms) or the amoeba were found in the stool. These labs tests were done in the afternoon with Ivan and one of the Somali employees who was being trained to do these examinations. Rarely were blood examinations done for the malarial parasite since every patient with fever received treatment for malaria in addition to the treatment for any parasites. Of course, there were respiratory and skin infections to be treated with antibiotics. There was tooth pulling which was done by Ivan. The back molars with cavities could be a big challenge to pull with their long roots. A local anesthesia was given before pulling the tooth.

There was always the unusual medical problem which Ivan said made the work interesting. He wrote that on March 9 he had a patient who had difficulty breathing and an x-ray showed that the heart was pushed to the opposite side of the chest by a fluid collection in the left side of the chest. With a needle Ivan removed four quarts of pus from the pleural space in the left chest. This would have been an empyema. By the next day the man was much improved.

On March 15 there was another very unusual medical situation which Ivan had to deal with. Mary Ellen described it this way: *"A five-year old girl was admitted because she had swallowed a coin which was lodged in the upper esophagus. Ivan's first attempts at dislodging the coin were not successful. He had first tried with a laryngoscope to remove the coin. Today (March 17) he tried another idea. He passed a Foley catheter which has a balloon at the end which can be filled with water. The catheter was passed through the nose down into the esophagus beyond the coin. Then the balloon was filled with water and Ivan pulled the catheter slowly hoping this would catch the coin and pull it out. After several unsuccessful attempts it worked. He did this under fluoroscope and saw the coin come out of the esophagus but then he couldn't find it anywhere – in the mouth or on the floor. After further checks with the fluoroscope it was seen lying behind the nose and the palate, a place impossible to reach without putting the child to sleep because she would bite on fingers or instruments put into her mouth. So the child was put to sleep with ether and the coin was removed from behind the palate. This is one of those unusual cases which we thank the Lord for helping us because the child may have died had the coin stayed in the esophagus. Ivan, before he dislodged the coin, was about ready to send the child to Mogadiscio but the mother wanted to take the child home and read the Koran over her and said 'if the child dies, it dies.'"*

Ivan also did two cataract operations that week. One was done on a man who had an extremely hunched back. Ivan usually does cataract surgery sitting down but this one he had to do standing up because the patient could not lie flat. When Ivan came in from the hospital one night, Allen Brubaker asked him how his day was. Ivan replied that the activity in the hospital was normal. Allen laughingly said, "All your days look abnormal to me."

On March 23 a young girl was brought in with her first pregnancy, at term but she was bleeding. Her blood pressure dropped and she was going into shock with no blood pressure. Helen Ranck and Viola Dorsch each gave a pint of blood and a Somali man gave blood also. Ivan was about ready to do a C-section but first did a sterile pelvic exam to see if she had a placenta praevia and discovered that she did not. So he ruptured her membranes and started a pitocin drip to induce labor. She progressed in labor and the baby was delivered by forceps. The baby was in difficulty at first but Ivan used mouth to mouth resuscitation to get it to breathe. Now the mother and baby seem to be doing well. Again, God blessed our efforts with a miracle and we thank Him for it.

The Brubakers had been at Jamama for over a month waiting for Erma's labor. There obviously was a miscalculation of the due date. She finally delivered on April 4 and little Brian Eugene weighed eight pounds. Allen was present for the birth and then he left two days later to resume his work at Mahaddei. Erma was staying longer to fully recover from her delivery. She would be flying to Mog on April 15 with the new baby after being away from Mahaddei for almost two months.

Victor Dorsch left for vacation from Chismaio by MAF plane on April 17 and Mary Ellen was responsible again for the station bookkeeping and taking care of the three times a day radio communication with the other mission stations. Also there were interruptions by the station workman so she was making many trips to the office which was in Victor's house. Ivan thought she should have "office hours" but she wasn't sure if that was a good idea. The Leamans were planning to take Dorsch to Chismaio and spend the day there. Mary Ellen was eager to get away from the work at Jamama since it was almost two months since she had been off the Jamama station.

The building of the new clinic building was going well and in the absence of Victor, Ivan was giving some oversight of the building. Jim Shelly was coming on April 29 by Somali Airlines to supervise some of the more difficult parts of the building construction. Deborah was being prepared for school. Mary Ellen was filling out application forms. Ivan needed to fill out

a physical examination form and he also needed to do some laboratory work which required a finger prick. Deborah was fussing that she didn't want to go to school if she needed to have her finger pricked. But she did go with her Daddy to the hospital to have that done without a word of protest. It was a sign that she was growing up.

Deborah and David both had mild cases of tonsillitis. On April 27 Deborah had a fever of 103-104 and today David had the same symptoms. Aspirin and penicillin tablets seemed to knock it in a short time and they were soon actively playing again. (The local elder's) youngest daughter, who was Deborah's age, was spending a lot of time playing here these days. She and Deborah get along well in Somali, though it is a sort of "pigeon Somali" that they use. The children and Mary Ellen and the house girl usually have a tea break every morning. This was something Jonathan looks forward to with the greatest of pleasure. Shortly after breakfast he could be heard saying, "Hubo (the house girl) make tea." At the end of the week and at the end of the month, Mary Ellen needed to see that everyone on the compound gets paid. David aptly called her a "pay Mommy."

The Leamans had an interesting visit by Clarence and Helen Rutt on Wednesday, May 11. They had hoped to come with all of their four children to visit the Leamans but because the Somali Airlines schedule to Chismaio was only on Saturdays and Wednesdays, only Clarence and Helen would come for a short visit on Wednesday. The Leamans met Clarence and Helen in Chismaio in the morning and they arrived at the hospital about 10:00 a.m. Ivan showed Clarence the hospital and then about 11:00 a.m. there was an employee get together when Clarence showed slides of their experiences in Indonesia. The Jamama missionaries had lunch with the Rutts and at 2:15 p.m. the Leamans took the Rutts to Chismaio where they flew back to Mog where their four children had been staying with the Mog missionaries in the absence of their parents.

The June 1 letter reported that two Italian women from Chismaio were planning to deliver in Jamama and because of heavy rains causing very muddy roads into Jamama, they decided to come to Jamama before they went into labor. The Dorsches offered each of them a room in their house since their children were away in school. They were very appreciative of this. The one lady delivered May 31. There was also an Italian man being treated in the hospital for bronchitis. He didn't like restaurant food so Mary Ellen was cooking his meals. The second Italian woman delivered on June 8 and although the baby boy was healthy otherwise, he had a cleft palate.

The mother was quite upset and at first didn't want to see the baby but Ivan showed pictures from a medical book how surgical repair can be done. The mother accepted this and then asked to see the baby and as she held the baby her mother emotions took over and she wept and said something like "beautiful baby." The baby needed special help with feeding with medicine dropper and Mary Ellen kept the baby overnight and fed him sugar water at 5:00 a.m. Mary Ellen kept him for about four days and said it was a pleasure to feed him. After the mother had breast milk she could use a breast pump and feed him with a medicine dropper. They wanted to have surgery as soon as possible in one or two months, probably in Italy. After these two Italian women delivered, another Italian woman came to await her delivery. She was due June 20.

There was a woman who had premature separation of the placenta and after she delivered she continued to bleed. She was in a very life-threatening condition and required four units of blood before she stopped bleeding. The fact that she and the baby were both living was a miracle from God. When Ivan made rounds one day he asked the baby's name and the mother said, "You name it." Ivan said, "This baby is a miracle. Can we give it a name meaning this?" And the name became "Leiyab."

The letter of July 11 was written by Ivan: *"I went to Mogadiscio on June 30 for general council. I was happy for this opportunity to go, having missed the last mission council because of hospital work. The roads were quite bad from the recent rains and we needed to detour by sand roads near the ocean. About half-way to Mog the rear end broke and this needed a major repair. Victor supervised this which meant dismantling the rear end and drive shaft and then proceeding to the nearest town on front-wheel drive only. At Brava, a town on the seacoast, we were able to persuade a local mechanic to sell us a used rear end out of an old Land-Rover. This required more work but finally we were able to proceed at about 11:00 p.m. We arrived in Mog about 7:00 a.m. Although I was very tired I couldn't resist the opportunity to go and see the July 1 Independence Day celebration. We had witnessed the first Independence Day in 1960. We did get to see the new President Abdirashid Ali Shermarki. This is the man who was Prime Minister a few years ago and whose hand Raymond Charles had shaken in Washington.*

Saturday p.m. we began the council which continued through Sunday. This was a good meeting with good sharing and good inspirational messages. It was thrilling to realize that our council represents a group of about sixty believers, scattered in the four stations. Monday evening I traveled to

Mahaddei with Allen Brubaker. I spent the next day with Miriam Leaman in the clinic. She is getting things organized for her stay there until Fae returns. In the evening there was a highlight. Two new ones were "received by pouring" in the very room where we had lived at Mahaddei, where Peter John had become so very sick. One of those received was one of our first friends in Somalia. After the ceremony someone announced to me that these two had each taken a Christian name, one was Peter and the other John. There was not only rejoicing in heaven that night!

The following day I headed to Mog by bus. The next day and half I spent in Mog contacting government medical offices. These proved to be very worthwhile towards our plans for a dresser-training program at Jamama. I conferred with W.H.O. officials who are operating a training school in Mog. We hope to be using the same syllabus and thus have our students receive the same certificate.

On Thursday evening I packed medicines to take along to Jamama. I had ordered medicines in January from Dar es Salaam but due to delays we only recently received the shipment in Mog. On Friday morning we got up early after about four hours of sleep and left for Jamama with a full car. We had stayed in Mog longer because of major repairs needed on the car. The trip went fairly well and we thought we might reach Jamama about 7:00 p.m. But about five miles from Gelib we became hopelessly stuck in a mud hole. After working for several hours several of us walked to Gelib. This area is thick bush and full of elephant tracks. We didn't know if we would see elephants or not but the fellows I was with were scared that we might and said it was dangerous to be walking in the dark through this area. In Gelib we found someone who was willing to help us by taking a Russian truck to pull us out of the mud. We finally got back to the Land Rover. In the meantime three other vehicles had gotten to the same mud hole so there was the work of pulling four vehicles through the mud. Around midnight I fell asleep in our car only to awake up about four hours later. At this point I was ready to travel. Victor had been working those four hours helping to extract one other vehicle out of the mud. I felt sorry that I had not helped but I was sound asleep. I was dead to the world. We arrived in Jamama at 6:30 a.m. I washed the mud off of me, had some breakfast and went to work in the hospital. That was a very eventful week. I did enjoy the change from hospital routine. In that sense it was like a vacation. Also, being away a week always affirms how much my family means to me and how happy I am to return to Mary Ellen and the children."

In the July 18 letter Mary Ellen wrote about the young Somali man who had come from Mog to be employed at the hospital to learn the bookkeeping of the hospital so that Mary Ellen could eventually let him do that work. He was a believer and a very likable fellow and Mary Ellen found it a pleasure to teach him. On July 28 a deaf mute Somali woman delivered twins in the hospital, two fine baby boys – one weighing six



Anna Lutz, R.N. holds the one baby of the twins born to the wife of the local doctor. Sofia, a good nurse aide, holds the one baby of the twins born to a deaf mute Somali woman.

pounds and the other five pounds, twelve ounces. Then two days later the wife of the local “doctor” in Jamama also delivered twins, a boy and a girl. This was most unusual to have two sets of twins born at Jamama so close together.

In the August 14 letter Mary Ellen wrote that the workmen had finished putting on the roof of the new clinic building and the custom of the mission was that on completion of a new roof of one of the mission buildings, that there would be a feast prepared for the workmen. So Mary Ellen prepared a meal of rice and “marak” with bananas and tea and at 2:00 p.m. when the last piece of roofing was in place, Mary Ellen served food to Hassan Imberwa, the contractor, and his five employees and Victor and Jim Dorsch and Ivan. That was a great occasion.

The Leamans left by MAF plane on August 17 for their vacation in Nairobi. The next four letters were written from East Africa. There was an appointment at the eye doctor for David. The doctor determined that he had good vision in both eyes and said there was no need for glasses. The patching of the dominant eye had been successful for David developing good vision in the other eye also. The Leamans made a visit to Rosslyn Academy and found it to be a lovely place. The staff was there in preparation for the opening of this new school. The staff included Lena Horning, Edith Martin, Clara Landis and Lois (Garber) Keener and her husband Clarence. The prospect was to have about thirty students – all Americans or Canadians but later that number was thirty-six. There were eight students for boarding. Deborah liked the place and wanted to stay there after the visit. The fact that Lena was there was the reason she wanted to stay.

On August 26 the Leamans left by bus for Kampala, Uganda. There was a broken axle on the bus which caused a delay of about three hours so that they arrived at their Jafferries Hotel in Kampala near midnight but the night guard had their names on reservation so they were admitted. The next day, which was Sunday, they had a meal at the Jafferries Restaurant. They ordered a special chicken and rice dinner but found that it was so spicy hot that they could not eat it at all! That was very discouraging. After a siesta they went for a walk and saw a white couple carrying a Bible so they followed this couple into a building where there was a Baptist worship service on Sunday afternoon. This couple was Elvin and Mildred Landis Peters from Lancaster County. How amazing that was! The Peters were missionaries in the Congo but had been evacuated to Kampala due to the war in the Congo. The Peters invited the Leamans to their apartment after the service and they shared food from a box they had received from the States. They gave the Leaman children jelly sandwiches which was very satisfying to the children. [Of interest is that years later the Peters settled in Lancaster County and became patients of Ivan at the Eastbrook Family Health Center. They later moved to Landis Homes Retirement Community.]

The next day the Leamans took off for a visit to Murchison Falls, 200 miles away. There was a game park where they saw buffalo, elephants and many gazelle. Ivan and Deborah took a motor boat ride on the Nile River and saw many hippos and crocodiles. They then boarded a lake steamer at Kampala and headed for Musoma where they arrived on a Saturday evening and were met by Uncle Clyde Shenk. They stayed in George Smoker's guest house. The next day Ivan spoke twice on Sunday, once at Bukiroba and also at the Secondary Alliance School at Musoma where Maynard Kurtz was teaching. They did a lot of visiting that week which included Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta Shenk where Anna Kathryn and Katrina were staying when Omar was elsewhere at that time. They took a bus to Shirati on Tuesday where Deborah had been born. Dr. Richard Weaver was the doctor at Shirati now and Ivan assisted him in surgery. Nevin Kraybills were also resident missionaries at Shirati at the time.

The Leamans then headed back to Bukiroba. On Friday Joe Shenk had invited Ivan to travel with him on the back of a motorcycle to go to an African weekend church conference, fifty miles south of Musoma. Joe showed Ivan the grave of Ray Wenger in that area. Ivan remembers that at the conference they served ugali at every meal which caused fermentation in his intestinal tract. When he and Joe Shenk returned back to Musoma on

Saturday evening, he with Mary Ellen and the children were invited to Leroy Petersheims for supper. But Ivan could not eat any of the appetizing food at the Petersheims because he was extremely bloated with gas. That evening they got on the lake steamer to head for Kisumu. During the night Ivan got relief from his bloating by passing much gas. Near Kisumu they visited some Church of God missionaries. Then they had a pleasant bus ride back to Nairobi through the tea growing area of Kericho and the beautiful Rift Valley.

They left Deborah at Rosslyn Academy on September 18. She was learning to know some of the other girls in the boarding school and she was playing with them when she was called to say goodbye to her parents. Ivan was delayed in talking to someone and Deborah got tired of waiting and she said, "Why don't we hurry up and say good bye so I can play with the other girls." That made it easier to say good bye than if there had been tears from Deborah!

The Leamans arrived back in Jamama on September 19 and it was not long before the hospital work was booming. Ivan saw two cataract patients that he planned to schedule for surgery. Hassan, the new employee, was helping with the bookkeeping and Anna Lutz had done a good job with the books. Mary Ellen had no difficulty in doing the August monthly financial report. They had received the news that a new nurse was coming but did not yet know who that would be. Anna Lutz had been doing very well but to be the only nurse on twenty-four hour call was very wearing. The Leamans invited Anna for an evening meal and Ivan talked about how the work could be carried on after the new nurse would get there. After the new nurse arrived, Ivan was hoping that Anna could help to see patients in the clinic so the clinics would not last so long.

The October 5 letter reported that Ivan was busy working on a paper outlining the proposed dresser-training program. He wanted the program to be accredited by the government so that it would be of full value to the students. He had been in close contact with Dr. Elmi, head of the Ministry of Health in Mogadiscio, since the W.H.O. was also planning a similar training school in Mog. Then the Leamans received the word that Esther Mack was the new nurse who was coming to Jamama.

Ivan and the family went to Mog by bus in mid-October for Ivan to attend the mission council meeting in Mog. While the men were in council meeting, Mary Ellen with the boys and Viola went out to Merca to visit Ali and Rhoda Buckwalter Salim. Rhoda had delivered a little girl two weeks before and she was named Martha, which was the name of Rhoda's mother. After the council meeting, the Leamans visited Mahaddei and Johar. While

at Johar they visited Helen Landis who had married Abdalla Ali. She had a baby boy on October 12. He was named Walter Elmi for each of their fathers. Hawa Hassan, the good laundry worker at the Jamama hospital, had developed a glaucoma eye problem and Ivan had taken her to see an eye doctor on Mog. An eye operation was done on October 18.

The next letter was written from Jamama on October 24 which was United Nations Day. That meant a holiday but not for Ivan. He had a cataract surgery scheduled for that day. He had rounds to make and then patients showed up who wanted to be seen even though they were not very sick. Ivan said that with such patients he gets impatient and Mary Ellen wrote: *"We need your continued prayers for more grace and strength in dealing with peoples' demands."*

On October 30 Mary Ellen's letter described an unusual activity that the students and teachers at Rosslyn Academy had experienced. There was a letter from teacher Lena Horning. She wrote that after a rain there were flying ants which they caught and then would fry them in butter and eat them. Lena Horning wrote that Deborah ate them with great gusto. Lena reported that Deborah was doing very well and wrote: *"She's a good, independent all around child who seemed to have made the adjustment quickly without ever a tear."* Mary Ellen wrote: *"When Deborah comes home I think of all the things I would like to do with her which somehow I didn't take the time to do before. I try to think that I will be more understanding of her and appreciate more her ideas and energies."*

The November 7 letter reported how busy was the work of the hospital and clinic. One day they didn't finish clinic until after 2:00 p.m. Mary Ellen had Somali language class scheduled for 3:00 p.m. with Esther Mack and Anna Lutz. They were going through *Barry's Grammar*. One day they were going through the weighty lesson of forming plurals. Finally Mary Ellen's students said, "We are tired. We just can't think anymore." Mary Ellen and Viola also had a sewing class of fourteen students. They were embroidering table cloths.

The November 14 letter says that Jim Shelly had come from Mog and arranged for the hospital bookkeeping to all be done at Jamama rather than at the central mission office in Mog. Mary Ellen wrote: *"I've forgotten much of the bookkeeping I learned in high school but it came back to me as we were setting up the new system. Having the medical books here will give us a much better picture of where we stand financially and that seems to be very important since the home board expects us to operate 'in the black.'"* Ivan

had faced a very difficult delivery with complication. One woman with an eighth month pregnancy came with bleeding from a premature separation of the placenta and she lost much blood and was near death. With blood transfusions she did live although she had a stillborn baby. The mother's survival was considered a miracle.

The November 27 letter reported receiving gift boxes, one from Mary Ellen's parents and one from Ivan's parents. These were most welcome with gifts of clothing and food items. Hospital activity was as usual – busy. On Friday morning Dr. Urqhart came to do a tonsillectomy with Ivan giving the anesthesia. On that afternoon Ivan had a hernia repair. One day in the clinic people were complaining to Sidi, the translator in the clinic. They said they were needing to wait too long and Sidi said, "Look, the doctor is only one man and he needs to be architect, mechanic" and listed other things and then he turned and said to Anna, "But I forgot one thing - he has to preach too."

The Jamama missionaries had a special visit of Mr. Uhlin on December 3. He came on the MAF plane that brought Deborah and the other children from Rosslyn. He had been a missionary with the Swedish Lutheran Mission in Lower Juba until that mission was forced to leave in 1935 when the Italian fascists came into Somalia. After being forced from Somalia, Mr. Uhlin had been with the Lutheran mission in Tanzania for many years and was now a quite elderly man. His first wife was buried in a town about thirty miles from Jamama. He was now retired from missionary work but was making this visit to Somalia. He spoke at the Sunday service and nearly all the believers were present. He had visited Tanzania before coming to Somalia. While there he had a bleeding ulcer and needed two pints of blood in Dar es Salaam. He was eager to get back to Sweden.

The sad news in the December 4 letter was that the Leamans received word that their former house girl Fatuma had died in Chismaio. They were not sure of the cause of her death. She probably never completed full treatment for TB. They were told she had married the second time and was seven month pregnant. It was not known if the pregnancy contributed to her death. The Leaman family, including the children, were sad to hear of Fatuma's death. They remembered her as "a nice house girl."

It was good to have Deborah home from school. Deborah's report card for the first term were four A's and two B's. Lena reported that she was doing well and showed a fine spirit of cooperation and determination. It was certainly interesting having her home from school. She told about two

plays she had to be in – one at Halloween and one at Thanksgiving. She very nonchalantly said, “I was very scared but I had to do it anyway.” The boys were glad to have their big sister home and she did a good job of entertaining them. Mary Ellen said she could depend on Deborah to help in so many little ways. She learned to work at school as well as study. On Sunday morning she dried the dishes for Mary Ellen without being asked to do it. Mary Ellen also wrote that she marveled at the way she and Joy get along. Although they are together at school, they also are almost inseparable here at Jamama and play so well together.

The December 24 letter told of the missionary conference that was at Jamama that year. The MAF plane had come in on Wednesday bringing Paul Miller who was the guest speaker for the conference. His expository messages were from First Timothy and were very scholarly but very interesting. The garage had been converted into a meeting room, but for this conference it was used as a place for eating together. The meeting sessions were held in one of the school classrooms.

The last letter of 1967 was written on December 30. Mary Ellen wrote that the Christmas play in which she and Ivan had parts went quite well. Mary Ellen played the part of Mary and Ivan the part of Joseph. They had to memorize their parts in Somali. Mary Ellen had to memorize the ‘Magnificat.’ She wrote that at first it seemed almost impossible to memorize such a difficult Scripture portion in Somali but the Lord helped her in this. On the evening of Christmas, the Christmas meal was at Dorsches. There was delicious roast and barbecued chicken, filling, mashed potatoes with gravy, creamed peas, a jello-cottage cheese salad, cranberry relish, a three-colored vanilla pudding with chocolate topping, fruit cake and cookies. There was a gift exchange afterwards. And then they went Christmas caroling and they dressed as if there was snow. The portable organ was taken along so the singing was accompanied by organ music. On December 31 there was to be a dedication of the chapel which had been created from the garage. Dorsches had laid a tile floor which was very nice. It was nice to have a special place for worship. The next day on Sunday, Ivan was to have the message and Victor would lead in the dedication service.

Chapter 10

(1968)

The first letter of 1968 was written by Mary Ellen on Sunday, January 7. She told of the unusual camping experience on the Chismaio beach the night before. This was to be something special as a birthday celebration for Deborah since she would be in school at Rosslyn for her seventh birthday. The Leaman family along with Martha Lutz and Esther Mack headed for Chismaio on Saturday. They had a picnic lunch on the way. Martha had made a banana cake with pink icing and candles and a gift of water colors. In Chismaio they went to the beach, then did shopping, ate at a restaurant and then found a place along the sea to camp out for the night. The children had flannel pajamas and the rest had many blankets and sweaters. They built a fire which was kept burning all night. Before sleeping they had a game of Scrabble. In the morning there was a beach breakfast of pancakes, eggs and spam. The sea atmosphere gave a hearty appetite. They went to the airport to pick up John and Joy Modricker who had come by Somalia Airlines from Mogadiscio. They would be going along on the MAF plane the next day on Monday taking six children back to school in Kenya. The group returned to Jamama in time for church.

The following week was the annual employee gathering with a meal of injera and watt at the town restaurant. This year there were forty-one persons. Following that the group came back to the school where there was a fun time of showing pictures and some of the employees put on skits. There was a severe burn patient in the hospital. A little girl was burned in the bush and it took five days to get to the hospital. About one third of her body was burned. Treatment with a silver nitrate solution was started, which was helpful in the healing of burns. The Leaman family and Esther Mack headed for Mog by public bus on January 15. UNICEF officials were arriving in Mog and Ivan wanted to be there to meet them. He had made application to

UNICEF for aid in setting up the dresser-training program at Jamama. He was able to meet with the Somalia Ministry of Health, W.H.O. and UNICEF officials concerning financial aid for the proposed Jamama dresser-training program and the maternal-child health center. These officials verbally promised teaching aids, equipment for the maternal-child center and stipends for the students enrolled in the training program. The verbal promise of aid was to be confirmed in writing. Ivan was able to meet with the Honorable Ali Mohamed Assableh, Minister of Health and Labor and a representative from W.H.O. and a date of February 21 was set for the opening ceremonies for the new out-patient clinic building at Jamama. There would be other officials invited by printed invitations and this would be the biggest ceremonial occasion that Jamama Hospital had ever known. Esther Mack had come



The two boys with their pet monkey make life interesting

along on this trip and she was able to meet the nurses at the Health Training Institute being sponsored by W.H.O. in Mog. The Leamans were impressed by Esther's pleasing personality and capabilities. They felt that she was right for the job of directing the new dresser training program at Jamama. They all returned to Jamama by bus on January 20 and felt that the days in Mog had been profitable.

In the January 26 letter Mary Ellen gave interesting descriptions of her two active boys: *"I am writing to the noise of a little boy 'motoring' around the dining room table on his tricycle. Every now and then he gets off to shake hands with me, saying, 'I came on my motor 'cooter.' Big brother has been playing train with a chair. David is developing a very inquiring mind and he is not satisfied with just any answer. He likes to have things explained to him until he understands. The other day he told me he went up in his airplane and as he was passing a cloud he saw Jesus. Jonathan is the athletic type. Bertha thinks he has football shoulders. Anyway, they make life interesting for us."*

Ivan had been called to the bush to bring in a fifteen year-old Somali girl in labor for several days. He took Esther along. They had to travel about twenty-two miles. Back at the hospital they did a difficult forceps delivery. The baby was not very healthy at birth but did survive.

From the February 3 letter: *"At times the boys have seen pictures in the 'Gospel Herald' of poverty victims in Vietnam. They wondered about this and their questions have led us to tell them about the war there. This of course has left impressions on their minds. Occasionally Jonathan will come to me and say, 'Where does war be.' Last night Ivan heard Jonathan asking this question and he replied, 'Sometimes there is war in this house – when David and Jonathan get to fighting.' That was a new thought for them."*

The letter of February 10 told of the preparation for the big day of February 21, the official opening of the new clinic. One hundred invitations had been printed in Mog and additional invitations were being typed by Mary Ellen. Esther was helping in the addressing of these invitations. In the Somali language teaching Mary Ellen had now covered thirty lessons of grammar. There were twenty-two lessons yet to cover in the book which Mary Ellen was hoping to complete before Esther became involved in the nursing school.

The February 15 letter reported that the fifteen year old girl with her new baby were taken twenty-two miles back to the bush. Mary Ellen went along and she said it was a most interesting trip with this opportunity to see a nomadic settlement and to be able to enter a small round bush house in which one could barely stand. Mary Ellen described the "bush" people as likable and unpretentious with a humor and gaiety all their own. The husband had set off firecrackers on their arrival. Ivan had taken movies of that visit to that nomadic settlement.



Building of new Jamama Clinic



*Official opening of
Jamama Clinic*

The February 24 letter told of the very memorable day of February 21 for the opening of the new clinic. Harold Reed had come from Mog and he introduced the Minister of Health who gave a speech. Then Victor Dorsch officially handed the keys to Ivan and when Ivan received the keys he said, "We accept these keys not as a sign of ownership but as a sign of

responsibility.” This was a rare day in Somalia when Ivan wore a coat and tie! Ivan then gave a speech in which he introduced the two new phases of the medical program at Jamama, the Maternal-Child Health Clinic and the nurse-dresser training program. Harold Reed then introduced the UNICEF and W.H.O. officials and the Regional Medical Director. The employees put on a skit portraying two bush men, with no knowledge of modern medicine, coming to the hospital for treatment, their reaction and fears about what was done. It was humorous and the audience seemed to enjoy it. The Honorable Minister of Health then cut the ribbon and the new clinic was officially opened. There were tours of the new clinic building and of the hospital. At the end of the tours there were refreshments and then a banquet. Mary Ellen, with the help of other women, had the tables decorated in blue and white representing the Somali flag. The appetizers were pineapple juice with banana chips. The main course was fillets with a tomato gravy, mashed potatoes, green string beans with a cheese sauce, salad greens and deviled eggs. Mango pie and ice cream concluded the meal. There were quite a few comments and thanks for the meal.

Ivan had written an article entitled “The Dream” for the August 1968 *Missionary Messenger* about the opening of the new clinic building. Paul Kraybill in 1964 had said, “You need a dresser school.” In 1965 Hershey Leaman had done a survey of the Jamama medical program and emphasized the need for a dresser training school and maternal-child health services as a basis for community health education. From this came the recommendation for a new outpatient clinic building. The home mission board approved this in 1966 and in 1967 budgeted the capital funds needed to build the new outpatient clinic at Jamama. The dream took shape but not without sweat and hard labor. A Dutch architect’s design was obtained, a contract was signed by a local Somali builder and there was ground breaking on March 1967. The new building struggled to be born in the long months of 1967. Supplies were not always easy to come by with the closing of the Suez Canal. But Victor Dorsch, the Canadian missionary, carefully supervised the construction with Italian lumber, Russian cement, Czechoslovakian tiles, Chinese locks, American windows and English paint. Present at the opening of the clinic was a W.H.O. doctor from Lebanon, a UNICEF representative from Turkey, along with doctors from Persia, India, Canada, and Italy. Truly it was an international gathering.

