

Objectives Of Shandia School Work

PETER FLEMING

The Shandia school for Indian boys, ably begun in 1948 by Dr. Wilfred Tidmarsh and presently maintained alternately by brethren Elliot, McCully and Fleming, is located in the eastern jungles of Ecuador in the headwaters of the Amazon basin. It is a small work among a primitive Indian tribe the Yumbos or Quichuas established and maintained in view of the following facts and with the following objectives.

1. *Formation of nucleus of literate believers.* Since the tribe is almost totally illiterate, both now and in the foreseeable future there must be trained at least a few young men in order to form a nucleus of literate believers in every assembly God raises up. No assembly can eventually be sovereign and independent of missionary help without being able to feed itself from the Word, and this necessitates men who can read intelligently and with understanding passages of spiritual in-

struction, which in turn demands more than a cursory acquaintance with the ABC's. Trained literate men, that is men who can read sufficiently well to understand and restate to others even difficult passages of Scripture, are essential to the functioning of a New Testament Church.

2. *Maintaining of continuous contact with future leaders of the tribe.* Nearly all the Amazonian Indian tribes, including our own, are semi-nomadic, their movements being dictated by needs or fears. Thus to have any sustained contact with the young men we must provide another home for them—a stable environment in their shifting world. To teach them while they are on the move is not feasible; daily systematic instruction of the Word is basic to the training of disciples.

3. *Means of gaining friendship of adult Indians.* Though it sounds strange it is true that one of the most

effective ways of reaching the parents is by training their children. Indians, naturally reticent and reserved, are much more friendly and open if they have entrusted their son to you. Older missionaries who worked in a neighboring tribe for fifteen years without school work, told me that they never really gained the confidence of the older Indians until



Messrs. E. McCully, P. Fleming and J. Elliott Are Responsible for the Indian School at Shandia.

