



Women of Faith: Passion, peoples, places and practices

WILLIAM TEMPLE ASSOCIATION PUBLIC TALK, 4 MARCH, 2024

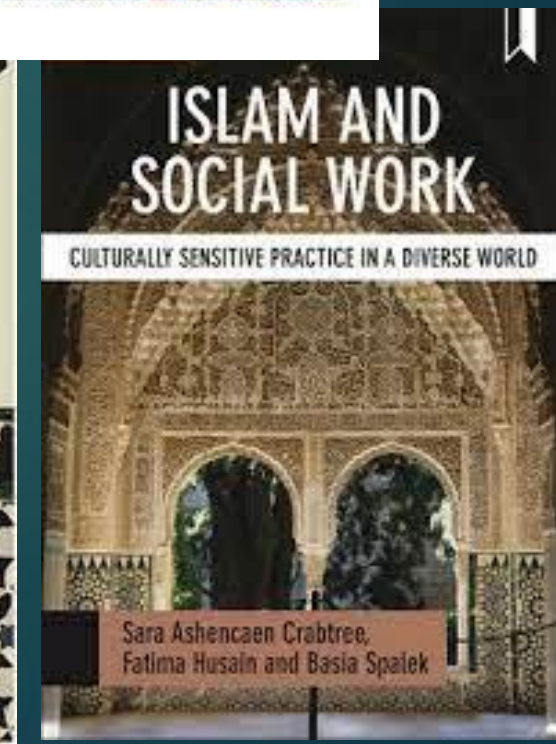
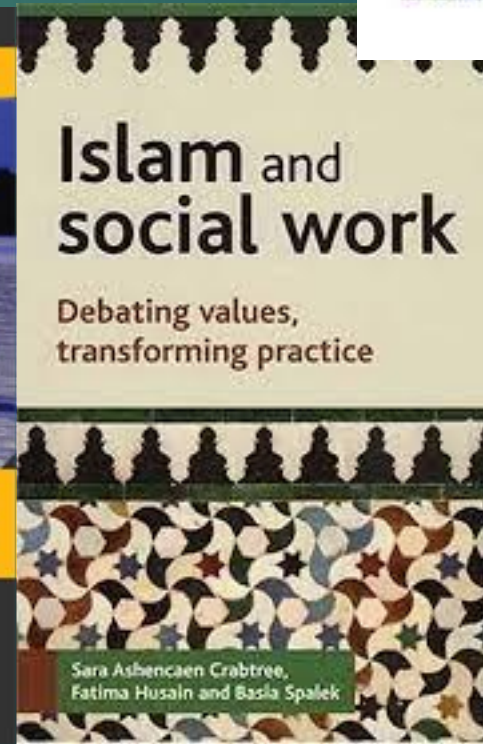
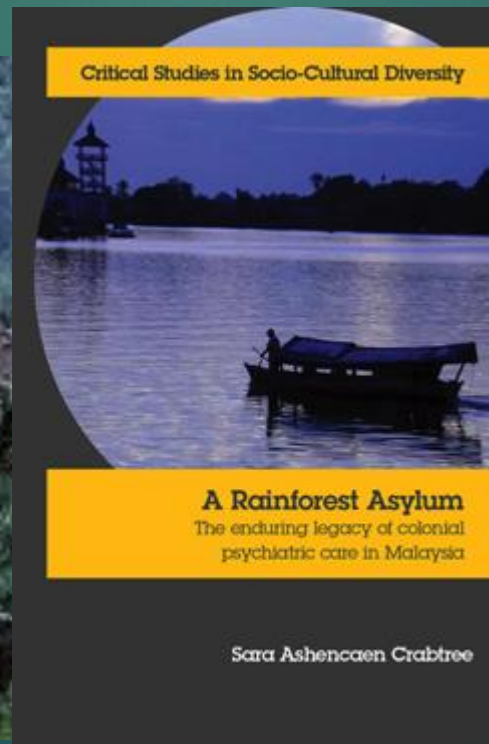
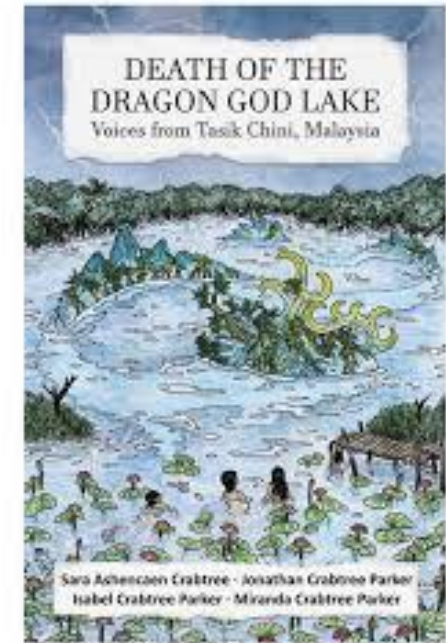
PROFESSOR SARA ASHENCAEN CRABTREE, PHD, MA, PFHEA, FRSA
PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL & CULTURAL DIVERSITY

BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

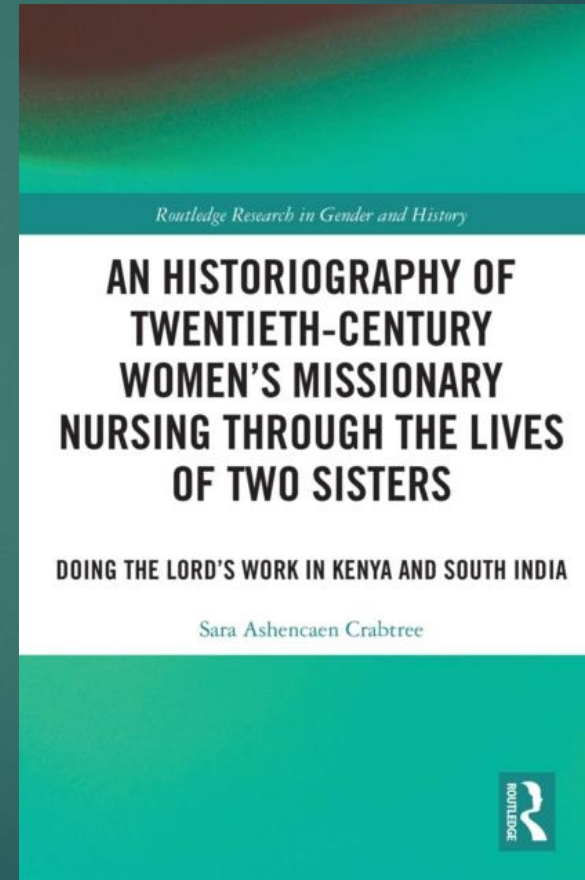
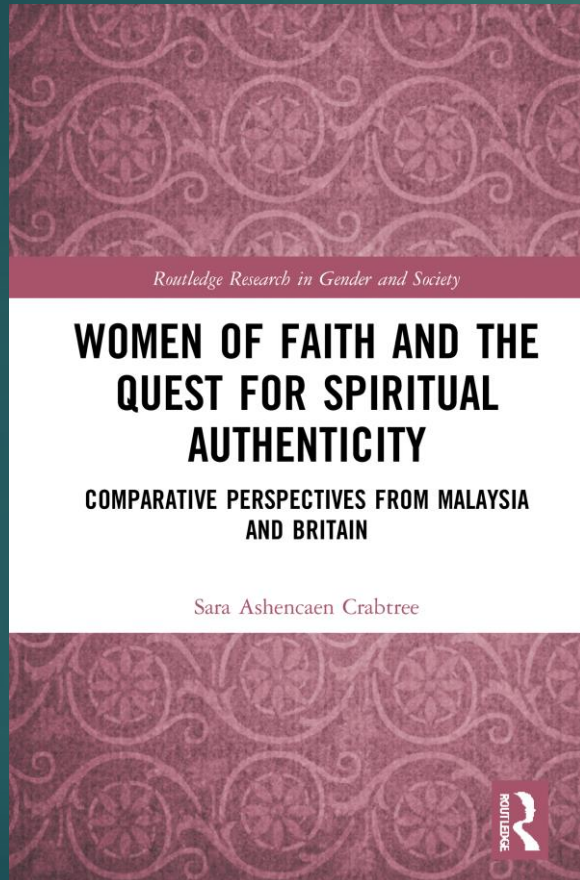
PROFESSOR EMERITUS, UNIVERSITY OF STAVANGER, NORWAY

