East Africa Diary: October 1996

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Monday, September 30

I’m sitting in the British Airways gate area at Chicago International Terminal. My flight to London is scheduled to board at 7.20 pm, just a few minutes from now. The waiting lounge here is not very crowded, so I’m guessing that this will not be a full plane.

My hunch was correct. My seat number is an aisle seat, within the center block of four seats, and I am the only occupant of this row. Shortly after take-off, I stake out my claim—push up the three arm rests, move to the adjoining seat, spread out my things across the other seats, put down a couple of tray tables—all this to deter anyone else from invading my territory. With four pillows and four blankets, I’m going to be a pig in clover tonight. The thought makes me feel drowsy already.

I like British Airways service. Friendly, efficient, and always extra things, like socks, ear plugs, eye shades, complimentary toothbrush and paste. I generally register for lacto-ovo meals, but after the last United Airlines trip to Peru, when I got two identical “special” dinners in a row—even to the three asparagus cuts on the top of the wild rice—I’ve decided to try “regular” for meals. It turns out there are two choices for dinner, and one is fish, which is OK with me; and breakfast looks to be as vegetarian as you can get.

Tuesday, October 1

This is the most comfortable overnight flight I have ever taken. Early in the flight I advance my watch five hours from Eastern Time so that my mind can begin to operate in sync with what is happening in London.

Southern England is overcast this morning, so we don’t see land until we are almost on it. Terminal 4 at Heathrow has a look of familiarity after two previous arrivals here with tour groups. I’m spending a night in England before continuing to Africa tomorrow night, so I have to claim all baggage. We arrived a half hour ahead of schedule this morning, so after clearing customs I wait expectantly at the busy arrivals level for Per Lisle, who is coming from Newbold College to meet me.

Per owns a genuine 1950’s Morris Minor in immaculate condition. Somehow, we manage to squeeze all my stuff into it, and it is a real treat to ride in this machine to Bracknell and Newbold College. I am assigned a guest room in “Parkham”, a rambling old multi-storied home set in nice grounds less than five minutes from the campus. A bath, a shave, and fresh clean clothes prepare me for lunch in the Newbold dining room with the three Newbold librarians. Afterwards we move to Per’s office for an afternoon of shop-talk.

Since I’m leaving first thing in the morning, I want to pay my bill this afternoon. The cashier is open, but ...

“I’m terribly sorry, sir, but we only handle cash in the mornings. You could pay by credit card, if you wish, but there is a ten percent handling fee.” This is England.

Wednesday, October 3

The Left Luggage department at Heathrow airport accepts all four of my articles of luggage, but charges a
handsome eight pounds sterling for minding them until I return this evening. The upside of the deal is that I get to enjoy a day in London with nothing more than my camera and a map of the city. The Underground from Terminal 4 takes me right into Leicester Square. Nearby Charing Cross Road is the bookshop center of London. I’m looking for a shop that specializes in travel books, and I’m quickly directed to Stamford’s at Covent Garden, just a stone’s throw away. Stamford’s stocks just about every travel book and road atlas in existence, so I’m able to find some Scandinavia guide-books for next summer’s tour.

Covent Garden market is my choice for a lunch venue. I patronize Crank’s vegetarian fast food joint, then sit among the crowds in the sunshine, watching an athletic team perform some tricky routines. Inside the old building, the sound of music leads me to a corner where four youthful musicians perform selections from Mozart’s Magic Flute with much gusto. The heart of London is a wonderful place. Africa will not be like this.

Back at Heathrow, I check in and join the waiting crowd at Gate 1. This is going to be a crowded flight, and the only seat I could get is in the dead center of the cabin. What if I have a fat lady on one side, and ...? But I could hardly wish for nicer seatmates. The charming German couple on my left are heading to a vacation in South Africa. Their English is much better than my Deutsch. The elderly lady on my right is returning to Cape Town after a holiday in Britain. Since all four of us have traveled extensively, conversation flows easily.