Ivan closed his article “The Dream” with these words: “*The spirit that has called the mission to Somalia must not die. It must grow and find lodg-*

ing in the hearts of others. What better way than to follow the Master who taught as He healed and healed as He taught. The new dresser school will provide for the teaching about the healing of the body but of greater worth will be the opportunity to teach concerning the healing of the mind and spirit. For the vision that has given birth to this dream is eternal, arising from the mind of the One who sorrows for the suffering of mankind and 'is not willing that any should perish' but that all should come to the knowledge that brings life and true healing."

The March 2 letter said that on the previous Sunday Ivan was scheduled to preach but an hour before the service he was called to the hospital to see a woman who had been in labor for several days and she was bleeding. Her hemoglobin was about ten percent and she was going into shock. Ivan began blood transfusions and prepared for surgery because of a suspected placenta praevia. Before and during surgery she was given a total of five pints of blood. A C-section was done and her life was saved. She was making a remarkable recovery and this miracle was attributed to the special prayers that were offered by the believers in the worship service.

The March 10 letter reports that there was a newborn in the hospital for two weeks being treated for tetanus. This baby needed tube feedings but was not as serious as the first tetanus baby that Ivan had treated and who needed to be resuscitated nine times. That child was now in Yemen with his family and doing well.

In the March 16 letter: Esther Mack was giving entrance examinations to those who have interest in entering the nurse-dresser training program. Esther and Martha prepared the exam and Ivan reviewed it. Mary Ellen looked at the math part of the exam and found it overwhelming. Ivan and Anna were both away from the hospital on a visit to Mog and Johar and Mahaddei. Miriam was alone at the hospital and quite busy. She had three deliveries and the last one was an eleven pound boy. When this letter was written there were twenty-seven admissions to the hospital which was the fullest it had ever been. At one point Miriam came to the Leaman house to get a bed because there were no more beds available in the hospital. On March 16 Ivan did a cataract operation on an Italian man. Ivan had suggested that he might want the surgery in Italy, but he wanted it done in Jamama.

The March 31 letter reported the highlight of the children's return from school on March 30 by plane. After meeting the children the families all went to the beach for a picnic lunch and a swim. The boys had gotten over their fear of water and they all enjoyed the swim. When Deborah

was at home, David loved for her to play school or Sunday school with him. Lena reported that Deborah was not satisfied with second best work and she really persevered to do a good job in everything. The hospital census was high and Ivan was doing quite a bit of surgery.

On April 12 Esther Mack presented letters of acceptance for those who would be entering the nurse-dresser training program. The date for opening the school was set for May 15. There was a group of promising young students of two girls and six fellows in that first class. The official opening was on the afternoon of the sixteenth. The Regional Medical Director from Chismaio, the local District Commissioner and the police captain were present. Miriam Leaman had made the uniforms and the students were an

attractive group. Ivan was the Master of Ceremonies, Esther had the main speech and then the Regional Medical Director gave some good practical advice followed by words from the D.C. and then from Abdi Guri as the student representative. On May 18 Ivan began his first lecture on Medicine to the students.



Official opening of nurse-dresser program on April 16 with government officials present



Six fellows and two girls start in the first class with teacher Esther Mack, RN



Nurse-dresser classroom

There was a very unusual report in the May 18 letter. Ivan reported on a cat bite that Mary Ellen had. When Dorsches were on vacation, Mary Ellen was feeding their cat and when she was feeding it on May 9, it had bitten her. The cat was acting strange and wouldn't eat and then it disappeared. Ivan was concerned that the cat may have rabies. The cat reappeared on May 11 and it was walking as if it was partially paralyzed and appeared sick. Ivan was sure it probably had rabies so the cat was caught and put in a box. Ivan contacted Jim Shelly by radio to ask him to find rabies vaccine at the American embassy which he did. The rabies vaccine came immediately by plane with Barbara Reed so Ivan was able to quickly start the rabies injections twice a day. On May 14, Ivan put the cat to sleep with ether and cut off the head. He sent the head with Roy Brubakers to Nairobi for examination. On May 17 a telegram came stating that the examination of the brain showed the cat had rabies. Ivan wrote: *"How thankful we are that the cat returned home or we may never have known it was rabid and also that the medicine was available so quickly."*

Barbara Reed had come to await her next delivery. Harold was hoping to come the next week so that he could be present for this delivery since he had missed the delivery when Gwendolyn was born. Mary Ellen completed her language teaching for Esther and Anna and they successfully passed the final exam which was long and comprehensive. Mary Ellen was glad that she has finished that responsibility. Also, the Dorsches had returned from vacation so she was free of station books.

The June 1 letter reported the birth of Gennifer Elaine Reed. Harold was able to be present with Barbara for this delivery which was special. There was no decrease in hospital work with the doctor and nurses working very hard. A woman was admitted who was losing blood to the point that she was nearly dead when she arrived at the hospital. Ivan gave her three pints of blood and after the first unit she said, "I'm hungry." The family said she had not eaten for days. But she kept bleeding and Ivan needed to give more blood to "build her up" so that he might be able to do a D & C.

Victor and Viola were making plans to move to Chismaio in several months to open a school there. Meanwhile, Ivan and Mary Ellen were thinking about an early furlough. Ivan was suggesting that if they would have an early furlough and leave by December 1968, they would hope to return in six months so Ivan could help to expand the medical ministry into a community health program. His thought was that some of the graduates of the nurse-dresser program could help to establish some outlying clinics in

surrounding villages. Finding a doctor replacement for Ivan's furlough was the big challenge.

The June 8 letter shared the sad news of the assassination of Robert Kennedy. This death which followed the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. earlier in the year gave a very poor image of America around the world. When the Leamans were talking about going to the States for a furlough, their Somali friends discouraged that idea, saying it was too dangerous to live in America.

There was an unusual case in the hospital. One man was brought who had been bitten by a lion. The man said that the lion first threw him and when the lion came to attack him the second time, the man hit the lion on the nose which frightened him away. This seemed like a fantastic tale but one of the hospital employees said that a lion first throws his victim to knock him unconscious before he will attack and eat. If the victim is fortunate not to be knocked unconscious, he can frighten the lion away by hitting him! Mary Ellen wrote: *"So it seems to me the lion is really not so brave after all."*

Ivan did another prostatectomy. Since that can be a bloody operation, Ivan wanted a pint of blood on hand before the operation. The family of the patient bargained with another man, giving him Sh. 30/00 (four dollars and fifty cents) for him to give a pint of blood. The man gave, but rather reluctantly. He was startled when he saw the full pint of blood that he had given. He said to Ivan, "Put it back. I told you take only a little."

The June 15 letter gave some stories about the Leaman children. Helen, Martha, and Anna had returned to Jamama from their vacation and reported on seeing Deborah at Rosslyn Academy. She was getting over a strep throat. "Uncle Abram" Godshall had taken her to the doctor in her pajamas and Deborah was embarrassed by this. When "Uncle Abram" wanted to carry her from the car into the doctor's office, she declared that she could walk herself! The other story related to the two boys at Jamama. That morning Mary Ellen had gone out of the house for a time leaving the boys in the shower. When she came back she found the house too quiet. In her search for the boys she lifted the lid of the large wooden box in the office and found two naked boys hiding there. They said that when they saw Viola coming to the house they hid so she would not see them without clothes.

The June 22 letter gave insight to the teaching in the new nurse-dresser program. Miriam was giving lectures on Surgical Nursing, First Aid and Central Supply. In the Nursing Arts class Esther had the students demonstrate various things such as the relationship of the doctor to the patient and the

nurse to the patient and the nurse to the doctor. She reported that the skits the students prepared were very good. Meanwhile, Anna was busy in her maternal-child health clinic and she was giving a lecture to the students once a week on maternal-child health. Ivan helped one of the employees with a false tooth that had come loose. He went to the maintenance department to get some glue.

Mary Ellen wrote that David had become an "office worker." He had a typewriter made out of tinker toys and when Mary Ellen was in the office, he was right there with her. That afternoon she heard him talking to himself about debits and credits.

Hope Brubaker had come to Jamama for her first delivery which went very well. After about eight hours of labor she delivered Angela Faith on July 20. Roy was not there for the delivery but heard the baby's cry on the radio. Roy did come later by Somali Airlines and was with Hope and his new daughter until they left on August 4 by plane for Mog. Roy made himself useful while at Jamama with his carpentry skills.

The Dorsches were moving to Chismaio at the beginning of August. A farewell was planned and nine of the young believers were invited for that farewell event. The teachers and nurses planned the meal and Ivan and Mary Ellen planned the games. There was a song written especially for the Dorsches. Everyone wrote special messages on forms which were prepared to look like telegram forms.

The next letter was written on August 13. Paul and Jean Kraybill visited Jamama on one of his administrative visits. They stayed in the Leaman home for the one night that they were in Jamama. Paul told the Leamans they should plan on going on furlough at the end of a four year term. The men then all left for Mog for mission council. Mary Ellen wrote: *"I have the feeling 'medical' would be given a rough time. We seem not to be doing so well in some respects, financially and administratively, I mean."* The Chester Kurtz family had now moved to Jamama to take the Dorsches place. Marianna and Deborah were having a great time. The Leamans were getting ready for vacation, leaving on August 20, flying from Chismaio to Dar es Salaam. They would be staying in the Salvation Army Guest House in Dar for a week and then take a bus to Mombasa, and after spending one to two days there, take the night train to Nairobi. They would stay at the Mennonite Centre from August 28-September 21.

The next letter by Mary Ellen was written from Mombasa on August 28. She said that they had really felt ready for a vacation and they were enjoying

the freedom from responsibilities. *"I wonder whether I'll be ready to go back even at the end of the month."* She reported the surprise in meeting the Dr. David Harnish family in Dar es Salaam. They did some things together. They went to a village museum which showed the different types of house construction and furnishings of the many different tribes. Ivan went to a medical conference with Dr. Dave. Ivan recalls that Dr. Denis Burkitt spoke to the group on Burkitt's lymphoma. Charles Bauman was the EMM representative in Dar and he invited the Leamans to his apartment one evening for a meal. They were very grateful for Charles' help in the recent months. He had been very helpful in getting some medical shipments on the way from Dar es Salaam to Mog for the Jamama Hospital. On Sunday morning the Leamans went to the Swahili service of the Tanzania Mennonite Church (TMC). There was a young man who interpreted the service for them. Ivan was asked to say a few words before the sermon. They felt a kinship to TMC because "Mama" Shenk was Ivan's aunt and Deborah had been born at Shirati. One day the Leamans took an excursion to Zanzibar which was a fifteen minute flight from Dar. The island was noted for its cinnamon, cloves and coconuts. They left Dar by taking a night bus to Mombasa. That was a fifteen hour ride which was not restful for the parents. The children slept but for the parents it was very tiring. Ivan and Mary Ellen did nothing more than doze off and then jerk their heads! In Mombasa they checked into a hotel for one night to catch up on sleep. By the next evening on August 28, they boarded an all-night train to Nairobi arriving the next morning on August 29. The children had been looking forward to this train ride. They had a compartment with triple bunk beds on each side. They stayed at the Mennonite Centre which they found relaxing and enjoyable.

The next two letters were written from Nairobi, one by Mary Ellen to her parents on September 4 and the other by Ivan to his parents on September 6-7. Here are the details gathered from these two letters. One of the interesting guests at the Mennonite Centre was Ken Anderson, the writer and filmmaker. Ivan had read at least one of his books, *Himalayan Heartbeat*, about a Dr. Lehman in northern India. Ken was presently doing a film for the Christian Council of Kenya. He had done a film for the Mennonite missions in Africa – the Congo, West Africa and East Africa – entitled "Africa in Three Dimensions." Mary Ellen wrote that he had a spicy sense of humor. When her boys were too active or noisy at the table which perturbed Mary Ellen, Ken Anderson said, "You know what's wrong with them? They're acting normal." He had seven children of his own so he obviously knows

all about children. The other unexpected guest was Nur Abdi who was on his way back to Somalia after graduating from the University of Michigan with a degree in English. He was the Leaman's first language informant at Mahaddei. He was hoping to find a teaching job in Somalia.

The Leamans also got to see John and Lois Shenk, who were in the Teachers Abroad Program (TAP) in Kenya. They had come from Migori, Kenya after visiting John's parents, Ivan's Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta, and after visiting Joe and Edith Shenk at Bukiroba, Tanzania. The Leamans were also seeing Shirati people regularly at the guest house, such as the Dr. Richard Weavers, Dr. Glen Brubaker who had just finished a month of language study, and Dr. Leo Yoders who were to begin a three month language study. Don Jacobs had reported that there was a good possibility that money would be available from the evangelical agency in Bonn, Germany for the building of a secondary school at Johar. This was the same agency that had provided the half million dollars to enlarge and modernize the Shirati Hospital.

On September 3 the Leamans met the school children at the airport who had come from Somalia for the beginning of the next term at Rosslyn. They delivered them to Rosslyn and got to meet "Uncle" Abe and "Aunt" Joanne Godshall. They seemed like such kind, understanding house parents. Miriam Buckwalter would be Deborah's second grade teacher since Lena Horning would be teaching the middle grades. Deborah seemed glad to be back at school with her friends. They saw her walking on stilts. Clarence Keener said Deborah was very agile and Mary Ellen said she didn't inherit that from her.

Ivan in his letter of September 16 wrote that in the past week, he had the unique opportunity to fly to Shirati with Flying Doctor Service while he was in Nairobi. A plastic surgeon flew to Shirati to do surgery on a child with a cleft lip. Ivan then came back to Nairobi overland the next day with Nevin Kraybill and they stopped to see Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta at Migori, living in a mobile trailer. Ivan said he was always impressed with the dedication of Uncle Clydes and their willingness to do pioneer mission work.

Mary Ellen in her letter of September 19 said that, on the previous weekend, they were invited to have supper with Clarence and Lois Keener. On Sunday they made a trip to Kijabe to visit Rift Valley Academy (RVA) at the invitation of Paul Burnetts, who were the house parents for James Dorsch. Mrs. Burnett was from Lancaster and interestingly, she was Ivan's nurse at LGH when he was in the hospital for minor surgery in 1965 while on furlough.

On September 19, Clarence Keener was admitted to the hospital around midnight with shortness of breath and the doctor said he had inflammation of the heart. He then died in the hospital. On September 20, the day before the Leamans flew back to Chismaio, Martha Buckwalter had arrived in Nairobi after her visit with Ali and Rhoda Buckwalter Salim in Somalia. They met Martha at the airport and in the afternoon took her along to Rosslyn and they visited two of the classes. After school was dismissed they all, with Deborah, headed for the game park and they all were excited to see the lions. The lions were having a feed while they were there. After supper that night the Leamans took Deborah back to Rosslyn. Deborah expressed some sadness at their soon leaving but as soon as she got back to the school with her friends she seemed almost to have forgotten her parents. The Leamans felt quite happy about Rosslyn and were thankful that there was such a good place for Deborah to be in school. The Leamans flew by MAF back to Chismaio on September 21.

On October 5, Mary Ellen wrote that Ivan was busy again in the hospital, having done three or four cataract operations [By the end of Ivan's second term he had done eighty cataract operations with only two cases being failures due to infection]. A wife of one of the believers, who was the contractor-builder for the new clinic, had a long and difficult labor. Ivan used a new vacuum extractor which he had brought from Nairobi. He said that this would have been a very difficult forceps delivery so he felt that the purchase of this vacuum extractor was well worth it to have for this one case. One day Mary Ellen went to visit the Arab family where she had started her labor and they always refer to David as their boy!

Jim and Gloria Shelly and their daughters had come to Jamama on October 6 for Jim to do an "Efficiency Study of Jamama Hospital." For this study he was looking at reports and statistics for the past three years. After his two-week study was finished he reported to the all-medical staff meeting. Mary Ellen said that Jim proposed quite a few changes which were supposed to be for the betterment of hospital operation. Mary Ellen asked for prayer: *"as we try to fulfill our assignment here. At times the job seems more than we can cope with. We especially ask you to pray for co-operation among the missionary medical staff and the much needed ability to communicate with one another in love and understanding. Remember us too as employee contract renewal time is approaching. This is of real concern to us because we need to take unpleasant action in some cases. If we can have the assurance you are praying for us, I know this will give us the confidence and rapport we need."*

In Mary Ellen's next letter of November 2 she wrote: *"The matter I had asked you to especially pray about is now history. This was the week when contracts were renewed and also a few were terminated. Despite our fears and misgivings, everything went better than expected and we thank God for that."*

In the month of October there were ten deliveries in the hospital and all were live births. That was a record for live births. There had been one month with twelve deliveries but some of them were stillbirths. On November 1, the Leaman family with the three missionary nurses and the eight nursing students went to an Italian azenda, called Romano, about ten miles from Jamama. The nursing students had planned this excursion. There was a meal of rice and goat meat, lemon and orange drink, bread, zamboozies, bananas and the most delicious red watermelon. There was also sweet, sour, smoky camel's milk! This azenda was the nicest place they had seen in Somalia.

The first part of November, Ivan along with the other men were at mission council in Mog. One of the big items on the agenda was Jim Shelly's report on the Jamama Hospital. Ivan was planning to make a visit to Johar since both Elizabeth Nissley and Grace Shenk had been sick with hepatitis. Ivan and Chester returned to Jamama on November 10. Then Jim Shelly made another trip to Jamama to present in detail his study on Jamama Hospital which was thirty-five pages! Jim was helping Mary Ellen in the setting up of a new bookkeeping system for the hospital. In her letter of November 15 she wrote: *"I've just gotten my bearings in the new system that was set up for last year and now we change again. But I suppose it's all for the good of the hospital program."*

In the next letter of November 23 she wrote: *"This week I have spent so much time at the hospital. This new bookkeeping system involves a lot of work but I suppose it's what we need."*

In her November 23 letter, Mary Ellen reported on a ten-day Bible school that was being held in Johar for the believers. Five of the hospital staff traveled to Johar for this Bible school, three were students in the nursing school and two were employees in the hospital. Since this was Ramadan, the nursing school was closed for a month and Esther Mack took her vacation during that time. That left the hospital short-staffed but fortunately Ramadan was a less busy time. Hassan Nur, the hospital bookkeeper, had gone to Johar for the Bible school. Mary Ellen wrote in the December 2 letter that when he was gone, she realized how much he does, for in his absence she needed to do that work. *"We're so organized now that hardly a detail*

escapes a recording of some sort.” In the same letter: “While the boys and I were eating dinner today, David wanted to know – ‘How could God put on our legs if he didn’t use nails and scotch tape?’”

Mary Ellen also reported in the November 23 letter that the parents of Harold Reed were visiting Somalia and they came with Harold and Barbara to visit Jamama also. The one evening of the Reed’s visit the missionaries all ate together at the Kurtz’s house. Then a special meeting was held with the Somali believers and George Reed, the father of Harold, spoke. Before lights out that evening, some of the missionaries provided orchestral music. Chester had a cello, Miriam had an accordion, and two organs were played by Martha, Esther, and Mary Ellen. In a later letter Mary Ellen said that they had another “concert” when a Peace Corps fellow brought his guitar and they sang and played Christmas songs and hymns.

The last letter of 1968 written on December 31 gave this information: *“These end-of-the-month days have been busy at the hospital; both the book-keeper and I have been busy almost full-time getting our Accounts Receivable statements, doing payroll plus the daily tallying of clinic slips, etc. etc.”*

Mary Ellen also reported that on Christmas Eve all of the Jamama people went to Chismaio to the Dorsches for the “family” dinner. The house and table were nicely decorated. The Jamama men had shot four geese for that Christmas meal. There were all the “fixings” too and the mince pie and ice cream. After supper the mission group caroled for the Americans living in Chismaio which they all seemed to appreciate.

One interesting special event in December was for the acting American Ambassador for Somalia to visit Jamama Hospital. Mrs. Josef, the ambassador’s wife, directed a women’s sewing class in Mog and they had provided linens and layette sets to the Jamama Hospital. Mrs. Josef presented a layette set to an Arab woman who had delivered a baby about four days previously. Mrs. Josef, who was Lebanese, knew some Arabic so she was able to speak some words to the Arab woman. Pictures were taken of that event.

Chapter 11

(1969)

It was now 1969 and the Leamans were in their last year of their four-year term. Deborah left for school by MAF on January 7. Mary Ellen started having kindergarten with David so he would be prepared for first grade for the next school year after the Leamans returned to the USA. Miriam Buckwalter sent two books for Mary Ellen to use for the kindergarten teaching. One was *Happy Day to Numbers* and the other was *Here We Go*. Jonathan was able to sit in on these classes and this was his observation: “*Now Catherine can teach us Sunday School and Mommy teaches us Rosslyn.*” They both were enjoying the kindergarten classes and David received a star for a perfect paper and Jonathan wanted one also. One morning in family worship, the boys were given opportunity to choose a song. Jonathan chose “Away in a Manger” and David chose “Winds Through the Olive Trees.” Mary Ellen was not sure of the words and David said, “I’ll sing it for you.” He went through the whole song. Mary Ellen was surprised that he knew all the words. He had learned them from Deborah.

Hospital work was booming with very large clinics. 107 patients were seen one day in January 1960. At the end of the month the total count was more than 2,000 patients seen in the clinic. The hospital was full of patients and the month of January was topping all previous records. Most of the time the hospital was operating at capacity. Mary Ellen wrote: “*Paul Kraybill should see how busy the medical staff is now.*” Ivan was often doing surgery in the afternoon. He did his second repair of a vesico-vaginal fistula, which was a tedious lengthy operation.

There was Sports Day at the Jamama mission school with many interesting relays, races and high jump. This attracted many community folks. Ivan took many pictures with his eight millimeter movie camera. Ali and Rhoda Buckwalter Salim were making plans to move to Pennsylvania. Their

attempts to have a pharmacy, first in Merca, then in Jamama and finally in Chismaio had not worked out for them. Everyone was hoping that Ali would be able to adjust to living in the USA. Ali's family didn't like seeing them leave.

And the Leamans were making plans for their move to Pennsylvania. With the medical work booming with a one-hundred percent increase from when the Leamans had left after their first term, Ivan realized that the doctor replacing him would not have the time to do the administrative work of the hospital. So Ivan was making plans for the nurses along with Hassan Nur, the hospital bookkeeper, to handle much of the administrative details. Ivan was also projecting how they would spend their furlough.

At that point the Leamans thought that with Rosslyn closing on July 18, they might be arriving in the States by July 23. The Ebys were making plans for the Leamans to live in the farmhouse during their furlough. To do this the Ebys were planning to make an apartment in the farmhouse so that there would be more privacy for each of the families. The Leamans felt that living on the farm would be ideal for the children. They were thinking of sending the children to Locust Grove. Ivan wasn't sure what he should do medically. He was hoping to have about four months working in the hospital to get updated on the changes in the medical field. He was also hoping that he might have some type of association with a doctor in general practice for four months. In his mind Ivan thought how wonderful it would be to have such an association with Dr. Henry Wentz who had been the family doctor for both the Eby and the Leaman families for three generations. The Leamans were asking for prayers in all of this.

In mid-February there was a very challenging obstetrical situation which kept the doctor and nurses up all night. Here are the words of Mary Ellen: *"This patient is a good friend of mine. She [Surgoi] came in with a full term pregnancy and bleeding. She continued bleeding and a C-section needed to be done. The C-section went well but following the surgery she still continued to bleed because of poor contraction of the uterus [Ivan believed that there was likely also a clotting problem due to a loss of fibrinogen]. They kept giving her one pint of blood after another that night. Three Somalis gave, then Esther, then Mim. In desperation Ivan packed the uterus and told Mim to take a pint of his blood too. Although he felt the case almost hopeless, something within compelled him to keep trying. He considers it a miracle from God that the lady is living today and doing well. She is such a dear lady and very appreciative. The baby was living at birth but weak and died later that day."*

At the beginning of March there was a delegation of MEDA men visiting the MEDA projects in the Jamama area. This included Jim Herr from Herr's Potato Chips. Catherine and Mary Ellen were planning a Somali type meal for them. They also made banana chips, mostly for Jim Herr's sake. They served them later in the evening with ice cream.

In the March 18 letter Mary Ellen wrote that they heard that a doctor couple had been found for Jamama but the Leamans were not told who this couple was and could not understand why they were not being told. At the end of March a letter came from Dr. Vernon Kratz which told that he and his wife Elizabeth were coming to Jamama. Ivan was quite happy that the Board was able to recruit an experienced doctor to fill the job and knowing the Kratzes, he was sure they would make a fine contribution. Vernon said that they were appointed for a two-year term which was a complete surprise to the Leamans. Mary Ellen wrote: *"We do not know what the Board has in mind. We wish we would hear officially."*

At the beginning of April, the annual missionary conference was held and the Jamama folks traveled north for that conference. Don Jacobs was the resource speaker and Mary Ellen wrote: *"Conference was a spiritual retreat and Don brought very helpful messages on the lives of Moses, Aaron and Miriam. Afterwards we met for small group discussion in which we could share freely and openly. It was also a time to fellowship with co-workers, some whom I had not seen for a long time."*

The Godshall family were guests with us for this missionary conference. The doctor and nurses were all able to attend the conference leaving the medical work in the hands of the employees and the student nurses. On their return from conference, the doctor and nurses were pleased with the way the medical work was carried on while they were gone.

After Ivan had returned from conference, there was a very unusual medical emergency. The employees came running to Ivan saying that a man had been brought who had been hit by an airplane. Ivan hardly knew what he would find. This was the story. There was a plane which had been doing crop dusting and the pilot was making a landing on a road near Jamama. The police were attempting to keep the people away but one elderly Somali man was crossing the road right in the path of the plane's landing. When the pilot saw the man, he pulled up to avoid hitting the man, but the plane hit the very top of the man's head, scalping his head but fortunately a small part of the scalp was still attached to his head. Ivan was able to suture the scalp back to the man's head and the man had a good recovery. The end of

the story was that the family later brought the man for Ivan to check his hearing. The family wanted to sue the company doing the crop dusting. They wanted to claim that the injury to the man's head caused the man to lose his hearing. When Ivan checked him, he did find that the man was very deaf but Ivan's belief was that the man was deaf before the injury. Later in July Ivan was asked to appear in court to give medical testimony for this law suit. His testimony was that the deafness of the man was not likely caused by the injury. As Ivan remembers, the family was awarded compensation for the man's injury.

Another unusual surgical emergency was a woman who came pregnant with a ruptured uterus. She had a previous C-section by Ivan and the uterus was weakened by the scar on the uterus from the previous surgery. Ivan needed to do a hysterectomy to save the woman's life. It was a lengthy and exhausting experience. Ivan wrote: *"At such times I feel God's hand on mine because I don't feel I am a fully trained surgeon."*

On Sunday, April 20, Don Jacobs, the Godshalls and the Dorsches were present for the morning worship at Jamama. Don brought the message and three of the guests shared testimonies. After the service a group of twenty-nine all ate together. It was a simple meal of injera and watt, eating from common dishes while sitting on mats.

Deborah returned to Rosslyn on April 28, for the last term of the school year and before the Leamans left for furlough. Mary Ellen wrote that she now had less to do at the hospital since her work was being turned over to Hassan Nur and the nurses. She had a few projects she still wanted to work at before leaving, such as a small manual of employee policies and also writing an administrative manual which will include office procedures and policies, etc. She also had typed stencils for two Medicine exams which Ivan had prepared for the nurse-dresser students. They were now completing their first year of training and were in the midst of final examinations. Miriam had been teaching the first aid class and she had the students present skits of what to do in various situations. Somalis are born actors and the students added more to the skits – it was all very well done.

One of the hospital patients had given a gift of a goat to Ivan. He was very pretty with a brown and white color and Mary Ellen thought he could be kept as a pet for the children. In particular, Jonathan had great fun with the goat. One day he was pulling on his ears while sitting on a cement block. The goat then came behind Jonathan with a slow deliberate push of his horns against Jonathan's back. Ivan had a good movie of that activity.

Mary Ellen overheard Jonathan talking to the goat. Picking up the goat's front foot, Jonathan said, "You don't cut your finger nails, you let them grow long, don't you?"

There was another difficult delivery in June. The wife of the mayor of Jamama was pregnant and bleeding. Ivan thought he might have to do a C-section but she then went into labor and Ivan was able to successfully deliver her baby using the vacuum extractor. She had also required five pints of blood to save her life. She had the unique feature of blue eyes, which was very unusual for a Somali, the first and only Somali person that Ivan had ever seen with blue eyes.

The reader of this memoir might wonder if every woman who came to the Jamama Hospital for help in a complicated delivery always survived. Ivan says humbly that he can not remember any woman who came to the Jamama Hospital with a complicated delivery who did not survive if she came early enough for treatment. The other question that the reader of this memoir might ask is this: Do doctors ever make mistakes that result in the death of a patient? This brings Ivan to report that the woman with the blue eyes brought back a painful memory. Some years earlier that woman with the blue eyes had brought her infant with diarrhea. Since the diarrhea was not severe, Ivan had elected to treat that infant with hypodermoclysis, giving fluid under the skin, rather than giving fluid by IV. Shortly after the treatment was started, the baby became much worse and died. The mother with the blue eyes accepted the sad loss of her baby with her unquestioning Muslim faith. The death of this baby was very puzzling to Ivan. It was only months later that Ivan realized that he had given the wrong type of fluid. He had by mistake given a hypotonic fluid which pulled fluid from the baby's circulatory system, thus leading to the death of the baby. The memory of that mistake has stayed with Ivan as a feeling of guilt and he has shared it now in this memoir, perhaps as a kind of absolution. Ivan could rejoice that years later he was able by blood transfusions to save the life of this same Somali woman with blue eyes and to save her unborn baby by a successful delivery in a life threatening situation. Ivan says humbly that in the years of his medical practice in Somalia, losing that baby with diarrhea by an error in medical treatment was the only medical treatment error that he can remember that resulted in the loss of a patient. Thanks be to God.