An ethnographic journey

- ▶ Ethnographic focus on culture
- ▶ Feminist ethnography – feminist insights into gender: visibility, relationship, critical emancipation
- ▶ A scholarly journey bringing faith into focus

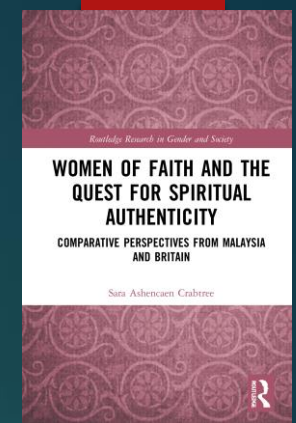


Today's topic



Questing women of faith

- ▶ **Aims:** A multi-faith, cross-cultural study of women's interpretations of faith and spirituality in UK and Malaysia.
- ▶ Participants – nearly 60 women across faith groups
- ▶ Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Pagans and Western Esoteric, Jews and Hindus



My starting point:
Do the biological realities of being a woman shape participant understandings of faith and their individual religious practices?

Themes

Being a woman of
faith: identity

God the Patriarch &
masculine control

Sacred Female/s

Damnation and
salvation: oppression
and redemption

Plus angels,
demons, sin and
virtue,
enchantment and
disenchantment,
goddesses and
gods, the good,
the bad and the
everyday, the
powerful and the
powerless, those of
sincere piety and
those of cultural
compliance

God the Patriarch

Melissa (Vicar's wife): I find that some of the attitudes to women in some of the Churches are extremely difficult. I have encountered Churches where a minority, maybe about a fifth or sixth, really don't like women, in any way, shape or form apart from making tea or coffee. Good in their place, which is by the tea urn.

Sheena (Pagan): No women! Especially (me) being Protestant, there wasn't even Mary. It wasn't fulfilling spirituality

Erin (RC) : It feels that it makes me uncomfortable that for unknown reasons that women are priests in the CoE, which is very ironic...There is a weird sense of patriarchy that it is in the only part of my life. Should a woman be a priest? It is an uncomfortable discussion for me. Nuns I have no problem with... If my daughter said 'I want to be a priest', I would say 'you *can't* be a priest. You *can* be a doctor'. Yet there is no reason why she shouldn't be. It is kind of engraved in me.

Beth (Anglican)
the real barrier to women's consecrations were these really die-hard scary old women, who are really adamant. [In reference to a Synod vote on the topic of women as bishops] The real hard-core objectors were women. It makes me terribly sad and disappointed but it's a real hard-core group. I was incredulous, so desperately disappointed.

Spiritual pain and patriarchy



Helen (Evangelical):

How you see yourself as a female, living in a female environment that certainly had a huge impact on my environment, view of men in general and faith. Because God as Father is a concept, but that was incredibly difficult. God is your Father. He loves you unconditionally. He made you beautiful. All those concepts that were part of preaching, teaching and in modern worship songs, was incredibly difficult. I would argue ‘how can I have this concept? The whole thing with father, God is not like an earthly father. My concept is one that abandons you before you are born. Some of the images have been very painful. God is a comforter. If you are saying God is of the male gender then I have no experience of that. That is very difficult. I have been to conferences, seminars where that very thing has been the subject and sometimes it’s about praying with someone, and crying out to God and asking of Him ‘how are You *different* from other men in my life?’


Saving the world! One woman at a time..



Elizabeth: Religion needs to be done in a different way and I don't know how or what. However, long the world lasts we still have love inside us: kindness, thoughtfulness and truthfulness. It still has to be brought out. I hope this book goes out to all women.

Mei-Feng: It is special to me because without this faith I don't think I can do the work I am doing. It is *fundamental* to what I live for and what I do. It's because of the love I receive from God that I feel the need to share with others. That's all I can offer. I don't have many, many other gifts, but it is the love that compels - His Love that compels me. Not so much to reach out to others but to share a little bit in this hurtful world.

Sheena: Let's start with world peace. It was the Druids that invented 'think globally, act locally'. Maybe I'll stand for Parliament. I've just joined the Green Party and campaigned for them. Both my children are Pagan and my grandchildren.



Margareta: Whatever is your intention Sara, when people read your book you will come to a better understanding of one another: that there is no division, especially in the area of religion. How can we say we love God and want to do good and at the same time we despise others? Who are *we* to compare and contrast? We are all going on the same path: from the same source back to the same source.

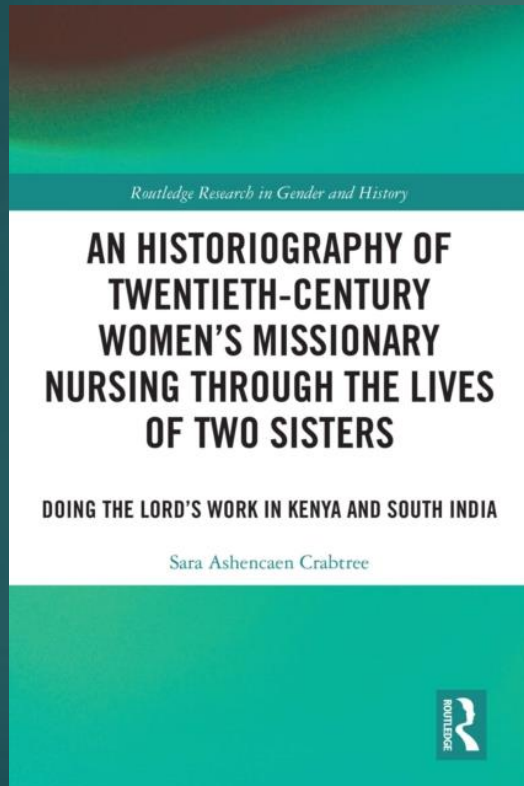
Missionaries, the post-colonial demon

‘The word “missionary”, you use the word missionary and every Jew will...[makes a gesture of shuddering]. It’s in our blood... Judaism doesn’t proselytise, and what *they* (missionaries) did in the African countries, to me that was very, very wrong. They took the diseases in and changed their culture and all these people who had a culture of their own lost it.

And as it happens my next book **was** all about missionaries!

Doing the Lord's work in South India and Kenya - *Two women at a time!*

Audrey and Muriel Chalkley



Retired to Southbourne



Sad serendipities



The screenshot shows the 'Memories of Nursing' website. The header includes the title 'Memories of Nursing' and navigation buttons for 'Home', 'About', 'Archive', 'Gallery', 'Links', and 'Contact'. A news article from Bournemouth University is displayed, featuring a large portrait of a man with glasses and a red shirt. To the left of the main article is a smaller portrait of a woman in a nurse's uniform, identified as Mary Culverhouse.