As the big jet lifts into the night sky and turns its nose toward Africa, I experience a feeling of alone-ness. England seemed already far enough away from my life and love. Now I am a pilgrim on an 11-hour flight to the southern reaches of a vast and unknown continent. I have not been to Africa before. I am following in the footsteps of the great David Livingstone. The courageous doctor once said, “I will go anywhere -- provided it be forward.” I like that. I should make it my personal motto.

Thursday, October 3

As morning breaks, we are somewhere over northern Zimbabwe. It was a sleepless night, and it’s going to be a long day before I arrive at my destination of Solusi University near Bulawayo. I would like to wash and shave, but there are long lines waiting for the toilets, so I’ll postpone my morning ritual until I am on the ground at Johannesburg. Meanwhile, breakfast is served and then we prepare for the descent.
Jo’burg International Airport may not be representative of the Republic of South Africa. The terminal building is old and lacks docking facilities. Outside the plane it is windy, warm, and dusty as I follow the crowd into the building where a choir of native women sings lustily. Must be a song of welcome. Since I am a transit passenger, I look for a direct route to international departures. I’m booked on a South African Airways flight at about one o’clock, so after getting my seat assignment, I find a comfortable place to snooze and vegetate for several hours. The boarding area is hot and dusty, and there are no departure signs nor gate announcements. Half the people in my line think they are catching a flight to Dubai, but the ranks thin rapidly as the airline official checks boarding passes.

Bulawayo is situated on a high plateau in southern Zimbabwe. The airport is in the bush several miles from the city, and we descend across miles of thorn bush scrub, brown at the end of the long dry season. The annual rains are expected here in November.

The immigration officer leaf’s systematically through my passport twice, then asks, “You have a visa?” “No, I was told I don’t need one.” There is some conversation in a foreign tongue, then the officer shrugs, stamps my passport, and waves me on to re-unite with my baggage. Out in the entrance hall I change some money, then settle on a bench to await arrival of an Air Zimbabwe flight from Harare. Coming on that flight should be Hudson Kibuuka, education director for the Eastern Africa Division, and John Fowler, an associate education director from the General Conference. I doze a little during the two-hour interlude.

When the Harare plane arrives, I am glad to see Hudson emerge from the customs zone. He introduces me to Bert Stickle, a Canadian national who is associate treasurer for the Division. John Fowler is not with them. They say he arrived in Harare earlier today on a flight from Jo’burg but did not appear for his connecting flight to Bulawayo. No one knows his whereabouts.

Under John Fowler’s intended leadership, we are a General Conference team appointed to conduct an interim evaluation visit at Solusi University. Three years ago, a similar team granted Solusi a tentative five years’ accreditation but decreed a mid-term review. We are here to do that review.

Solusi is a small island of civilization in a vast sea of thorn bush scrub, thirty miles from Bulawayo (the locals pronounce it “B’LOU-way”). It is dusk as we drive into the settlement and pull up outside a handsome ronval in the center of the campus. Here we are served a hot meal and meet the Vice Chancellor of Solusi University and other officers. There is concern for John Fowler, so the university van will return to the airport this evening to meet the last flight from Harare.
Friday, October 4

Last night’s sleep was total immersion, thanks to melatonin, the new wonder pill for travelers. I surface to reality at seven, suddenly aware of bright tropical sunshine and a bird concert outside my window. I am staying in the home of one of the Solusi faculty. Mr. Mhosva is director of campus development.

Solusi at this season is a riot of color set in a desert of brown grass and red sand. The air is perfumed with Jacaranda blossoms. The pioneers planted hundreds of these trees which just now are loaded with the purple blossoms that are already dropping to form a sweet-scented carpet in their shade. Add to this, clusters of bougainvillea in bright red, orange, mauve and yellow, plus plantings of native ornamentals and grey gums from Australia. The bird life is prolific and equally colorful.