There was a dry spell with insufficient rain for the crops. Catherine Kurtz felt led to call the missionaries together for special prayer. They did that and in a few days the rain came and there was about five inches in a week's time!

Deborah was expected home from Rosslyn on Saturday, July 19 by MAF. The Leamans were expecting a visit by Paul Kraybill during the week prior to Deborah's arrival. The last letter that Mary Ellen wrote was July 9. There was no letter by Mary Ellen about Paul's visit which was around July 15. So there was no written comment about that visit. The Leamans have no clear memory of what was said during that visit. There was surely some discussion about the two-year furlough. Ivan had been surprised by the decision that they would have a two-year furlough rather than the usual one-year furlough. He had given some thought as to what he might do during the two-year furlough. There was a suggestion that additional training in tropical medicine or public health would be helpful but that would create a challenge as to how to do that and stay connected to the family. A one-year furlough would have been much more to the liking of Ivan where he could have sought out some additional training at the Lancaster General Hospital and perhaps find an association with a local doctor in general practice. His dream was to work with their family doctor, Dr. Henry Wentz. So Ivan headed into the uncertain future of a two-year furlough, not knowing how to plan.

The Leamans heard that the Kratz family would be arriving August 3. Ivan planned to spend a week with Vernon, helping to introduce and orient him to the medical work before their leaving on August 11. The Leamans now had their MTS travel home itinerary and shared with their parents that they would arrive in Philadelphia on August 15.

Deborah returned from school on Saturday July 19, landing in Chismaio by MAF plane, with a new pilot. Mike Melville. Two days later on July 21, that same pilot took off with a plane full of passengers headed for Tanzania, most of the passengers were from Europe, a construction engineer and architect, etc. who were going in relation to the building of the new Bunda Hospital. On that plane also was Alta Shenk, the mother of David Shenk and sister to Ivan's mother Ethel. Word came to Jamama via inter-station radio that this MAF plane had crashed into the Ngong Hills, just outside of Nairobi on Monday, July 21. There was fog which obscured the pilot's view. This was a very sad tragedy. David Shenk received the word at Johar and he was able to go to the funeral on Wednesday, July 23 at Shirati where his mother was buried.

The Leamans went to Mogadiscio on August 3 to meet the Kratz family. There was no letter from Mary Ellen that described the details of the next eight days, after which the Leamans would fly from Mog to Nairobi. Ivan likely would have taken Dr. Kratz to Mahaddei to meet the nurse serving

there and would have shown him the places where medicines might be purchased in Mog. Then Ivan traveled with the Kratzes to Jamama, leaving Mary Ellen and the children in Mog. Ivan spent the next days in Jamama introducing Dr. Vernon Kratz to the staff and employees of the Jamama Hospital. In particular, Ivan wanted Vernon to meet Hawa Hassan, the good laundry worker, who had an unusual eye problem. She would have periodic attacks of inflammation of the iris which would cause blurred vision. Ivan wanted Vernon to know that a course of prednisone tablets would cause the inflammation to subside. Ivan stayed for the Sunday worship service on August 10 and he was able to take movies of that service.

Ivan returned to Mog to join his family and they left the next day on Monday, August 11, at 4:15 p.m. by East African Airways to Nairobi. After two nights in Nairobi, they flew to Addis on August 13. The next day they flew to Frankfurt, Germany. The Leaman's memory was that they bought a box of Legos in Frankfurt. At some point on the travel to the USA the box of Legos was dropped and spilled while on an escalator which caused David great distress. But the Legos were retrieved. The Leamans arrived in Philadelphia on August 15 at 6:25 p.m. and were met by the welcoming Eby and Leaman families. They soon settled into the apartment made ready for them in the Eby farmhouse. Were they ready to face the future?

The Leamans prepared their children for entering Locust Grove Mennonite School. Deborah for third grade, David for first grade and Jonathan for Kindergarten. The two older children seemed to make an easy beginning but it took Jonathan somewhat longer to adjust to going to school. He would cry in the mornings and it took some careful questioning by the parents before Jonathan expressed his fears that he might "be bad" in school and be punished. Ivan and Mary Ellen went with Jonathan to meet his teacher, Mrs. Betty Zook. Ivan verbalized to Mrs. Zook the fear that Jonathan had and Mrs. Zook kindly embraced Jonathan and assured him that he would be just fine and that ended the morning crying!

Ivan met with Dr. Nik Zervanos at Lancaster General Hospital to explore what he could offer Ivan in some type of informal residency experience at LGH. Dr. Zervanos had recently come to Lancaster and had been asked to begin a new three-year Family Practice Resident training program which would begin in July 1970. He suggested to Ivan that he could arrange a schedule for him to rotate among some of the hospital doctors at LGH in the different specialties. This would help Ivan in updating him in the newest medicines and procedures. This sounded good to Ivan and he began this

work at LGH, probably in the month of October. Ivan soon discovered how much change there had been in medical practice and he felt very inadequate as compared to the young doctors fresh out of medical school. Ivan was developing anxiety and then there was a telephone call from Dr. Donald Witmer, a general practice doctor in Willow Street. He told Ivan that Dr. David Bucher had died at a young age of forty-two on November 12. He had a general practice in New Providence, which now was left without a doctor. Dr. Witmer told Ivan that here was an opportunity for him to step in and fill this need. This was a trigger for acute anxiety in Ivan for he realized that he was completely ill equipped to do that! This progressed to increased anxiety with depression and insomnia so that over the next weeks, Ivan was barely able to function. The anxiety-depression reached the point of severity that Ivan felt that he could not continue at the hospital and he was hoping that an accident would give him an excuse not to go to the hospital. Mary Ellen was helpful in urging him to get going in the morning.

What other factors may have led Ivan to develop this anxiety and depression? Here are some of his emotional feelings which may give some insight to that question. In many ways Ivan had been very happy and enjoyed his medical practice in Somalia. The long hours spent as a doctor in Somalia was not the problem. But he did not enjoy being an administrator of his missionary nursing staff. Ivan had a team of selfless, hardworking dedicated missionary nurses. But the long hours and personality differences led to times of tension and discontent within the missionary nursing staff. Ivan didn't know how to help the team in that situation. This made him feel like a failure and he did not know how to handle that. He wondered if being a poor administrator was why he was given a two-year furlough. That led him to internalize a feeling of failure and rejection. He should have been more open and shared his feelings.

Chapter 12

(1970 – 1986)

Ivan was on the medical service of Dr. Richard Mann, a highly respected cardiologist at LGH. Ivan told Dr. Mann that he needed to discontinue helping him on his service because of his anxiety. Dr. Mann interrupted his rounds and took Ivan to a private room and spoke to him. Ivan doesn't remember the exact words but in essence Dr. Mann told Ivan that he should not stop. Although Ivan was suffering from anxiety and depression, Dr. Mann assured him that he still had good judgment and he trusted him to stay on his service and help in the care of his patients. Those words could not have come at a better time when Ivan felt that he was hopeless with no future in medicine. So he continued to work at the hospital.

Dr. Zervanos was aware of Ivan's emotional anxiety and depression and he invited Ivan to join the family practice residents in a type of informal sharing of emotions and stress which a doctor faces in practice. During one of these sessions Ivan opened up and shared about the death of their first born son, Peter John, and the emotions that came from that painful experience. Ivan revealed that he was still carrying a sense of guilt that his son had died. His head told him that he had done all that he could have done but his emotions still needed healing. This open sharing brought some healing and hopefully that sharing was helpful to the young doctors.

Ivan had shared his emotional anxiety and depression with his family doctor, Dr. Henry Wentz and with Dr. Zervanos. Both doctors were understanding and tried to be helpful. In those days there were no anti-depressant medications and Ivan did not tolerate sleeping medications. Dr. Zervanos was compassionate and he excused Ivan from doing night duty at the hospital. It was arranged for Ivan to see a psychiatrist which was very helpful. Dr. Kendrick Eshleman told Ivan that he would be a better physician for having experienced this anxiety and depression. He would have empathy

for his patients who had anxiety and depression. Dr. Eshleman assured Ivan that there was a light at the end of the tunnel and that he would gradually get better. Slowly over a period of months Ivan started his recovery from this anxiety and depression. And then a most wonderful thing happened!

Dr. Wentz was asked by Dr. Zervanos to help in teaching the family practice residents in the model family practice which was to begin in Quarryville. To do this, Dr. Wentz would need help in his own practice in Strasburg. So he asked Ivan if he could come to work half-time in his office when he was at the Quarryville family practice center. This was the answer to the prayer and the dream that Ivan had when he was still in Somalia – the dream of an association with Dr. Wentz.

Meanwhile Mary Ellen's parents had sold their farm to Don Denlinger in January 1970 with the understanding that they could stay in the farmhouse for one year until their newly built house would be ready for them in Highland Acres. So Ivan and Mary Ellen knew they would need another place to live. Ivan asked Dr. Wentz if he knew of any houses for sale in Strasburg. Yes, he knew of two houses on North Decatur Street. The one was at 109 N. Decatur St. Ivan knew that house since his Uncle Isaac Barge had this house built in the early 1940s as their retirement home when they moved from their farm. Ivan and Mary Ellen met with the owner, Helen Ferguson, and arranged for the purchase on June 22, 1970. This house became the ideal place to live during Ivan's medical practice association with Dr. Wentz. It was only a few blocks from Dr. Wentz's office on Hillcrest Avenue and Jackson Street. His office was in the lower level of his home.

Beginning general family practice with Dr. Wentz was a wonderful way to start in practice. If a medical situation faced Ivan which was new for him, he could always call and consult with Dr. Wentz. Ivan was interested in delivering babies, which Dr. Wentz had discontinued doing. That was acceptable to Dr. Wentz. The illnesses that Ivan faced in Strasburg were far different than the common illnesses in Somalia which were parasitic infections, TB and malaria, etc. Now he had to learn how to treat hypertension, diabetes, and heart illnesses which were rare in Somalia. In 1970 house calls were still common and Ivan would make house calls to see patients having heart attacks or congestive heart failure. He learned how to take along his medical bag with emergency medications and an oxygen tank if needed before the ambulance arrived. Early on in his practice in Strasburg, he was asked to see an elderly woman confined to her bed with weakness. After blood tests, he diagnosed hypothyroidism and began the appropriate treat-

ment which restored the woman to being able to get out of bed and walk! Dr. Wentz told Ivan that making that diagnosis and treating that woman would establish his reputation in the community.

Next would come the decision about the Leamans return to Jamama after the two-year furlough. On March 1, 1971, Ivan wrote a letter to Harold Stauffer, who had now replaced Paul Kraybill as EMM overseas director, and to Harold Reed as Somalia Mennonite Mission director and to Vernon Kratz at Jamama Hospital. Ivan described the painful experience of his deep depression soon after returning to the States. Ivan was now happily and comfortably established in working with Dr. Wentz in his practice. This had gone a long way to restore in Ivan a sense of usefulness as well as giving him a solid feel of general practice in the States. Ivan realized that to leave that practice to return to Somalia would put Dr. Wentz in a bind as to how he would continue the coverage of his Strasburg general practice. Ivan felt an obligation to stay in Strasburg for the present time, at least until mid-1972. Vernon Kratz would leave in mid-1971. Fortunately they did find Dr. Gerald Miller who was able to go to Jamama for one year.

During that third year in the States Ivan became involved in helping to form a group practice. Ivan was hoping that the group practice would be formed by like-minded doctors who would allow one of the doctors to serve short-term in overseas mission. Ivan needed to tell EMM that they would not be available for serving in Somalia for a future long term. So the Leamans were officially terminated at the end of the two-year furlough as of August 15, 1971. There was a Canadian physician, Dr. Ronald Loewen, who was found to replace Dr. Gerald Miller in mid-1972. He was only at Jamama for a few months when the word came from the Ministry of Health in Somalia that on December 13, 1972 all mission medical personnel serving in Somalia would be replaced with Somali persons. So within about a week the missionary medical staff left Somalia to go to Nairobi, Kenya. Some medical persons were reassigned. Dr. Loewen went to Shirati for a time.

As Ivan reflected on this abrupt closure of the Mennonite Mission medical work in Somalia in December, 1972, he wondered if it was in the providence of God that they did not return to Somalia after the two-year furlough or after Dr. Gerald Miller's one year of service at Jamama. That closure of the medical work in Jamama would likely have meant that Ivan and his family returned to the States. Ivan would again have had to find a way to reestablish himself in medical practice in the States. It would also

have been a disruption for the family and for the children's education. So there was a sense of seeing God's hand in all of this.

In 1973, Ivan was part of the planning for a group practice which opened in January 1974. This group practice was called Eastbrook Family Health Center and was located a mile from the town of Smoketown where Ivan had been born. It was interesting and rather unusual that Ivan had patients for whom he had delivered newspapers many years before. Ivan felt very good about being part of a group practice with Dr. Henry Wentz as the guiding leader for the group. As the years rolled along, Ivan continued to be happy in being part of this family medical practice group. There was adequate income for Ivan and Mary Ellen to send their children to Locust Grove Mennonite School and then to Lancaster Mennonite High School. The children were encouraged to choose one of the Mennonite colleges. Deborah and Jonathan chose Eastern Mennonite College and David chose Goshen College. The parents also helped in the financial costs of their children's college education.

Those years of living in Lancaster County provided many opportunities to relate to family and the important milestones of weddings, graduations and anniversaries. The big year for Ivan and his siblings was 1979 when they celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the wedding of their parents who had been married on June 6, 1929. They all gathered in Smoketown to have a picture taken with their parents in front of the house where they all were born.



In June 1979 Ivan D. and Ethel M. Leaman celebrated fifty years of marriage. This picture was taken in front of the Smoketown house where all eight children were born. Back: Ivan b. July 1932, Mary b. March 1940, Marian b. August 1931, James b. June 1946, Front: Esther b. March 1935, Alta b. November 1933, Ethel b. August 1936, Lois b. July 1930

Ivan D. Leaman was ordained to the ministry at Columbia Mennonite Mission in 1955, thus fulfilling the prophetic words of his grandfather that he would be a preacher someday. He was later ordained as bishop for the Manor District of LMC in 1968. Ivan and Ethel were blessed to see their children become active in the work of the Kingdom in various ways. Lois earned an RN at LGH and then married Jay Garber who was a dairy farmer, a pastor at New Danville MC and chairman of EMM board. Marian married Earl Neff who was a dairy farmer and deacon at Nickel Mines MC. Ivan married Mary Ellen Eby and he was ordained for medical missionary service in Somalia. Alta married John Metzler who was a poultry farmer and pastor at Straight Mountain MC in Alabama. Esther married David Kniss who was a pastor and church planter at multiple locations, mainly in southern states. Ethel married Glen Sell who was a pastor at several locations for Lancaster Mennonite Conference and was for many years a full-time evangelist. Mary earned an RN and served in Honduras as missionary nurse with EMM where she married Abraham Zuniga who later was a pastor for a small Hispanic church in Miami. Mary worked for many years as a maternity nurse in Miami. Today Abraham makes periodic trips to his home area where he manages his palm oil farm. James married Beth Kling, RN and Jim was a pastor at Oxford Circle MC and Groffdale MC and then chaplain at Landis Homes and is now retired. All the Leaman children were still living in 2021 and only one spouse has died. David Kniss died in April 2020.

Chapter 13

(1987)

After graduating from Goshen College in 1985, David wanted an overseas experience so he found a job teaching English in Tokyo, Japan for about fifteen months. As he was approaching the end of that experience, he wrote to his parents in 1986 and asked if they would consider meeting him in East Africa on his travels home and accompany him to the place of his birth in Somalia in 1963. This interested Ivan and Mary Ellen so they flew to Nairobi, Kenya arriving on February 21, 1987. There was great excitement for them to be back in Africa after seventeen years and the anticipation of meeting their son David the next day at the airport. They had not seen him for about one and a half years. He had become a seasoned traveler, having visited about six or more countries in southeast Asia after completing his English teaching in Japan.

That Sunday evening in Nairobi with their son David, Ivan and Mary Ellen joined an informal group of Mennos, comprised of EMM missionaries and MCCers. Mary Oyer, a former professor of music at Goshen, was in Kenya and she talked about the planning for the new Mennonite/Brethren hymnal which became the *Hymnal, A Worship Book*. The next day David was able to get a visa to Tanzania, a minor miracle in that it was issued in three hours! The Leamans had an all night bus ride from Nairobi to Migori, Kenya near the Tanzania border and they were met at the border by Joe Bontrager. They had a short visit at Shirati with a quick tour of the hospital, the nursing school and leprosy treatment area.

On Wednesday, Verle Rufenacht, drove them to Bukiroba where they reconnected with Victor and Viola Dorsch, their former co-missionaries in Jamama. Victor was now involved in an effective Theological Education by Extension (TEE) program. On Thursday they were driven to Mugumu Hospital where Dr. Tom and Jill Miller were working. Dr. Tom had worked

at Eastbrook for one year before accepting the challenge of medical work in East Africa. He and Jill were now in their second term of service. On Friday and Saturday the Leamans traveled with Tom, Jill and their two daughters across the Serengeti Plains observing the wild life. They drove all the way to Arusha where they met Dr. Lester Eshleman. On Sunday they heard Dr. Lester preach at the Arusha Mennonite Church. After church they drove to Moshi where the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center was located and where Lester gave leadership to the surgical training of urological residents. Lester with his boundless energy had other interests besides surgery, such as bird-watching and star gazing. He encouraged the Leamans to get up early in the morning to observe the Southern Cross, which they did. On Tuesday, March 3, they were driven to Nairobi by the Eshlemans and had a night at the Mennonite guesthouse before their much anticipated visit to Somalia the next day.

On Wednesday, March 4, the Leamans flew by Somali Airlines to Mogadishu where they met much confusion which they had been warned about. Mary Gehman met them and drove them to her home. It was exciting to again experience the sights and sounds of Mogadishu. The Leamans were able to deliver gift packages which they had brought from relatives and friends in the States. They were glad to be the bearers of happiness and in particular it was joyful to see the excitement of the three small sons of Carl and Julia Sensenig when they received their gifts. To see them immediately playing with the toys they had received was a special happy moment. The youngest of these boys was Peter who years later would himself receive the call to serve Somalis through education in peacemaking. Peter M. Sensenig received his PhD from Fuller Seminary and his writing was published in 2016 as a book, *Peace Clan – Mennonite Peacemaking in Somalia*.

Thursday, March 5 was a full, but very interesting day as they visited various EMM missionaries now working in various government agencies: Ed Rissler was working in the Curriculum Development Center writing textbooks to be used in intermediate schools. Three EMM workers were teaching in the National Technical Teacher Training College in Mogadishu. Bruce Bradshaw was teaching economics and accounting, Carl Sensenig was teaching math and statistics, and Mary Gehman was teaching English. Sharon Yoder was in the Women's Education Department and Kevin Yoder was in the Adult Education Department. Mary Bradshaw had a unique ministry teaching health education to the Somali mothers of sick children in the hospital. Julia Sensenig was helping to organize a medical library in the Benadir Hospital.

Carl Sensenig arranged for Ivan to meet Stuart McNabb who was project director for UNICEF in Somalia. UNICEF had begun a program of Primary Health Care (PHC) centers in Lower Juba and they were looking for other organizations to help with PHC in Lower Juba. Mr. McNabb said that UNICEF was hoping to renovate part of the former Jamama Mennonite mission clinic building for use as a maternal-child health clinic, to renovate the Jamama Hospital to make it operational again and suggested that the Mennonite mission might provide a doctor and nurse for the hospital. The idea was that the doctor and nurse would not just be in curative medicine but would assist in training Community Health Workers.

On Friday, March 6, the Leamans were able to attend the Somali believer fellowship that met in the Catholic Cathedral in Mogadishu. There were about fifteen Somalis and about thirty expatriates in attendance from different organizations working in Somalia. Somali believers led the service but at this particular service Ruth Abrahamson, director of Swedish Church Relief in Somalia, brought the message which was translated into Somali. The Leamans were impressed by the enthusiasm of some of the young Somali believers, for their participation in special music and their composing of new music in Somali language.

On Saturday, March 7, Carl and Julia Sensenig took the Leamans to the cemetery several miles outside of Mogadishu, where the grave of Peter John was now located. Ivan and Mary Ellen viewed the cemetery wall with burial crypts and saw the brass plaque with the name of Peter John Leaman and the dates: August 24, 1959 – March 10, 1960. This was an opportunity for reflection again on that deep loss of their first born son three weeks after arriving in Somalia in 1960. The large Catholic cemetery with the protestant section where Peter John had been buried in 1960 had been relocated to this site about 1972. The previous cemetery had then become the location of a very large mosque.

The Leamans had interest in visiting Bullo Burti, 120 miles north of Mogadishu. Bruce Bradshaw drove the Leamans to Bullo Burti on Sunday, March 8. This was where Sudan Interior Mission (S.I.M.) had operated a hospital in the 1960s similar to the Jamama Hospital. Dr. Marc Erikson had worked at Bullo Burti for a time in the late 1960s and early 1970. It was the influence of Dr. Erikson that led Ahmed Haile to faith. Ahmed as a young boy had been a patient in the S.I.M. Bullo Burti Hospital. When Dr. Marc Erikson had returned to his home in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the early 1970s, he had helped to plant a church in Milwaukee, called Eastbrook

Church. He gave up the practice of medicine and became the pastor of this thriving evangelical church. He had not forgotten Somalia and he got his congregation interested in sending a team of five couples as missionaries to Bulo Burti. The Eastbrook group had brought new life to the former S.I.M. hospital at Bulo Burti, now called Eastbrook Hospital.

The Leamans were challenged as they met these young couples who were committed to long-term, even life time service in Somalia. The five couples included a doctor, five nurses, a lab technician, a teacher, a carpenter and a handy man. One innovative thing that Eastbrook had done was to get a concession from the Somali government that they could charge a small fee for the patients who came to the clinic and hospital. This money could be used to buy some supplies and to give incentive pay to the Somali staff who were very much underpaid by the Somalia medical system. This incentive pay had increased morale in the Somali staff and made it worthwhile for them to show up for work. The Leamans had a good time of fellowship with the Eastbrook missionary group over a lunch meal.

In 1987, Ahmed Haile was working for this new mission organization in Somalia called Eastbrook Church. Ivan remembers meeting Ahmed in Mogadishu where he was working in the Eastbrook office. You can read Ahmed Haile's personal story in *Tea Time in Mogadishu* as told to and written by David Shenk. This book gives the story as to how Ahmed lost his leg while on a peace mission to Mogadishu in 1992 and nearly lost his life. He was transported to Nairobi by a small plane where he received blood transfusions and then was flown to Milwaukee, Wisconsin where he was treated for the infection in the stump of his amputated leg. Supported by prayers from around the world, it was a miracle that Ahmed lived and later was able to continue his mission of peacemaking. He taught at Daystar University in Nairobi from 1994 to 2009.

During the days the Leamans were in Mogadishu they met various persons from their Jamama days. Former friends would come to Mary Gehman's house to greet them. One was Kadiga Barre who worked first with Fae Miller in the clinic at Jamama and later got her nursing education in Hargesia and now was working as a nurse in Mog. One evening they were invited to Kadiga's house so they could meet thirty year-old Hussein, who had been treated about twenty-four years earlier in Jamama Hospital for a severe gangrenous arm resulting from a snake bite. He had been in the Jamama Hospital for many months until his arm was healed from the infection. He was grateful for the care he had received many years in the past. They also met Hassan



Hussein as six year old boy with gangrenous arm from snake bite at Jamama Hospital, comforted by nurse Helen Landis



Hussein, after arm was healed, ready for discharge from Jamama Hospital



Hussein as 30-year old man living in Mog

Abdi, the husband of Hawa Ismail, who came with his son Hussein to greet the Leamans. Hassan and Hawa were friends from Jamama in the 1960s. [Note: Their son Hussein now lives in Edmonton, Alberta, and in 2021 he made contact with Ivan by telephone and Ivan shared pictures that they had of Hassan and Hawa and their little son Hussein from their days in Jamama.]

On Monday, March 9, Ivan traveled by bus to Afgoi to visit the Christophel Blinden Mission which was a German volunteer mission providing eye care to underdeveloped countries of the world. Dr. Franken, a sixty-seven year old ophthalmologist, was giving leadership to this program in Somalia. He was training Somali doctors to do eye surgery. Together they were doing twenty to thirty cataract operations a day. Ivan observed that Dr. Franken had a prayer before beginning surgery which was the same practice that Ivan had in the 1960s. Later that day on March 9, the Leamans were invited to a restaurant to eat with Ahmed Shek, a former judge in Kismayu who now was on the Supreme Court in Somalia. He was a very gracious man who wanted to show his appreciation to Ivan for the care of his wife during a complicated delivery at Jamama Hospital in the 1960s. Abdullahi Sidi, a former employee at the hospital, accompanied the judge for this meal with the Leamans which was very special.

On March 10 came the day when the Leamans began their travel to Lower Juba which they had been eagerly waiting for. They were able to travel by Land Rover with a couple who were headed to Jilib. The Leamans spent the evening with the World Concern team on an island near Jilib, formerly known as Allesandra—now was called Labadaad. Ivan showed slides



Ivan and Mary Ellen meet Abdullahi Sidi, former employee at Jamama hospital and Ahmed Shek, former judge in Kismayo

of their medical work in Jamama in the 1960s. The Leamans spent the night with World Concern. That night as Ivan and Mary Ellen lay on their beds in one of the small houses in this World Concern compound, they reflected that on this date, March 10, twenty six years before, they had lost their little son Peter John. On this

trip Ivan had brought with them the tape that they had recorded the day after Peter John's death. This tape they had sent to their parents and it was played at Peter John's memorial service at Stumptown. They had never listened to that tape until that night as they lay on their beds on Labadaad Island. That seemed the appropriate place and time to remember their little son and the sadness that memory brought to them, but it was also a time to reflect on the goodness of the Lord in the years that followed.

The next day the Leamans were shown around Labadaad Island where there had been a leprosy treatment colony run by a Catholic order. It had become run-down and World Concern, a relief organization, based in Seattle, Washington, had in the past year sent a doctor couple, Dr. Campbell and Ferne Millar, with a team to work in this leprosy colony. The Millar couple had previous missionary experience in Ethiopia but after that, for seventeen years Campbell had a medical practice in the States. Now they were committed to a second career in missionary medicine. As Dr. Millar escorted the Leamans on a tour of the leprosy village, they could see the genuine love that flowed from him to the people. His love and concern to share the knowledge of Jesus was very evident. The World Concern team at Jilib had about twelve persons. They were not just involved in the leprosy work but were also beginning primary health care in the Jilib area under the direction of Swedish Church Relief who had the contract to do Primary Health Care (PHC) in the Middle Juba area. The next day on Wednesday, March 11, the Leamans gave goodbye to the World Concern team who graciously provided a vehicle and a driver to transport them to Kismayu.

On the way to Kismayu they took the side road into Jamama to give notice to the Jamama people that they were planning a visit to Jamama on Friday. In Kismayu they met EMM workers Dan and Janet Gerber and their four children who had just arrived in January and were still adjusting to a new culture. They were frustrated with the fact that their assignment to teach in a nursing school had not yet materialized because the nursing school had not yet opened. Dan had gotten involved as an advisor to the local PHC teams. The next day Janet took the Leamans to visit the main regional hospital in Kismayu and they were shocked at the deplorable condition of the hospital. The operating room assaulted their senses and they could not imagine how sterile surgery could be done there.

On Friday, March 13, the Leamans were able to make their long anticipated visit to Jamama. They were welcomed by the local medical personnel and the former employees of the Jamama Mennonite hospital. Dr. Mohamed Hussein, the young doctor who was living in the Leaman's former house, and Dr. Ali Mohamed Samater, the regional coordinator for the PHC in Lower Juba, greeted the Leamans, but it was their former employees who did the hosting and planned the meals during their one day stay. Marian Mohamed, the wife of Abdi Gure, gave leadership to this welcome. Abdi was away on a business trip to the north. Marian was now the mother of eight children and she also helped to run their private pharmacy. The Leamans marveled at her efficiency as she gave directions for the various details of the meals. The Leamans were told that they would be staying in their former house. Mattresses and sheets were brought and placed on the beds which had been the Leaman's seventeen years before. They found that the house had become badly deteriorated and the plumbing did not work. A picture of Christ as the Good Shepherd still hung on the walls but at an angle. Ivan straightened the picture—the one thing that could be done to bring order in the house!

The Leamans walked to the hospital and they were saddened as they viewed the general deterioration of the building and what had been a place of busy medical activity was now a relic of emptiness and abandonment. In the nursing station there were still the metal patient chart holders, but they were empty. There was one dying person found in one of the rooms which seemed to symbolize this dying building. The Leamans walked into the operating/delivery room where David was born in 1963 and a picture was taken of David and his parents in that room and the wooden baby bed that had been used for the newborn. There were a few rusty-looking instruments as a reminder of the past days of sterile operations.



Ivan and Mary Ellen show David the room where he was born on August 2, 1963



The Leamans eat a sumptuous meal on the living room floor of their former home in Jamama

The clinic next to the hospital had more signs of activity. One part was being used by the TB control program funded by the Finnish government. Another part had been used in recent days for an immunization program. A maternal-child health clinic was to be developed in the clinic building. A Primary Health Care team was meeting there at times to plan strategy and training for their proposed work in surrounding villages.