How 'Doing the Lord's Work' was born

Fran died in 2012

Audrey died in 2013

Chakley data – rescue/jettison?

Gaps and fragments

- ❖ 5 different data sets from 1994 up to 2022
- ❖ Primary
- ❖ Secondary
- ❖ Interviews, mementoes and archives

“Playing devil’s advocate, why should anyone be interested in two old, colonial missionaries?”



Audrey and Muriel, born in Wirral to lower middle-class Methodist family

Audrey Margaret 1918-2013)

Muriel Mercy (1922-2022)

Audrey to India 1946

Muriel to Kenya 1955

A total of 54 years as nursing missionaries

A woman’s respected vocation (plus adventure!)

Name of Ship "EMPRESS OF SCOTLAND"

Date of Departure 18th October, 1946.

Steamship Line—P. & O. CANADIAN PACIFIC STEAMSHIPS LTD.

Where Bound BOMBAY

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF BRITISH PASSENGERS EMBARKED AT THE PORT OF LIVERPOOL

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) or 3rd	(5) AGES OF PASSENGERS	(6)	(7)	(8) Country of Last Permanent Residence.*	(9)
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To India



The P&O Empress of Scotland at Liverpool

LO.094080	Port Said	CLARK, Ruth William Pauline	"	56	147, Audley Road, London	Teaching		1 Palestine
LO.092998	Bombay	CHALKLEY, Audrey Margaret	"	28	295, Spital Road, Bromborough, Wirral, Cheshire.	Nurse	} Ind.	India
	"	COSTELLO, MARGARET MARY	"	50	159 Livingstone Road, Crosby, Liverpool	Nursing Supt.		"

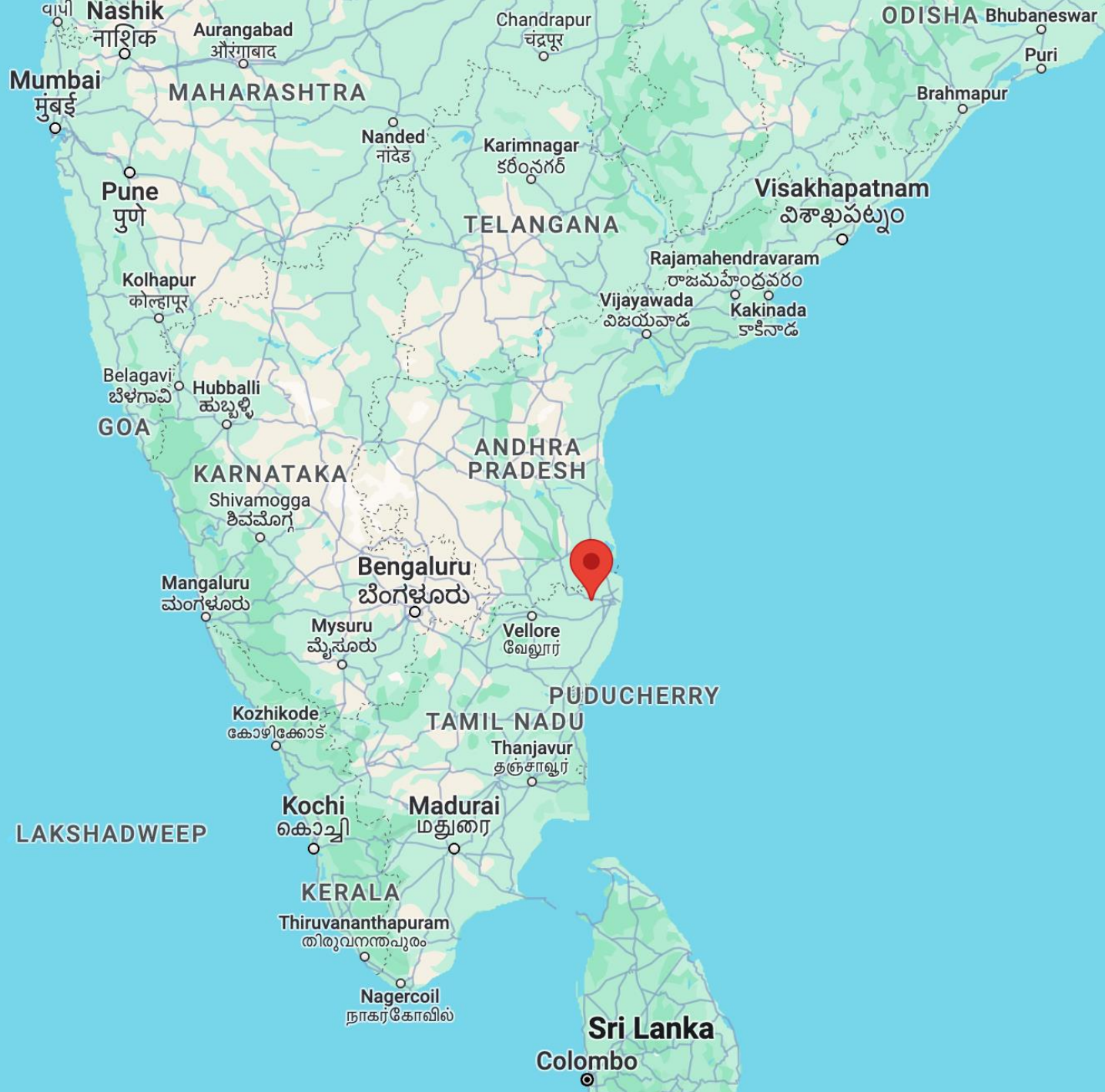
Methodist Hall, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1



And Methodology

SOAS) School of Oriental & African Studies, Uni London –

A set of correspondence between the remarkable Miss Mabel Freethy, B.A. of the Women's Work division of the Methodist Missionary Society at Methodist Hall, dated 1946-47 – and a pious, yearning young nurse in West Park Hospital, Macclesfield heard '**THE CALL**'



Ikkadu in
Tamil Nadu

Post-war India

- Twilight of the British Raj
- Wartime mission and colonial upheavals
- Great local privations and suffering
- In addition to perennial suffering and need



India – a sensory tsunami



Photos courtesy of Audrey Chalkley





The Methodist Legacy in Ikkadu

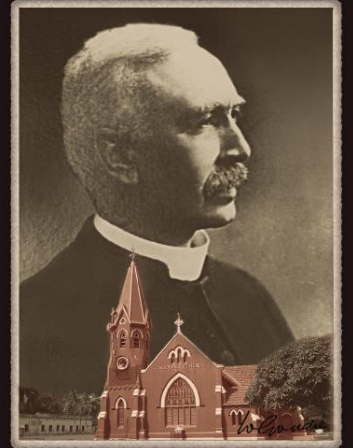


Rev William Burgess,
founder of the
Methodist Mission in
Hyderabad and
Secunderabad.
3rd mission – Ikkadu.



Ikkadu Caste and Outcaste communities

DANIEL MOHANRAJ. V



William Goudie

A VERITABLE APOSTLE TO IKKADU

Goudie
succeeded
Burgess, building
a hospital,
children's' homes,
cottage industries
and the
Wesley Church in
Ikkadu

The Wesley Church in Ikkadu



Touchers of the Untouchable

The poorest of all, the 'Outcaste' 'pariah' people – the 'Dalits'. Noticed only by Christian missionaries.