John Fowler did not arrive last night, so there is concern for his whereabouts. SAA confirms that he was on their flight to Harare yesterday, but no one has seen or heard of him. Of course, it doesn’t help that the phones at Solusi are out of service today. In Fowler’s absence, Hudson Kibuuka takes team leadership, and our day is soon organized. Hudson was to have led in the vesper program tonight but will now take the Sabbath service. I am to take the vesper program.

Sabbath, October 5

Solusi is already weaving a spell on me. This morning, as I walk in bright sunshine to Sabbath-School, I join throngs of Africans, all in their Sabbath best, making their way toward the neat “A”-framed church from every point of the compass. No park lot here and no carloads of worshipers. Everyone comes on foot, mostly single file along dusty trails, summoned by the church bell. This is the Africa I will remember.

Sunday, October 6

Phone service was restored last night, and it produced a fax from John Fowler. He is in Nairobi, Kenya.
Zimbabwe refused him entrance, arguing that he was supposed to have a visa. He was flown back to Jo’burg, and from there made connecting flights to Kenya. We are relieved that he is alive and well. Meanwhile, Hudson is doing a fine job as our team leader. My main responsibility is to evaluate the library.

**Monday, October 7**

It’s an early rising this morning, and at seven we are back at Bulawayo airport. My flight to Harare is scheduled at 7.50. Hudson and Bert assumed they had tickets for the same flight but discover that they were booked on an earlier plane. However, their luck is in. There are plenty of spare seats on the aircraft.

On board the small prop-jet, we buckle up. Two engines roar into life, then the pilot feathers them. “Ladies and gentlemen, we have some problem with the right engine. We apologize for the delay.” Bert, sitting next to me, remarks, “Ah, it’s that plane again.” A pause as I digest his statement. “You mean...?” “Well, every time I travel on this particular plane they are having trouble with the right-side engine.” I like Bert—he is so calm and laid back. Twenty minutes later, the maintenance crew moves off and we are up and away.

At Harare, we disembark in front of the terminal building. I collect my baggage and prepare to walk the few yards to the international departures building next door. My connecting flight is to Lusaka, where I am to catch an Aero Zambia flight to Nairobi. Hudson and Bert are not coming with me today, but have booked to fly to Nairobi tomorrow, via Dar es Salaam. I ask why they are waiting here an extra day. Bert shrugs. “We prefer not to fly Aero Zambia.” He grins at me. “They only have one plane -- I think it’s an old 767 that Air Zimbabwe had finished with.”

I hurry over to the international terminal, recalling that I said my prayers early this morning. At the Air Zimbabwe counter, I ask if they will check my stuff right through to Nairobi, but the answer is no. I pay 200 Zim dollars departure tax, fill out a departure card, and head for immigration. The officer inspects my passport, then my card. “How many days have you been in Zimbabwe?” he asks. “Four”, I reply.

He doesn’t like my answer and accuses me of lying to him.

“Sir, I arrived in Zimbabwe four days ago. I could show you a copy of my air ticket.”

He points to the arrival stamp in my passport. It reads, “Bulawayo, September 27.” But I landed there on October 3. The date stamp is incorrect, and again I offer to produce my ticket receipt. He doesn’t want to see it. “It is your responsibility to check what is in your passport, and have it corrected if necessary. It is your problem, not mine.”

He hands me my passport and I proceed to the boarding area. But I wonder if this was the official who refused entry to John Fowler four days ago at this same airport.

Moments later, we file out to board the plane. I recognize the same aircraft that brought me here less than an hour ago—the one with the problem right-hand engine. Well, if the Lord wants me in Africa, He will take care of me. I’ll just relax and enjoy the day. Soon we are safely airborne and headed north again.

On the ground in Lusaka, I face a dilemma. The immigration entry point lies between me and my baggage, which I must collect and check-in again at the Aero Zambia desk. But if I go through Zambia immigration, they will stamp my passport and then I will have to pay a $20 departure tax to leave the country in two hours’
time. I explain my predicament to the immigration officer, who promises nothing, but waves me through. As I prepare to board the Aero Zambia flight later, I have to explain why I should not be required to pay departure tax, and my story is accepted.

