

It was urgent to call on the local government officials to let them know why we were in the area, so after lunch we went to the district headquarters. There we met an older gentleman, who was president of the local counsel, and the vice-president. The latter was a young business man with whom we could communicate a little in Hindi; we told him what we were wanting and I left my name and phone number.

By this time it was 2:45, so we took a bus back toward the capital. In route we passed through a city called Boko and although we had paid our fare to Guwahati, when the bus stopped I said to Khen let's get down and ask if anyone knows about any land for sale. We did, and left our name and address with a local man, for as noted, rarely do the smaller towns have anything like a real estate office.

Our bus had just stood at the curb as we spoke to the local people, so we re-boarded and rode into Guwahati, where we got an "auto" to take us to our lodge. The next morning we hired a car to take us to Shillong as there were no seats available on the helicopter. The car cost Rs 1,750\-\$40.70). It took three hours and we arrived at the building in Shillong just before 12:00 (midnight).

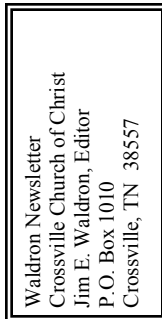
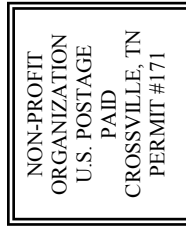
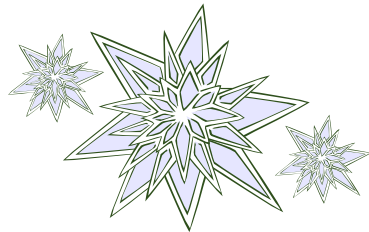
This search was to continue over the next few weeks and I will report on it next month. We need your fervent prayers that Satan may not hinder (cf., 1 Thess. 2:18) the expansion of the effort to train gospel preachers and elders; and that we may find just the kind of place we need.

## SINCERE LOVE AND APPRECIATION

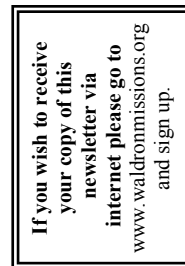
As we draw close to the end of the year let me thank each one of you for your love, your personal prayers and your participation in this soul-winning church-planting work. May our heavenly Father and His Son have all glory and praise, world without end.

In Christian love,

Jim E. Waldron



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



# NEWSLETTER

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## SOMETIMES THE FRUSTRATION AND TRAMA OF THE MISSION FIELD MUST BE REPORTED

The following reminds me of Paul's request to the church in Thessalonica for himself and those serving with him, "*Finally brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified... and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith*" (2 Thess. 3:1-2).

Shillong, Meghalaya, N. E. India: My return to India at this time (Nov. 4th) was rather un-expected as I had thought that it would not be necessary to leave the States until after Thanksgiving, but urgent needs related to shifting the Bible Training School from the mountainous city of Shillong to the plains intervened.

To go back a bit, the preacher training school was begun in Shillong in the summer of 2002 with the expectation that brothers from the seven states of the N. E. region could be trained to build up the local congregations. Unlike the other preaching schools which we (Don Iverson, Garry Jones and I) conduct in various places, this school uses English as the medium of instruction, which at the beginning seemed needful as there are many tribes in the area and literally more than a hundred languages are spoken. The building is located in a suburb of Shillong called Rynjah.

Over the eight years there have been an average of about 12 students a year with 10 or so graduating annually, but a big drawback has been that 95 percent of them have been bachelors; it is married men with families who become the backbone of any congregation. Most of those who graduated had little or no interest in returning to their villages, but wanted to go to large cities where they could get a job using English.

This is not to say that they are not helping the church where they live, but these circumstances have not been very effective in building up village congregations in the northeast. This is in contrast to the schools that we conduct in the south of the country where we have over the last twenty years trained about 1,700 brothers in the schools of preaching and eighty percent or more have been married with families. As a matter of interest about 75 percent of the 1.2 billion Indian people live in villages and are involved in agriculture.

In light of these things I spoke to the elders at Crossville last March and asked if we could sell the building in Shillong, shift to a more agrarian area and thereby be able to train married men who are farmers. In order to do this we would need to use teachers who can teach in the local languages as is done in the southern states. To this the elders agreed and subsequently gave me a power of attorney to sell the building. We found a buyer and the three brothers from three different congregations in or near Shillong, who serve as trustees for the building readily agreed for it to be sold as they could see the need of expanding our outreach to the brotherhood in the northeast by training men, not just in English, but in the local languages also.