Forever and irredeemably degraded by the caste laws of Hinduism to a life of squalor and oppression

But elevated by the Christian message from missionaries, they flocked to be baptised











The demonised
Dalit Dai



Baby born at
home.

Western
midwifery
concept
does not fit
into Hindu
caste systems

How a baby is born unimportant compared to who does the cleaning up of impurities: Enter
the community *Dai*



The Goudie-established Boys' Home with their own piece of land to cultivate for food

IKKADU HOSPITAL, TAMIL NADU,



Beautiful colonial, mission built hospital but post-war things are desperate. Audrey newly qualified as SRN battles:

Cholera, dysentery, smallpox, TB, malnutrition, skin diseases, leprosy and the plague.

Plus invasions of, flies, bedbug, mosquitoes and others insects, wild dogs, cats, rats, monkeys and crows

Plus, rudimentary understandings of hygiene, terrible roads and transport, ignorance and want

Plus, insufficient surgical and medical supplies, no electricity, no running water.











INDIA 1947!

The end of denominational differences among Protestants in the CSI

Anglican upheaval back home!



Quit India Movement



Hind Swaraj and the Harijan

Methodist Missionaries and others celebrate the end of Empire and the birth of 'Mother India'



Young CSI
converts and
their pastor



The Chapel at CSI Ikkadu Hospital



Suffer the little children

The CSI feed the hungry local children daily

Audrey's first cohort



Overseas mission is about obsolescence!

Training was an essential part of the mission duty: to raise a generation of indigenous people to serve their communities as Christian pastors, teachers, nurses, doctors, welfare professionals



From
colonial run
to Indian
run services

Muriel's 'Herstory'

OUT-GOING PASSENGERS

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS, 1894-1952.

Returns of Passengers leaving the United Kingdom who have contracted to land at Ports out of Europe

P.M. 1.
First Schedule

NOTES:

- (a) The expression "EUROPE" includes all islands in the MEDITERRANEAN SEA, all ports in the REPUBLIC OF TURKEY, and all ports in the UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS other than those ports on the PACIFIC OCEAN coasts thereof.
- (b) All Passengers who have Contracted to Land at Ports in EUROPE should be excluded from this schedule and included in the third schedule.
- (c) In the case of those ships which are engaged in pleasure cruises starting and ending in the UNITED KINGDOM, the full particulars required by this form should be furnished only in respect of those passengers who embark in the UNITED KINGDOM and disembark out of EUROPE.
- (d) Passengers in each class of accommodation should be entered in separate groups.
- (e) This form should also be used in the case of a ship carrying stowage passengers from the UNITED KINGDOM, the CHANNEL ISLANDS or the ISLE OF MAN to ports outside EUROPE and not within the MEDITERRANEAN SEA and in this case the expression "EUROPE" bears its normal geographical meaning.

1841/01

Ship's name "CHANTAL"
 Gross Tonnage 7551
 Date of Departure 22nd October, 1955.
 Owner or Agent B. I. S. N. CO. LTD.

Summary of Passengers	
Total number of Adults of 12 or over	11
Total number of Children between 1 and 12 years	-
Total number of Infants under 1 year	-
GRAND TOTAL	11

5 Coded

I hereby certify that the following is a correct list of the Names and Descriptions of all Passengers who embarked at the Port of London **B. I. S. N.**

in the ship "C. H. A. N T A L A" Signed [Signature] Master. Date

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AND IRISH REPUBLICAN PASSENGERS EMBARKED AT THE PORT OF LONDON

(1) Contract Ticket Number	(2) Names of Passengers (Surname first)	(3) Class of Travel	(4) Port at which Passengers have contracted to land	(5) Sex (M. or F.)	(6) Date of Birth			(7) Married or Single (widowed or divorced to be entered as single)	(8) Address in the United Kingdom	(9) Occupation (i.e., Profession, calling, or kind of work done rather than industry in which engaged)	(10) Country of which a citizen as shown on passport. (If citizen of U.K. and Colonies state also country of issue of passport)	(11) Country of last permanent residence* (Residence for more than 12 months)	(12) Country of intended future permanent residence*
					Adults of 12 years and over	Children between 1 and 12 years	Infants under 1 year						
CHALKLEY ✓	Muriel Merch	C	Mombasa	F	4.1.22			S	296, Spital Road, Bromborough. Missionary		U.K./U.K.	England	Kenya

1949 and a sparkling new NHS

Beveridge's
vision,
Bevan's
triumph





Muriel –the reluctant missionary, in her happy and fulfilling NHS nursing career in Britain