Whatever the vintage of Aero Zambia’s sole aircraft, a Boeing 767, it is freshly painted with the airline’s mauve and yellow logo. It turns out that I am one of only ten passengers flying to Nairobi this afternoon, so we feel lost among 150 seats on this jet. We take off on time, and head north-east to Nairobi, where we are due to land about sunset. I expect a representative from the branch Division Office at Nairobi will meet me on arrival.

**Tuesday, October 8**

This is my free day to explore Nairobi. I am staying in the Panafric Hotel, a large modern place on the edge of downtown. The balcony of my sixth-floor room overlooks a pool and gardens. The morning air is quite cool, conditioned by the city’s altitude of 5,000 feet above sea level.

After breakfast, I join a throng of native people walking the dusty paths paralleling Kenyatta Avenue into the city center. The relatively narrow road is crowded with assorted buses, trucks and matatus. In town, I make my way to the impressive Kenyatta Conference Center. It has a high tower which provides a wonderful panorama of the downtown area. After taking several pictures, I wander into the shopping streets including the market area. I am looking for a copper engraving of African wildlife to take home as a souvenir. I find the right one in a small souvenir shop, and the owner writes our agreed price on his business card. I will come back to make the purchase sometime next week—by then I should have space for it in my suitcase.

Back at the hotel, I try to telephone the library at the University of Nairobi. There is a single number listed for the university, but it does not answer, which is perplexing, because this is a large university with more than 10,000 students. I ask the hotel operator to check the number for me, and we try several more times, without success. Meanwhile, Hudson and Bert have arrived from Harare. John Fowler is also staying here. I stopped by his room this morning for a short visit. All four of us fly to Kisumu early tomorrow morning.

**Wednesday, October 9**

We are on board Kenya Airways for the short flight to Kisumu, near Lake Victoria, at the western border of Kenya. It is overcast, so we see little until the descent over the lake to the small airport. We are met by two drivers from the University of Eastern Africa at Baraton, in the highlands about 70 miles north of here.
The journey is spectacular, as the road climbs steadily to 6,000 feet, crossing the equator en-route. We pass through dozens of small African villages and towns, observe many large tea estates along the sloping hillsides, and encounter dozens of hopelessly overcrowded matatus. A matatu here in western Kenya is nothing more than a small truck with a passenger box on the back. An unbelievable number of people crowd into these vehicles (“there’s always room for one more”) and they carry mountains of baggage and freight on top. Men commonly hang out the back or stand on the rear fender which is practically dragging on the road. And everywhere there are people, walking beside the highway in both directions. Africa is a continent on the move.

We arrive at the university in time for a welcome lunch, followed by a tour of the campus. We are impressed by well-kept lawns and gardens, attractive buildings, and the fine dairy and farm. This is a young institution with a steadily growing enrolment. We have less than two full days here, so our team work will keep us busy. Tonight, we enjoy dinner in faculty homes, then attend a devotional meeting where John Fowler preaches a powerful sermon.

Thursday, October 10
Tonight, Hudson and I have dinner at the home of the University’s Vice-Chancellor. A visiting couple from Loma Linda Medical Center, Robert and Odette Johnson, are also guests for the meal, so we enjoy a lively and interesting conversation. Dr. Johnson has visited the Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in China and remembers meeting Kerrie there.

The climate here on the plateau is pleasantly cool, the nights even chilly. Three of us are accommodated in an empty faculty bungalow, which has just been re-painted. We are to leave for Kisumu at day-break tomorrow.

Friday, October 11
We were instructed to prepare for pick-up at six this morning. We are ready on time, but our driver arrives late. This guarantees a fast ride down the mountain roads, slowed only by pedestrian-thronged villages and 66 speed bumps--Hudson counted them. We arrive at Kisumu airport with little time to spare.