The former school buildings of the Mennonite mission were now being used by the Egyptians and again there was a look of disrepair and unat-

tractiveness. The grounds of what had been called the “mission compound” was now barren and unkempt. Where previously there was a thick grass cover, now it was dry dusty ground and covered with straggly scrub brush. Since the sisal border fence had come down, cattle roamed and grazed and people walked across the area.

The Leamans were brought out of their doleful contemplation as their former employees and friends brought a sumptuous meal of goat meat and rice, spicy tea and bananas. They relaxed in their former living room, sitting on mats on the floor as food and friendships were shared. Ivan offered a prayer for this special occasion, remembering that he had prayed here seventeen years ago as they were leaving this house to go to the States for a furlough. They did not know that it would be this long before they returned to this place. They shared of their lives in the years that had passed. Their former employees were now the parents of many children. Five of their

former employees were now operating their own pharmacies in Jamama. These were Abdi Gure, Mohamed Aden, Aden Ali, Mohamed Diriye, and Hussein Ibrahim. Aden Ali had Ivan's medical school microscope which had been used in the Jamama hospital. He was now doing lab work with this microscope. [In 2020 Aden Ali's son Mohamed Aden made telephone contact with Ivan. He had immigrated to the USA in 1998 and was living in Seattle, WA. He was working in the Public Health Department. Mohamed said that his parents had followed him in 2007 and that his father Aden Ali was still living. Mohamed arranged for a zoom meeting on September 25, 2020 so Ivan was able to talk to Aden Ali after many years! It was a wonderful experience. Mohamed was interested in knowing more about the work of the Mennonite mission in Somalia so Ivan mailed to him the book, *Fifty Years, Fifty Stories –The Mennonite Mission in Somalia, 1953-2003* which was written by Omar Eby. Also, he sent the book *Tea Time in Mogadishu*, written by David Shenk about the life of Ahmed Haile.]

When the Jamama hospital had deteriorated, the former employees of the Mennonite mission hospital had survived by starting their own pharmacies. They were using the knowledge that they had learned from their training and their work in the Jamama hospital in the 1960s and the early 1970s before the Mennonite medical mission in Somalia was asked to leave. The mayor of Jamama had said to Ivan: "the ones you have trained are now helping us."

That evening and the next day the Leamans walked the streets of Jamama and visited former friends. They visited Hawa Hassen, the former laundry worker for the Jamama hospital, who had the periodic episodes of iritis. This dear lady was now blind for lack of treatment. They visited the Arab home where Mary Ellen had been in 1963 when she had the sudden rupture of membranes and later that day delivered David in the hospital. The Arab women remembered that occasion and saw David as their boy.

The Leamans met Abdullahi who had been the faithful grounds keeper for the Mennonite mission in the 1960s and 1970s. He still had that position in 1987 and he told the Leamans that he was now old and wished to be released of that responsibility! David recalled how Abdullahi would share some of his "muffa" with him and Jonathan when they were little boys. So Abdullahi sent for some "muffa" and David had the experience again of tasting and smelling "muffa." What a special treat!

That night as the Leamans lay on their beds in their former home in Jamama, they thanked God for this opportunity to again visit Jamama and to be renewed in friendship with so many people. They wanted to believe

that the service the Menonite mission had given to Jamama in years past could still be seeds for His Kingdom to grow and flourish in this area.

On Saturday, March 14, the Leamans had another sumptuous meal, this time at the home of Marian Mohamed. Many of the former employees and friends joined in this meal and pictures were taken. The mayor came by and wanted Ivan to make a list of things needed to get the Jamama hospital operating again. Ivan said that if the community wanted a hospital again, they needed to work together. Outside expertise and help would be needed but the interest and initiative needed to come from the community. Ivan saw that the community had a lot of life and he challenged the mayor to

use that vitality in restoring the Jamama hospital. Goodbyes were said and the Leamans headed back to Kismayu in a UNICEF Land Rover with the Primary Health Care team.

The next day on Sunday, March 15, the Leamans headed for Mogadishu with Jan Gerber driving. Dan was out in the bush with a primary health care team.

On their way they stopped in Mofi, where they had a very emotional reunion with Tabitha. She hugged all of them and kissed them on both cheeks. There was a wonderful time of sharing as she got out her Swahili song books and they sang together. The Leamans recalled how Tabitha had



Former hospital employees and friends meet and greet Ivan as they recall the good days of the past and hope for a better future



Marian Mohamed, former nurse trained at Jamama Hospital, now the mother of many children

carried David on her hips when he was a baby. And she laughed as she tried to lift David now! She looked good for seventy-five years of age. The Leamans left her with a feeling of awe and happiness as they reflected on how she had kept her faith all these years.



▲ *Tabitha carried David on her hip in 1963 outside the Leaman house in Jamama*

Above right: Tabitha laughed as she tried to lift David now!

◀ *A joyous reunion of the Leamans and Tabitha after eighteen years*

[It was very sad to hear that two years later in 1989 she had died of starvation. When there was intra-clan fighting, and normal life was disrupted, Tabitha had no one to care for her. Her husband had died; she had no children, and she was a believer; so she died for lack of food. How sad!]

Several years after that visit, David wrote a reflective article entitled, "Enlarging Our Families, Extending Our Tables" which was printed in *Grand Rapids Magazine* and later for *Festival Quarterly*. Here are a few excerpts: *"I have two snapshots of me and Tabitha. In the first, I am an infant. She is holding me at her side with a sling of cloth tied around her neck. The second, a 'reunion' shot taken more than twenty years later, shows us arm in arm with me slightly hoisted. A large and strong woman, Tabitha was playfully proving—I remember with a smile---that she could still lift me up.*

Many worlds separate Tabitha and me. I have known the soft comforts that come from being close to the sources of power and plenty in affluent America. - - - Tabitha by contrast has known the challenges and hardships that come from being- - - a poor Bantu in the sad land of Somalia.

She is poor, I am rich. Continents divide us. Yet something inside of me wants to claim Tabitha as part of my family - - - and to be included in hers. I wish to share our food and laughter at the same table. Last year I learned that Tabitha had died. Of starvation. - - - Tabitha will not be able to join the Thanksgiving meal I dream of. For her, food ran out. I will always remember and treasure the brief time I was able to spend with Tabitha as an adult- - - during that visit [in 1987] with my church worker parents. In her mud and thatch house, Tabitha sang- - -her voice husky and deep- - - hymns of worship and praise.

That woman can still lift me up. In my dreams, I feast with her. Around a big table with all our favorite foods. Until we are full. And the world is fair."

Before reaching Mogadishu, they stopped at Merca where EMM missionaries, Lamar and Barbara Witmer, were working. The Leamans were impressed at how the Witmers had immersed themselves in learning the language and the culture of the people. They stayed one night in Merca and the next day on Monday, March 16, they arrived back in Mogadishu. That night the group of Mennos, both EMM and MCCers, met at Ed Risslers home and Ivan shared of their visit to Lower Juba. He showed slides of their experiences of the 1960s. Jon Rudy and his wife Carolyn, who were in MCC work in Somaliland, had come to Mogadishu for a visit. It was interesting for David to meet Jon Rudy's wife Carolyn again. As Goshen College students in 1984 David and Carolyn Peachey had gone to Honduras for an SST (Study-Service-Term) experience.

The Leamans went to bed on Tuesday, March 17 and in the night Ivan got very sick with a gastrointestinal disorder. He had severe pain and abdominal distension. Julie Sensenig went for IV fluids but by the time she returned Ivan had found great relief when his stomach emptied. Ivan had never experienced anything like the previous twelve hours of intense pain and suffering. He believed that he must have had acute stomach dilatation, the cause of which he did not know. He was thankful that it had not occurred while he was on the road traveling.

On Tuesday evening they had said goodbyes to Somali and missionary friends which continued into Wednesday, March 18. Hassan Nur, their former Jamama hospital bookkeeper, whom Mary Ellen had trained, came

to say goodbye and he was extremely helpful at the airport to navigate the Leamans through all of the confusion.

In Nairobi they had a few days at the Mennonite Guest House where they had the opportunity to meet Kalifa Ali from Ethiopia. He was one of the church leaders who had been imprisoned for several years. On Thursday afternoon they visited Rosslyn Academy where they were given a tour by Joy Dorsch and they recalled the experiences that she and Deborah had together when the school began. The Leamans had a delightful evening with John and Helen Miller and their children, Wendell and Frances, who gave them an “after-dinner” concert with a violin and cello.

The Leamans packed their bags for the last time, this time for a flight by British Airways from Nairobi to London and then from London to Philadelphia, arriving Friday evening, March 20, 1987. They rejoiced in the evidence of God’s protecting and guiding hand through the varied experiences of the past four weeks.

Chapter 14

(1988 – 1990)

After returning to their home in Strasburg, Ivan resumed his medical practice with the group at Eastbrook Family Health Center. Then in August 1988 Harold Reed, who was serving now at EMM as Associate Director for Overseas, had an interview with Ivan and Mary Ellen inviting them to consider service again in Lower Juba, Somalia. After their visit to Somalia and Lower Juba in 1987, their hearts were again drawn to the people there and they were open to consider this invitation as a call to again serve in medical mission in Somalia. Their response to Harold Reed was in a letter written on September 13, 1988. They said that they had shared this with their children and their parents and had received affirmation that they were free to consider this call. However, their greatest concern was their responsibility to their parents. Ivan's mother had died in February of 1988 and his father, a widower, was eighty-two years old. Mary Ellen's parents were both in their upper seventies.

Ivan said that the medical practice at Eastbrook was projected to be very busy for the next year of 1989. There was the prospect of Dr. Richard Jackson, another Mennonite doctor, joining the practice in 1989 and Ivan was very comfortable with turning over his patients to that doctor. Ivan said that they would like to project the summer of 1990 as the time when they would be ready for another term of service in Somalia. Ivan envisioned that he could serve in a primary health care program in the Jamama area. They were made aware that another couple, Wesley and Marian Newswanger, had also been asked to consider a call to serve in Somalia. The Leamans knew this couple very well since Marian was a nurse who worked at Eastbrook FHC and Wes was a teacher at Lancaster Mennonite School. These two couples both lived in Strasburg and they began a conversation with each other and talked how they might serve as a team in a public health ministry

in southern Somalia. The Newswanger couple also felt that they would not be ready to serve in Somalia before 1990. So this was the beginning of the emotional, physical and spiritual preparation for the possibility of serving again in Lower Juba. The plans for the Leaman and Newswanger couples were that they would serve together in Lower Juba, either in the Jamama area or in Kismayu.

During the next two years there was much thought given to their plans for moving to Somalia in 1990. The Leamans had been receiving the interesting newsletters from Dr. Campbell and Ferne Millar, the missionary couple serving with World Concern at Jilib whom they had met in March 1987. They wrote a letter to the Millars on December 29, 1989, informing them of their plans to serve again in Somalia, with their base likely to be in Kismayu and with periodic visits to Jamama for medical consultations. They were anticipating their arrival as sometime in late summer of 1990. They ended their letter with “Insha’llah” (Arabic for “If God wills”). Dr. Millar responded on January 20, 1990 with the comment that at the present time it was considered unsafe for any expatriates to live anywhere south of Jilib and that many organizations had been pulling out their expatriates. He said that the situation in the entire south (meaning Lower Juba region) remained unsafe. He remarked that he and Ferne would be completing their three-year term by May 1990.

World Concern had no medical doctor to replace Dr. Millar in Jilib. In February there were tentative discussions with World Concern that perhaps the EMM team of the Leamans and Newswangers could be seconded to World Concern for a year at a time to serve in Jilib, before moving to Kismayu if or when that area becomes safe. This idea was presented to the Leamans and the Newswangers and they were open to that idea. They needed to be processed by World Concern so the Leamans and Newswangers gave permission for their personnel files from EMM to be forwarded to World Concern. They also needed to sign an Assumption of Risk form which they did on April 19, 1990. After all this preparation, the word came from EMM that David Shenk and Harold Reed had met in Addis on May 25 with World Concern leaders, Howard Berry, Africa Director and Craig Anderson with World Concern in Mog. They were informed that all expatriates with World Concern were being withdrawn from Jilib by December 1990. So that place of service for the Leamans and Newswangers was closed. So the question was, now what? Would there be another place to serve?

In early June, 1990, Marian Newswanger accompanied the Leamans to the International Conference on Missionary Medicine on St. Simon's Island near the Brunswick, Georgia headquarters of MAP International (Medical Assistance Program). At the MAP conference Ivan was excited about a demonstration of portable lab equipment that was operated by small batteries. The Eastbrook office was interested in providing money as a going-away gift to help in the purchase of some of this medical equipment. Ivan's physician colleagues, Dr. Don Siegrist, Dr. Jim Wilson, Dr. Jim Duprey, Dr. Clair Hess and Dr. Richard Jackson were generous in their gifts of support as well as the nursing and front office staff at Eastbrook FHC. This was particularly significant since Marian Newswanger, the well-loved staff nurse for Dr. Siegrist, would be part of the medical team serving in Somalia.

There was a very large EMM overseas orientation for the Leamans and the Newswangers at Black Rock Retreat from July 9-13, 1990. That orientation was saddened by the word of the tragic death on July 10 of Ivan's nephew, Fred Garber. He was responding as a volunteer fireman when his vehicle was struck by a fire engine that had lost control while driving on the road just in front of the New Danville Mennonite Church, which was Fred's childhood church.

The Eastbrook doctors and staff were very encouraging and helpful to the Leamans and the Newswangers as they prepared for going to Somalia. There were many contributions of money for the purchase of a portable microscope and other medical equipment. On July 21, 1990 there was a farewell party at Dr. Jim Duprey's home and the Leamans displayed Somali artifacts and Ivan and Mary Ellen dressed in Somali costumes.

Ivan and Mary Ellen had the privilege of attending the Mennonite World Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba from July 24-29, 1990. There were 12,000 registrants with representatives from seventy countries, including Somali representatives Ahmed Haile and Hersi Ahmed. There were 20,000 in attendance at the closing service in the Winnipeg Stadium. That was a great experience to fellowship and to sing with fellow Mennonites from around the world. After the conference, the Leamans drove to Toronto, Canada to visit some Somalis who had recently fled their country and had found refuge in Canada. One person was Marian Ali who had been a student in the Mennonite school in Jamama and had worked in the Jamama hospital in the late 1960s into the 1970s. Her husband was still in Mogadishu and the Leamans were hoping to see him when they arrived there later that year.

On August 12, 1990, Sunday morning, the Stumptown congregation had a commissioning service for the Leamans with special words from Paul Landis, representing EMM and Pastor Luke Nolt, representing the congregation. Following the morning service, there was a fellowship meal and the Leaman children and Ivan's father were able to be there in addition to Mary Ellen's parents who were part of Stumptown congregation. Dr. Don Siegrist, one of Ivan's physician colleagues at Eastbrook FHC, and his wife Joanne were also members at Stumptown and they were part of the farewell service. Joanne expressed her emotional concern for the Leamans going to Somalia at this time when there was potential danger in serving in this country.

Before the Leamans left for Somalia, they were happy to know that their parents were able to make plans to move into retirement communities. Mary Ellen's parents moved to Landis Homes in May 1990 and sold their home in June. Ivan's father sold his home in August with plans to move to the Mennonite Home after his room would be ready. When Ivan said his final goodbye to his father, he told his father that he was feeling guilty to be leaving him and going to Somalia. His father assured him that he would be okay because God had always taken care of him in the past and he was trusting Him for the future. The Leamans had made plans to rent their home in Strasburg to single young women. They did arrange to have a bathroom put in the basement of their house so that they would have a basement apartment to live in when they returned in the summer of 1991 for Ivan to take his family practice recertification exam.

The Leamans left the USA and arrived in Nairobi on August 28, 1990, and spent a few days at the Mennonite Guest House. In Mary Ellen's first letter of August 30 she reported that they went on a safari tour to Lake Nakura to see the flamingos. They also had a nice meal and tea at a fine hotel which Ivan said was not missionary style. This tour was a very nice gift from the Eastbrook staff. Ivan and Mary Ellen were the minority Americans on this tour of eleven persons. The rest were Swiss from Swiss Air.

At the guest house they first met Mike and Cindy Brislen and little daughter Jessica who were serving with EMM in Djibouti. The Leaman's friendship with the Brislens strengthened through the years and later the Brislens became members of Stumptown congregation and were financially supported by Stumptown for their ministry in Djibouti and later in Nairobi. They had an invitation to have lunch with a couple who had been missionaries in Somalia and were now working in Nairobi. This would have been Michael and Oetje Madany whom they had first met in 1987 and who had

provided transportation for them from Mogadishu to Jilib where they were working in a leprosy treatment control program.

The Leamans flew into Mogadishu on Sunday afternoon, September 2. They had supper together with the other EMM team in Mog. The other persons were Kevin and Sharon Yoder with little daughter Ana. The Yoders were the EMM team leaders in Mog. Mary Gehman was there as a teacher. She was the person who had served the longest with EMM in Somalia, having come first to Somalia as a teacher in 1958. Tom and Sue Martin with their three children, Shane, Tiffanie and Sabrina, had come a few months earlier to Mogadishu. Tom as a nurse was serving in a psychiatric hospital in Mog called Forlanini. Sue was also a nurse and was working in the Benadir Hospital. Bonnie Bergey had also come that year as a teacher. Wes and Marian Newswanger were due to arrive in a few weeks to complete the team. The Leamans felt a warm welcome from the other EMM persons in Mog and for the first week they were treated as guests.



Outside beautiful Mogadishu Catholic cathedral after Friday believer worship service

The Leaman's first letter written from Mogadishu was written on Friday, September 7. That morning they had attended the Somali believer fellowship that met in the large Catholic Cathedral. The Somalis were in charge of the service but would at times invite missionaries or other expatriates to bring the message. On that morning there were about fifteen Somalis which included two women and there were eight Mennonite missionaries present. The Leamans were invited to share their testimonies. After the service a young Somali man approached Ivan and greeted him by saying that Ivan had delivered him in the Jamama hospital. Ivan expressed surprise and asked how he knew that and the young man said that his mother had told him and he remembered Ivan's name on the birth certificate. There was another worship service that met on Saturdays in the other Catholic church in Mog. That was an international service with an Anglican type of service. The pastor was John Benwell who was from a Free Church tradition in England but to serve this ecumenical service he needed to follow the Anglican style of worship.

The Leamans moved into a large spacious house that was also planned to accommodate Wes and Marian Newswanger when they arrived. There would be some partitions put in so that the house would seem more like a duplex or double house. Wes with his carpentry skills would do those modifications. Ivan was perhaps the only American doctor in Mog at that time and there was the thought that if he was asked to see other missionaries or expatriates, it would be good to have a room for private examinations. Ivan's thought was that rather than charging a fee for these private patients, they could make a contribution that could be used to buy medicine for the poor Somalis who could not afford their medications. Ivan said that he would need to present this idea to the Ministry of Health.

Some of the Leaman's Somali friends had expressed surprise to see them at this time with all the violence that the country was experiencing. Kadiga Barre, one of their first Somali friends in Jamama who was a nurse aide in the Mennonite mission Jamama Hospital, had asked why they had come. When she was told it was because God had led them to come, she responded, "Then God will take care of you." Kadiga was now a nurse, having trained in Hargeisa and she was working for the UN dispensary. She said that if they ever needed help they should call her, even at 2:00 a.m! Ivan wrote to his father and said that they felt a sense of peace in being in Mogadishu even though many Somali friends were saying that they should be careful because there were many thieves and at times acts of violence. Ivan wrote also: *"We believe God does protect us and we believe that the prayers of our families and friends at home are very important."*

In the next letter of September 14, Mary Ellen said that they had made an interesting visit with Mohamud Farah or Mohamud 'Madoube' (the black one). He was the husband of Marian Ali from Jamama whom they had met in Toronto on the way home from Mennonite World Conference. They discovered that he had been a teacher in the Mennonite mission school in Jamama and that was when he had met Marian Ali. He was now the director of an institute for training Somalis to teach refugees. He was a very nice man and spoke fluent English. He and his wife had six beautiful children, three were with his wife in Toronto and three were with him. They certainly would wish to be together as a family but the present situation made it difficult.

The Leamans were told that there were about 200 Americans in Mogadishu in official paid positions with USAID, American Embassy, and the American International School. Tom Martin and Ivan visited with the nurse at the American Embassy and found that they had the latest in medical facilities.

The nurse told Ivan that their services would be available to Mennonite mission personnel also in case of an emergency. That was helpful to know.

In the middle of July, Kevin Yoder had spoken to the Directors of Benadir and Digfer Hospitals in Mogadishu about whether there would be a place for Dr. Leaman and nurse Marian Newswanger to serve in one of these hospitals. Dr. Abdul-aziz of the Benadir Women and Children's Hospital readily accepted for Marian Newswanger to serve as a nurse and for Dr. Leaman to serve in the Pediatrics Emergency Room. Kevin suggested that they could serve for several hours a week for the remainder of 1990 and full-time beginning in January, 1991, continuing through June. Hopefully they would then be able to move to Lower Juba by July, 1991. Wes Newswanger was invited to teach vocational subjects at the Commercial and Technical Teachers College in Mogadishu.

Sharon Yoder left for Nairobi on September 16 to await the birth of their second child. Wes and Marian Newswanger arrived on Sunday, September 23. Most of the team were at the airport to meet them and it was exciting. On September 27, the EMM mission team had a get-together at Tom Martin's house. Everyone was to dress in fall colors and each was to provide an activity for the evening. The team got along well with each other. The Yoders had provided good leadership, but Kevin was leaving on October 7, to join his wife in Nairobi. He would be gone for about six weeks and his various responsibilities were shared with other members of the team in his absence. Ivan wrote in a letter to his father about the upcoming anniversary of the October 21, 1969, revolution and the concern that this might bring political disturbances with rioting, etc.

During the previous week Ivan had attended a four day medical seminar on TB, presented by Finnish and Somali doctors who were running a very good TB treatment and control program in the country. The head of the Finnish TB program was Dr. Taisto. At the Somali believer fellowship on September 14, Dr. Taisto had preached a very forthright message on "God Incarnate." At this TB medical seminar Ivan remembers the striking change in the dress of Somali women who were medical professionals. They were dressed very conservatively with head veils. This was a change that had come about in recent years with the influence of the more fundamentalist Islamic teachings that had been brought into the country.

At the Friday believer fellowship on September 28, Ivan gave an introduction for the Newswangers. Adam Jimali Farah was the scheduled speaker and he did not appear that morning so Kevin Yoder preached on a moments

notice and he had a good sermon on the call of Abraham and the call of God on his own life. Mary Ellen wrote that she hoped that the Newswangers would find living with them in the same house as easy as the Leamans anticipated it would be living with them. All the newcomers began language study that week with a Somali teacher, Abdullah Saline. He was an interesting teacher who did not only teach language, but bits and pieces of Somali culture as well. Classes were two hours a day, five days a week.

Mary Ellen wrote about the challenge of cooking. She was baking sweet potatoes and grilling meat over charcoal. She was making granola, buying the wheat and having it ground. She would sift it and then separate the wheat flour from the germ. She was making a French dressing and preparing salads after soaking the salad greens in chlorox water. They were using powdered milk and boiling water for drinking. Ivan would keep the lemonade supply replenished and they would drink a gallon each day. Once a week she had her house help make a Somali meal.

The next letters were written by Mary Ellen on October 11 to her parents and Ivan to his father on October 12. Mary Ellen had an interesting description about the skinny chickens that were available for purchase. She said that this poor chicken would make Frank Perdue stand on his head! Wes had built a separate kitchen for Marian so each couple had their own kitchen. However, they had planned a system so that each of them prepared two meals a week which they shared for the mid-day meal. Each couple had a separate living area but there were many opportunities for togetherness.

Mary Ellen had begun a job as teacher's aide in The American International School. There were thirty countries represented. The enrollment was



Ivan and Mary Ellen share this large house with Wes and Marian Newswanger



Mary Ellen enjoys her job as teacher's aide in The American International School with some Somali students

decreased that year to 100 students because many expatriates had left. There were some Somali students. She enjoyed her job working with preschool, kindergarten and first and second grades. “Mennonite” was new to most of the staff so Mary Ellen was getting a lot of questions. When asked why she was here she would emphasize that as EMM workers they were in Somalia as a Christian presence, serving in ways that they could but they were not allowed to proselytize. Mary Ellen said that being in the school was an experience she was enjoying and it was helping the mission budget. Because of the extreme inflation, when Mary Ellen got paid she carried home her pay in Somali shillings in a large bag!

Ivan was going to the Benadir Children’s Hospital three times a week – mainly going on rounds with the pediatrician, Dr. Mustafa, an Egyptian, and also relating to Dr. Dahir, the director of the hospital. He was seeing some very uncommon illnesses. The big problem was that the system was so complicated. At times the patient had to be taken to another place in the city to have a test done because the hospital didn’t have the necessary supplies or material to do that particular test. The family of the sick child had to find transportation to take the child elsewhere in the city for the test. Ivan was moved one day to hear that a mother had pawned her bed to pay for a chest x-ray for her child which cost about three dollars.

There was an infant that Dr. Mustafa diagnosed as having cretinism. This was by observation only and the infant was started on Synthroid. There were no thyroid blood tests available in Mogadishu so Ivan arranged for thyroid blood tests to be done in Nairobi. The TSH came back as seventy-three which was extremely high! The thyroid blood tests cost twenty-six dollars. Fortunately Ivan had available to him a special Somali medical fund that he could draw from to pay for this test. As Ivan observed that some patients did



Ivan with Dr. Mustafa in Benadir Women and Children’s Hospital



Marian Newswanger and Sue Martin in Benadir hospital maternity area

not have the money to pay for simple tests or even the transportation to take a sick child for a test, he came up with this idea. There had been generous contributions from the staff and colleagues at Eastbrook FHC and there was a sizable amount of money available in this special Somali medical fund. Ivan proposed that he would deposit some money with the Italian Catholic Sister Maria at the Benadir Children and Maternal Hospital. When there was a hardship case, there could be a referral to Sister Maria who could assist with the needed funds in hardship cases.

After the Newswangers arrived, Marian was going with Ivan three times a week to the Benadir Women and Children's Hospital. She was observing deliveries in preparation for later doing teaching basic nursing skills to the midwives. Apparently these women had only midwifery training without knowledge of basic nursing skills. Marian would observe rather crude and unsterile obstetrical techniques. Marian's presence was likely a positive influence although at that early stage it would have been too early to make many suggestions for change.

The EMM medical team was invited out for lunch by Dr. Kasim, the Director General in the Ministry of Health. He was the person who issued the invitation for this EMM medical team to come to Somalia. When he met the Leamans he said, "Welcome home" and he said that several times during the interview. Dr. Kasim was from the Jamama area and had been a student in the Mennonite school at Jamama in the 1960s. He made it very clear at the lunch that he wanted the EMM medical team to go to Jamama as soon as possible to renovate that hospital. His request would need to be discussed with Harold Reed on his visit in January, 1991. The prior understanding was that the EMM medical team would first go to Kismayu and would perhaps go to Jamama by the summer of 1991. The understanding had been that the EMM medical team would work in Primary Health Care and teach public health.

The Leamans had an interesting visit from one of the friends from their Jamama days. This was Marian Mohamed, the wife of Abdi Guri, both of whom had been trained in the Jamama nurse-dresser program. Abdi Guri had been one of the elders in the Jamama believer fellowship and the Leamans heard that later Marian Mohamed also had become a believer. She was the one who had so graciously and efficiently hosted the Leamans on their visit to Jamama in 1987. She had come to Mogadishu now to be with her father who was ill and had been hospitalized in one of the city hospitals and had now been discharged. She came to Ivan with questions about her father's condition, still valuing Ivan's medical advice.

The plans were for the Tom Martin family to go to Nairobi on Sunday, October 14, and to be gone for two weeks. The idea was to not have a family with children in Mogadishu at the time of the anniversary of the revolution on October 21. In the letter of October 22, Mary Ellen states that they had received word that Sharon Yoder had delivered another daughter, Alita Joy on October 16, and all were doing well. The anniversary of October 21 had passed without incident and Tom Martins were returning to Mog on the twenty-eighth.

A note written by Mary Ellen on the twenty-sixth stated that there were demonstrations and riots the day following the October 21 anniversary. Then on the night of October 25, they had a phone call from a trusted employee advising the mission people to stay inside on October 26, because there might be trouble in the streets. So the team decided not to attend the Friday services on the twenty-sixth. Mary Ellen wrote: *"We as expatriates and Christians keep a low profile. We try to exercise caution and wisdom and take our cues from our Somali friends who are very protective of us and show genuine concern for our well being. Most days seem peaceful and we move freely about the city but with the general unrest and instability one is not sure what will develop from day to day. For the most part we feel at peace about being here and know that if things get too bad we would leave. This we say not to cause you worry, but so you can pray for us. We still walk in confidence that God has led us here."*

In language class one day there was the question: "Hooyo iyo aabbo may nol yihin?" (Are your mother and father living?) Mary Ellen felt blessed to answer, "Haa, way nol yihin." (Yes, they are living).

Mary Ellen said she felt sad for Marian Newswanger who no longer had a father or a mother.

Mary Ellen was enjoying her work at the international school. There was a new student, a Somali child, who knew no English so Mary Ellen would speak to him in Somali and he would call her "grandmother" or "ayeyo" in the Somali language which Mary Ellen liked! She was working individually with slow learners, helping the teachers with crafts, bulletin boards, filing and running off dittos on the duplicator.

In the Saturday afternoon international worship services, Mary Ellen was sometimes helping with the music. She had a keyboard that Dr. Campbell Millar had left for her to use. Bonnie Bergey was asked to lead singing at times and Mary Ellen would be on the keyboard. For one Saturday service she was preparing to play, "All Creatures of our God and King" and for the

communion service she and Bonnie would lead, “Broken for you, Broken for me.” Ivan wrote that they were enjoying the two weekly worship services; the one on Friday with the Somali believer fellowship and the Saturday international worship service. Ivan preached one Friday at the Somalia believer fellowship service and he was asked to preach on Saturday, December 8, at the international service.