Nursing, midwifery and midwifery tutoring were Muriel's life

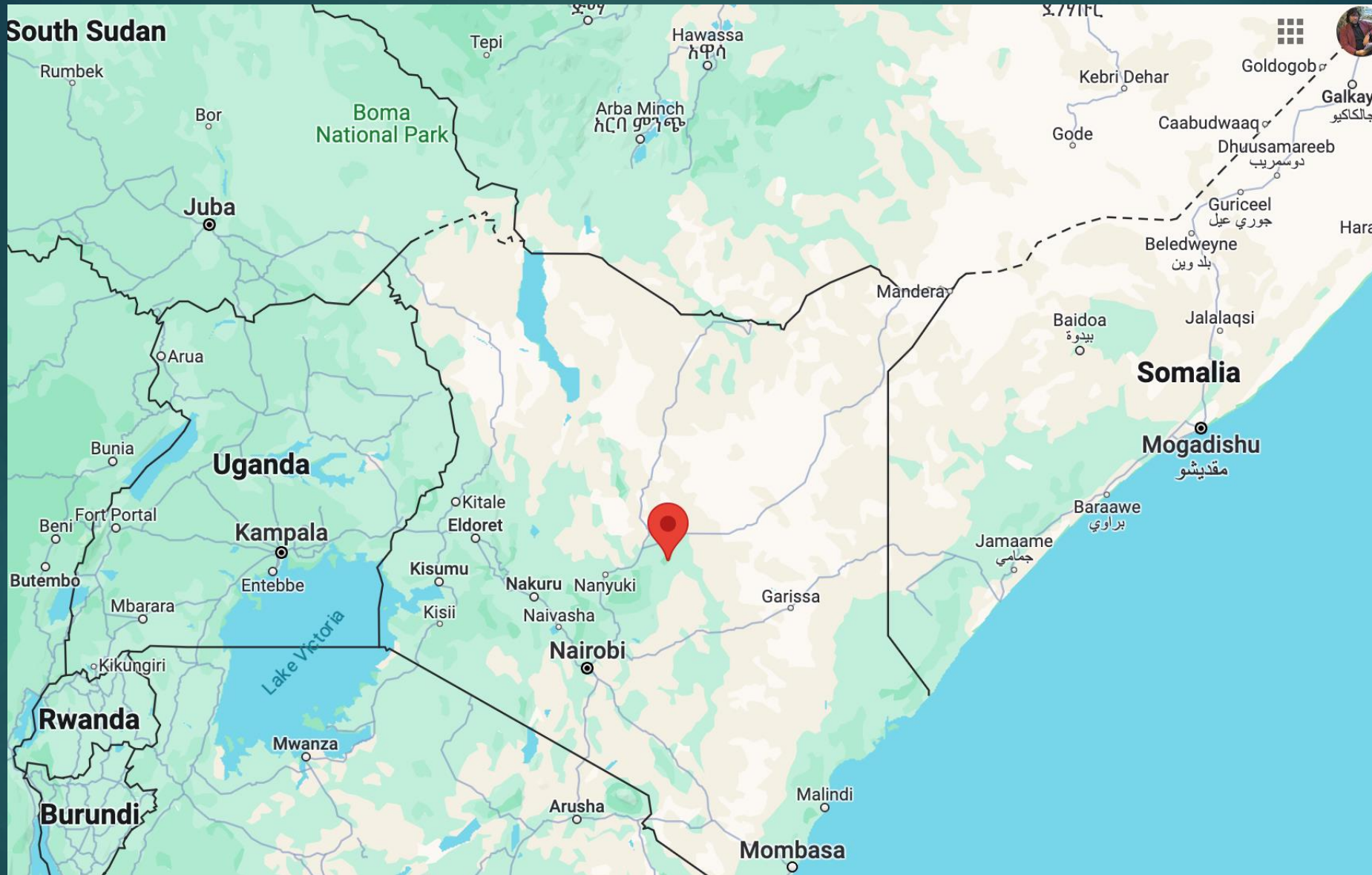


A nurse at 18 during World War II when the country were desperate for nurses – it fulfilled a life-long ambition to nurse and tutor



'The Call'

Kingsmead,
Birmingham



Maua.
Highlands,
Kenya –
home of the
Ameru
people

Remote,
inaccessible
crater

Atrocious
roads:
dusty and dry
or torrential
and flooded

Muriel & the State of Emergency 1952-60

Mau Mau Atrocities
'Bad As Belsen'

Few people in this country appreciated the fact that the **Mau Mau atrocities** committed in Kenya were as bad as those that took place in Belsen, said Mr. Taylor, of the Kenya Special Reserve, when he addressed the Edinburgh last night. Making a plea for the public to back up the Government in Kenya, Mr. Taylor pointed out that it was only 50 years since

Briton 'Probably Buried Alive'

Mr. **Leakey** 'a **Mau Mau Sacrifice**'

Mr. Arundel Gray **Leakey**, a British "blood brother" of the Kikuyu tribe, was probably buried alive as a **Mau Mau sacrifice** after his abduction 12 days ago, the Government said yesterday. Mr. **Leakey**

is a farmer who refused to take the **Mau Mau** seriously, disapproved after terrorists murdered his African servant. **Leakey** is believed to have been on the upper slopes of Kenya, near Nyeri, where the "marsh" Kaleba, the commander of local **Mau Mau** forces, was captured yesterday in a cave containing possessions of Mr. **Leakey**.

Books of

THE **MAU MAU** TROUBLES

Dr. L. S. B. **Leakey** and their

Yorkshire Post

MAU MAU BLAMED FOR KILLING FAMILY

NAIROBI, Tuesday. The bodies of an African houseboy, his wife and four children were found mutilated in a European house here today.

MAU MAU SEIZE FARMER, STRANGLE WIFE

HUNT FOR BRITISH "BLOOD BROTHER" OF THE KIKUYUS

NAIROBI, Thursday. SECURITY forces searched over a wide area today for Mr. Arundel Gray **Leakey**, a British farmer who refused to take **Mau Mau** seriously, scorned the employment of guards and seldom carried a gun. He was dragged off

A WISE CHOICE
When you choose 'Vantella' Shirts and Van Heusen Collars you buy satisfaction in materials, appearance and real comfort. 'Vantella' Shirts, White, Cream or coloured. Van Heusen Collars 3/6. Van Heusen Collar-attached Shirts 33/6.
RUFUS SANDERSON'S
LEEDS 1 13 COMMERCIAL ST

Mau Mau murder British family

30 arrests in big man-hunt
NAIROBI, Sunday
POLICE hunting the killers of a 37-year-old British farmer, Mr. Roger E. G. **Rock**, his wife and their six-year-old son, tonight arrested 30 Africans, including some women. The Africans were spotted by the emergency aircraft.

RAIDS BY **MAU MAU**

MAU MAU

Murder, Arson, Abductions

NAIROBI, Sunday. — **Mau Mau**

Muriel's colonial 'bungalow' was a humble shack of 3 rooms, no electricity, no running water, no toilet and an outside kitchen with a temperamental, ancient iron stove.

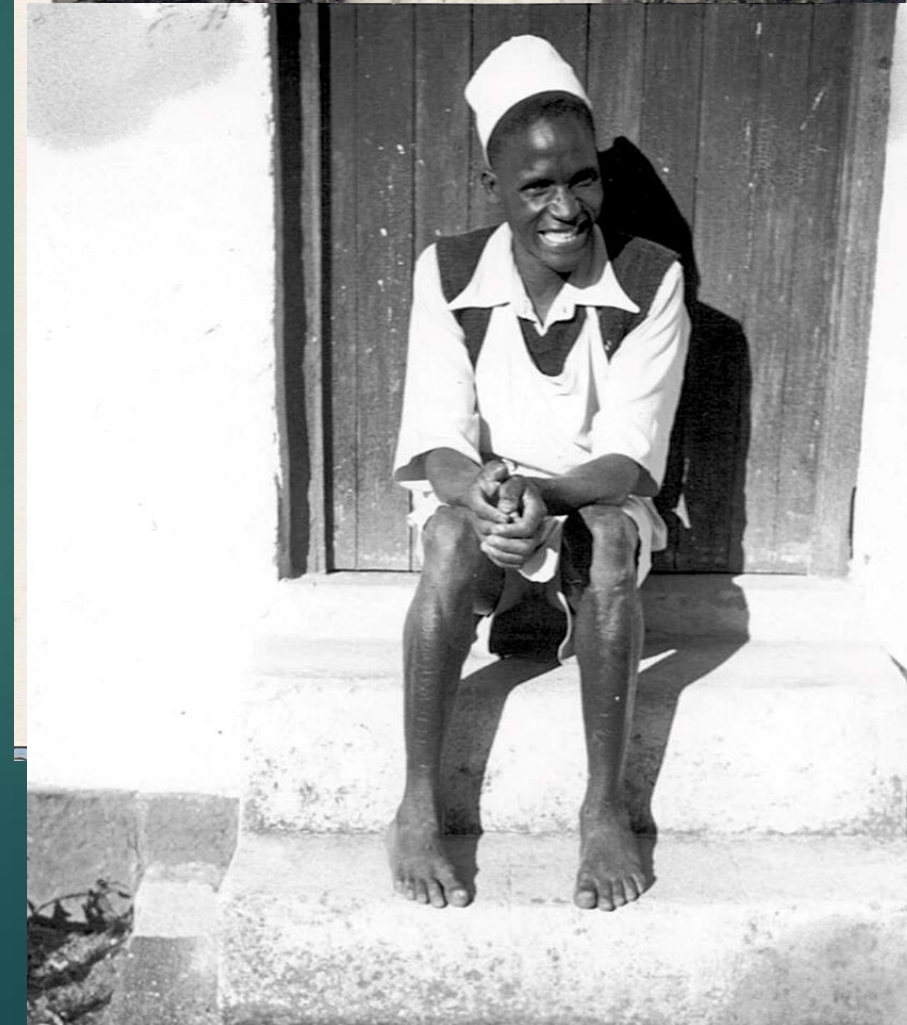
Muriel even had to bring her own bedding out from England.

Stephano was a P-T Methodist preacher, general handyman, kitchen gardener and liaison person, and Muriel's 'house boy'

Neither she nor Stephano could cook!