At Nairobi airport, we are met by George Wheeler, treasurer at the Eastern Africa Union Mission. He and his assistant will be very busy meeting and transporting people arriving for a 9-day Eastern Africa Division Conference which begins this afternoon.

This multi-disciplinary convention with about 500 delegates is taking place at the rather new and impressive-looking campus of Kenya University of Eastern Africa, Baraton. From top: (1) Administration and classroom block; (2) Auditorium; (3) Library; (4) This building was the former library.
College of Communications Technology, in a rural setting about 20 miles south of Nairobi. The major emphasis of the professional meetings is health, and the problem of AIDS in Africa will receive priority in the presentations and discussions. This is the first convention of this magnitude organized by the SDA Church in Eastern Africa, and is possible only because of heavy financial support by the World Bank and several other organizations.

The KCCT campus at Mbgathi includes a fine conference center and adjoining hotel with accommodation for 400 guests. I am allocated one of just four suites in the building. It consists of a spacious living room, a bedroom with queen bed, kitchen with stove and refrigerator, and bathroom. I’m not sure why I am accorded this degree of luxury.

Kenya College of Communications Technology, where the convention and the library workshop was held.

Sabbath, October 12

The morning worship services in the conference center are memorable. I will not forget the wonderful singing, nearly always accompanied with body actions. Part way through the preaching service, there is a power cut, but we have no difficulty hearing the message.

The conference program advertises a bus ride through the nearby Nairobi Game Park this afternoon for all conference delegates. We hurry through lunch, and board the buses lined up outside the hotel. But the buses go nowhere. We are told that the payment for the trip was not made in time, so the tour will be postponed to next Sabbath afternoon.

Sunday, October 13

This is the first day of the health conference sessions. Hudson invited me to conduct a week-long workshop for Eastern Africa Division librarians. We meet in a classroom on the KCCT campus. There are seven of us, representing institutions in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi and Zimbabwe. We have a get-acquainted session and plan our week together. I will have overhead presentations on several topics, there will be software and CD-ROM demos, an Internet demonstration, and a field trip to libraries in the Nairobi area.

Monday, October 14

Before breakfast this morning, I wash out three pairs of undershorts and hang them on a make-shift clothesline in front of the bedroom window. The hotel is not air-conditioned, so the open windows will keep the room pleasantly cool and help dry the clothes. At the end of the morning session, I return to the room to find the window closed and one pair of underpants missing. I am about to report the theft to reception when there is a knock at my door. It is a maid from the hotel staff who asks if I am missing some clothing. Yes, indeed.

“You left your window open,” she says.
Oh, did the wind blow away my underpants?” I don’t understand how that could have happened.

“No, a monkey took them,” she explains. “A monkey climbed into your room and took a piece of your clothing. A man outside saw the monkey and reported it to reception. We came and closed your window. You must not leave your window open when you are not in the room.” I thank her and picture a monkey who is trying to set a new dress code for the species.

**Tuesday, October 15**

We are scheduled for a library field trip tomorrow, but I am still unable to get telephone connection to the University of Nairobi. I am told that the number printed in the directory is correct, but no-one ever answers my phone calls. In desperation I finally manage to contact the librarian at the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST), who tells me that the university number is incorrectly printed in the phone book. I finally get in touch with the university librarian to arrange tomorrow’s visit.

Problems with eastern Africa’s infrastructure are not limited to the telephone service. Each day there are unscheduled power brownouts (which play havoc with my use of overhead projection and the computer demos). There are similar problems with the water supply in the hotel. Yesterday there was no hot water, and this morning there was no cold water either. I’m not quite ready to blame the monkeys for that -- yet!

At mid-week I am frustrated. In addition to the power failures, sessions frequently start late, and schedules are haphazard. Then Hudson stops by the workshop. As I share my frustrations with him he smiles. “Keith, you come from North America, where everything runs by the clock. Here in Africa, you must understand that relationships are more important than the clock.” As I digest what he is trying to tell me, I realize that my time here must be a learning experience. I must set aside my cultural norms, and be open to cultural differences. I must try to see the world with new eyes.

