

# Bible doorstep kicks open history of Daniel Lindley

By Jean Nourse

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Durban, South Africa

Some years ago, Miss Minnie Carter, head teacher at the Inanda Seminary for African girls, near here, decided to re-cover what she took to be a brick doorstep which she used in her office.

She removed the outer covering of cloth, the next, and the next. Finally, instead of a brick, she uncovered a Bible — a sturdy leather-bound volume printed in High Dutch. It was the Bible of American missionary Daniel Lindley.

This precious piece of Africana is now on loan to the Campbell Museum in Durban.

Daniel Lindley was a remarkable man and the great bridge-builder between the races of South Africa. He was loved by Boer, Briton, and African — and he ministered to all.

Paul Kruger, Boer president of the old Transvaal republic, kept his portrait in his home. He once said of Lindley, "If he had stayed with us we would have been a wiser nation."

Daniel Lindley was born on Aug. 24, 1801, in Pennsylvania. He came of English Puritan stock. His father, a Presbyterian minister, trained at an institution which has since become the world-famous Princeton University.

Daniel's upbringing was stern. Out of necessity he learned to ride and shoot well—assets which in later life were to hold him in good stead and endear him to the Boers.

Lindley was ordained a Presbyterian minister and immediately became a successful preacher. One day he picked up the "Missionary Herald" and read an appeal by the American board for pastors to go out as missionaries into the non-Christian world. "I gave heed to the appeal, resigned, and went," he said.

Before he sailed for Africa on Dec. 3, 1834, with five other missionaries and their wives, he married Lucy Allen, a woman who proved to have indomitable courage and who became his beloved companion and helpmate through all the vicissitudes of their life in South Africa.

After a voyage of 64 days the party reached Cape Town. Lindley was sent with two other missionaries to dwell among the people of Mzilikazi in the Transvaal, but disaster befell the mission. Fighting broke out between the Boers and Mzilikazi, and the missionaries and their families had to flee for their lives.

Later, we find Lindley in Natal. Dingaan,

the tyrannical Zulu king, was cordial to the missionaries and Lindley started a station. Through an interpreter, he preached his first sermon to a "respectable congregation" of Zulus assembled under a great tree.

After Dingaan's massacre of the Boer leader, Piet Retief and his party, his Zulu army attacked the little settlement at Port Natal (now Durban) and Lindley took refuge on the brig "Comet" in Durban Bay.

In 1840, the Boers, who had trekked from the Cape Colony to find new pastures in Natal, had established themselves in palisaded camps in Port Natal. Daniel Lindley, who admired their bravery and simplicity, was conscious of their need of help and started a school for them. There were 90 scholars ranging from eight years old to adults.

Lindley and his wife labored among them and learned to love them. He was a man after their own heart. He, too, was a trekker and could talk wagons and oxen. He lived heartily as they lived. He could ride and shoot with the best of them and, above all, he was not a "Rooinek" (Englishman).

When the Boers decided to make Pietermaritzburg their capital and built the first church in Natal, Lindley became its minister, at a salary equal to \$240 a year. The American board gave him an "honorable release."