Rev. John Benwell, the pastor of the international service, was from a free church tradition in England but he needed to fulfill his duties at the international service as an Anglican pastor. At one service he was asked to baptize a newborn baby of an Orthodox Ethiopian couple. He felt he needed to fulfill this request although as a person from the free church tradition, he was a person who supported believer’s baptism. For this baptism, the Ethiopian couple asked one of the Mennonite women to serve as godmother. This was an unusual situation. Pastor Benwell in his sermon, in a very careful way, presented his view of baptism and although Ivan does not remember his words, the thought was that Pastor Benwell presented this baptism as the parent’s commitment to raise this child in the Christian faith.

A few days later Ivan had gone with Annie Hellstrom, a missionary with Swedish Church Relief, to a Somali government medical office to meet someone. That medical official never showed for the appointment. Ivan brought up the unusual situation of the recent baby baptism where the pastor was not completely comfortable with infant baptism and a Mennonite missionary woman was asked to be the godmother. When Ivan told Annie Hellstrom that as Mennonites they did not believe in infant baptism, Annie became very earnest in her belief and wanted to show that infant baptism was Biblical. Ivan never had opportunity later to discuss their different views on baptism. Ivan knew Annie as a very committed follower of Jesus whose desire was to be a witness to Somalis. Mennonites felt an affinity with Swedish Church Relief because it was the Swedish Lutheran missionaries who first came to the Lower Juba area in the early part of the 1900s.

On October 22, the EMM medical team had an interesting visit with Swedish Church Relief. They were invited to their home/headquarters. They met with Ruth Abrahamson, who was the overseas director (similar to Harold Reed’s position with EMM) and Annie Hellstrom was there. Their organization was very committed to witness in Somalia. They had many Swedish workers in Somalia in the 1980s but now they were reduced to only one expatriate worker, Annie Hellstrom. They still had a big program with many Somali employees. At this meeting they had a good time of sharing each

other's spiritual pilgrimage and how God led them individually to Somalia. Then these Swedish Church Relief persons began to explore the idea with the EMM medical team about the possibility of working together in a medical clinic in one of the poorer areas of Mogadishu. They had the Somali staff and a budget for 1991 that would allow them to pursue this idea. Ivan was excited about this idea and said it would need to be worked through the EMM administration. Harold Reed would be making a visit in January at which time this idea could be worked at together.

Ivan wrote to his father (and to Mary Ellen's parents) on November 10, 1990, on a computer which was his first letter written to them in this way. Dr. Jim Wilson from Eastbrook had arranged for Ivan to have a small portable Toshiba computer and a Kodak printer. Ivan was very ignorant with the use of a computer, but Wes Newswanger and Bonnie Bergey gave instructions and Ivan soon found that this was a good way to type because it was so easy to correct errors! Ivan wrote about another new development for the EMM medical team. Ivan had been invited to be part of a task force to study the health care needs in the poorer areas of Mogadishu. They had one meeting and then had a three-day tour visiting various clinics to see how they could be improved. During these tours Ivan learned to know some Somali doctors as well as doctors working with UNICEF and WHO. Annie Hellstrom from Swedish Church Relief was also part of the tour group. The area of Mogadishu called Wadajir was a place that Ivan and Annie felt would be a good possibility for them to work together to improve the primary health care in the outpatient clinic there.

In the November 17 letter by Ivan, he mentioned that the EMM missionaries would all be in Nairobi from December 9-23. There was a large missionary retreat planned from December 14-20, in a place near Nairobi. His father was to send the next mail to them to the Mennonite Guest House in Nairobi, Kenya. On November 30, Mary Ellen tried her hand at the computer. She said that they had attended the Friday Somali believer fellowship that day and Dr. Taisto had the message. That was his farewell message because he was leaving on Sunday, December 2, to return to Finland. He had been a faithful supporter of the believer fellowship in the two years that he was in Somalia. Dr. Taisto had taken Ivan and Mary Ellen out to eat the previous Friday at the Anglo-American Somalia beach club along the Indian Ocean with a beautiful view and excellent food.

Mary Ellen reported that the language class was ending the following week and that Kevin and Sharon were planning a graduation party. In her

last letter from Mog she also told of the two turkey meals on Thanksgiving Day. Tom Martin had ordered a turkey from Nairobi through Somalia Cold Storage. In the Leaman-Newswanger house they started the roasting process at 4:30 a.m. in the electric oven. Then the electricity went off after an hour and fifteen minutes. They had prepared for that possibility and a charcoal fire was made and then covered with ashes. The turkey was put in a pan covered with tin foil over the ashes of the charcoal fire. They covered the turkey with a metal half-barrel. Roasting continued for the next six hours. It turned out great which the Mennonite mission team enjoyed! Then on Thanksgiving evening Mary Ellen and Ivan were invited to a Thanksgiving meal with the staff and faculty of the American International School where Mary Ellen had been working. That was an interesting evening of socialization with persons of different countries.

In the letter of November 30, Mary Ellen also wrote that Joe Bontrager was coming the next week to do Bible teaching for the Somalia believer fellowship. A church fellowship tea was being planned to be held in the courtyard of the Leaman-Newswanger residence. Then Ivan added to the rest of the letter. These are Ivan's words: *"I did something different and that is, I did a sermon on the computer. I have been asked to preach at the next Saturday, December 8, afternoon international service since Rev. John Benwell plans to be away. I was given the topic and scriptures to use which comes from the Anglican order of service. My message is for the Second Advent Sunday and the message is 'The Word of God in the Old Testament.' One of the passages is from Isaiah 55. I sat down at the computer after I had done some initial study and planning my message and composed it on the computer. I found this very fascinating. Having the computer seems to make it easier than sitting down and writing."*

Ivan wrote that they had a visit from Isaac Nur the previous evening. The Leamans had first known Isaac as a six year old boy at Mahaddei in 1960. He was now working as the administrator for the Christophel Blinden Mission which Ivan had visited in Afgoi on their 1987 visit. Isaac talked about the deteriorating situation in Somalia. Mahaddei and Johar had recently been the site of fighting between the rebels and the government forces and these towns were now essentially empty as people had fled to the bush or to Mogadishu. These places were only sixty to seventy-five miles from Mog and the government forces were only in control in Mogadishu. There was increasing lawlessness in Mog and four-wheeled vehicles were being stolen at gun point and sometimes lives were lost. This happened at

the bakery shop where the EMM missionaries often bought bread. A white man driving a four-wheeled vehicle had stopped at that bake shop and he was shot and killed for his vehicle! Isaac said that he would keep the EMM workers informed so that if things got too bad, he would tell them when they should leave.

Ivan had not written in his letters that in Mogadishu many people were fearful of what might be coming with the approaching war. Ivan recalled that Sister Maria was also fearful as she saw changes that had come with the influence of radical Islam. She feared what she saw in some people's eyes. Ivan also had not been writing letters home stating how he was feeling during those weeks in Mogadishu. With all the reports of shootings in the city and the many gun shots heard at night, Ivan had developed increasing anxiety. His anxiety was that if one of his fellow missionaries was injured, would he know how to respond to help in such a crisis? At nights it was difficult to sleep because of gun shots. It was helpful if the fans were running because that muffled the sounds. It was difficult to sleep if the electricity was off and the fans were not running.

One night the night guard came to the window of the Leaman-News-wanger residence to report that there were armed thieves in the area. Wes and Ivan got up and went to the gate of their compound and looked up and down the streets and they did not see any danger to their residence. Ivan would sometimes think and imagine how they might be able to escape if armed thieves would break into their residence. Wes worried that one of the guards might be killed protecting their residence. The Leamans and other EMM workers in Mogadishu were saying that they continued to have a sense of peace about being in Mog. The Leamans heard that Grace Shenk was praying that God would take away that sense of peace when it was time for them to leave.

The next letter written by Ivan was on December 12. He was writing from the Mennonite Guest House in Nairobi. He wrote that they all had increasing fears the last two weeks in Mog and were hoping that they would all get out without any harm. So there was a great feeling of relief when they arrived in Nairobi and as they traveled from the airport, they spontaneously broke into singing "Alhamdulillah." There was also a great feeling of sadness since they were not sure if they could return to Somalia in the near future. Also, they felt sadness for their friends in Somalia whom they may not see again and knowing that those friends could not leave the lawlessness and violence. If the Leamans could not return to Somalia,

Ivan wanted to check if there would be something he could do in one of the hospitals in Tanzania.

A highlight for the Leamans in Nairobi was that they were able to watch the video that Jonathan and Jackie had sent to them. It was of Benjamin's dedication service at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster. It was great to see Benjamin in motion and to hear his baby sounds. It was also good to see other family members at the dedication.



EMM Somalia team at December 1990 Christmas banquet in the Brackenhurst Retreat Center. Left to right: Ivan & Mary Ellen, Bonnie Bergey, Kevin & Sharon Yoder with Ana and Alia, Tom & Sue Martin with Tiffanie, Shane and Sabrina, Wes & Marian Newswanger

The East Africa missionary retreat was held from December 14-20 at the Brackenhurst Conference Center near Rosslyn Academy. This was a large gathering of EMM/MCC workers from Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, Uganda and Sudan. Ivan gave leadership in planning a Somalia missionary presentation on the conflict/tension that they had experienced in the recent weeks. Mary Ellen helped to plan a worship session. There were about 170 persons in attendance including children. The Leamans reported that this was a wonderful time of fellowship and learning from others.

The theme of this missionary conference was "conflict" and each country presented an issue of conflict relevant to the life and work in a particular country. It was not difficult to decide on the issue of conflict for those who had been in Somalia the previous months. It had been difficult to plan for the work because of the insecurity in the country due to the civil war. But

there had been positive feelings for the Leamans. They learned a greater dependence on God and the Psalms had become meaningful and personal. They had recognized God's protection in specific ways. Their participation in the Somali believer fellowship had been very special and to say good-bye was difficult.

After the conference, the Leamans were invited to the Christmas celebration with the Somali believers in Nairobi which was held on Friday, December 21, at the Eastleigh Mennonite Center. There was a worship service led by the Somali believer fellowship followed by a goat feast. The World Concern missionaries from Somalia were also invited to this Christmas celebration. There had been a tradition in Somalia to have a goat feast at Christmas and the Somali believer fellowship in Mog had been told that they could use the courtyard at the Leaman-Newswanger house for this celebration. They had money in their treasury to pay for this goat feast.

On Sunday, December 23, the Leamans went to the Nairobi Baptist church where the Rev. Tom Houston had pastored in the past but there was now an African pastor. On Christmas eve they went to the home of Marvin Stutzman across the lawn from the Mennonite Guest House. There was a room full of people singing Christmas carols. Christmas day was spent quietly in the guest house. There was a big Christmas meal. Paul and Erma Lehman tried to create a family atmosphere by planning a little program after the meal. The Tom Martin family sang, "Christmas is a time to love." Everyone shared something about themselves. Dorothy Smoker was there and Ivan remembers that she shared with him about her present project of gathering stories for a book which she was writing. This book was to tell of the nonviolent stance of some African Christians during the bloody Mau Mau uprising in the 1950s. These were not people who had learned it from peace churches but had learned it from the Bible.

Ivan and Mary Ellen celebrated their thirty-fourth wedding anniversary on December 26 by "getting away." A little old blue car was made available to them and they traveled African roads to Thika. On the way they observed a lot of interesting African culture. They ended up staying in the Blue Poste Hotel in Thika which was mentioned in a classic book about this part of Africa, called "*The Flame Trees of Thika*." Ivan had just finished reading it and Mary Ellen was reading it now. There were two nearby waterfalls and it seemed very appropriate since they had viewed the Niagara Falls on their honeymoon. The big difference was that the Niagara Falls on their honeymoon had been frozen.

Chapter 15

(1991)

The next letter of January 10, 1991, carried the sad news of the war in Somalia. The rebel forces had entered Mogadishu and were controlling most of the city. The BBC reported that the large Catholic Cathedral was burning. This was very sad since this was the place where the Somali believer fellowship would meet on Fridays. Most of the expatriates had been evacuated from Mog. One of the last to leave was Annie Hellstrom from Swedish Church Relief. This woman of about sixty years of age was a woman of great faith whom Ivan had learned to know and respect. She had left on January 5, and when the Leamans met her in Nairobi she told them of the great peace and joy she felt in that last week in Somalia. She was ready to go back on the first plane that would take her back.

Harold Reed, EMM Africa Director, had arrived in Nairobi on January 8 and he was busy meeting with the displaced Somalia missionaries as a group and individually, helping to think about alternate assignments if there was no possibility of returning to Somalia. For the Leamans, there was a possibility for Ivan to help in the Mugumu Hospital in Tanzania while Dr. Glenn Stoltzfuses were in Musoma for language study. Ivan would be assisting Dr. Victor Buckwalter along with the Tanzania doctors there.

The Leamans had the emotional experience of viewing a video that Jonathan and Jackie with the help of Deborah had recorded of the Eby and Leaman family Christmas gatherings. Their hearts and arms longed to hold dear baby Benjamin when they viewed many others holding him. Mary Ellen said that she had found babies to love and cuddle and kiss, but she did miss little Benjamin who looked so lovable! Mary Ellen had begun volunteering as a teacher's aide at Rosslyn Academy. There was an enrollment of about 300 students with many international students. Mary Ellen was assisting Jean Martin in the fourth grade and there were two Somali girls in that class. She was enjoying that opportunity.

The January 21 letter from Nairobi reported that they had met Father Georgio, the Catholic priest who was one of the last expatriates to leave Mogadishu. He had a very dramatic and sad story to tell. He said that a lot of people had taken shelter in the Catholic Cathedral since it had strong stone walls. However, armed soldiers got inside and stole vehicles. As one large truck was being driven through the gate, the driver struck the gate and the supporting wall so that the compound was no longer secure. Soon a lot of people entered to loot and to smash windows. Father Georgio left and went to a neighboring building where the Catholic sisters stayed. From there they saw the beautiful cathedral go up in flames. It was sad to think that this place where many people had gone to worship and pray was now a shell of stone walls. At times of war and general lawlessness, people do evil things that they would not do at other times.

Father Georgio and three Catholic sisters had stayed for awhile at the Italian Embassy and when they were evacuated from there, they decided to stay and help the French “Doctors without Borders.” One of these Italian sisters was Sister Maria whom Ivan had worked with in the Benadir Hospital. Ivan had come to respect her highly. When it became too dangerous for this small medical team to stay within the hospital compound, they flew to Mombasa about January 18, and for a short while they were helping the Somali refugees who were fleeing by boat to Mombasa. Michael Madany called Ivan by telephone to say that he heard that there was a boat of Somali refugees in the Mombasa harbor and on that boat was Hersi Ahmed who had worked with Ivan at Galcaio in 1965 and was a delegate to Mennonite World Conference last year at Winnepeg. The big question was: would Kenya accept these fleeing Somali refugees and would UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) begin helping these refugees? It was being suggested that mission agencies such as EMM, World Concern and Swedish Church Relief should be giving thought to helping in this Somali refugee problem. Ivan was wondering if this might be another possibility for an assignment for him.

After Harold Reed had met with the Somalia missionary team, it was determined that Wes and Marian Newswanger would be assigned to work at Ogwedi in western Kenya with Carl and Vera Hansen. This was the place where Leon Ressler had been serving. It was sad that the team concept that the Leamans had developed with Wes and Marian Newswanger had not worked out as had been envisioned. They had to work and pray through this change but the Lord was giving grace to accept it.

Tom and Sue Martin with their three children needed to terminate their EMM assignment after only six months and return to the States. This was very difficult for them after their preparation and dedication for this overseas experience. Bonnie Bergey was assigned to stay in Nairobi and handle the EMM office for Somali interests. Kevin and Sharon Yoder with their two children were returning to the States.

On the morning of January 31, the Leamans were in Eastleigh with Harold Reed to visit Somali friends there. They got to see Hersi Ahmed who was now in Eastleigh with his family. He described the difficulty that they had in coming by boat from Somalia to Mombasa. There were over 100 people packed “like sardines” in an Arab dhow. There was no privacy for toilet. The children were seasick and they were all very weak by the time they reached Mombasa after six days on the ocean. They couldn’t get off the boat for three days until Kenya authorities gave permission. Ivan wrote: *“The plight of refugees is so sad! Losing practically everything and not knowing how to plan for the future. I didn’t know what words of comfort to give Hersi but we had prayer with him that he would be given direction what to do now. He does not want to go back to Mogadishu now even though he had a house and business there. Things are in a state of anarchy even though the overthrown president Siad Barre has fled Mogadishu by an armored tank. No one is quite sure where he is. The stories coming out of Mogadishu are incredible with everything including government offices and even the banks being looted. We doubt that our mission houses would have been spared this senseless looting. One can’t imagine how this poor country will ever be able to rebuild.”*

Ivan had written a letter on January 31, and he reported that he and Mary Ellen were leaving the next day by train for Mombasa to help provide medical aid to the Somali refugees there. There was a call from Sister Maria from Mombasa three days before. She suggested that Ivan should come now to help in a temporary medical clinic that had been set up in the refugee camp which was in an agricultural “showground” facility. Ivan had to get a special three-month work permit to do this since he was not registered in Kenya to work as a doctor. He also got permission to buy and dispense medications so he had placed an order for medications that they would take on the train with them. Since all of this approval went smoothly, Ivan saw this as a sign that the Lord was with them in this new development.

The next letter was written by Mary Ellen on Sunday, February 3, two days after arriving in Mombasa after traveling by train from Nairobi to

Mombasa. She described the train ride in these words: *“We left Nairobi on the five o’clock train [Thursday evening] and arrived in Mombasa at 7:30 a.m. the next morning. We were loaded to the gills—six cartons of medicines which Ivan had to obtain special permission from the Ministry of Health to bring, two pieces of personal luggage, the portable lab, the attaché case with the computer, the medical bag and a red metal suitcase both also stocked with medicines and supplies and my keyboard. Knowing how much stuff we had, I wondered if there would be room for the two of us in our train compartment. There barely was. We squeezed together in one bunk. That was an experience. For me it meant a night of practically no sleep while Ivan slept sporadically. The train made frequent stops throughout the night. Hershey Leaman used to say that this train was mentioned in the Bible, ‘And God created every creeping thing.’*

Between supper and bedtime we played Scrabble. The Scrabble tiles on our board were all jolted out of position at one point when the train came to a sudden stop. We reconstructed it without too much difficulty, only to sometime later have the same thing happen again when I accidentally dropped the dictionary on the board which was a bigger difficulty. Ivan won the Scrabble game by nine points.

Our train compartment was separated from the next compartment by a formica partition with a flimsy door that had an even more flimsy bolt. Ivan, in the process of getting ready for bed in our cramped quarters, while taking off his pants, lost his balance from the jerking of the train and was thrown against the door and without warning found himself flying into the next room. Totally flabbergasted and embarrassed, he scrambled to regain his equilibrium, not quite knowing which he should do first—pull up his pants



“Loaded to the gills” for the Mombasa train



Likoni Ferry at Mombasa

or make a hasty exit. We knew that the next room was occupied by a young couple but luckily they were out for dinner at the time, Ivan discovered much to his relief. The unexpectation of this moment and Ivan's reaction was so hilarious, I laughed till I cried and even for a long time afterwards whenever I'd think about it, I'd go into spasms of laughter. Ivan said if laughter is the best medicine we should surely be healthy for a long time to come."

When they reached their destination at Mombasa, the Leamans hired a taxi to bring them and all their stuff to "The Children's Holiday" which was along the Indian Ocean, across the Likoni Ferry south of the town of Mombasa. It had been built many years before as a place for English people in Kenya to come for a place of relaxation. There were a number of concrete houses in "The Children's Holiday" but Ivan and Mary Ellen were often the only guests. There was an English couple, Jack and Frieda, who were the managers, and they lived in a house on the property. This was not a deluxe place but very adequate. There was a kitchen which Mary Ellen was happy for. The bathroom/toilets were in a separate building. The ocean and beach was a relaxing place to sit and watch the waves. Nearby were very upscale beach resort hotels such as Shelly Beach.

Jack and Frieda were very helpful to get them settled in and Jack drove them to get some groceries. After lunch and a siesta and showers, they walked up the road to the Consolata Sisters to visit Sister Maria, the Italian Catholic sister from Mogadishu. She had come to Mombasa and was helping in the temporary clinic in the refugee camp. But she was ready to return to Mogadishu as soon as possible. She was truly a dedicated woman with a beautiful and courageous spirit. The Leamans stayed with Sister Maria for the five o'clock vespers in the Consolata Chapel that Friday evening. Although the service was in Swahili, they did enjoy the spirited African singing. On Sunday, they did not know what church to attend in Mombasa so Mary Ellen wrote: *"We had our own worship today which included reading the Scriptures and Rejoice magazine, praying for all of you, and singing from the bottom of our hearts to the top of our voices with keyboard accompaniment."*

The next day on February 4, Ivan and Mary Ellen went with Sister Maria to their first visit to the refugee camp. Ivan was introduced to the temporary medical clinic which was in a building without running water. Water had to be carried in buckets to the clinic. While Ivan was seeing patients, Mary Ellen was visiting with women and children (and a few men) and listened to their stories. They asked Mary Ellen to help them to get visas to the USA

or Canada. It was difficult to know how to relate to these people who are experiencing this kind of loss. It was difficult to be a refugee but especially for a proud Somali who had an independent spirit. Many of these refugees were educated and had a good life in Somalia. She met one young woman who said her brother-in-law was at Cornell University working for a PhD in agriculture. The Somalis felt somewhat like prisoners in the refugee camp because they were not allowed to leave the camp without permission. This rule was difficult to enforce and many Somalis appeared in the streets of Mombasa.

The next letter was written on Valentine's Day, February 14, and Mary Ellen wrote that Ivan, her "true love", was planning to take her out for dinner at Shelly Beach Hotel just up the road. In this letter, she wrote that she and Ivan were going to the clinic in the refugee camp six days a week. The most interesting aspect of these daily trips was how they traveled each day. They went by "matatu" or taxi which were small ten to twelve passenger vans, but often they were filled to over-capacity with seventeen to eighteen people crammed in and with some hanging on the doors. They would take a matatu to the Likoni ferry and then walk onto the ferry. At the other side of the ferry they got into another matatu which took them to downtown Mombasa where they got another matatu which took them to the refugee camp. On the last leg of their trip home that day, the matatu was already filled but the driver said to Mary Ellen, "Up here, Mama" and motioned for her to share the driver's seat with him. She sat beside the driver using half of the seat and she found that her knees were getting in the way of the gearshift but the driver reassured her with the very typical African phrase, "No problem." Ivan was scrunched behind Mary Ellen, neither sitting or standing. Mary Ellen wrote: *"It made me laugh to think how funny it all was."*

The refugees kept coming and the camp had grown to be about 4,000 of these Somalis who had fled their country by boat. The stories were sad as they heard of some boats overturning and people being drowned. At the clinic, Ivan and Mary Ellen were serving as a supportive presence, in consultation and a supervisory role. Ivan was seeing patients along with a team of refugee Somali doctors who had made up a schedule for when they would see patients. One of the leaders of those doctors was Dr. Warsame whom Ivan had learned to know in Mogadishu. Ivan was very happy to see the teamwork in this group of doctors.

Mary Ellen had organized a drug dispensing area and she was becoming frustrated and overwhelmed in trying to keep up with the doctors' orders.



▲ *Ivan seeing patients in Mombasa refugee clinic*

► *Mary Ellen helping to organize drug dispensing area*



Help was needed and Ivan and Mary Ellen prayed about this. When they walked into the clinic that day, Ivan asked if there was someone to help in the dispensary and immediately Ali spoke up, “I can help.” He had been a professor of chemistry in Mogadishu, and he became a most valuable volunteer in the clinic. Mary Ellen enjoyed working with him. Ivan saw that one of his main functions at this point was to see that medications were available for this refugee medical clinic. With approval from EMM, Ivan had set up a special Somalia medical fund with contributions that had come from Eastbrook staff and colleagues and other friends. Some of this fund had been used in their stay in Mogadishu but there was still money in that special fund that was available to buy medicines and supplies in Nairobi for this medical clinic in Mombasa. Ivan was able to order medicines in Nairobi from an organization that provided low cost medicines for approved mission or relief medical work. In addition, Red Cross and a Baptist Mission in Mombasa were promising to provide some medications.

The Leamans received a message from Bonnie Bergey in Nairobi that the Stumptown congregation would be making a telephone contact with the Leamans on Sunday, February 24. On that day they waited in the afternoon with great anticipation in the manager’s office of The Children’s Holiday for that expected call and then it came! What a wonderful experience it was to hear greetings from the pastors John Leaman and Luke Nolt and from various friends at Stumptown, from Mary Ellen’s parents and other family members. Deborah and Jonathan, Ivan and Mary Ellen’s children, had been invited to come to Stumptown to participate in that special telephone call which came through very clear. It was an overwhelming emotional time and

after the call was completed, Ivan and Mary Ellen sat at the beach for a long time and reflected on the wonder of it all!

As Ivan and Mary Ellen regularly walked through the camp, friendships were being developed. Relationships with patients and others developed and they prayed that their presence would be showing the love of Christ. One day Omar walked into the clinic and he asked Ivan, “Are you Dr. Leaman?” He remembered Ivan from the 1960s when he was a school boy at Jamama and he remembered when Ivan had sutured his foot. He went on to become a star soccer player in Somalia. He expressed interest in studying the Bible and Ivan introduced him to a small group of believers which had formed in the refugee camp.

The next letter on March 3, told of another very sad tragedy. A greatly overloaded boatload of about 650 Somalis was coming from Kismayu and headed for Mombasa when the boat hit a coral reef near Mombasa and sank. It was estimated that 150 drowned. One mother with five children was hoping to join her husband in Mombasa and all five children drowned. A young obstetrician who knew Ivan from Mogadishu was on that boat. He told Ivan that he had helped a woman give birth to a baby just minutes before the boat sank. Ivan asked about the woman and her newborn baby and the doctor said that they had perished. What a sad story.

The Somali refugees kept coming into Kenya, many going overland to the Kenya border where a large camp of 30,000 to 40,000 refugees was forming. This camp called Dadaab eventually reached hundreds of thousands of persons. The Somali refugees coming by boat to Mombasa had reached about 6,000 by March and they were still coming in spite of the dangers of coming in overloaded boats.

One day the Leamans met Basra Ali who had attended the Mennonite mission school in Johar. She eventually received a master’s degree in nutrition in Michigan and then had a good position in Mogadishu. She had come by boat with her aged father and some nieces and was eight days on the way. The father had fallen in a hole in the boat and had injured his back. His care was of concern to her. The Leamans were impressed by her sweet, calm spirit in what was a very difficult situation for her.

Another day in the Mombasa refugee medical clinic, a former acquaintance was brought to Ivan. This was Ahmed Shek, who had been a judge in Kismayu in the 1960s and whom Ivan had met again in 1987 in Mogadishu where he was then a supreme court justice. In 1987 he had invited the Leamans to a restaurant dinner in appreciation for the medical care which

his wife had received when she delivered in the Jamama mission hospital in the late 1960s. Now a refugee in Mombasa, this former highly respected judge was afflicted with a psychiatric break-down. He was delusional and confused. How sad to see this formerly kind gentle man in this confused state of mind. How many other Somalis were suffering in the same way due to psychological trauma?

The Leamans had found a good place for worship on Sundays. They began to attend the English service in the African CPK (Church of the Province of Kenya) in the Memorial Cathedral. This was an Anglican type of worship and they found the choir-led music a wonderful time of singing some of the old familiar hymns. On March 3, there was a special liturgy followed by scripture readings and the Nicene Creed. There was a good message by the African pastor and then the communion. The Leamans went forward with the others to kneel at the railing to receive the emblems. At some point while they were in Mombasa they were invited to the home of the African pastor and his wife. During the conversation Ivan asked how the pastor and his wife had met. He said it was at a “fellowship meeting.” Ivan asked if that was part of the East African revival movement and he said that it was. How interesting that they knew some of the Mennonite missionaries involved in this East African revival movement!

The next letter was written on March 17, and Ivan mentioned that they had now completed six weeks of the three month Special Pass that he had obtained to give medical help to the Somali refugees. Ivan felt that they should be making plans to turn over the medical work to UNHCR since they would be leaving Mombasa by the middle of May. Also, the money that was available from the Special Somalia Medical Fund would soon be depleted and other sources of funds would be needed to provide the needed medications and supplies. Ivan was busy making reports for the Kenya health services. Plans were underway to move the refugee camp out of this agricultural “showground” to a place about fifteen kilometers north of Mombasa. Ivan was concerned about that extra travel time. He shared that concern with Jim McNeil, the local UNHCR director for the Mombasa Somali refugee camp and Jim offered that the Leamans could travel with a UNHCR vehicle. That was a welcome thought.

On March 17, after church the Leamans had arranged to meet John Wong, who was the son of the Wongs who were members at Stumptown. They had a very delightful visit with John and Sherri Wong and their little daughter Shereen who was five days older than their grandson Benjamin.

Mary Ellen had great joy in holding Sherren and later felt sad for Grandma Shunyee Wong in Pennsylvania who was not able to hold her granddaughter in Kenya. John was working for an oil company in Africa.

On Palm Sunday, March 24, the Leamans were blessed to have a visit from Rev. John and Pat Benwell. They went to church together at the Memorial Cathedral. There were five Somali believers there also, four of them from the refugee camp. After the service both couples with the Somali believers had fellowship together at a restaurant. They ended by singing together “Bind Us Together.” John and Pat Benwell had an obvious love for the Somali people but they were now returning to England because of the continuing instability in Somalia. They had served almost nine years there.

