

This is a complete transcript of the oral history interview with **David Howard Adeney (CN 393, T1)** for the Billy Graham Center Archives. No spoken words that were recorded are omitted. In a very few cases, the transcribers could not understand what was said, in which case [unclear] was inserted. Also, grunts and verbal hesitations such as “ah” or “um” are usually omitted. Readers of this transcript should remember that this is a transcript of spoken English, which follows a different rhythm and even rule than written English.

. . . Three dots indicate an interruption or break in the train of thought within the sentence of the speaker.

. . . . Four dots indicate what the transcriber believes to be the end of an incomplete sentence.

( ) Word in parentheses are asides made by the speaker.

[ ] Words in brackets are comments made by the transcriber.

This transcription was made by Katherine Elwell and Paul Ericksen, and completed in September 1990.

**Please note:** Text underlined text throughout the transcript identifies changes made in the transcript by Adeney. Underlined text in brackets [text] denotes a written addition made by Adeney to add clarity. No subtractions have been made from the spoken record.

**Please note:** This oral history interview expresses the personal memories and opinions of the interviewee and does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Billy Graham Center Archives or Wheaton College.

**Collection 393, Tape 1. Oral history interview with David Adeney by Paul Ericksen on June 10, 1988.**

**ERICKSEN:** This is an oral history interview with David Howard Adeney by Paul Ericksen for the Missionary Sources Collection of Wheaton College. This interview took place at the office of the Billy Graham Center Archives in Wheaton, Illinois on June 10, 1988 at 8:15 a.m. Well, Dr. Adeney, I'd like to start by going...going back to your childhood, for just a little bit. I understand that you were born in Bedford...

**ADENEY:** That's right.

**ERICKSEN:** ...England, and that your father was a missionary in Romania?

**ADENEY:** Yes, yes.

**ERICKSEN:** What sort of work was he doing?

**ADENEY:** Well, my father, actually, was with the Church's Ministry to [Among] Jews, which was known as the London Jewish Society in those days. And he had been in...in Palestine first of all, for his first few years. He'd worked amongst the Jews in London to begin with, when he was a very young man. And then he went to Palestine, and then he was appointed to Romania. And he had two schools for Jewish girls [clears throat] in Romania, and he recruited teachers from Germany. He was also the chaplain in charge of the British church there, the.... And at that time the queen of Romania, Queen Marie, was an English woman and so he was also chaplain to the...to the queen of Romania. Such was very different from the present situation in Romania. But he worked there for best part of thirty years. He was.... Richard Wurmbrand was actually discipled by my father just after his conversion, and so Wurmbrands knew my father very well. And he...he really was working with the Jewish people mainly, although [he had many friends among the Romanian Orthodox Churches] I remember in our home that we had quite a number of icons, that had been given to my father by people who'd be...become Christians, I suppose in Romania, who'd been linked with the Orthodox Church.

**ERICKSEN:** Now when you speak of thirty years, what time period is that covering? From when to when?

**ADENEY:** Well, from...[pauses] let me see, roughly just before the turn of the century right on....[until about 1930]. During the war...First World War he...he couldn't get back to Romania, and he [so he] came back to England and he was chaplain to German prisoners in England during the war time, because he was...he speaks German and Yiddish, so.... I was in Romania when I was about three years old. But I was taken very ill in...in Romania, almost died there and my...then I was brought back [my mother brought me back] to England and then the war came, and so I remained in England. So, actually, I was only in Romania once.

**ERICKSEN:** And that was when you were very young.

**ADENEY:** Yes, that was when I was very young.

**ERICKSEN:** Do you remember anything from that time period...

**ADENEY:** No...

**ERICKSEN:** ...other than the...you mentioned the icons?

**ADENEY:** No, not really. No, I don't remember anything about the work in Romania at all, because I was under three years old.

**ERICKSEN:** Sure. What about your mother? How did she fit into the ministry among the Jewish people?

**ADENEY:** Well, she was...I...I think she had gone out to Romania as one of the people [teachers] my father had...had taken [pauses] to work there with the...in the schools. But, [pauses] my father's first wife died at...when my elder brother was born, and so my father came back and then married my...my mother. And my mother was not in Romania a great deal of the time, because after I was born and my mother came.... Actually I was born in Bedford [England], and it was after I was born, that my mother took me and we went out to Romania, but then came back when the war came. And my mother felt that she should remain in England, and that we should have our education in England.