But the pending sale has been greatly frustrated by one member of the local congregation (Wung Kui Zimik), who has played the role of Diotrefes (See 3 John 9), and used all kinds of ways to halt the sale. He has, over the last four months, stirred up much division among the students and the small congregation that was meeting in the building. As far back as August I approached him about the pending sale, but he opposed it. Subsequently brothers Scott Richards and Garry Jones sought to reason with him, but he sent them out of his house in anger.

Eventually the question of his division and rebellion against the elders' decision to sale the building came before the brothers in the local church in Rynjah with him present in the meeting. A plea was made for him to repent, but he became more adamant, went out of the meeting and began secretly trying to use the students to further his agenda. Thus it became necessary to apply Romans 16:17-18 and notify the area churches that he was no longer in fellowship with the church in Rynjah.

He has no claim over the building whatsoever and when he had a meeting on the 14th of November at the building to promote his claim only five showed up and one of those was not a member; yet he insists that they should have the building. Finally on the 25th of November the assistant to the director of the government registration office, a lady, called a meeting of the three trustees, the complaining brother and me; along with some others who came as witnesses or to put in a word. She did this to keep down any complaint that her office was

not being fair. She patiently heard his complaints and asked him pointedly at least a half dozen questions as to his right or motive for claiming that he and the few with him should have the building.

To every question he refused to give a straight answer, but simply gave a vague or indirect response. The three trustees stood firm against his claims and as one of them noted as they went out, his aim is to stall the sale to get money; which is extortion. The lady took down the statements of all of us, which she will submit to higher authorities in the revenue office with her own recommendation and hopefully we will know the outcome in three or four weeks. Her immediate superior said that he would recommend to those above him that we had every right to sell the building. Please pray for us as Paul requested the prayers of those in Thessalonica.

## OTHER EVENTS

Thursday, November 4: Laura dropped me at the Tyson-McGhee airport about 12:00 as my flight was to leave for Newark, NJ at 1:45; but due to bad weather in Newark it was kept on the ground at Knoxville until 3:45; thus in Newark there was only 30 minutes to spare when I reached gate 90 in terminal "C" for the direct flight to Mumbai on India's west coast. The plane was a Boeing 777 and its regular cruising speed is about 550 mph, but with a strong tail wind from the jet stream we were at times traveling at speeds of 660 or more. It took about 14 hours to make the approximate 8,000 miles; I read and slept.

Friday, November 5: The plane landed at the Mumbai airport about 8:20 p.m. (India time is 10.5 hours ahead of EST) and I cleared immigration quickly, but had to wait fifty minutes for my two boxes (mainly books) to come off the plane. By 11:30 I was in a local hotel that cost Rs 2,500\- (\$58) for the night.

Saturday, November 6: I slept until 2:00 a.m., then read and dressed for the day. At 4:30 I took my bag and my boxes to the lobby and by 5:00 a.m. I was in the hotel van on the way to the domestic airport. My flight from Mumbai left at 6:30 and arrived in Guwahati at 10:35. At 12:30 p.m. I flew by helicopter to Shillong. The 70 mile trip takes 20 minutes by helicopter and costs Rs 1,200\- (\$27.27). By car, over the tortuous, mountainous, switch back road, it takes three hours and the cost is Rs 1,850\- (\$42.00). Scott Richards, who is sponsored by the church in Griffin, GA, was at the school to meet me along with the two dozen students. Scott has served as teacher and director of the school for over seven months this year; that work has been absolutely invaluable, which included arranging a place for the local Hindi members to meet in a nearby school.



Tuesday, November 9: Today a brother, Khen Samte, a visitor from Imphal, the capital of Manipur, a state which lies due east of Shillong, and I took the afternoon helicopter flight (12:30) to Guwahati, which is the capital of the state of Assam, to seek property in the region to build and expand our work for the Master in the northeast. After reaching the airport we took a bus to the city and booked a place to stay for the time we were to be in the area.

Wednesday, November 10: This morning we sought to follow up on a lead for property, but even though the man claimed to have information the search proved fruitless. Before leaving the lodge I had looked in a phone book for a real estate agent and found a name, but when we finally ran down the office, they said that they didn't handle real estate. The work of real estate agents in the country is just beginning to take hold and they are few and far between, especially in the smaller cities.

Thursday, November 11: This morning in search of a farming area for the new school site brother Khen and I got an auto-rickshaw to take us to a local bus station where we got a bus to take us southwest of Guwahati to the small town of Rang-Juli; which lies 56 miles from the city. The trip took three hours so we arrived about 11:30. Hindi is one of India's national languages, but the local people were weak in it as they speak Assamese. However, Khen and I both speak a little Hindi so we were able to order lunch in what I call a hole in the wall; it was rice with vegetables and pieces of very fat pork.