The following Sunday, March 31, was Easter and Ivan and Mary Ellen were considering having a restful day at home but then they had the desire to spend the day with their Somali family so they headed to the Memorial Cathedral. After worshipping together, they invited the six Somali believers to come to their cottage by the sea to have a time of “breaking bread” together. They had lunch together on the porch of their cottage and a time of fellowship and singing with Mary Ellen at the keyboard, plus sharing and praying. That morning they had a surprise visit by San Duck, a Korean missionary who had a heart for evangelism among the Somalis whom they had learned to know in Mogadishu, so she added to the fellowship on that special Easter Day.

The Leaman letter of March 26 had reported that Dr. Carole Collins, the UNHCR coordinator for medical services for refugees, had visited the refugee camp and had requested that Ivan give oversight to the UNHCR medicines and supplies, but these supplies had not yet arrived. This was to be a three month supply of medications and medical supplies, enough to cover the care of 10,000 persons for three months. But that shipment was very slow in arriving. In the April 10 letter the three month supply had still not arrived. However, in early April the medicines that Ivan had ordered from Nairobi had arrived and also a shipment of medicines from Catholic Relief in New York had arrived so the supply of medicines was okay for the present. They spent a lot of time sorting through that shipment to see what was useful for the refugee camp. The Leamans had been given a place to store medicines and supplies in the basement of a Catholic church in Mombasa. There was a Catholic priest, Dick Baker, who had come to help as a volunteer and was supervising the food distribution. Dr. Carole from UNHCR and Dick the priest offered to help with the sorting through the medicines. That was a big job and by the time they were finished, Ivan’s

clothes were soaked through and he realized how exhausted and dehydrated he was. He recovered after fluids and a meal at a restaurant where they ate together with Dr. Carole and Dick who previously had been a parish priest in Mugumu and who knew Dr. Victor and Christine Buckwalter. He was a good person with whom to share observations and concerns.

The Leaman's letter of April 10, described the very busy clinic activity with some days being mass chaos and how at times tempers would flare. Part of the reason may have been that this was the month of Ramadan which was to end on the sixteenth. Then a numbering system was started which helped with the flow of patients. There was no word as to when the camp would move to the new location. There was an Indian man, a Mr. Ram, who was showing interest in helping in this refugee situation. He was offering to provide the furniture for the clinic at the new site. In the letter of April 20, Ivan wrote that they were still going to the clinic at the "showground" and that the refugee camp's move to the new site may still be two weeks away. Ivan had been doing a drawing for the new clinic building at the new site. It would be a simple structure with wooden pole framing, a thatched roof and thatched sides using coconut palm leaves. There was also a plan for an eight to ten bed infirmary in a separate building.

The big job that Ivan and Mary Ellen had was to see that adequate medicines and supplies were available at the clinic. That meant almost daily taking more medicines from the basement storage under the Catholic church to the clinic. They called it the catacombs since it had stone walls and little alcoves. It did provide adequate storage. The big shipment from UNHCR had arrived later in April. It was called Emergency Health Kit and was designed to care for 10,000 persons for three months in a setting such as a refugee camp. It would provide equipment as well as medicines for a small health clinic and infirmary, as was being planned. Ivan wrote that he now had a very nice person to work with. He was Ali Mohamed Elmi who had been trained at the Jamama nurse-dresser school after the Leamans had left in 1969. He remembered Ivan because he had been in the Jamama intermediate mission school when the Leamans were still there.

The Leamans continued to have contact with the Somali believers on Sunday at the Memorial Cathedral with good times of fellowship after the service at a local restaurant. There had been others who had approached them about Bible studies and one man asked if he could study the Mennonite faith. There seemed to be more of an open door in the refugee camp than in Somalia, but Ivan wrote that they needed to proceed with caution.

There were two more letters written from Mombasa by the Leamans, one by Mary Ellen to her parents on May 2, and one by Ivan to his father on May 6. Ivan needed to fly to Nairobi on May 1, to have his Special Pass renewed. His three month pass had expired on April 30, and the immigration officer in Mombasa would not issue a renewed pass and said Ivan needed to go to Nairobi to do that. Ivan felt the Kenya immigration officer should have been able to take care of that in Mombasa and that he was taking out his frustration with Ivan because he and other Kenyans were upset with all the Somali refugees that were flooding their town. So Ivan had to buy another three month Special Pass even though he would only be staying in Mombasa until the middle of May. Ivan came back to Mombasa by the night train, arriving on the morning of May 3.



Buckets lined up for water at new refugee camp



Ivan worked with team of Somali doctors, also now refugees

The letters of Ivan and Mary Ellen stated that the refugee camp had moved the weekend of April 27-28. That was chaotic because there had only been enough shelter constructed for 800 persons and the refugee population was now between 8-10,000 persons. The first families to be moved got the first houses that had been built and one family even had moved into the building intended to be the new clinic. The ones without houses were given materials to construct their own house. The houses were all very simple with wooden poles pushed into the ground and then thatched with dried coconut palm leaves. The roof structure was made with poles and covered by either plastic sheeting or thatched with the coconut palm leaves. Mary Ellen wrote that in spite of the great difficulty the refugees faced, she was amazed at how they managed to make the best of their situation. The rains had started and that made it difficult for those without shelter. Many had to cook out

in the open and there were long lines to fill their plastic water containers. *“Life goes on for them, bleak and humiliating as it is.”*

The new clinic building had to be built at another site since the original building that had been designated for the clinic was now being used by one of the refugee families. Ivan wrote that the new clinic would be of simple construction – poles stuck in the ground and poles tied together to form the roof. The sides and roof would be thatched by coconut palm leaves. Ivan wrote on May 6, that the building of the clinic had started a few days before and would be finished in three to four days. At the present time the Somali doctors were examining and treating patients from a small warehouse where the medicines were being stored. Travel to this new refugee site would take much longer on a dirt road and navigating many water holes. Ivan made two trips on Monday, May 6, between Mombasa and the refugee site. He had a rented car which made it easier. One trip was to take a child with diarrhea and dehydration to the hospital and the other was to get insulin for one patient. [In Mary Ellen’s photo album, there are pictures of the finished clinic building and a picture of Mr. Ram, the friendly retired Indian business man who had offered to provide the furniture for the new clinic building and pictures of the Somali doctors and assistants who had worked alongside the Leamans in the refugee medical clinic.]

In Mary Ellen’s letter of May 2, she told of the visit by Wes and Marian Newswanger. They had come to Mombasa on the night train, arriving on Tuesday, April 30. They were staying for the rest of the week and would return to Nairobi by train Sunday night the fifth. Ivan had rented a car for the week that the Newswangers were visiting and they with the Leamans visited a nature reserve the first day. It was good for the Leamans and the Newswangers to have this time together and catch up on each other’s lives.



Visiting coral rock cave area with outdoor worship



Fellowship meal in restaurant with the Somali friends before goodbyes

On Sunday, May 5, the Newswangers worshipped with the Leamans at the Memorial Cathedral. There were eight Somalis in the service and after the service there was a time of fellowship and a meal at a restaurant. Then they went to a cave in a coral rock formation. This was where the small Somali believer group, when they were leaving the refugee camp almost daily, said that they would go to. This was a secret place for fellowship in privacy. Here they would have Bible study, prepare and share meals together and wash their clothes. Ivan said it reminded him of the Anabaptist cave in Switzerland. This young Somali believer group had developed a unique spiritual fellowship in this place. The leader said that perhaps in the future they would bring their grandchildren here to show them this place. There was a young Somali woman who joined the group that Sunday. There was a short time of worship with testimony, singing and prayer. Ivan recalled one song that this group would sing: “The Lord knows the way through the wilderness.”

Ivan and Mary Ellen had another ten days in Mombasa before heading back to Nairobi. By that time the medical clinic had just begun operating from the hastily built simple clinic building. Ivan was hoping that there would be another expatriate doctor to replace him to give oversight to the safe storage of medicines and supplies which was the desire of UNHCR. As Ivan recalled, there was a woman doctor from another East African country who was designated to be Ivan’s replacement but he heard later that this doctor was not able to stay long because the Kenya Ministry of Health wanted a Kenya doctor in that position. There were goodbyes and picture taking outside the new clinic building. There was sadness with this farewell because the relationship between Ivan and Mary Ellen and the Somali medical doctors and nurses had been a very positive experience.

May 12 was the last Sunday at the Memorial Cathedral. There were eight Somalis in attendance, two Somali believers from the Bible school in Mombasa and six from the refugee camp. There was a final meal together in a private room at the restaurant. The meal ended with a time of fellowship and prayer. The Somalis prayed for the Leamans who were leaving and Ivan and Mary Ellen prayed for this group of Somali young men who were staying. Again, there was sadness as they gave their goodbyes, not knowing if they would ever see each other again.

Ivan and Mary Ellen returned to Nairobi on May 17. Five days later Mary Ellen would be celebrating her fifty-fifth birthday on May 22. Ivan, ever the romantic, went to Westland’s Shopping Center to buy roses from the

many street vendors on the street, eager to sell Ivan roses. He decided that he would buy fifty-five roses, no more and no less, and that is what he did, after much negotiating with the many eager sellers of roses! After buying the elegant roses in varied colors, he went into a shop at Westland's to buy the right birthday card for Mary Ellen. He found the right one for fifty-five shillings and when he went to the counter to pay, he discovered that he had exactly fifty-five shillings in his wallet. He had to tell the African clerk of this very unusual moment of buying fifty-five roses and having exactly fifty-five shillings left in his wallet to buy a fifty-five shilling card for his wife's fifty-fifth birthday. Ah serendipity! The birthday card had beautiful roses on the cover with these words:

"Why does God make roses? Why perform this miracle?

They serve no useful purpose. They are merely beautiful.

*It's because He knows that though we are clothed and housed and fed -
Man needs something more than roof and hearth and daily bread."*

~ Patience Strong

Bonnie Bergey, who was now serving as the EMM representative for Somali interests from a Nairobi base, suggested that she, with the remaining Somali team of Ivan and Mary Ellen and Wes and Marian Newswanger, have a small retreat together at the Aberderie Country Club where they had a most delicious lunch. Later they spotted animals on the African plain and went to the ARK where they observed a lumbering herd of seventeen elephants.

After shopping for gifts in Nairobi, the Leamans were now ready and eager to fly home to meet their family on June 2, 1991, at the Philadelphia airport. Here they were met with a large Welcome Home sign. They were met by daughter Deborah and son Jonathan with his wife Jackie and an almost year-old grandson Benjamin. Mary Ellen's brothers Wilmer and John were also there to welcome home Ivan and Mary Ellen. The first thing the Leamans did on reaching Lancaster County was to visit Ivan's father who was now happily settled into a residential room at the Mennonite Home and they visited Mary Ellen's parents in their Landis Homes cottage where Mary Ellen greeted her mother with a kiss and presented her with fresh tulips from Holland.

Ivan and Mary Ellen settled into their Strasburg home but they lived in their basement since they had rented their house to several young women. They had a small kitchen in the basement and a bathroom. They used the entrance into the basement from the back porch. They lived in their basement until September 1, 1992, when they moved to the main floor. They had made

a small apartment in the second floor in which, over the next twenty-seven years, they rented to young couples and sometimes to a single person. At times it was home to immigrant families.

Ivan took his recertification exam for the family practice board on July 12, 1991. He began working part-time at Eastbrook FHC. The Leamans had a letter in August from Annie Hellstrom, the nurse with Swedish Church Relief in Mogadishu. She pleaded with the Leamans to return to join with her in the work there. She wanted to start a maternal-child health clinic. Harold Reed, the EMM Africa director, said that the Leamans should not think of returning to Somalia before 1992, because of the warring factions in that country. Bonnie Bergey along with a missionary from World Concern went into Mogadishu in early September and there was fresh fighting while they were there. To return to Kenya to work with the Somali refugees was not an option since Kenya government would not issue work permits to foreigners to work with Somali refugees.

Ivan and Mary Ellen were being asked to speak in churches about their recent Somalia experience and spoke in six different churches in November, which included speaking at Straight Mountain, Alabama on a visit to Ivan's sister Alta married to John Metzler. They spoke at the Mellinger District Missionfest on Sunday, November 10. The Leamans began going two to three times a week to the Millersville International House to relate to Millersville College international students living there. They were doing English tutoring and Ivan was leading a Bible study.

Chapter 16

(1992 – 2010)

In early 1992 the situation in Somalia was still very unstable with active fighting so after discussion with Jay Garber and Harold Reed at EMM it was decided that there should be an official termination of the two-year appointment for the Leamans and that was done on February 29, 1992. But then Somalia came to them. On April 2, 1992 Hersi Ahmed arrived in Lancaster with his wife Asha and their six children and one adopted child. They had come as refugees. As a young man of nineteen years of age, Hersi had worked with the Leamans and Daniel Wert in the Galcaio experience. After that Hersi had studied at the Nazareth Bible Academy and later graduated from Eastern Mennonite College with a degree in business.

Hersi and his family were provided a house in a farming area near Lititz. The Lititz Mennonite congregation had formed a committee with Jim Shelly as leader to assist in the resettlement process. Elaine Good started English classes with Asha and the children. The children were very nice and well-mannered and they were a delight to teach. Ivan began the scheduling of the medical and dental appointments for the family at the Southeast Lancaster Health Services (SELHS), where Ivan had started part-time employment. It became quite a challenge to take this family of nine for their many visits to Lancaster for the medical and dental appointments. The transportation for the Leamans meant driving from Strasburg to Lititz and then to Lancaster and then making the reverse trip to return them to their home. By September the Leamans had logged 2,400 miles in this transportation. It was very time consuming to sit and wait in the medical and dental office at SELHS but in that waiting and observation it helped the Leamans to gain a perspective for what it meant to be a refugee in a foreign country. SELHS did provide good and compassionate care but there were often long times spent in the waiting area. Hersi's daughter Idil required orthodontic work

and there were no orthodontists in the Lancaster area who would do orthodontic work with payment by Medicaid. There was an orthodontist near Harrisburg who did accept Medicaid payment so there were many trips to take Idil to this place near Harrisburg.

Verda Weaver, a nurse from the Goshen area, was appointed by EMM in the summer of 1992 and she was leaving in September to go to Nairobi. This would be her base from which she would join a team with World Concern who would make periodic visits into Mogadishu to help coordinate maternal-child health clinics. Bonnie Bergey had made a recent investigative trip and reported that the need was great but that the political situation was not settled with civil war fighting still occurring at times.

In December 1992 the Leamans traveled with Chester and Catherine Kurtz and Mary Gehman to visit the Somalis in Toronto who had invited the former Somalia missionaries for a time of fellowship. Victor and Viola Dorsch joined in this gathering. The Somalis had formed an organization called the Canadian-Somalia Friendship Association. The most emotional meeting for Ivan was to meet Dr. Hassan Barre who had come recently to Canada. As a young boy in the early 1960s Hassan had worked with Ivan in the Jamama mission hospital and later went to Russia to study medicine. He told Ivan he wanted to return to Jamama when things get better and invited Ivan to come and work with him.

There was a monthly Somalia Prayer Fellowship (SPF) that met in one of the lounges at Landis Homes. Ivan and Barbara Witmer gave leadership to this. Mary Ellen took notes and sent out a SPF Newsletter. David Shenk visited Mogadishu for a few days in January 1993 and he reported on meeting some of the believers. They gave a wonderful testimony of experiencing God's love, even amidst all the tragedy around them. This fellowship of believers was transcending the tribal feelings of hate. Bonnie Bergey was making periodic visits into Mogadishu.



In December 1992 Ivan meets Dr. Hassan Barre in Toronto. They recall the days when Ivan taught Hassan simple lab work at Jamama Hospital

Ivan's niece, Marilyn Metzler, a nurse from Straight Mountain, Alabama, was making preparation to join Verda Weaver, in this ministry of love and healing in Somalia. There was a commissioning with oil for Marilyn in January 1993 at her home congregation and the Leamans were blessed by listening to the taped message by Steve Longenecker and Marilyn's testimony. The Leamans wrote to the Straight Mountain congregation affirming them in releasing Marilyn to go and serve in the difficult and chaotic country of Somalia. They, with the SPF, would be following her and Verda in their movements in and out of Somalia. They would pray that their love and caring spirit would touch Somalis in a significant way.

On January 23, 1993, Hersi Ahmed moved his family to a house on Plum Street in Lancaster. He had arranged for a two-year lease-purchase on this house. It was a decision that Hersi made because they felt too cramped in the small house near Lititz. Hersi was having health issues with back pain after hurting his back in stocking shelves at Stauffers of Kissel Hill. After his move to Lancaster, Hersi got work at Fulton Bank which was more in keeping with his education since he had graduated with a degree in business from EMC.

On January 31, Hersi, Ivan and Mary Ellen shared at Masonville Mennonite Church in the Sunday school hour and the main worship hour. Hersi was a very good communicator and the sharing together went well. On February 7, there was an all day meeting at Charlotte Street Mennonite Church with a Somalia focus. Hersi and Ahmed Haile who lost his leg in Somalia were the main speakers. Hersi and Ivan were scheduled to share together at Mt. Pleasant Mennonite Church on March 14, but a big blizzard cancelled that and it was held later on May 9. They gave more up-to-date information by letters from Marilyn Metzler who was a good letter writer and gave interesting details of her and Verda's work.

The Leamans were quite involved in helping to coordinate the medical care of another large Somali family that had arrived in Lancaster on August 6, 1993. This was an extended family of eighteen persons and the head of the family was a brother to Hersi. The Leamans prayed that the help given would be seen as love motivated by Jesus and that someday their hearts would be open to faith in Jesus.

On August 20-22, 1993, there was a big reunion of former Somalia Mennonite missionaries who came together in Toronto by invitation of Somalis in that area who were former students or employees of the mission. Former missionaries from the Lancaster area traveled by a large van. There were

about twenty former missionaries from PA, Ohio and Ontario who met with about eighty Somalis. Abdullahi Bille Musse, co-chair with Victor Dorsch of the Canadian-Somalia Friendship association (CASOFA), both spoke. It was a great time of fellowship with good Somali food of rice and goat meat with pasta, vegetables and fruit, followed by informal conversations and formal speeches by missionaries and Somalis. Dr. Hassan Barre shared his personal pilgrimage, first as a lab assistant at Jamama Hospital with Ivan, and then later as a student at Johar, before going on to Russia to study medicine. One very moving story was for Victor to share that at a previous meeting, Bille Musse, on behalf of the Somali people, asked Dorothy Grove's forgiveness for her husband's death at the hand of an assassin in 1962. There were informal introductions and stories from the past. At the end there was a slide show with pictures from the past, the singing of "Hayyee An Ammano" and the emotional singing of "O Healing River" which seemed to describe so well the situation in Somalia. The prayer was that the healing river would come to that troubled land.

The Somalia Prayer Fellowship (SPF) continued to meet monthly with leadership by Barbara Witmer and Ivan. The monthly SPF Newsletter prepared by Mary Ellen was now being mailed to about sixty persons. News and prayer concerns would come from Marilyn Metzler who was a good descriptive letter writer. Marilyn would thank the SPF for their prayers and felt that she was sustained by the prayers coming from the SPF and other friends. The Leamans, with the SPF, were grieving with Marilyn at the UN/USA military force being used in Somalia and prayed that the right decisions would be made by the UN/USA that might contribute to a peaceful solution.



Hersi Ahmed with his wife Asha and daughter Idil at graduation of son Abdirisaq at LMS in June 1994

For Christmas dinner on 1993, Mary Ellen invited her parents and daughter Deborah and Hersi's family of eight. There was a good time of sharing. Mary Ellen was continuing to teach English to Hersi's wife Asha.

Abdirisaq, the oldest son was a student at LMS. He graduated on June 18, 1994. Hersi had not been able to work for ten months. He had a herniated disk in his lower back and also a herniated disk in his neck for which he had surgery. He was receiving workmen's compensation and food stamp assistance, but the income was not adequate to cover the monthly payments on the lease-purchase of the house on Plum Street. Hersi had asked Ivan and Glen Roth for financial counseling. These financial needs were brought to the SPF and suggestions were offered as to how help could be given. A fund was established whereby people could make contributions towards this financial need. Hersi was hoping to return to a type of work that would not be hard on his back.

On March 8, 1994, there was World Relief Day at Stumptown. Although it was a wintry day, seventy-five persons came and spent an hour or more knotting comforters or quilting or tearing sheets into strips to roll into bandages. Children helped to assemble health kits. Mary Ellen had arranged for Hersi's wife Asha to make 100 zambos and people seemed to like them. There were other Somali foods such as tea, Somali cake, mango and papaya, dates, peanuts and coconut. It was a good day.

Ivan had been helping some of the Somali men learn to drive and had used his father's Renault Alliance for Awil, Hersi's nephew, to take his driver's test. After Ivan's father could no longer drive, Ivan offered to sell the car to Awil. That made Awil very happy.

Marilyn sent a fax to EMM telling that on March 21, 1994, a Somali Christian had been targeted to be shot as he was walking one morning to his work with Swedish Church Relief and he was killed. That was Libaan whom Marilyn had known well. He was married and his wife Roqia also was a Christian. They had three children [In Appendix 1 the story of Libaan is told]. This brought great sadness to think that Somali Christians were being persecuted and targeted to be killed. Then in August, 1994 word came that another young Somali Christian by the name of Suleman, who also worked for Swedish Church Relief, was shot by two armed men as he got off the bus near his home. The crowd nearby were alarmed but the gunman said, "Don't be afraid. It is only the Christians we are after." On October 16, 1994, at 3:00 p.m. there was a memorial service for five Somali Christians who had died which included Libaan and Suleman. This was held at Charlotte Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster. Hersi Ahmed, Harold Reed, and Mary Gehman shared memories. A message from David Shenk was read by Grace. Ivan and Mary Ellen read letters from Nairobi.

In early 1995 Hersi told Ivan that he had made the decision to move his family to Seattle, Washington so that they would be near other Somali families. The Leamans along with Glen Roth and Barbara Witmer and others helped to plan a farewell dinner in the basement of East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church. This was held February 25, 1995. This gave opportunity for Hersi's missionary friends to come and give their goodbyes. Hersi and his family left by bus on March 6, 1995, a three-day trip to Seattle. They had been in Lancaster for almost three years. After they were settled in Seattle, Hersi wrote to Ivan and Glen Roth to say that the family was very happy with the move since there were about fifty or sixty other Somali families in their area. The Leamans were very glad for a happy and satisfying move for Hersi and his family. In December, 2000 Ivan and Mary Ellen made a road trip to Northwest USA and they visited Mary Ellen's nephew, Andrew Eby and his family in Portland, Oregon. On their way to Victoria, Canada, they were able to have a brief "passing through" visit with Hersi and some of his family in Seattle, Washington. The family seemed to be doing well. Their oldest son had a good job. They do not recall what Hersi was doing. After that visit the Leamans had lost contact with Hersi and his family for many years. They didn't remember the address.

[Note: As Ivan was writing this memoir he had a great desire to talk to Hersi again and with the help of Mohamed Togane, he was able to talk to Hersi by phone on July 15, 2021. This was a wonderful reconnection for Ivan and Hersi. Hersi shared the sad news that his wife Asha had died about five years ago from a stroke. Hersi sent this message by email to Ivan and asked him to share it with his teachers and friends of long ago: *"Please give my sincere and warm greetings to all my living Mennonite friends, those who were my teachers, those who were close to me and my family, and all who helped us when my family and I were in Pennsylvania. Tell them for me that we are grateful to them for the goodness and compassion extended to us. May the Lord reward them for what they did for us!"*]

Ivan was asked to preach at Stumptown on Palm Sunday, April 9, 1995. At first he hesitated but then he saw it as an opportunity to share the story of Somali martyrs. His message was entitled, "Triumphal Living to Triumphal Death." He shared martyr stories from Anabaptist history and Mary Ellen helped to tell the stories of Libaan and Suleman which always moved them as they told those stories.

On December 9, 1995, Wes and Marian Newswanger, who had gone to Somalia in September, 1990 to team with the Leamans, returned from

Africa to their home in Strasburg after serving in Ogwedi, Tanzania for five years. Unfortunately Marian had developed pneumonia while traveling in Europe on their way home. She was admitted to the Lancaster General Hospital and found to have a severe right lung infection and had surgery for drainage of the lung abscesses. She was placed on a respirator and unfortunately developed acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) which was a very serious condition. This caused multiple organ failures of her body and it was painful for the Leamans to witness her seven weeks of suffering before she died on January 27, 1996. The funeral was a wonderful reflection of her life of service and she had blessed many people during those years. She was greatly loved by the Africans who had learned to know her.



Mary Gehman with former Somali students who honor her with love and praise

There was another CASOFA reunion in Canada on August 26, 1995. A group of about seventy North American and Somalis persons gathered in the Wallace Emerson Center in Toronto. The room was decked with colorful Somali cloths and there was the inviting aroma of Somali food. A camel bell called people to attention. Ahmed Gedi served as emcee and gave the welcome. He reported the good news that his wife Abado and their five children were able to join him in Canada. Harold Reed recognized Wilbert and Rhoda Lind and said that they had laid a good foundation for the work of Somalia Mennonite Mission. Dr. Hassan Barre recalled again how he had started in the lab at Jamama Hospital and Victor Dorsch recalled that Hassan Barre's father was the person from whom the mission had rented some rooms for the beginning of a school in Jamama. Abdullahi Majoor who was a member of the parent council in Johar Middle School spoke and said he still had the receipts from the time his sons were in school in the mission schools. Carl Wesselhoeft said, "God has woven our lives together into a tapestry and He is not finished."

By May of 1997 the Leamans were able to communicate by email and at some point they began to use email to send out the monthly SPF Newsletter

to those who had email. The next biannual Somali-missionary reunion was held on the weekend of August 30-31, 1997, in Lancaster County. There were thirty-one Somalis and sixty-four North Americans who came from Canada, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Massachusetts and participated in that very special day. In the morning Ivan had helped to arrange for a tour of the Lancaster County Amish farming area and also of the Hans Herr house where the story of Mennonite immigration was told. In the afternoon the group met at the Salunga EMM headquarters. Barbara Reed had a large cake decorated with the welcome words: "Soo dhowada." Beginning at 1:00 p.m. there were refreshments, snacks and conversations as the group was gathering. David Shenk gave the welcome speech and the dinner was at 3:00 p.m. There were formal remarks from Susan Godshall who was serving as Africa director for EMM. She said that EMM with MCC continued to work with Somali women ministries and give support for peace initiatives and some assistance to Somali refugees. There were Somali pictures and music by Chester Kurtz. During the open sharing, Mohamed Siad Togane, an educator, writer and poet, spoke of Merlin Grove's death as "not a shout but a whisper, and the whisper of his death is blowing over the land. Merlin followed the Word who became flesh, that men might believe. Now Merlin's flesh in Somalia has become a word, a whisper in a dry land."

The fourth biennial CASOFA reunion was on September 4, 1999, and was held in the Toronto Mennonite New Life Center. There were about twenty-six North Americans and by the end of the afternoon there were about fifty Somalis. Victor Dorsch was the emcee and Adolfo Puracelli, pastor at the Toronto Mennonite New Life Center, welcomed the group. Abdullahi Majoor, who had been a member of parliament in the Somali government, had sent his children to the Mennonite mission schools. He said that any knowledge (even that from the Bible, which Somalis despise) is better than ignorance. Ahmed Gedi encouraged support of the emerging Amoud University in Somaliland which was near his homeland. Leon and Elaine Good responded to this invitation and they made plans to go in January of 2000. Leon would take a semester sabbatical from Lancaster Mennonite High School. After the speeches there was a wonderful Somali meal of rice, goat, chicken, vegetables, zamboozies and desserts. Shirley, Joy Dorsch and the Somali cooks were to be thanked for the great hosting.

It had been the consensus at the 1999 reunion, that there should be another reunion in two years. So on September 1, 2001, there was a Somali-missionary reunion held at Salunga. There were Somalis from Toronto

and Kitchener, Ontario, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from Baltimore and Olney, Maryland and from Chicago, Illinois. Victor Dorsches and Dorothy Grove came from Ontario. Three of Ivan's nurses from Jamama were there which was wonderful: Miriam (Leaman) Segerstrom and her husband Ed from Tucson, Arizona, Rhoda (Buckwalter) Salim and her husband Ali, Helen (Landis) Ali and her son Weli, his wife and two beautiful children. In all there were about sixty persons. There was good Somali food coordinated by Barbara Witmer. Leon and Elaine Good shared about their experiences at Amoud University in Somaliland. The northern part had been more peaceful and there was the possibility of sending teachers there again.

Somalia Prayer Fellowship (SPF) continued with monthly meetings at Landis Homes. Mary Ellen was preparing a monthly newsletter that went to about seventy-five persons, mostly by email. Two thousand three was a special year for it was the fiftieth anniversary of Somalia Mennonite Mission beginning the work in Somalia when Wilbert and Rhoda Lind and Fae Miller traveled by boat and landed in Mogadishu on January 16, 1953. To celebrate that anniversary, a dinner with a program was planned for March 29, 2003, with the gathering at 5:30 p.m. in Landisville Mennonite Church. There were about seventy missionary alumni at this reunion and with their children a total of about 125 persons were at the banquet. Ivan and Mary Ellen were happy that two of their children with their spouses were able to be there, which were Deborah and Jonathan. Richard Showalter, President of EMM, gave words of welcome. Wilbert Lind led in an invocation. The program included story telling from various persons. Susan Godshall gave recognition of Omar Eby who had gathered many stories of those years and pieced them together in the book, *Fifty Years, Fifty Stories: Mennonite Mission in Somalia: 1953-2003*. Galen Reed had prepared a slide show of pictures from the Mennonite mission in Somalia. Ahmed Haile and Bertha Beachy gave reflections. Clair Good and Chantal Logan gave updates on Somalia. Lamar Witmer led in "O Healing River." Victor Dorsch closed with a benediction.