And didn't know each other's languages well

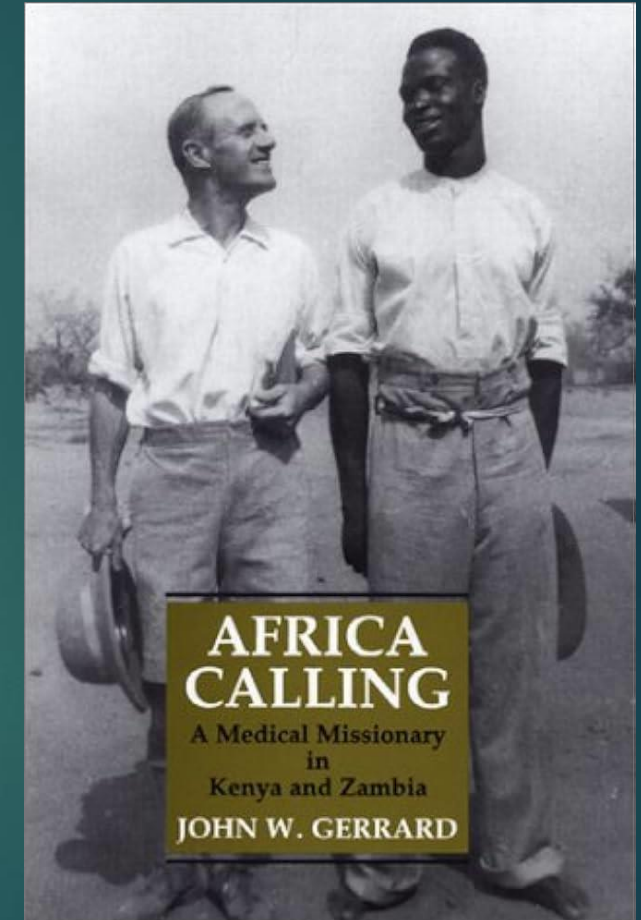
But they did get on famously well!



From colonial mission hospital to post-colonial



Maua
Methodist Hospital
Sharing and Caring



Plus small maternity ward
and a generator for X-Rays

What Muriel found

‘What a contrast to my hospital in the UK! I see I wrote in my diary my first impressions: “FLIES -DIRT - SMELLS!” Especially on the Children’s wards. There were just holes in the ground for latrines, potties for the toddlers but they didn’t understand how to use them and just deposited their waste in little heaps everywhere on the floor! It was all such a contrast to having done four years in the UK of course. But the African staff – mainly boys and young men – some now qualified, having done four years training were very welcoming to me. The beds were made of iron, with a wooden base and straw mattresses. Sterilising of instruments was done with Primus stoves, and at night theatre had an oil lamp fixed in the ceiling. But for all other procedures (including complicated deliveries) we only had tilley (kerosene) lamps and torches.’

Apart from dealing with

- ▶ All kinds of horrible diseases
- ▶ Hideous 'panga' machete wounds
- ▶ Accidents and wild animal maulings
- ▶ Malnutrition and parasitic infestations
- ▶ Maternal health and midwifery
- ▶ Muriel had to carry out public health and medical check-ups in remote, inaccessible villages



FAMINE 1957

Famine in 1957

Terrible famine outbreaks occurred regularly – Maua Methodist Hospital was at the forefront of care



ERRY MILLS AND THE BEDFORD VAN I LEARNED
TO DRIVE
WITH!





WATCHING A PUPPET SHOW 1956

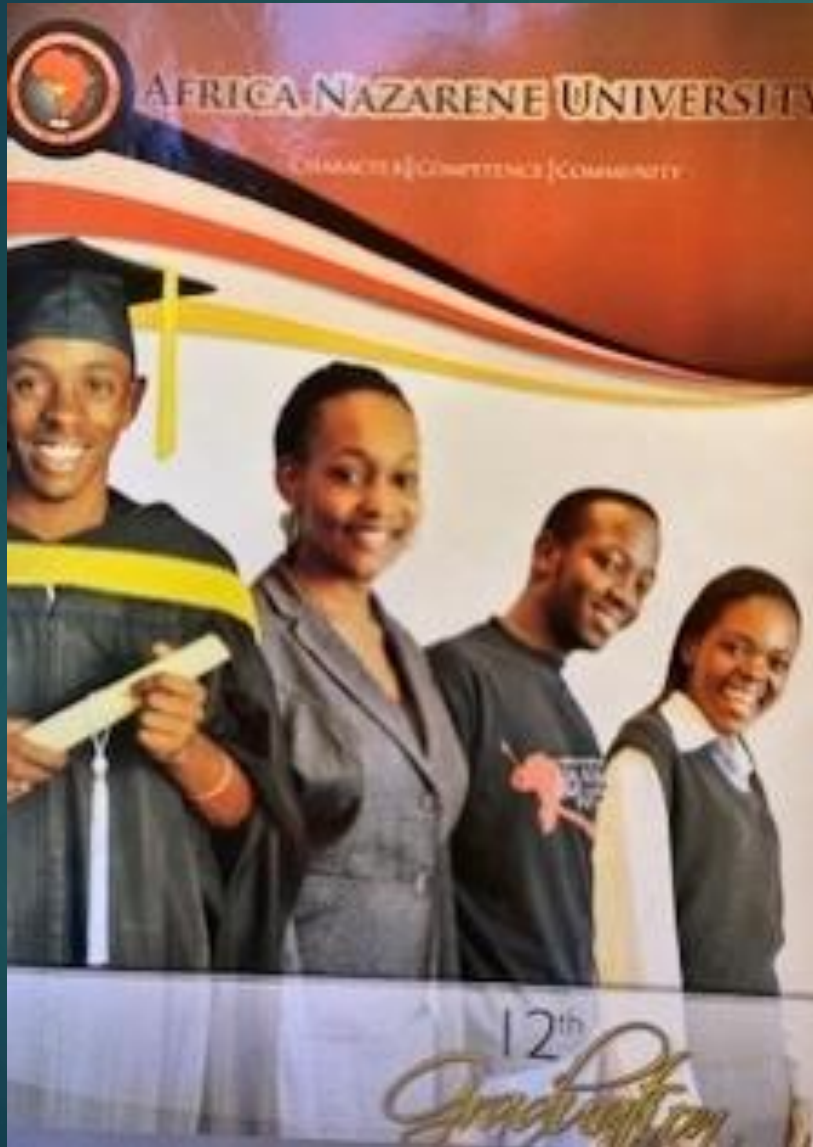


Muriel and
her first
class of
Kenyan
students

1955

MY FIRST YEAR AT MAUA 1955

An acorn in the 2nd cohort



Enduring values in a changing world

Professor Leah T. Marangu
Vice President, Africa Nazarene University

I get the great pleasure to work with one of you in Africa Nazarene University's 12th graduation ceremony. Today we celebrate with you because you are commencing a new period of growth of 2015 graduates ready to go into the world of work as committed, capable and productive young men and women.

Let us join with you and thank your parents, guardians, faculty and staff who have contributed to the successful completion of your studies. You have acquired excellent academic competencies coupled with moral values and sound social responsibilities that will enable you to go out and transform your world. The weak, special and economic with acquired skills will be transformed through the dynamic nature of the current world.

God gave the 12th class members the 360-degree view of what, when, where, why and how to make the difference from the page words of statistics. God wanted them to lead a life of a kind of life by going their own 360-degree view, not just that they should have values that would fit all students and generations to come. The commandments God gave the children of Israel to love God first, then love their neighbors, to love their parents and to love the Lord your God the best of time and our generation. We are convinced we will continue to love God and ourselves, to love our parents and to love our neighbors as we love the Lord our God. I hope you will love, to go to the world with the best of intentions and to love the Lord our God through the Holy Spirit.