At the devotional meeting tonight, I join the African multitude as we sing together, “Hark the voice of Jesus calling.” I cannot help but smile as we sing the words of the third stanza:

“If you cannot cross the ocean and the heathen lands explore,
You can find the heathen nearer, you can help them at your door.”

Come to think about it, America needs the gospel message as much as Africa.

**Wednesday, October 16**

After the early morning meeting in the conference center, our library group climbs into a minivan for our field trip. It begins at the large campus of Nairobi University in the city center, where we spend two hours visiting various library departments. After a lunch break in the market area we drive out to the Karen area and manage to find the small but interesting campus of NEGST. The library there occupies what used to be a chicken shed, after some renovation. We gain interesting information and perceptions from these visits.
Back at the hotel, I enquire about a white shirt which I handed in for pressing yesterday afternoon. They promised an overnight service. After several phone calls, the desk attendant assures me that the shirt has been pressed and will be delivered to my room momentarily. It doesn’t arrive by bedtime, so I will need to follow up tomorrow. Meanwhile, there is still no hot water in my bathroom, so I use the kitchen stove to boil two pots of cold water to make a lukewarm bath.

**Thursday, October 17**

Some of the visiting delegates from America are complaining about the food that is served in the hotel dining room. Some drive into town to eat at city hotels or restaurants. Personally, I value the opportunity of eating with the African delegates. We learn a great deal from each other. It is true that there isn’t the variety of food that we get back home, but it is attractively served, and I take every opportunity to try distinctly African dishes, such as the ugari that they are serving for dinner tonight. I really don’t mind the rice and beans that appear very regularly on the menu. But I share the view of Adventist pioneer preacher, Uriah Smith, who once said that he didn’t mind having beans 365 times a year, provided it didn’t become part of his regular diet.

I am still chasing the whereabouts of my shirt. Whatever did the laundry service do with the thing? Every time I enquire, I’m assured it will be delivered to my room within minutes. Tonight, I must bring the matter to a conclusion, since I’m depending on that article for Sabbath wear. I will stand at the reception desk until my shirt appears. The attendant makes numerous phone calls, and finally admits that the shirt still awaits pressing. He promises that I will have it first thing tomorrow morning.

**Friday, October 18**

The morning devotional meetings conducted by Walter Pearson from the General Conference are excellent. Each day’s sermon features a different Bible character. When I return to my room after the meeting, my white shirt is there, with the bill of 10 Kenya Shillings (about 20 cents). I am a happy man again.

After several unsuccessful attempts to set up an Internet demonstration for my librarians (there is a power outage or some other problem every time we arrange a time), we locate an Adventist businessman in Nairobi who is an Internet service provider. We take the mini-van to his address and find a garage-type computer operation behind his house. But he does manage to bring up the World Wide Web, so we demonstrate several important sites and links, and there is time for some hands-on experience by each person.

Our library workshop concludes this morning. Despite some technical problems, it has been a success, and the participants express their deep appreciation for the experience. We will maintain contact with each other in the future. Cheryl Doss and her husband take me to lunch at Maxwell Adventist Academy which is just a few miles from here. The menu does not include rice or beans. We have a campus tour before driving back to the conference center. (Below: Maxwell Academy)

This afternoon we are scheduled for a shopping trip to downtown Nairobi. But there is a problem. The official opening of the convention by the Kenya Minister for Health had to be postponed from earlier in the week until this afternoon. As a guest presenter, I am to be part of the platform party. At 1.30 the Minister arrives, and the program begins. The speeches are long, and by the time all the tumult and the shouting dies, it is nearly 3.30 pm. The bus trip to Nairobi is canceled due to lack of time. That was my last chance to procure the copper engraving before I leave Kenya tomorrow night.
Sabbath, October 19

This is my last day in Africa. It is mild and sunny as every day has been since I arrived on this continent. There is an advantage to being here in the dry season, despite the arid appearance of the landscape and the dusty atmosphere. I have enjoyed my first experience in Africa, finding the people friendly and proud of their cultural heritage.