Another celebration of the fifty years of the beginning of the Mennonite mission in Somalia took place on Saturday, August 2, 2003. There was an invitation to Somalia friends of the 1960s and 1970s to come to Lancaster County for a reunion with the missionaries who served in Somalia. There were about forty former missionaries and twenty-five Somalis who came from Kitchener and Toronto, Canada, and from Ohio, Virginia, Wisconsin and Chicago. For Saturday morning Ivan had arranged for a tour of the Hans Herr House which



About forty former Somalia missionaries and twenty-five Somali friends meet in a reunion at EMM Salunga headquarters

happened to be the Heritage Day. A group of about twenty-five, mostly the Somali guests, had a guide who gave a good historical background of the Mennonites who came as Swiss-Germans from Europe for religious freedom. In the afternoon, the program of speeches and food was held at Salunga. The Somalis always had words of appreciation for their former teachers in Somalia. Galen Reed gave the slide show. It was good to have Mohamed Togane with his wife Madeleine and Nur Abdi with his wife Pam present. After the speeches the Somali food with all of its aroma and taste was enjoyed.

The next reunion of former Somali students and Mennonite workers in Somalia was held in Canada on August 15, 2009, in the Toronto United Mennonite Church/New Life Centre building. The Leamans offered their van and invited Harold and Barbara Reed and Mary Gehman to travel with them. Ivan invited Galen Reed to go with them and help with the driving. They had made reservations for three nights in dormitory rooms at Victoria University. The first day they had arranged to meet Ali and Rhoda Buckwalter Salim who were staying in a hotel near where many Somalis lived. It was said that there were now 70,000 Somalis living in Toronto. They visited and shopped where Somalis had businesses and were impressed that the Somalis seem to be doing well in Toronto. Ivan bought a shirt with a camel and nomad pictured on the shirt. This was a Warya shirt and Ivan was told by Somalis that it was a popular designer shirt.

At the reunion it was estimated that there were about sixty-five in attendance. There was thanks to Shirley Dorsch Sherk for capably coordinating this event and for Abdurahman Hosh who provided the wonderful catered meal and emceed the event along with Victor Dorsch. Stories were shared and speeches of appreciation were given. Dorothy Grove told of a previous event which had been planned in her honor by Somali friends. A special feature at this event was to have Mary Wiens from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation present to interview various persons to learn about this special story of the Somalia Mennonite mission-student relationship.



Meeting in James Street Mennonite Church with Galen Reed as emcee



Carl Wesselhoeft with daughter Ruby meets Mohamed Togane who was an elementary boarding school student at Mahaddei with Carl as headmaster. Togane went on to become a professor and well-known Somali poet and now living in Quebec.

The last and biggest Somali-Mennonite Reunion was on July 31, 2010, and was held in the James Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, PA. The planning of this reunion chaired by Ken Nissley included three MKs, Galen Reed, Daniel Lind and Karen Shenk-Zeager. There was great emphasis on bringing together the “Third Culture Kids” whether they were the Mennonite missionary kids or the kids of Somalis who moved to North America. This grand reunion brought together 140-150 persons which included sixteen MKs. The program emcee was Galen Reed.

The following speakers shared their reflections: Carl Wesselhoeft, Abdullahi Essa, David Shenk, Ahmed Gedi, Mary Gehman, Mohamed Dhere, Ruby Wesselhoeft Dunlap, Clair Good and Mohamed Togane. Prayers were offered by Elizabeth Nissley and Victor Dorsch before eating. The meal of injera, maraq, goat meat, rice pilau, veggies, watermelon, and cake with Somali tea was savored by all, thanks to Barbara Witmer and Karen Shenk-Zeager.

There was a lot of picture taking. One special picture was of three doctors who had served at the Jamama Hospital: Ivan Leaman, Vernon Kratz and Gerald Miller. They were pictured with Abdi “Dhere” Mohamed Eeye. He was the son of the long-serving faithful night watchman Mohamed Eeye. This son Abdi “Dhere” went on to become a player on the Somali National Basketball team. Another special picture was of the MKs at the reunion: Ruth Wesselhoeft Bender, Miriam Lind Messersmith, Ruby Wesselhoeft Dunlap, Karen Shenk-Zeager, Dan Lind, Kristen Zook Witmer, Jonathan Leaman, Deborah Leaman Masters, Jim Dorsch, Galen Reed, Doris Shenk, Shirley Dorsch Sherk, and Gwendolyn Reed Blankenship.

Addendum to Chapter 16: There was a picture of an Addis Conference in June 1999 which was a special event and a spiritual highlight for those attending. Ahmed Haile, who helped to plan the event, and his wife Martha came from Nairobi where Ahmed was teaching at Daystar University. Bertha Beachy also came from Nairobi where she was the EMM representative for Somali interests and David and Grace Shenk came from Lithuania where they were teaching in a university.

► *Left to Right: Abdullahi Kenyare from Mahaddei, Bertha Beachy, Ahmed and Martha Haile, Grace and David Shenk, Nur Henry who had been song leader in Mog, and Abdullahi Ahmed who had been chair of the believer fellowship in Mog*



Three former Jamama doctors, Vernon Kratz, Gerald Miller and Ivan Leaman, pose for a picture with Abdi “Dhere”, the son of Mohamed Eeye, the long-serving faithful night watchman at Jamama. Abdi “Dhere” became a player on the Somali National Basketball team.



▲ *Another special picture was of the MKs at the reunion. Left to right standing: Ruth Wesselhoeft Bender, Miriam Lind Messersmith, Ruby Wesselhoeft Dunlap, Karen Shenk Zeager, Dan Lind, Kristen Zook Witmer, Jonathan Leaman, Deborah Leaman Masters, Jim Dorsch, Galen Reed. Kneeling: Doris Shenk, Shirley Dorsch Sherk, Gwendolyn Reed Blankenship*



Chapter 17

(2011 – 2021)

Ahmed Haile died on April 26, 2011, after a long, courageous battle with prostate cancer with the latest treatments being made available to him. The funeral on Saturday, April 30, was in Eastbrook Church in Milwaukee. Ivan traveled with Jerry and Ann King-Grosh and Wes and Lois Boyer from Lancaster. Dr. Marc Erikson, the founding pastor of Eastbrook Church, had the message. Others, including Ken and Elizabeth Nissley, shared of the triumph of Ahmed's life; how he lived his life committed to peace and reconciliation. At the luncheon after the funeral, Ivan met some of the persons who had been missionaries with the Eastbrook mission at Bulo Burti in 1987 when the Leamans visited there. Dr. Erikson had served in the Bulo Burti SIM mission hospital in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Ahmed Haile had grown up in that area and as a very young man he had been a patient in the SIM mission hospital at Bulo Burti. It was in that hospital that he was first introduced to Jesus when a nurse gave him a Bible story book. The story of Ahmed's life as told in the book *Tea Time in Mogadishu*, written by David Shenk, had just been printed and was available at the funeral.

The Nissley Family Story: For this memoir, Ken and Elizabeth Nissley were invited by Ivan to share how they received the call to Somalia and how they developed a close friendship with Ahmed and Martha Haile. Their journey to Somalia began in the hallway of Eastern Mennonite College (EMC) in the early spring of 1966 when there was a mission/service week at the college. Harold Stauffer, a representative from Eastern Mennonite Mission, passed Ken in the hallway and asked to speak to him. In a nearby student lounge Harold explained that EMM was looking for a Math/Science teacher for Johar, Somalia and wanted Ken and Elizabeth to consider this possibility. That evening Ken and Elizabeth, a young couple married for a year and a half, first began to seriously consider what such a mission assignment might

be. Ken would be graduating in a few months with a major in Mathematics and Elizabeth had already completed her three-year registered nurse training. Their Christian faith was very important to them which meant asking God for guidance and choosing a path that included service to others. After weeks of praying and sharing with family and friends, they accepted this invitation and began making plans go to Somalia in August for a three-year term.

In August 1966 after arriving in Mogadishu and after a very brief orientation by Bert Lind and purchasing a few household supplies, they were put on a bus and told to travel for about one and a half or two hours and when they saw the windmill on their left, they were to tell the bus driver to stop. Thus began a new life at this intermediate level (grades 5-8) boy's boarding school in Johar, Somalia. Elizabeth quickly filled the role of student nurse and eventually also assisted with some English teaching classes and activities with Somali women from the village. This was a time of new experiences and learning to develop their gifts. Near the end of their first year at Johar, David Shenk, who was serving as school principal, called Ken into his office and said that his family was going on furlough to the US for a year. He asked Ken to step in and be the school principal for the coming school year which Ken agreed to do, and which he continued to do for another year until the end of their three-year term.

During that last year of their term, the mission was making final plans to expand the Johar school to be a full secondary school. Before Ken and Elizabeth left to return to the US in 1969, they were asked to consider returning to Johar after a year's furlough with Ken giving leadership to the new secondary school which Ken agreed to. For the next eighteen months they lived in Philadelphia where Ken completed a master's degree in math education and Elizabeth completed additional college courses to get her BS in nursing degree. While in Philadelphia they adopted their first child, a seven week old baby boy. In early 1971 the Nissleys were back in Somalia with a young child, with a new secondary school being built and with facing the challenges of organizing and preparing for the opening of the new school later that year.

The first year for the new secondary school had a small first class. As plans were shaping up to begin the next school year, the Somali government made an unanticipated announcement that they were nationalizing all private schools in Somalia, including the Shebelli Intermediate and Secondary school at Johar. This was a jolt to all of the EMM workers and they needed to quickly shift gears to this new reality. The government appointed Ahmed

Gedi to be the new principal, a former teacher in the intermediate school at Johar, who was attending the government teachers training college at the time. Ahmed was a good friend and supporter of the mission efforts in the past. Ahmed Gedi asked Ken to continue giving leadership to the school as acting principal until Ahmed finished his studies at the college. Ken carried most of the responsibilities for running the daily functions of the school. They completed this school year with Ken as acting principal at which time the Nissleys decided to terminate their time in Somalia at the end of that school year.

After their return to the States, Ken accepted an invitation to work in the Salunga office of EMM as an associate in the overseas office. For the next ten years Ken continued working at EMM with varied responsibilities. They adopted two other children and a birth child was born making their family complete. One of Ken's roles involved contacting, communicating, and recruiting prospective personnel for overseas assignments. This involved occasional trips to the Mennonite colleges and on one of these trips to Goshen College, Ken first met Ahmed Haile. In the course of their conversation, Ken invited Ahmed to spend the Christmas holidays with him and Elizabeth in Pennsylvania. This was the beginning of a close friendship for many years. Ahmed continued to spend most of his college holiday times at the Nissley home and at some point, they began to discuss the idea of both of them returning to Somalia together for further ministry there and to support the local believer group. Ahmed completed his college studies and a graduate degree and in the early 1980s accepted an assignment with World Vision to work in Mogadishu.

At about the same time the Nissleys began discussions with EMM about their family returning to Somalia to be director of EMM's presence in Somalia and to teach in one of the government schools in Mogadishu. Elizabeth was invited to work as a consultant/editor with the Women's Education Department. This became a reality in 1983 when the Nissley family moved to Mogadishu and for the next three years they worked closely with Ahmed. During this time, they learned of Ahmed's growing interest in an African-American woman by the name of Martha Wilson and they learned to know her when she came to Mogadishu for an assignment with the Eastbrook Church in Milwaukee.

Several years later when the Nissleys were back in the USA and when Ahmed was again in the USA and making plans to marry Martha, they traveled to Milwaukee for the wedding of Ahmed and Martha, providing

counsel and praying together as they sought guidance for their future. Eventually Ahmed and Martha accepted an assignment with EMM to go to Nairobi to teach at Daystar University and to relate closely with the small Somali believer group in Nairobi, despite Ahmed's traumatic loss of his leg during a peacemaking mission to Somalia several years earlier. [Told in *Tea Time in Mogadishu*.]

Later Ahmed was diagnosed with prostate cancer, but with treatment he and Martha were able to continue their role in Nairobi for several more years. During their furlough times in the USA, the Nissleys met often with Ahmed and Martha and their children. Eventually Ahmed's illness caused them to terminate their Nairobi assignment. The Nissleys were able to visit the Haile family in Milwaukee several times during Ahmed's illness up until several weeks before his eventual death. As soon as Nissleys got the word of Ahmed's death, they traveled to Milwaukee to spend a few days with the family as they prepared for Ahmed's funeral and memorial service and at Martha's request, they were able to share some words at the memorial service.



Ahmed and Martha Haile visit with good friends Ken and Elizabeth Nissley as Ahmed is undergoing treatment for prostate cancer

Ken wrote: *"Ahmed was a man of high intelligence who enjoyed talking about the hard issues and had a deep understanding of how his faith in Jesus built upon and extended his childhood religious experiences as a Muslim who knew and followed God. Within his own Somalia family and community, he unashamedly shared his faith in Jesus and while this brought much reaction and rejection from certain family members and others, Ahmed found a way to maintain close relationships with his family and Somali culture and was recognized and respected by many."*

During their years together in Somalia, Ahmed served as a bridge between the EMM team and the Somali culture and people. The Nissleys enjoyed many meals, competitive table games, and celebrations together with Ahmed, which endeared him to the Nissleys and their children. They all loved him and miss him.

The Ahmed Haile Book Launch: On July 30, 2011, there was a mini-reunion of Somalis and former missionaries in Toronto for a book launch for *Tea Time in Mogadishu*. This book launch was arranged by Mohamed Togane with the support and help of other Somalis in Ontario. They had invited David Shenk to come to Toronto to introduce his book there. The Leamans offered their van so all seven of them, David and Grace, Harold and Barbara Reed and their son Galen, traveled together in the van. There were about fifty persons in attendance with about twenty Somalis, most of whom were Muslim. Victor and Viola Dorsch were present for the event as was their daughter Shirley Dorsch Sherk who helped with arranging overnight lodging among members of her Mennonite congregation in Toronto. Before the formal talks there was plenty of time to move about and get acquainted. There was a wonderful Somali meal that was catered by a Somali woman who had started a restaurant about a year before.



David Shenk tells history of Tea Time in Mogadishu as Mohamed Togane with others listening intently

For the formal program, Mohamed Togane was emcee. David Shenk had a very good talk explaining how the book came to be written; recording Ahmed Haile telling his story and then Grace typing his words. David and Grace would meet with Ahmed to check that the story was written accurately. Martha, the wife of Ahmed Haile, spoke at the book launch and she described her husband as a man of faith, love and peace. During this meeting there was a surprise phone call for David Shenk and Mohamed Togane from Abdi Hosh in Mogadishu. Abdi Hosh had helped plan this book launch but he was not able to be at the event because he had recently been appointed to be a minister in the latest Somali government. David offered a free book of *Tea Time in Mogadishu* to everyone present. There were many good responses and a good spirit evident in the responses to David's talk even though the Somalis who responded were mostly Muslim.

The Lind Family Story: Wilbert and Rhoda Lind were the pioneer missionaries who were sent by EMM to enter Somalia in 1953 and they served until 1967 in Mogadishu as the director couple. Bert was a very good pioneer missionary and he explored how to extend SMM ministry into outlying areas

such as Mahaddei and Margherita (Jamama). Rhoda was a most gracious hostess in Mog, entertaining the mission deputations from the States and serving well the entire mission team when they came to Mog. At Landis Homes Rhoda was a faithful attender to SPF meetings until her hearing problem made it difficult to hear what was being said. Mary Gehman would later share the SPF news with Rhoda in her room. On January 16, 2020, there was a 100th birthday party for Rhoda Lind in her room in health care at Landis Homes. At age 100, Rhoda had a clear mind and a sparkling gracious spirit as she welcomed guests to her birthday party celebration. [Rhoda died on March 22, 2020.]



Rhoda Lind enjoys greeting the guests at her 100th birthday party as long-time friends David and Grace Shenk and Ruth Weaver listen. Her daughter Joyce sits at her feet. [Rhoda died on March 22, 2020.]

The Somalia Prayer Fellowship (SPF) had met in one of the lounges at Landis Homes since the 1990s, first in Grandview Lounge, then in Westview Community Room and later the group met regularly in Kirkview Lounge. The meetings were usually at 7:00 p.m. on the second Monday evening of each month. Ivan and Mary Ellen had given leadership to this for these thirty years. There has been a faithful core of former Somalia missionaries who have regularly attended these monthly prayer gatherings. Ivan asked these regular participants to share their testimony of how God led them to serve in Somalia.

The Mary Gehman Story: Mary Gehman was the missionary who served the most years in Somalia. Her years of service were 1958-1976, 1983-1987, and 1990. Mary was a very faithful attender to the Somalia prayer fellowship meetings. By request, at one of the SPF meetings Mary shared in very interesting detail how God led her into a teaching career with first beginning in a local Mennonite elementary school where she did not experience the joy of teaching that she had anticipated. A minister in her home congregation one day asked her if she had ever considered a foreign missionary call. She grew up with reading and hearing about foreign missionaries and was in awe of these missionaries and could not imagine that she could be used in such a way. However, after she was completing her fourth year of elementary education in 1958 at EMC she was approached by Paul

Kraybill of EMM who asked her to consider teaching in Somalia. This led her to go to Somalia in 1958 on a boat with many other missionaries going to Somalia and other countries of East Africa. Mary found the joy of teaching in Somalia with students eager to learn. She was the longest serving teacher in Somalia over several decades. To this day she still is receiving calls of appreciation from her former Somali students from places scattered around the globe. She still marvels that God led her home congregation minister to plant in her the thought that perhaps she could be a foreign missionary!

The Reed Family Story: Harold and Barbara Reed went to Somalia in 1961 and served until 1974 with Harold serving first as a teacher and then as mission director in Mogadishu. Harold and Barbara were regular attendees at the SPF meetings until Harold's Alzheimer illness kept him from attending, but Barbara continued with faithful participation even after Harold could no longer attend. Barbara told this story of how she and Harold had received the call to serve in Somalia: She shared from her preteen years when she first was encouraged by an evangelist to become a member of the church. In her days as a high school student at LMS she came to a clearer understanding of what it meant to be a true follower of Jesus. She told of dating Harold and of their mutual inner sense that they would someday serve in overseas missions. Harold was ordained by the use of the lot to be a pastor of a mission church in Chester, PA. This interrupted Harold's college education after having completed two years at Eastern Mennonite College. Barbara completed a RN nursing degree at Lancaster General. After Harold's serving several years as pastor, Harold and Barbara were invited by Paul Kraybill from EMM to consider overseas missionary work. Preparing for this call allowed Harold to resume his college education at EMC and then he and Barbara followed their call for overseas mission and arrived in Mogadishu, Somalia in 1961. Barbara was writing a memoir of her life which was being prepared for printing before the end of 2021.

The Lena Horning Brown Story: Lena was asked to share her story. Lena Horning was born into a farming family in the Bowmansville area. She went to a one-room public school with a wonderful first grade teacher and at a young age she had a desire to be a teacher, perhaps even a missionary teacher. In her eighth year of school, a substitute teacher said, "Lena, I hope you can be a teacher someday." Did God use that to encourage Lena not to give up her desire? To get the education for such a dream seemed impossible. Lena graduated from eighth grade and for a year she worked for several aunts as a maid and also worked at a local fruit orchard. On occasion,

Lena would plead with her parents to allow her to go to LMS and she did not know what sacrifices her parents made for her to attend LMS. But her dream came true and she graduated from LMS in 1952, taught at Weaver-town Mennonite School for a year and then at Gehman Mennonite School for five years while also taking summer classes at EMC. She then attended EMC full-time for two years and graduated in 1960 with a BS in education.

While at EMC, Lena was contacted by Paul Kraybill about teaching overseas with EMM. Lena had developed a desire to teach in another culture as she read biographies of missionaries, read *Missionary Messenger* and saw many slide presentations of returned missionaries, including hearing Mary Gehman's presentations. Lena was ready, even eager. But she had college debt and wanted very much to repay her father for his generous loans before she would go abroad. So she returned to Gehman Mennonite School for two more years, 1960-1962 and was able to pay her college debts and tell EMM that she was ready to accept an assignment. There was an opening in Somalia and as she was making preparations to go to Somalia, Merlin Grove was killed. Paul Kraybill said, "Lena, do you still want to go?" God had opened doors all along the way for Lena and she was ready to say, "Yes."

And so Jamama became Lena's home and school. Most of her Somali students wanted to be in school, so they were a delight to teach. Knowing very little Somali made teaching a big challenge, but Lena loved teaching! In particular she remembers Abdurahman studying the dictionary. He was such an eager student!

Lena remembers the Christmas parties, the Independence Day parades and speeches, the school plays, and the visits from the District Commissioner and from the parents. She will always remember her wonderful Somali-Arab teaching assistant who helped her solve many knotty problems.

Lena taught for four years at Jamama, from 1962-1966. She said that one of the hard parts of leaving home for Somalia was saying goodbye to her nieces and nephews, but in moving to Jamama she discovered "new" nieces in Deborah, the daughter of the Leamans and Joy, the daughter of the Dorsches. This was a real blessing. Some years later she eagerly welcomed both of them as her students at Rosslyn Academy in Nairobi, Kenya. Lena met Mike Brown who was serving as a TAP teacher in Kenya. They married in 1971 and for thirty years lived in the Grantham area when Mike was a librarian at Messiah College. They attended Slate Hill Mennonite Church where they were very involved in refugee resettlement. Lena and Mike now live at Landis Homes and have been faithful attenders of the Somalia Prayer Fellowship.

The Shenk Family Story: David and Grace Shenk were asked to share their story. They went to Somalia in 1963 and served until 1973. They then transitioned to Nairobi, Kenya where they served from 1973 to 1979. David and Grace have been very active participants in the SPF meetings for many years when they were not traveling overseas in ministry. After they moved to Landis Homes they became very regular attenders to the meetings. They shared their very personal story of how God led them to each other at EMC. Following their marriage, they were in NYC in voluntary service. After this they were hoping to serve in overseas missionary service in Tanzania where David was born and grew up. However, before they could serve with EMM overseas, they needed to live in Lancaster County for several years where David was a teacher at Lancaster Mennonite School. When Merlin died in Somalia, the Lord spoke to Grace that they would be called to Somalia to take Merlin's place and three weeks later they had a call from EMM asking if they would accept a call to serve in Somalia to take Merlin's place in the education mission.

David and Grace received this as a call from the Lord to serve in Somalia. After serving in education at Johar, Somalia for two terms, Somalia Mennonite Mission needed to leave Somalia. At that point, they were able to continue their ministry in Nairobi, where David became a religion professor in the University of Nairobi. They found a place to live in Eastleigh, living among the Somali community. David had a vision for the purchase of a property in Eastleigh to become a community center. However, there was a complication in the purchase of this property. A miracle took place in the UK where permission was finally given for the purchase. David, with the help of Grace, had been writing a memoir of his life in mission to Muslims. His manuscript had been accepted by Herald Press for publication and the printing and release of the book was planned for September 2021.

The Jane Myers Hooley Story: Jane was asked to share her story. She wrote that she felt called to missions soon after she confessed Christ as her Savior. In Summer Bible School a teacher shared her scrapbook of missionary stories which led Jane to start collecting missionary stories also. She always wanted to be a teacher and during the three years between high school and college she worked in a bank leading her to study business education at Goshen College. She did a Study Service Term in Honduras in 1969 and that experience reaffirmed her interest in missions.

In 1969 Jane Myers accepted a business education teaching position at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. As classes were closing for

Christmas break in 1970, the school principal asked to talk with the two business teachers. He said that a teacher currently on leave would be returning and one of them would be without a job next year. Jane remembers walking out of the office and saying to herself, “I know who is not returning.” EMM had already been inquiring about Jane going to Mogadiscio to open a business school and Jane believed the Lord was confirming to her that she should accept this call to Somalia.

In August 1971 Jane arrived in Mogadiscio and taught bookkeeping and typing in the adult night school while she studied Somali language. The Ministry of Education announced in October 1972 that all private schools were to be nationalized. The Somalia Mennonite Mission teachers volunteered their services to the Ministry of Education. Jane was assigned to the Somalia Institute of Public Administration to teach accounting and to consult with government agencies, setting up accounting systems and teaching how to keep accounts. She also taught in the clerical training center. Over many cups of tea in her office there were many opportunities to share and speak of the love of Jesus.

In May 1974 Jane returned to Pennsylvania to pursue a master’s degree and in 1975 she earned an M.Ed. in business education at Shippensburg University. In September, she returned to Mogadiscio and was assigned to the Ministry of Education as a consultant in business education. She trained five teachers on the job, including traveling to Hargesia and Burao twice. She also taught a special afternoon class for the clerical staff at the Ministry of Education. In May 1976 the Ministry of Education informed the Somalia Mennonite Mission that their teachers were no longer needed. The ten EMM teachers went to Nairobi to discern next steps, and Jane was asked to consider going to Juba Commercial Secondary School in Juba, South Sudan. She accepted that as a call for God and began serving there in a time of turmoil and unrest. She worked eight years with a mission agency called ACROSS.

Jane Myers married David Hooley in 1990. She faithfully attended the Somalia Prayer Fellowship except for the years she and David lived in Findlay, Ohio when he taught there. David died in 2015 of a brain tumor and in 2016 Jane moved back to Lancaster County and resumed attending the SPF.

The Galen Reed Story: Galen is the son of Harold and Barbara Reed, and he often attended the SPF meetings. At the SPF meeting of January 18, 2020, with the use of slides projected on a TV screen, he told of his recent three and a half week visit to Kenya and Ethiopia. The visit to Ethiopia was very significant in that Galen met Abdi Duale and his wife Kawser who were

serving on the staff of Nolosha Cusub (New Life). Abdi shared with Galen how he came to faith in Mogadishu and then had Biblical teaching with EMM Mennonite missionaries Lamar Witmer and Carl Sensenig in Mog in the late 1980s. He later moved to Djibouti in the mid-1990s where he met Mike and Cindy Brislen and Mark and Chantal Logan, EMM missionaries serving there. Abdi said he “feels like a Mennonite” and was thanking the Lord for this reconnection with Mennonites through Galen Reed. Abdi’s story is told more completely later in this chapter.

The Sensenig Family Story: After the pandemic began in 2020, the monthly meetings stopped after the one on February 10, but then on June 8, 2020, there was the first zoom SPF meeting with Lorri Bentch from EMM providing the zoom link. Peter and Christy Sensenig had been invited to share of their experience in East Africa. Some of this story, as now recounted here, comes from their recent newsletter of August 2021. Peter and Christy first went to Djibouti in the Horn of Africa in 2009 as newlyweds. Although the internship for Christy did not work out as planned, God intervened by having a British doctor invite her to teach community health and a French midwife let Christy observe her work. This planted the seed for Christy to begin the long road to get an RN degree followed by studies and work towards a nurse-midwifery degree.

Prior to the zoom meeting of June 8, 2020, Ivan had reviewed the minutes and found that Peter and Christy Sensenig first met with the Somalia Prayer Fellowship in September 2012. Moses was with them at eight months of age. Peter had been studying at Fuller Seminary working towards a PhD. in Christian ethics. His dissertation was focused on peacemaking in Somalia and the involvement of Somalia Mennonite Mission in peacemaking. Peter faithfully attended the next eight monthly meetings of the Somalia prayer fellowship. During this time of writing his dissertation, he was also interviewing former Mennonite missionaries in Somalia. [Note: Peter’s dissertation was published as a book in 2016: *PEACE CLAN: Mennonite Peacemaking in Somalia.*] Those regular monthly visits of Peter with the SPF were completed in May 2013.

In May 2013 the family moved to Atlanta, Georgia where Christy began a nursing degree program. After completion of her nursing program the family moved back to Lancaster County and began preparation to go to Hargeisa, Somaliland, leaving in January 2015. There Peter taught in the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, a program that EMU had helped the University of Hargeisa to develop. The Sensenigs were not able to stay

due to threats made against Peter. The family was transferred to Zanzibar where Peter taught at Zanzic, an Interfaith Christian-Muslim peace studies program. Christy, as a nurse, worked in a hospital setting, especially working to develop the “kangaroo” method of caring for premature babies. They left their work in Zanzibar in March 2020 as the pandemic was beginning.

Christy was able to do her clinical work in Lancaster for her midwifery degree and Peter joined the EMM Christian-Muslim Relations team. In the Sensenig’s latest newsletter of August 2021 they were rejoicing in sharing the news that Christy had graduated in July with a master’s degree in nurse-midwifery. They and their three children were now looking forward to flying to Paris, France on August 4, where they planned to spend a year so that Peter and the children could learn French. Christy speaks French fluently, having spent part of her childhood in France with her missionary parents. After the year in France they look forward to serving in mission in one of the French-speaking African countries.

Stories from the zoom Somalia Missionary Reunion of 2020: There had been the tradition of an annual reunion of former Somalia Mennonite missionaries. This was often held in July, on the same day as the EMM Global Fair. In recent years this Global Fair was held on the grounds of the Hans Herr House. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Global Fair was not held in 2020 and the missionary reunion was also not held in July of 2020. Since the annual Somalia missionary reunion meeting could not be an in-person meeting in July, there was a zoom missionary reunion on Saturday, September 5, 2020, from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon with about twenty-five persons appearing on the screen. Lorri Bentch was asked to share a testimony of her life. She and her husband Tim had served with EMM in Budapest, Hungary from 1994-2006. She was now the Mission Team Director for EMM. At this reunion Jon Rudy and Peter Sensenig shared about their visit to Somaliland in March 2020. They taught in a seminar at the University in Burao for about a week. They had contact with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Hargeisa, but did not teach there on this visit. They were met by Hussein Musa, a former student at Johar, who helped with the logistics of their trip. Ahmed Gedi came to greet them in Hargeisa from Borama, where he lives part of the year when he is not in his home in Kitchener, Ontario. Peter and Jon had to cut their visit short by one day when the Covid-19 was beginning to affect travel.