Villagers lived
in remote
and
traditional
communities

Courtesy of Muriel Chalkley



VILWACE WOMEN AT MAUA
1956

Typical village
women in 1956

Ameru women
extremely hard
working,

Farming, water
carrying,
firewood
collecting,
childbearing and
raising families

Late 1970s





And the
Ameru
men?

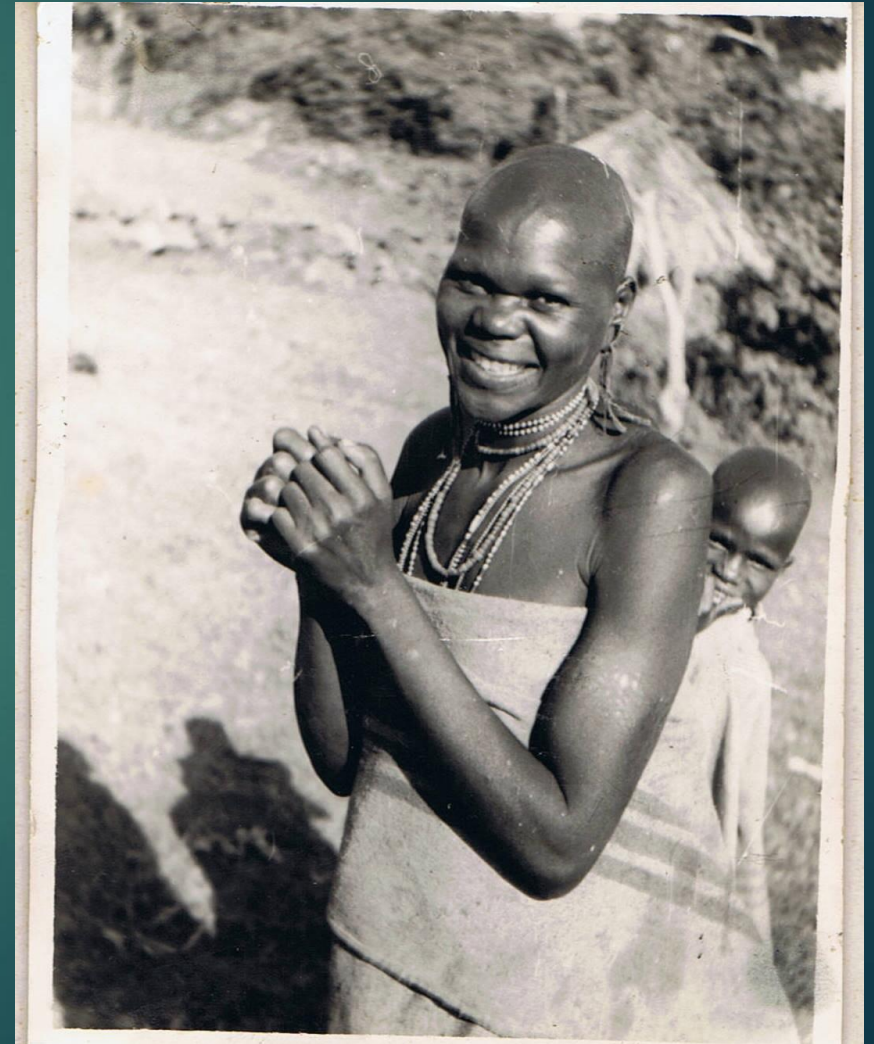
Childbirth was very dangerous for Maua women and their babies



Work-related
pelvic
deformities

& adolescent
initiation:

'Female genital
mutilation'





Maternal and infant deaths were very common, particularly when women laboured in remote communities

One little orphan

'Shilling -itano' who became 'Mary'



Multiple
births
were
common
and
added to
danger

TRIPLETS AND MARY & FLORENCE



The Mau Mau apart....

Kenya –where the beautiful people are!

Shooting with cameras replaces guns

Safari becomes the new big attraction



George and Joy (Born Free) Adamson, murdered – 1989 & 1980



'Mission' blues – times change

Sisters see change

Muriel Chalkley, former assistant matron of the maternity hospital at Clatterbridge and now of the Methodist Mission Hospital at Maua, Kenya.

Both sisters emphasised how their own roles had changed from the traditional idea of the missionary to that of partners in enterprises where local people were showing increasing self-sufficiency.

As Miss Chalkley put it: "We are now called seconded workers. Our presi-

dent will not let us call ourselves missionaries."

Today it was the church in their own adopted areas in India and Kenya who were concerned about the state of the church in Britain. But they appreciated the help given to them in community development and in running badly needed medical facilities.

Miss Audrey Chalkley described the enormous problems of Indian society where the high and increasing birth rate meant half the population were underfed. For vast numbers of people life was a hand-to-

not let us call ourselves missionaries."

It was the church in their own adopted areas in India and Kenya who were concerned about the state of the church in Britain. But they appreciated the help given to them in community development and in running badly needed medical facilities.

Audrey Chalkley described the enormous problems of Indian society

the high and increasing birth rate meant half the population were underfed or vast numbers of people life was a hand-to-existence.

the Kenya hospital Muriel Chalkley said the demand on the 30 beds had risen from a situation where only 10 maternity beds were available to babies being born in Maua to some 3,000. The government hospital was 100 miles away.

giving a parallel between the resources available in Clatterbridge where there were ample medical supplies, and at Maua everything had to be sterilised by boiler relatively primitive conditions.

sisters thanked the people who had been helping them over the



Missionaries one and all. The Rev. Henry Dennis (left), of Stanton Road, Bebington, who was a missionary in Ghana meets, sisters, Miss Muriel Chalkley and Miss Audrey Chalkley, with Mrs. Enid Priestley, widow of the late Bishop Eber Priestley of the church of South India.

Newspaper cutting,
Muriel Chalkley, about
1980

No longer to be called
'missionaries'