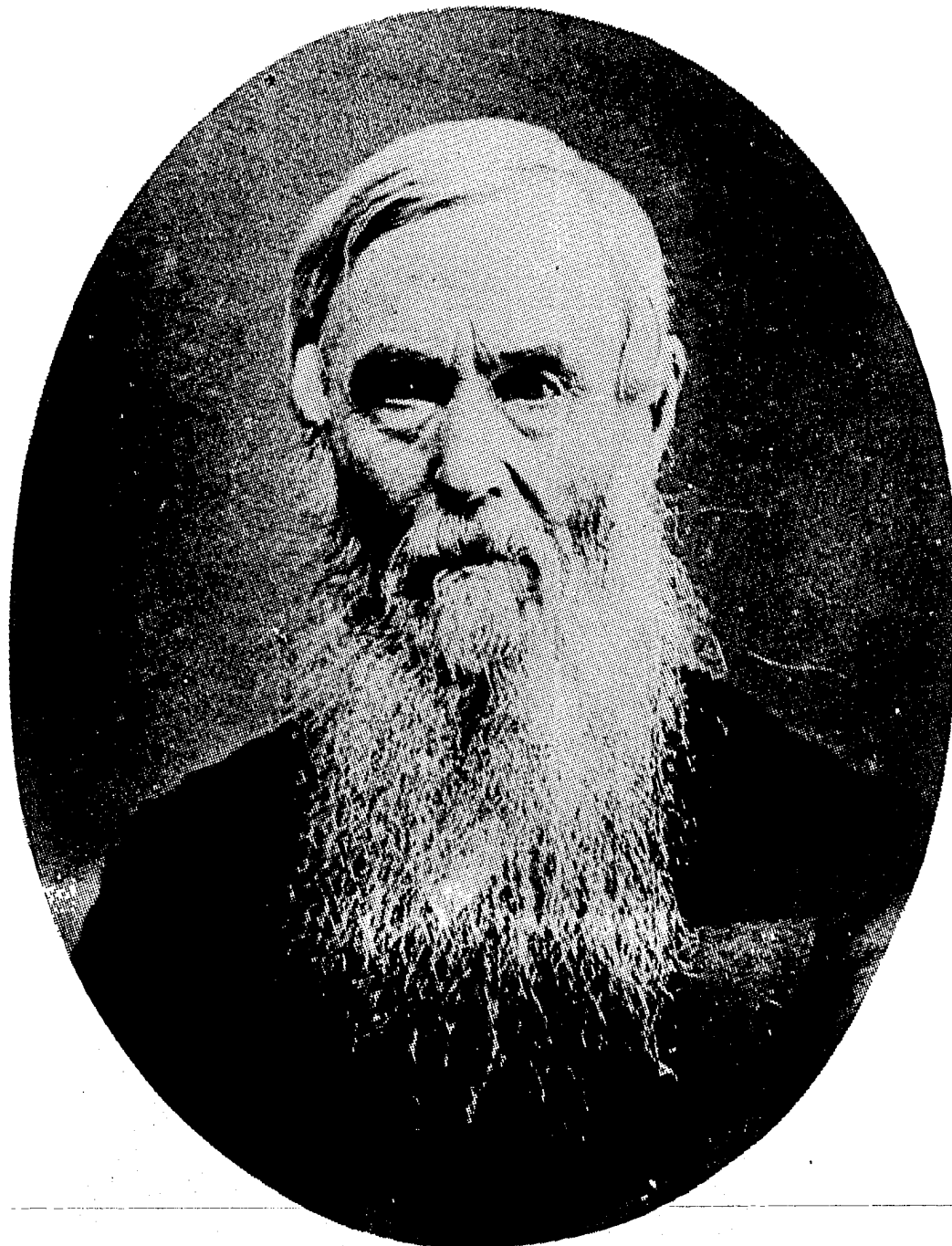
Lindley learned the language and spent many months on the road traveling either by ox-wagon or on horseback, visiting his far-flung parishioners, for his parish embraced not only Natal, but the Transvaal and the Orange Free State as well!

When Natal became a British Colony and many of the Boers trekked away, Lindley returned to his original calling — that of converting the Zulus.

He selected a site, built a three-roomed dwelling, and, in 1848, he, his wife, and seven children moved in. Until a chapel could be built, his Sunday services were held in the shade of a great tree. Beside spiritual instruction there was school. All the family (there were now 11 children) helped. Lucy and Daniel never spared themselves.

After seven years Daniel became dissatisfied with the site he had chosen. He was 54 when he moved to the present site in Inanda and proceeded to build, with his own hands, the house which today is a national monument. Fittingly, the inscription is in English, Afrikaans, and Zulu.

In 1859, after serving 25 years in South



Courtesy of Killie Campbell Africana Library

## American missionary Daniel Lindley

Africa, the Lindleys returned to America. Their growing family had to further their education. The citizens of the straggling town of Durban presented Daniel with 150 guineas (worth some \$600 in those days) and a Bible. "These compliments make me feel very awkward," he was heard to say.

Mrs. Lindley writes in her diary: "June, 1859. Arose at daylight and began preparing for leaving. The last breakfast, the last session of family prayer at Inanda being over for some of us, we took leave of a weeping, sobbing assemblage of native men, women, and children.