On January 11, 2021, there was another SPF zoom meeting with Lorri Bentch again providing the zoom link through EMM. Galen Reed shared

from his recent exploratory visit to Ethiopia. He was able to again make contact with Abdi Duale and his wife Kawser who were working with Nolosha Cusub (New Life), a Somalia outreach ministry with preaching and teaching using social online ministry.

Beth Manyara had been a regular attendee at the SPF for several years after she learned to know Somali families through her work with Millersville University Migrant Education. She offered to provide the zoom link for a regular monthly zoom SPF meeting and she was able to provide a good zoom link through her work.

The Camel Milk Story: Ryan Fee and Danny Thompson had been invited to the June 14, 2021, SPF zoom meeting to tell the story of the Camel Milk Co. now called Camel Culture. Here is their story: Ryan Fee and his wife Lauren were students at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama from 2007-2011 and met in a Biblical Perspectives class in their second year. They were married in July 2011 in Birmingham, Alabama. They were exploring the call to possible overseas missions. They focused on Somalia as one of the most unreached people groups and they felt a call to that group. Then they discovered that many Somalis had come as refugees to the USA so that today there were half a million Somali refugees in the USA. After leaving Samford University they moved to Seattle, Washington where there were about 65,000 Somalis. They began to work with the Somali refugee community alongside Michael Madany and his wife Oetje, who had been in Somalia in the 1980s in a leprosy mission in Jilib along the Juba River in southern Somalia.

One day Ryan was talking to Somali men and asked, “What do you miss most about Somalia?” and the answer was, “camel milk!” In 2015 this led Ryan and Lauren to explore if there was camel milk available in the USA and they found a camel farm near Denver, Colorado. They ordered some camel milk and then delivered it to a local Somali shop and the supply soon sold out. They kept ordering more shipments of camel milk and found that there was a great demand for it. Ryan and Lauren began to ask themselves if this could become a business. Ryan’s full time job was in commercial real estate and the camel milk business was a side hobby which was bringing much joy as it opened up opportunities to relate to the Somali community.

In 2017 there was a competitor who wanted to buy all the camel milk from the Colorado farmer, but the farmer wanted to stay with Ryan and Lauren. At that point they made the decision to give their full energy to the camel milk business and began to expand their sales to other parts of

the USA by finding sales reps who would contact Somali shops where they could introduce camel milk as a product to sell in the stores. Then in 2018 Ryan and Lauren decided to move from Seattle to a town near Denver, Colorado so they could be closer to the camel milk farm and also to be more centrally located. They found another camel farm in Springfield, Missouri. The farmers there were Amish or Mennonite and they now have about 200 camels on about 1,000 acres. The milk is processed and sterilized and FDA approved for shipping across state lines.

Danny Thompson's story was that he was a student of Messiah College near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. There were a lot of Somali refugees who had settled in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania near Harrisburg. In 2010 Danny and some other Messiah students began a soccer team among the Somali communities and this opened Danny's heart to the Somali community. Danny became aware of the camel milk business that Ryan and Lauren Fee had started and he joined the business as a sales rep in 2019. He is now full-time since December 2020. Danny coordinates the sales part of the camel milk business and is helping to expand the sales reps so that today there are over thirty sales reps.

In March 2020 there was a rebranding of the company and the name was changed from Camel Milk Co. to Camel Culture. They want the company to show appreciation for the Somali culture and to be a bridge between the Somali refugee community and the farmers and the blue-collar workers of America. The company has added other products such as camel, lamb and goat meat which are sold in the Somali or Arab "halal" stores. Ryan and Danny want this business to be a mission as a way to reach into the Somali communities and all the sales reps are Christian believers. There is a web site *Camel Culture* where one can order camel milk online which is shipped frozen.

The Madany Family Story: At the July 11, 2021, SPF zoom meeting Michael Madany was asked to share his and his wife Oetje's life story. Michael began his talk by giving his background which was enhanced by later email communication with Ivan. Michael's father, Bassam Madany, was born in Antakya Province of Syria which is now part of Turkey. His grandfather had left the Orthodox Church and became a Presbyterian evangelist/pastor. Michael's father, Bassam Madany, came to North America and married Shirley Dann who was Anglo-Canadian of Manitoba. Bassam became one of the first Arabic language radio missionary speakers, starting his broadcast in 1958 and retiring from that radio ministry in 1994. Of

interest is that they developed a relationship with Khadra Bashir, a Somali believer. In 1984, Ahmed Haile, along with the Nissleys and Reimers and others with EMM, had helped Khadra to get to Goshen College. At that time Bassam and Shirley Madany were living in South Holland, Illinois about 110 miles west of Goshen and they would host Khadra at times in their home.

Bassam continued to be active in ministry and wrote an article in July 2021 entitled: *A New Era in Missions to Muslims*. Bassam wrote that “*The advent of the Internet and social media have given rise to an unprecedented spread of the Christian Gospel.*”

Michael came prepared with a PowerPoint slide presentation for the SPF zoom meeting. This provided many interesting pictures and facts from his work in Somalia and later with Nolosha Cusub. Michael came to Somalia in 1982 and became an instructor in range management in the agricultural faculty of the Somali National University and also taught in the Agricultural Secondary School near Afgooye. This was a project of USAID/UN. Oetje, who was from the Netherlands, in 1980 had worked in Thailand and with Cambodian refugees and then arrived in Somalia in 1981 in response to the refugee crisis produced by the Ogaden War. She worked in medical emergency work at a refugee camp near Luuq, near the Kenyan and Ethiopian border.

Michael met Oetje in Somalia in 1983 and their friendship led to marriage in 1984. They had become involved in the Somalia believer fellowship in Mogadishu and were blessed in learning to know Ahmed Haile, Hawa Farah, Adam Jimale, and Abdulqadir Mursal. Another blessing was to meet and learn from veteran missionaries, both inside Somalia and in Nairobi: Fae Miller, Mary Gehman, Neil and Margaret Reimer, Ken and Elizabeth Nissley [with EMM], Annie Hellstrom [with Swedish Church Relief], and Warren and Dorothy Modricker, Ruth Myers, Albert and Tina Erion [with SIM].

Oetje had begun a leprosy mission work in Labadaad Island near Jilib, which Michael joined after their marriage. Oetje, as a nurse, developed a more up-to-date leprosy control program. By using modern drugs, they were able to treat leprosy patients in their own homes rather than the previous confinement in a leprosarium. While living in Middle Juba they learned to know some believers in Lower Juba who had come to faith through the Swedish Lutheran Mission.

The Madanys were particularly blessed by Tabitha who had a strong faith and vibrant personality and who loved to sing. They recorded some of her singing. Tabitha, as a very sick infant, had been given by her parents

into the care of the Swedish Lutheran Mission in 1915 and was reared by this mission in Kismayu. Tabitha learned a very good Swahili. The Swedish Lutheran Mission had developed stations in Kismayu, Ionte, Mofi and Allesandra [Labadaad Island] before they were forced out in 1935 by the Italian Fascists.

Adam Jimale Farah, a Somali believer and hymn writer from Mogadishu, was assigned to government security work in Lower Juba, and he helped in promoting relationships between the Madanys and the Somali believers.

In 1989 the Madanys were invited to join the work of Codka Nolosha Cusub [Voice of New Life] in Nairobi. This was a Somali radio broadcast ministry. In Nairobi they became involved with the Somalia Discipleship Training Center. Here was where they also reconnected with Abdi Duale in 1991 who would spend weekends and holidays in their home. Abdi became a student at Daystar University in Nairobi from which he graduated in 1997. In the Somali believer fellowship in Mog the Madanys had learned to know Haji Mohamed, the uncle of Abdi Duale, who was later martyred.

In 1998 the Madanys moved to Addis, Ethiopia when the Nolosha Cusub work was transferred to that city. The Madanys had two daughters, Alida and Johanna, and for the benefit of their daughters' education and serious family illness, they decided to move to the USA in 2004. They chose Seattle, Washington as a good place to live because there were many Somalis living in Seattle [second largest in America, roughly 50,000]. In Seattle, they began the web site Nolosha Cusub ["The New Life" which was an offshoot of the broadcast].

Oetje Madany developed relationships with the Somali community and provided social services such as tutoring and helping with homework and building relationships with families. There was a remarkable connection with a nephew of Tabitha who had come as a refugee to Seattle where his wife delivered her ninth baby. That was such a special moment for the Madanys because of their relationship to Tabitha.

Michael reflected on the end of an era. Codka Nolosha Cusub [Voice of New Life] had used shortwave radio from 1974 to 2020. The radio has now been replaced by the use of online messaging sent to mobile devices. Programming is filmed on cellphones and then viewed on cellphones and this is reaching many more persons. Michael reported statistics since the beginning of the website in 2006 and Facebook in 2014. These are the statistics: 7,000 individual contacts, 633 cities, 87 countries and 21,250 messages. The New Life website: www.noloshacusub.net.

Michael says: **This is harvest time.** Many are questioning their faith due to the forty-three year civil war, the jihadist violence and using social media provides a safe place to seek answers.

The Abdi Duale Story: At the SPF zoom meeting on Monday, March 8, 2021, Abdi Duale had been asked to share his testimony. This was his story: Abdi Duale was born in 1967 in Las'anod in Somaliland. In 1974 when there was a bad famine his family moved to southern Somalia to a town called Kurtunwaarey. This was where Abdi grew up and had his schooling. He finished his secondary education in 1985 and then he lived in Mogadishu with his uncle who had studied in Canada and was now a professor in the Lafoole University in the outskirts of Mogadishu. Abdi had been raised as a Muslim and had studied the Koran. He had heard of Christianity as an ancient religion which no longer existed. One day he saw the Catholic cathedral and he asked what that large building was. When he was told it was a Christian church, he was shocked since he thought Christianity was an extinct religion.

One day Abdi was exploring his uncle's library and he found a large black book which was written in the Somali language. He began to read at the beginning of the book and he discovered that it told the creation story and of Adam and Eve. He was fascinated by this book which told the stories in a chronological way, which was different than the Koran. He was told by a relative this was a Bible. Abdi kept reading the Bible secretly for two years without his uncle's knowledge. Finally he asked his uncle if he was a Christian and he acknowledged that he was but he was not very open about his faith and did not regularly attend a Christian fellowship. In 1988 his uncle did show Abdi where a Christian fellowship was meeting in the Catholic cathedral on Fridays. [Abdi Duale's uncle was Haji Mohamed and his martyrdom is told Appendix 2.]

Abdi started meeting with the small believer fellowship in Mog and he was introduced to the *People of God* Bible study and in a seven month period he was led through this study by Lamar and Barbara Witmer and later by Carl Sensenig. This led to his baptism by Carl Sensenig in 1989. He became one of the committee of young Somali leaders in the small believer fellowship in Mogadishu. It was in the fall of 1990 that the Leamans met Abdi Duale.

When the war broke out in Mogadishu in early 1991, Abdi Duale stayed in Mogadishu for a period of time. In December 1991 he was told that he was accepted into a Bible school in Mombasa. He found his way traveling by truck from Mogadishu to Kismayu to Liboi to Garissa and then to Nairobi.

Someone directed him to the Eastern Mennonite Mission offices in Westlands, Nairobi. He started a four-year Bible certificate program in Mombasa but after a year and a half, he transferred to Daystar University in Nairobi.

After finishing his studies, Abdi went to Djibouti where he met Kawser who had been born in Jijiga and she also had become a believer. They were married in 1998 by Mark Logan, who with his wife Chantal were Mennonite missionaries in Djibouti. At the end of 2000 they went to Europe as refugees where they lived in Belgium near the Netherlands border and Abdi learned the Dutch language.

The Madanyis reconnected with Abdi Duale and Kawser in Belgium and Michael arranged for Abdi to translate Ahmed Haile's book, *Tea Time in Mogadishu*, into Somali which he completed in 2015. This was a very good Somali translation and it has been made available to be read online. Abdi and Kawser joined SIM France-Belgium and were invited to join SIM Ethiopia and they moved to Addis in 2018. In Addis Abdi and Kawser were given many responsibilities with developing programming for the Nolosha Cusub web site and social media. Abdi developed spiritual messages using Somali proverbs.



Kawser Omar in 2021



Abdi Duale in 2021

There are many Facebook messages and emails which need responses so “Caynaanshe”, a son of the martyr Haji Mohamed and thus a cousin of Abdi Duale, has joined the Nolosha Cusub team in Addis. He is helping with some of the many responses to the messages received. Galen Reed, who has been studying in Addis, has been doing some discipling of “Caynaanshe”.

At some point Abdi had been asked to find financial supporters and, like a miracle, there was a man with a mission organization in the USA who helped Abdi to find financial support by asking his own supporters to transfer their support to Abdi.

Abdi Duale tells of the changes in Nolosha Cusub. For forty-five years this was a radio program, but this became very expensive and had closed down a year previously. This ministry had now become an internet media

outreach. Abdi preaches and sometimes his wife Kawser sings on the program. There is a very special recording on YouTube of Kawser Omar beautifully singing “*10,000 Reasons*” which had been translated into the Somali language by Abdi Duale.

There was a new type of outreach on February 4, when Abdi and Kawser had their first Somali Gospel TV program on satellite TV. This developed with the encouragement and financial support of a doctor in California. Plans also developed for Abdi and Kawser to move to Belgium in late August 2021. While living in Belgium for the next year, they will continue their work with Nolosha Cusub.

In conclusion, at the end of this memoir, there is a call to reflect on the mission of EMM and SIM through the years since 1953 in bringing a witness of Jesus to the Somali people. There is also a call to support the mission of EMM and SIM both financially and in fervent prayer for Somalis living in Somalia and scattered in the diaspora around the world.

Let us receive the promise from Isaiah 55:10-11. *“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”*

Bible – English Standard Version

Let us see in faith the vision from Revelation 7:9-10. *“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’”*

Bible – English Standard Version

Appendix 1

Libaan Ibrahim Hassan – Somali martyr born about 1969 – March 21, 1994

On March 21, 1994, Marilyn Metzler, a niece of Ivan working as a nurse in Mogadishu, sent a fax to EMM with these words, “My heart is saddened to share with you that a fellow believer was killed today in Mogadishu. Libaan Ibrahim, who works for Swedish Church Relief, was shot to death this morning as he was walking to work.” Two gunmen were waiting for Libaan on the sandy road near his office. “Libaan leaves a wife, Roqia, also a Christian, and two small children. Libaan was serving as a leader of the underground church movement. The reality of this tragedy leaves me numb.”



Later Marilyn wrote these words, “A couple of months before Libaan was killed, he engaged me in conversation on the porch of the health clinic (where Marilyn was working). With excitement he described how the Holy Spirit was working in Mogadishu. At that time he was meeting with six or seven other young men on a regular basis to have Bible study and prayer. Knowing the great risk he was placing himself in, I felt concern for him and reminded him to be careful. He assured me that he was praying and using caution but he said, ‘There is no price too high for me to pay for the gift of knowing the truth about Jesus.’”

While growing up, Libaan had listened to Christian radio broadcasts both in Somali and in English. One of those broadcasts was Codka Noloshu Cusub

(Voice of new Life). In 1982, at the age of about thirteen, he read Sigmund Freud's *Dreams*, which disturbed him so much that he began to suffer from insomnia. Traditional solutions, such as visits to sheikhs, reading the Qur'an etc. did not cure him. An expatriate Christian gave him a New Testament and suggested that he read the first letter of John. During the mid-1980s Libaan struggled over deep theological and spiritual issues as he read the Bible in Italian and English. He also read Italian devotional books on the epistles of Paul. He prayed for God to show him the right path.

Libaan became dissatisfied with Islam for a variety of reasons. He wondered why it was necessary to always pray to God in Arabic, a foreign language. He wondered why it was necessary to face Mecca when praying. Ethical issues also troubled him, particularly the fact that the Qur'an, he believed, sanctioned polygamy and abuse of women.

Finally, in 1985, Libaan decided that only the Bible could be true and not the Qur'an. He decided that the first thing he must do as a follower of Jesus Christ was to practice humility. (Humility is not normally considered a desirable trait in Somali culture). Libaan's friends began to notice a change in him. While working in the hospital, medical staff noticed that he had a totally different attitude from the other workers. He did not differentiate between patients based on their clan. He showed sympathy and concern for people; working as a nurse's aide in the operating room was not just a job for Libaan.

Libaan became very active in sharing his faith and would write to Codka Noloshu Cusub asking for literature. In early 1993 he requested fifteen New Testaments and fifteen correspondence courses. Believers began meeting in his home and he was serving like a pastor. He used to have religious discussions with a sheikh who had been badly wounded. Later, he donated blood for this man, and after the sheikh had recovered, Libaan told him to listen to the Somali Christian radio broadcast. In due course the sheikh wrote to the radio station to request Christian Scriptures and a correspondence course. This sheikh was just one of many whose lives were touched by Libaan. He encouraged numbers of people to study the Scriptures.

At the relief agency where Libaan worked, all the workers went to him with their problems. Even the men who guarded the vehicles of the relief agency – battle-hardened, street fighting, veterans of the past four years of civil war – had perceptibly changed through their contact with Libaan. Such a bold Christian stance made him stand out in a country which is almost one hundred percent Muslim. In 1993 Islamic radicals criticized his activities

in newspaper articles. All of this activity led to his martyrdom. The name Libaan means “victorious” and we need to believe that his death was not in vain. May the story of Libaan’s faith and martyrdom lead many others to come to a similar courageous faith.

Marilyn Metzler communication with EMM
Noloshacusub.net (New Life)

Appendix 2

Haji Mohamed Hussein – Somali martyr born 1951 – April 3, 1996

Haji was born in 1951 at Gar-Adag in Sanaag Region. He was a quiet, thoughtful man who preferred work to leisure. When not teaching, his principal past time was reading. He deliberately avoided wasting time in political debates in teashops, a common Somali past time. He acquired the nickname “Haji” as a child because he was quiet, well-behaved and studious, though he never actually visited Mecca.

As a young adult, Haji moved to Mogadishu and completed a degree in education at Lafoole College. He began teaching in northern Somalia and then later taught in schools in the south, at Quryooley and Kurtunwaarey. After more than ten years as a teacher, Haji was chosen to pursue a Master’s degree at the University of Saskatchewan.

When he first arrived in Canada in 1980, Haji was full of doubts about whether any religion was true. However, while studying at the University Haji met some committed followers of Jesus and through their witness he began to read the Bible and placed his trust in Jesus, the Messiah. Upon returning to Mogadishu in 1984, Haji became a Professor of Education and Curriculum Development at Lafoole College. He also attended the weekly worship of the small Somali Believers Fellowship that met in Mogadishu in those days and shared his faith with some of his family.



After civil war broke out in 1991, Haji did not return north to his home region but remained in Mogadishu. He worked for various humanitarian organizations, particularly in the areas of education. In both 1993 and 1994 Haji went to Nairobi for training courses. He returned both times to Mogadishu to resume his work in education.

During the first two months of 1994, Haji often spent his afternoons with Libaan Ibrahim Hassan, discussing various matters and topics from the Bible. Their offices were in the same part of Mogadishu. On March 21, Haji had arrived early to work and was sitting in a teashop when he saw Libaan coming. Suddenly as Haji watched in horror, masked gunmen shot Libaan dead right in front of him.

When Haji returned from Nairobi at the end of 1994 for another seminar, he mentioned that he was greatly concerned for his safety as jihadist activities had increased in Mogadishu. On April 3, 1996, Haji was kidnapped and his body was found the following day in an abandoned building near his house.

At a memorial service in Nairobi after his death, one Somali believer remembered Haji in this way: “There were times that I have been tempted to cover up my faith. The last time I saw him, he challenged me never to deny my belief in Christ. Now, after his death, I want to be as brave as him and, if need be, to die rather than pretend I am not a Christian.” At the memorial service another friend also remarked that he noticed that Haji was more concerned about threats from jihadists in the last months before his death. At the same time, Haji had been more open in witness and fervent in prayer.

Noloshacusub.net (New Life)

Afterword to *Born for a Purpose*

Writing this memoir was started in August 2020 and the draft was finished by August 2021. The author had made copies of an earlier draft which was given to his children to read and to some friends such as David and Grace Shenk and Don and Doris Sensenig. He was encouraged by their response. David and Grace said it should be made available to more people by having it printed as a book. Doris Sensenig suggested that the memoir should be shared with the small book club of which Mary Ellen was a participant.

The author planned a self-publishing of the book but needed help in the formatting of the book and he was fortunate to have Sheila Meck accept that challenge with enthusiasm and she did an admirable job. After that was done, the PDF file was sent to Masthof Press for the printing of an initial 300 copies. The cost of preparing and printing 300 copies was about \$3,000. The author was not publishing this book as a profit-making venture. His plan was that the proceeds of the sale of this memoir would be given to EMM for the work of the Christian-Muslim relations ministry in dedication to the memory of their son Peter John who died in Somalia on March 10, 1960.

In December 2020 there was an endowment established called the David and Grace Shenk Legacy Endowment which would fund specific EMM projects dedicated to Christian-Muslim relations. The first \$3,000 from the sale of this book, *Born for a Purpose*, would go to EMM for this David and Grace Shenk Legacy Endowment fund. The author has been blessed to be a cousin to David Shenk. His mother Ethel Barge was an older sister to Alta Barge who married J. Clyde Shenk and their first son was David. As you have read in this memoir, the author's Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta Shenk were a great encouragement to the author of this book by their gift of \$50 when the author had just begun medical school in Philadelphia in 1954. At that time he was struggling with the thought of whether he should continue

medical school. That gift from his Uncle Clyde and Aunt Alta was a sign from God that he should continue medical school to prepare for overseas medical service.

You may wish to make a contribution to EMM by check and mail to P.O. Box 8617, Lancaster, PA 17604-8617, marked for the David and Grace Shenk Legacy Endowment in memory of Peter John Leaman. Jonathan Bornman is giving leadership to the EMM Christian-Muslim Relations Team and to learn more about the David and Grace Shenk Legacy Endowment, contact Jonathan Bornman at jonathan.bornman@gmail.com.

Ivan B. Leaman

► *Ivan and Mary Ellen are seated in the middle front. To the left is daughter Deborah with her husband John Masters. To the right is son David with his wife Marva Williams. Standing far left is son Jonathan with his wife Jackie Amstutz. Standing are their three sons: At far right is oldest son Ben with his wife Katie Toole and two sons Eli and Joel. Standing in the middle is son Zach with his wife Rachel Rutt and their son Easton. At the left is youngest son Nich with his wife Jeni Rairigh. The two pink balloons represent the two little girls yet to be born, Eliza and Brynn.*

Since that picture, the family welcomed three more great-grandchildren, Eliza born to Nich and Jeni, Brynn born to Zach and Rachel, and Wesley born to Ben and Katie.

~ credits for both pictures opposite: Jackie Leaman



Ivan B. Leaman

Ivan B. Leaman was born in Smoketown in 1932. He graduated from Lancaster Mennonite School in 1950, from Franklin and Marshall College in 1954 and from Hahnemann Medical College in 1958. He married Mary Ellen Eby during medical school in December 1956. After an internship at Lancaster General Hospital from 1958-1959, he and his wife Mary Ellen with son Peter John sailed to Somalia in 1960 where they served in southern Somalia in medical work with Eastern Mennonite Missions. In 1970 Ivan began family medical practice in Lancaster County, retiring in

2000. He is a member at Stumptown Mennonite Church and served in various roles in missions and stewardship and as deacon from ages sixty-five to



seventy. In 2000 he began as a volunteer at Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society doing genealogical research by requests which he continued for twenty years. He and his wife moved to Landis Homes Retirement Community in October 2019. This memoir was begun in August 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic and the major portion was finished by August 2021.

Mary Ellen Eby was born on the Eby homestead in Paradise Township in 1936. She graduated from Lancaster Mennonite School in 1954 taking commercial courses. During the years before Somalia, she worked as an office secretary in Lancaster, Philadelphia and at Millersville College during Ivan's internship. In Somalia, she assisted with various aspects of Jamama Hospital administration including the bookkeeping, detailed reports for the mission and the local Somalia government including payroll taxes. She trained a Somali to take over her responsibilities before leaving. In her home congregation of Stumptown Mennonite Church after 1970, she served as a Sunday school teacher, compiler and editor of the weekly church bulletin, co-editor of the Stumptown Newsletter, and editor of the bicentennial book *The Story of Stumptown Mennonite Church 1781-1981*. Mary Ellen was also a volunteer in various settings including Tabor Housing and Easter Seals in Lancaster. At Easter Seals, she received the "A Brace for an Ace" award in August 1986. She, along with Ivan, helped in refugee resettlement. She also gave leadership to Love INC for Stumptown, providing many hours of transportation. For decades, Mary Ellen was an avid and devoted letter writer. Her letters to her parents from Somalia were the single most essential source for this memoir. This book would not have been possible without those richly detailed letters.

Deborah J. Leaman was born January 22, 1961, in Shirati Hospital in Tanzania. She had her first two years of schooling at Rosslyn Academy near Nairobi, Kenya. She completed her elementary education at Locust Grove Mennonite School, then graduated from high school at Lancaster Mennonite School in 1979, and from Eastern Mennonite College in 1983 with a BA in Early Childhood Education. She taught for about twenty-three years in education and presently works as a reservationist in hospitality in Bird-in-Hand. She married John Masters on November 29, 1997. John has been a professional carpet layer, and was facility manager for a church camp for many years and presently is the facility manager for a large church. They live in Strasburg.

David E. Leaman was born on August 2, 1963, in the Jamama Hospital, Somalia. He had his elementary education at Locust Grove, graduated from

high school at LMS in 1981 and from Goshen College in 1985 with a BA in History. He later received his PhD in Government from Cornell University. He taught at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago for many years, and then was dean at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. On March 24, 2001, he married Marva Williams, who has her PhD in Urban Planning and Public Policy from Rutgers University. David and Marva now live in Delaware County, Pennsylvania where David is Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Widener University and Marva is an adjunct faculty member and consultant in the Philadelphia area.

Jonathan G. Leaman was born on December 19, 1964, at Lancaster General Hospital. He had his elementary education at Locust Grove, graduated from high school at LMS in 1982, and from Eastern Mennonite College in 1986 with a BS in Psychology and an AAS degree in computer science. He has worked in technology throughout his career, including software development, project management, and consulting. He has supported and worked for non-profit companies for much of this time and is presently employed by Masonic Villages retirement communities. He married Jackie Amstutz on August 8, 1987. She graduated from Eastern Mennonite College in 1987 with a BA in Biology and later received training in medical technology and has worked for over thirty years in that field at Lancaster General Hospital. Jonathan and Jackie live west of Lancaster. They have three sons all born at Lancaster General Hospital: Benjamin on June 19, 1990, Zachary on December 1, 1992, and Nicholas on January 13, 1995. Jackie's "other job" is watching her grandkids several days a week.

Ben has a BS in Psychology and Masters of Arts in Teaching from University of Pittsburgh and presently teaches middle school at Landis Run in Manheim Township in Lancaster County. He married Katie Toole on August 18, 2012, who also graduated from University of Pittsburgh with a BA in English. She has worked at Friendship Community and now works at Love INC as Director of Communication. They live near Lititz and have three sons: Eli, Joel and Wesley.

Zach has a BS from Temple University in Mathematics Computer Science and presently works for a financial technology firm near Bala Cynwyd. He married Rachel Rutt on August 1, 2015. She has an RN in Nursing from Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences and works for an Ob-Gyn office. They live in Terre Hill and have two children, Easton and Brynn.

Nich has a BA in Accounting from Grove City College and presently works as a CPA for an accounting firm in Lancaster. He married Jeni

Rairigh on June 17, 2017, who has her BA in Elementary Education from Grove City College and presently teaches part-time in that field. They live near Millersville and have one daughter, Eliza.

Ivan and Mary Ellen are blessed by their children and grandchildren and are happy to see them all active in church, serving in their respective congregations with Deborah as mission secretary, David as member of the Endowment Committee and “Widening the Circle” task force and Jonathan serving as elder. Their desire as a family is for all to live in the spirit of the Prophet Micah who said, *“What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”*

The deep commitment Ivan and Mary Ellen Leaman developed in their years in Somalia has translated into persistent prayer for Somalis, encouragement for ongoing ministries, and an abundance of amazing stories. All of this is grounded in a living hope that God is at work in Somalia.

-Peter Sensenig, Mennonite Mission Network/
Eastern Mennonite Missions

Following Jesus leads to deep joy as well as times of almost unspeakable grief; this memoir of many years of service contains an abundance of both. Ivan's humble, honest account of his and Mary Ellen's years among Somalis will stir the reader's heart for these beloved people. I pray it inspires others to the same kind of sacrificial service.

-Lorri Benth, EMM Mission Team Director

The call of God upon the arrival of Ivan and Mary Ellen in Somalia signaled the beginning saga of a Somali Muslim community meeting a north American Mennonite family who also meet a small Somali believer community. This book is about those communities discovering each other in the name of God. This is an incredible story touched with the wonder of it all as the saga unfolds.

-David W. Shenk, missiologist and founder of the
Christian-Muslim Relations team of EMM

As a clan-based society, Somalis like genealogies; I can name back to more than twenty forefathers to know whether I am related to or not related to every other Somali person. As a believer of Christ, that is no longer relevant for me. Instead, I feel honored to stand on the shoulders of the faithful witnesses whose stories are shared in this book. It is to them that I owe the chance to hear the good news, grow in faith, and be privileged to continue the work they've begun - sharing the gospel of peace with the Somali people.

-Abdi Duale, Somali believer

Seven million camels in Somalia, a land
of 10 million people (as reported)