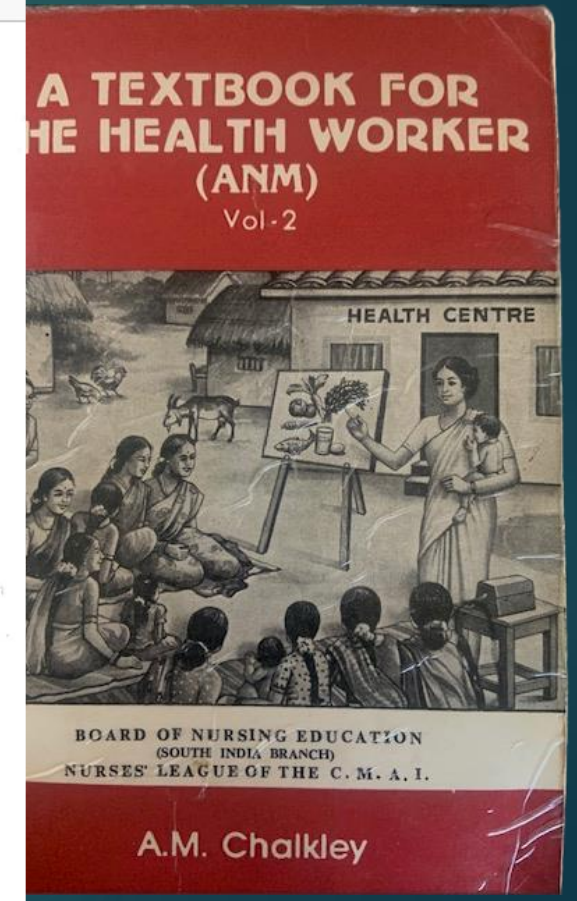
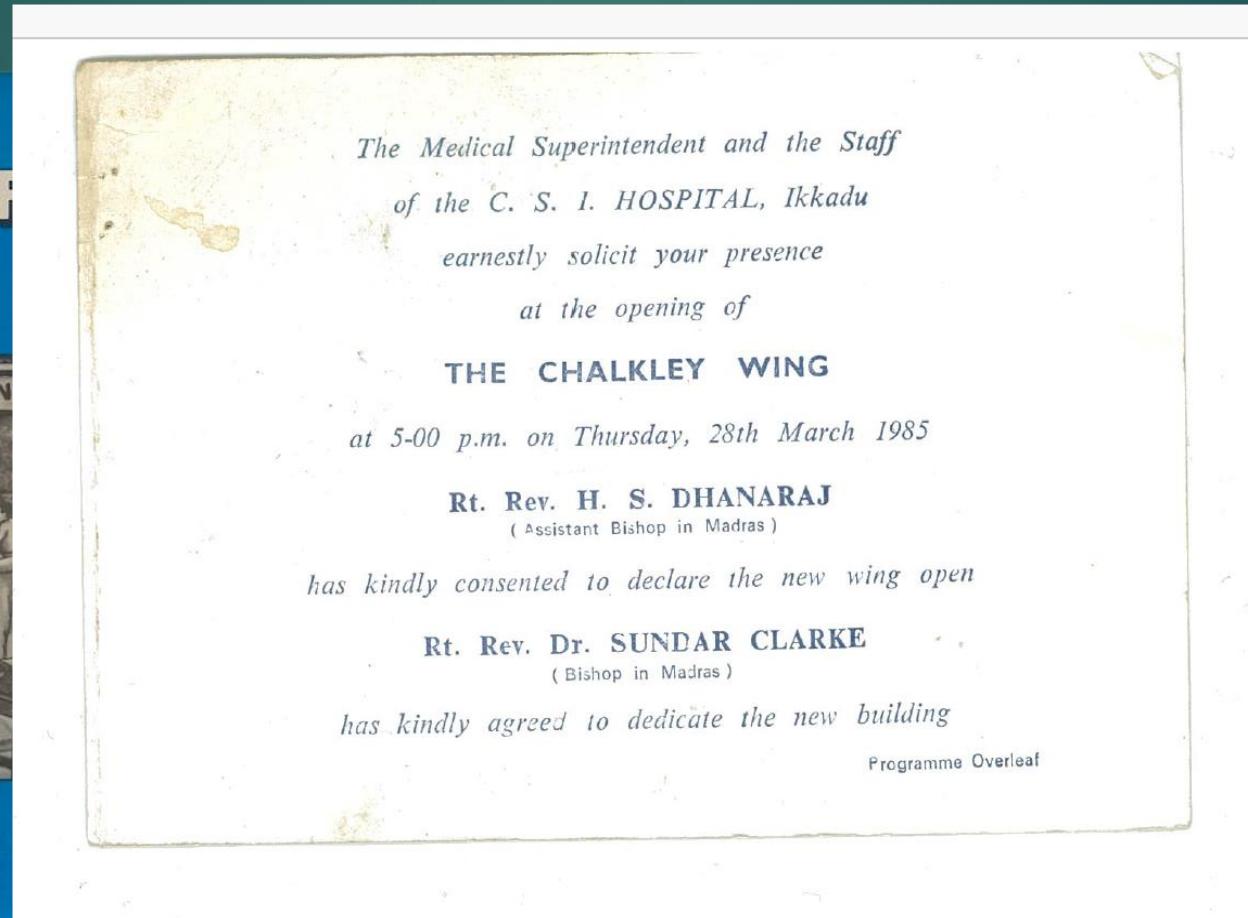
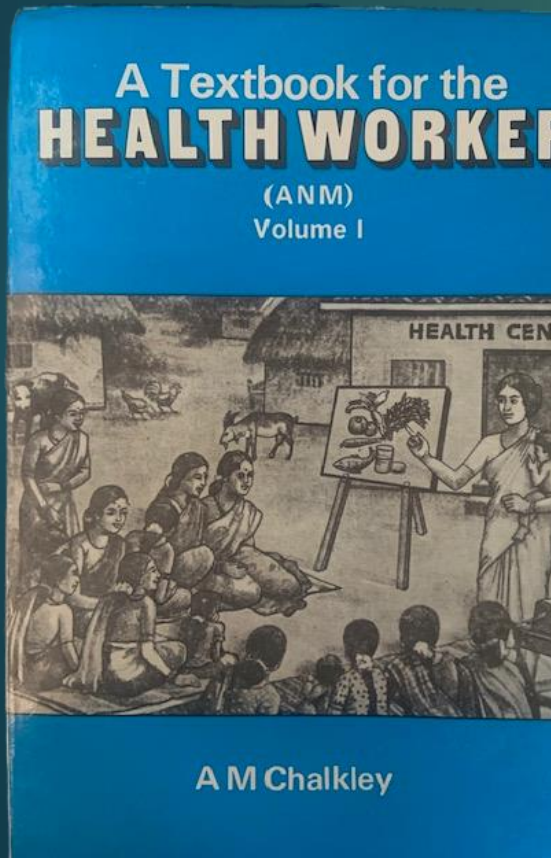


God chose
well, said
Muriel.:

Muriel was
perfect for
Kenya just as
Audrey was
ideal for India

Audrey – godly, gentle and scholarly

Hospital supervisor, Manager of Nursing, examiner and inspector of hospitals, All-Indian Secretary for midwives, leader of training Auxiliary Midwives Nursing organization, producer of key text books – still in print and use!



Muriel's legacy: loved and honoured

1 more precious
baby



God that

ann

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uding

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ags”



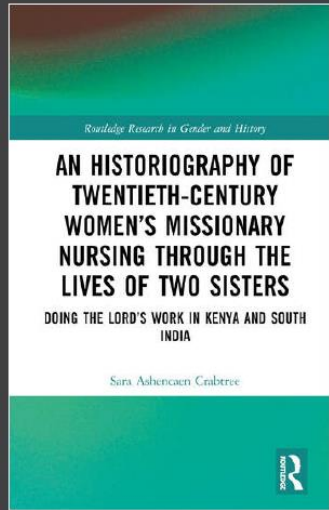
Honorary doctorate 2014

Thank you!

And before
I go, here's
Del Boy's
promo:

'cop-a-load
of these
beauties!'





Dec 2023: 272pp
20 B/W illustrations
Hb: 978-1-032-41796-7 | £130
eBook: 978-1-003-35974-6 | £38.99

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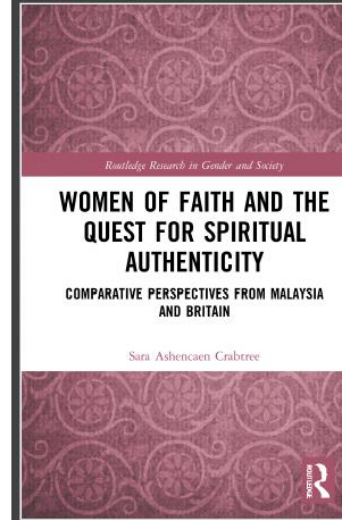
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