— It was painful to Daniel and Lucy to leave so many of their children with strangers in America, but, in 1863, they set out once again for South Africa.

The Zulu Christians contributed considerably toward the expense of their voyage. They landed in Durban Jan. 31, 1863.

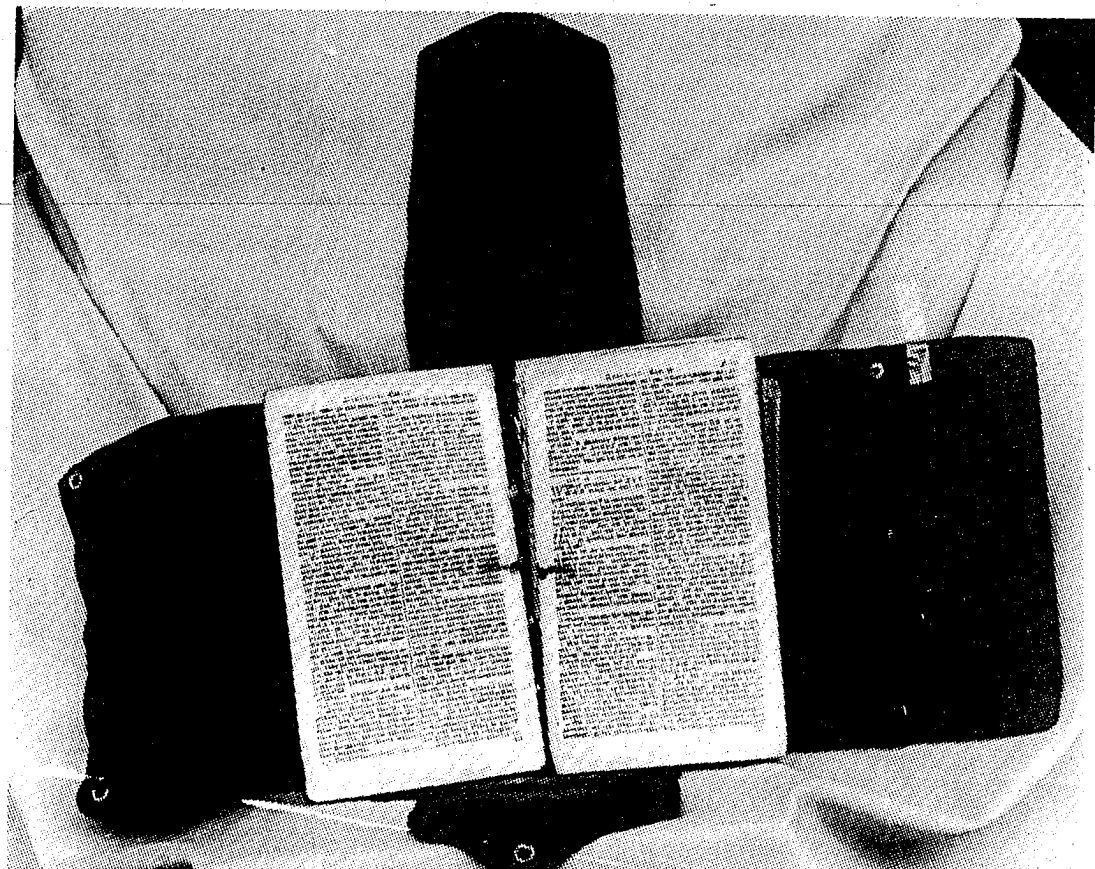
The news of their arrival spread like wildfire. Whites and blacks alike gave them a tremendous welcome. Many Zulus walked hundreds of miles to greet their "father and mother."

Inanda flourished. A boarding school for Zulu girls was established in 1869. Today, it is one of the finest schools in South Africa.

After 40 years of toil, the Lindleys said good-bye forever to Natal and its people returned in 1873 to the United States.

Daniel Lindley, who outlived his wife by three years, passed on in 1880.

He writes in a letter before his death, "My physical powers are declining. My heart is often in Africa, and I am frequently living over my life there. I hope to meet old friends in Heaven—my Comrades in Mission work, my Dutch parishioners, and my Zulu converts."



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## 'Brick' doorstep revealed High Dutch Bible

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