**ERICKSEN:** How would you describe the...I guess the religious environment of your home as you were growing up?

**ADENEY:** Well, my...my mother was a very devoted Christian, although her family was...most of her family were not. And she had a completely different background [from my father]. She grew up in Patagonia [Argentina], and her...her family were...were sheep farmers in Patagonia, and they had a lot of land in Patagonia. And her brothers were much more the...in England we would have said the...the country gentlemen type with doing a lot of shooting and [with] large country houses in the south of England. And so my mother going, marrying my father, who was a...who'd...who came from a relatively poor family and had to...had to work very hard in order to get to Cambridge and work his way through. Well, he was...he worked in the civil service before he went there. And [pauses] my father was a...a very, very conscientious, devoted Christian, with a great sense of responsibility and duty and extremely thorough in everything that he...that he did. And my mother was a...a very, very outgoing person, who...everybody loved her. She was always enthusiastic, always wanting to try something new. She...she loved to travel, and she loved contact with missionaries. So we constantly had missionaries coming into our home. And she...in the early days she got a car [at a time when not many women drove cars] and...so that [pauses] she took us to the Children's Special Service Missions, so that from my very youngest days, I was brought into touch with...with Christian...Christian groups. And [during the] summertime we used to go to the seaside. In England they have these beach missions, and...and so we...we...we got involved in them and I suppose they were the...perhaps most important influence on my life from a religious point of view, Christian point of view in...in the [my] early days. And I was very much affected by [pauses]



one of the greatest of children's evangelists, Hudson Pope, who was a remarkable man and tremendously gifted in...in reaching young people and children, a man who could hold a group of children for an hour preaching on the deepest doctrinal message and yet so well illustrated and [pauses] so beautifully presented that...that children would just listen for ages to him. And I...I had my earliest experience of the Lord really through...through the Children's Special Service Mission and especially through Hudson Pope, and later on I became a worker with him. I got my earliest training in young people's work through being in his house party, being one of his workers.

**ERICKSEN:** Now at what age would that process have started?

**ADENEY:** Well, [pauses] I'm...I'm not quite sure. The [pauses, laughs]...it's probably...probably when I was seven or eight, something like that. I...I don't remember very much of my childhood. I remember the end of the war in 1918, when I would have been seven years old and I was going to a little prep school, a little kindergarten-type school, and I remember that. And then, I remember later on I used to go not only to the beach missions, but later I went to boys camps and the Varsity's and Public Schools' Camps, as they were called. But that was in my teens. And I went away to school when I was twelve years old, and went to a Christian school, to...to Monkton Combe. And, actually, I was...I was already quite definitely a Christian at that time. I'd been going to school in Bedford in the public school, known as Bedford School. And I...I already had been attending (another influence was the Crusaders)...I attended the Crusader class in Bedford. And that was a Sunday [somewhat similar to]...Sunday class. And so that by the time I went to boarding school, at the age of twelve, I was established as...as a Christian. And it was actually in the next couple of years that the call to China came.

**ERICKSEN:** Now what were the...what was it that happened at the school that...that brought that about?

**ADENEY:** Well, in our...in our school, it was the [Monkton Combe] Junior School, and I was only there two years, [ages] twelve to fourteen, then I went down to the Senior School. But one of our teachers was a...a man named Stanley Houghton, who was the brother of [Bishop] Frank Houghton, who became the general director of the China Inland Mission, [he was] also a hymn writer and is well known. And Stanley Houghton was an outstanding teacher and he was of course a young man then, when he was teaching at Monkton Combe Junior School. And he [pauses] was going out to China and [pauses] he...he was going out with the China Inland Mission. And he is one who helped me a great deal. He was very wise and a very, very balanced Christian. [Laughs] I remember a tiny incident, which...little bit absurd, but I remember that some of the boys... I suppose I...because I was involved in...I was involved in a Crusader class and things like that at...at school and someone had written...drawn a picture on the board, supposedly of me, with a halo and "Saint Adeney" written underneath it. And Stanley Houghton came in to teach the class and saw this thing on the board [laughs] and very, very calmly just wiped it off and carried on, said nothing [pauses] at all, and [laughs]... A little incident, but those are the kind of things that stand out when you're a child, and.... But he...he talked to me about China, and knowing that he was going to China made a great impression on me. And then he began to lend me books about China, and I...I read...I read a book called *A Thousand Miles of Miracle in China*, which...written by Glover told the story of escape from the Boxers, which, of course, was only about twelve years before, you see. No, it

was about eleven years before I was born. But, this was a very thrilling book of God's deliverance during the Boxer Rebellion. And that made an [a deep] impression on me. And then I think I read the story of Hudson Taylor. And these...these things [books] really impressed me. I probably joined the Comradeship for China at that time, which was a children's group connected with the China Inland Mission. And I always remember being given a small map of China done in black squares, each square, I think, representing, say ten million people, and a tiny pinpoint of white in the middle representing Christians. And I used to carry this with me and the thought came, "here are so many Christians in England, so many churches all around and China where they haven't heard the...the Gospel." And sometime around that time, possibly a little later I wrote a little verse in my Bible,

"The restless millions wait the light,  
whose dawning maketh all things new.  
Christ also waits,  
but men are slow and few.  
Have you [we] done all you [we] could?  
Have I? Have you?"

Or "Have we done all we could? Have I? Have you?" And I wrote that [laughs] in my Bible. And that was really the beginning of God's call to China. And...