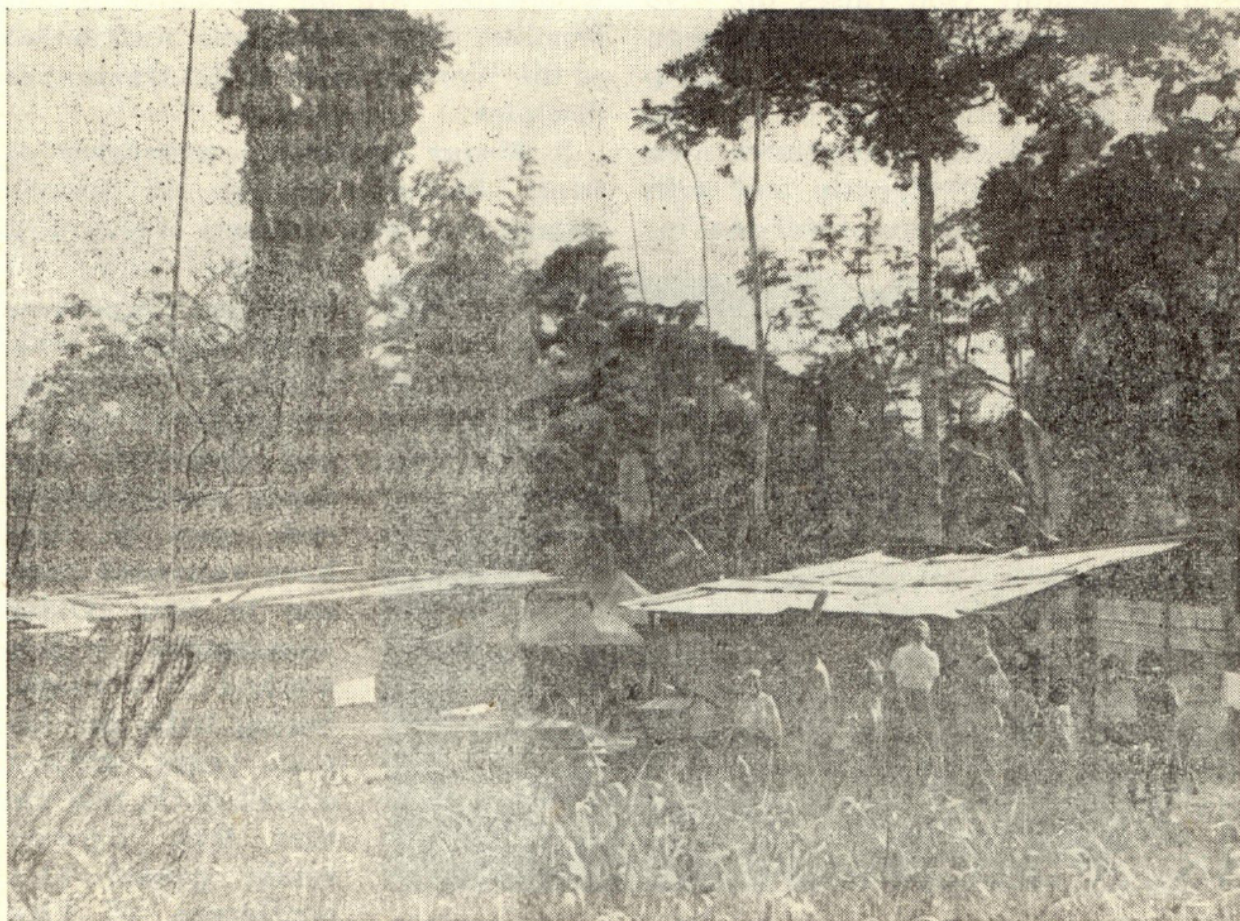


Jivaro Indian. Confidence of these People is Gained Through School Work.

they began the boy's school. Indians love and trust those who care well for their sons.

4. *Original means of entrance to community.* In the Indian mind it is the desire for a school which led them to ask us to enter their otherwise closed and unfriendly communities. They have heard enough about education to want it for their sons, and so invite us to come on the understanding that we teach them to read and write.

5. *Provision of Christian teachers.* Education is becoming increasingly important in the colonization of these eastern jungles. Since the Ecuadorian government encourages Indians to assume the teaching responsibility, our schools can provide a number of believing young men who with additional training in a normal school may



Emergency Shelter Erected at Shandia Following Flood Disaster in 1953.

give an ever increasing testimony to still unreached areas.

For these reasons we have established a boy's school at Shandia. The type of school, that is the actual form that the school takes and the details of its administration, is indicated by the aims of the missionary, the desires of the natives, and the demands of the government. In places, happily, nothing more than a literacy center for both adults and children is required. In other cases however, the Indians themselves expect something more formal. Therefore in Shandia, for reasons too complexly associated with

the needs of the work to be explained in this short paper, we maintain this type of school; a boy's boarding school for 25 which is taught by a government trained teacher and financed largely by the missionaries, while a plan is in operation to make the school more self-supporting.

Since no plan, however good, is perfect and no administration of a school completely fulfills the goals of a missionary, we ask definite prayer to make our school work more effective toward the evangelization of our Indian tribe.

Educational Work At Usumbura

GLADYS PUE

When Mr. and Mrs. Carl Johnson arrived at Usumbura, Belgian Congo, late in 1949 to take over the mission from World Wide Grace Testimony, they found an educational system such as is found in nearly every mission in Central Africa. Under this system there are many out-schools, each in charge of a teacher. This teacher acts as the school teacher and also the pastor of the church—thus a regular clergy system. Because there was no missionary to take over the educational work, this system was retained temporarily. However, when I arrived here in November, 1953, we decided to try to separate the school from the church, thus paving the way for the planting of assemblies in our rural areas.

With the help of our African brethren, ten places were chosen where we plan eventually to have regular primary schools. On January 25, 1954 we began school, in a limited way, in seven of those places and later added nother.

Along with the rural schools, we also have a school in the station with six classes and one in the native city with three classes. In each of these classes we have an African teacher, but only two of these teachers have formal training. Our educational work is greatly handicapped through lack of trained teachers who are sound in doctrine, godly in walk and who are serving the Lord devotedly. We do not have a training school for teachers and thus must take those who are trained by other missions.

For the time being we are planning to have just the first two grades in our rural schools. The students then come into our station school for three years, making a five year program. We have a dormitory building for a limited number of boys. We provide the building only, the students bring their own food.

We are working to bring the standard of our present schools up to government requirements. At present we have no school buildings on the