We were instructed to be ready to board buses at eight this morning. The entire convention group will be part of a combined Sabbath meeting at the Kenyatta Conference Center in Nairobi. We scurry through breakfast, and by 8.00 a crowd of nearly 500 delegates is milling around outside the hotel. But there are no buses, and it is not until after nine that the first one arrives on the scene. Hudson finds me and directs me to join several other delegates who are traveling in the conference minivan. By the time we arrive at the city meeting-place, the Sabbath School program is half over, but we are ushered to specially reserved seats at the front of the large auditorium. A crowd of 6,000 is in attendance here today.

We are seated only a few minutes when my name is called, so I go to the back of the hall. There I am surprised and delighted to meet Kroy and Sue Christison, a young couple whom we knew at Lacombe, Alberta. They heard I was in Kenya and drove all the way from Kendu Bay near Lake Victoria to see me. I had hoped for an opportunity to visit them at Kendu Bay, but I am so thankful they were willing to come here to make contact. Praise the Lord for young people dedicated to mission service.

Following the service, as I wait near the van for our driver, I observe a young man standing nearby. He notices my conference badge and asks if I am from Andrews University. His name is Richard, and he is a Tutsi refugee from Rwanda. He arrived here in Nairobi just yesterday with a special pass that expires in a few days. He went to the Eastern Africa Union Office yesterday, hoping to contact the treasurer, George Wheeler, to ask for a sponsorship, but everyone was away at the convention. All of Richard’s family died during the recent Rwanda genocide. He is here without money or food and sleeping on the ground near the railway station. All that he has is his precious, very-worn Bible, in which he keeps his few personal papers. He tells me that he wants to put the past behind him and hopes to find his way to an Adventist college. The first step in that direction will be to obtain some level of sponsorship so that he will not have to return to the refugee camp. I am touched by his genuine need, and his confidence that God is leading him. I have nothing to give him (my wallet is back in my hotel room), but he accepts my own Bible as a gift. I ask him to write his name on a sheet of paper. He has a friend who may now be at Andrews University, and I will check that out when I return. I take his picture before we drive away. I have come face to face with a child of my Father who has an urgent need. I yearn to help this young man.

This afternoon I join a bus load of delegates for a tour of the Nairobi National Park. I am amazed at the numbers and variety of wildlife which we encounter during a three-hour drive through the savannah. Unfortunately, the bus is an old rattle-trap with dirty windows that are mostly jammed shut. It is a hopeless task to take pictures. However, I manage to relax and enjoy the sights of the African wild.

Back at the hotel, I locate George Wheeler during supper and I tell him about my encounter with Richard. He will help him if he can. I sign a traveler’s check to provide some funds for him, and George will see that he receives it.

A couple of hours later, I carry my baggage down to the foyer, where three of my library friends have gathered to say goodbye. They present me with a signed copy of a beautifully illustrated book, “Wildest Africa.” I thank them from my heart, then we load everything into George Wheeler’s wagon for the drive to Nairobi.
airport. My British Airways flight to London is due out soon after 10 pm.

At the airport, there is a Kenya departure tax to pay. I assumed I could pay in local currency and kept enough for that purpose. But the officer demands $20 US in hard cash, which I do not have. The airport bank will accept my traveler’s checks for a double exchange, which means that I must sign over $40 in checks to receive $32 in bills. It’s a rip-off, but these are the joys of traveling abroad.

**Sunday, October 20**

A smooth overnight flight ends as the plane touches down at London’s Gatwick Airport just before seven. Somewhere between there and Heathrow Terminal 4 the zipper on my pants gives way, so I guess it’s going to be a cover-up all the way back to Chicago. I’m looking forward to being home again!