**ERICKSEN:** What...how did you picture China at that point?

**ADENEY:** Well, I suppose I had a very inadequate picture of China. But I...I just pictured it as a [chuckles]...as a place where there were vast numbers of people who'd never heard of...of Jesus Christ. Now, I had not...not until I got to Cambridge did I get any Chinese friends [chuckles]. So, I think that I had very little knowledge of what China was like except in the...the pictures that come through reading Hudson Taylor and...and so on. So, I saw it as a...a very needy land and a kind of a pioneer field.

**ERICKSEN:** I'd like to go back for just a minute. We were talking about your family. I'm curious to know, as you look at your father and your mother, and they both seem to be very different kinds of people. What did you in...sort of inherit from the two of them? Who were you more like? That sort of thing.

**ADENEY:** Well, I think probably [laughs] I...actually I think I received [much] from both of them. From my father I probably inherited his great sense of duty. I think that one of my...it's...it's both a strong point and a weak point. I'm sure that in current terminology I would have...I would be described as a person who has been driven, [laughs] in a...in a sense with a...a constant vision of a work to...to do, which I must accomplish, and a sense of duty and responsibility to...to do that. And that...that pictured [in that way I was like] my father. He was very much that way. I certainly received from him an example of conscientiousness, of devotion, discipline, [and] devotion to Christ. I wish I'd followed that more. But he...he taught me from the earliest days about having a...a quiet time in the morning. And that has been one of the greatest things I have inherited: the importance of the first hour of the day being spent with the Lord, and my father's example, and that

was a...was a...was a blessing to me. Now, I didn't see so much of my father because he was away. There was a disagreement between him and my mother, and he felt that he must continue in Romania; my mother felt she should stay at home with the children for our education. And this meant that he was out of the country for [pauses] eight...eight or nine months...nine months a year. So that this was not an ideal situation. But, my father was always very, very kind. We had good...when he was at home we had good talks together, and.... So I...I...I certainly inherited that from him. I wish I had inherited his orderliness, because he was a very tidy, careful person in detail, and kept everything in perfect order, which I did not inherit, and.... My mother, on the other hand, was a...a very, very outgoing person. And [pauses] she was always...liked to try something new. She was adventurous, and [pauses] I think I inherited from her an ability to communicate with people and reach out to people. I was not at all athletic. I didn't get that, and.... And I was not really a...so much of a community...in I did not enjoy institutional life. And probably it wasn't until I left school [clears throat] that I really began much more of an outgoing type of [pauses]...of ministry to others. But...but my father and mother certainly gave me a great deal. My mother's generosity. She was extremely generous. And [pauses] she used to be the house mother at...at the Swiss camps that we went to in the...in the wintertime.

**ERICKSEN:** You talk in...in one of your...one of your books about...or maybe it was Dick Hillis's book where he wrote about you...about the Missionary Training Colony? Where did that fit into your high school years?

**ADENEY:** Well, this was when I...when I finished school at...at Monkton Combe, I...I took my entry to Cambridge exam, which was known as the "Little Go". And I...I finished that at...at Christmas time. And the...this...this...the year at Cambridge only started the next October. And so, when I was eighteen years old, I left school, and I had the next seven or eight months free before going to the university. And already I was quite sure that God was leading me to the mission field [clears throat]. And I'd already began speaking at meetings and [clears throat] so on, was active in the work amongst young people in...in the summertime. And so I applied to the Missionary Training Colony. You were supposed to be twenty-one before you entered. But for some reason or other, Godfrey Buxton, who was the leader of the...of the Colony, decided that they would accept me. And so I arranged to go there for a period before going up to university. And that was January. I...I...I suppose it would have been January '29 or something, yes, I think, January 1929 [30]. And that...the Colony was in...in London, southwest London, and it was a very primitive kind of place. It was...we lived in army huts. And [pauses] it was only for men. And it was mainly for training pioneers. It was really rather connected with C.T. Studd and [the] Worldwide Evangelization Crusade. Quite a lot of the people went into that...that mission, because the.... Another Buxton, Alfred Buxton, who'd [pauses] died in the...in...in the...in the war, I think in a bombing raid, I think, and his wife, his widow was there at the...at the Colony [C.T. Studd's daughter, widow of Alfred Buxton, lived near the Colony]. We called her Mrs. A.B. She was Mrs. A.B. Buxton. And...and then Godfrey Buxton, her brother-in-law, who had been wounded in the war, and later was to become the head of the Officers' Christian Union, and (he was always known as Captain Buxton). And he...he was the one in charge of the...of the Colony. And we...we lived [with] a group of about roughly twenty-five to thirty men, and did all our own work. And I remember I...being very cold when I first went there. There was a big hole in the side of this army hut [laughs]. And I was...a friend of mine, who I got to know well...know very, very well later [in



China], Louis Gaussen, who was from Oxford, and there were practically no university people [was the one other university man]. There were only...I think Louis was maybe the only one. And he was...he was a help to me and he was quite a bit senior to me. And later he went to China with the...with the CIM. But, I had to do my share [in the work]. I had to cook for thirty men for a week. And they [clears throat] fortunately [put up with my mistakes], although I offered a number of burnt offerings, yet they survived. I think I went to bed for a bit after it. It was...but it was...it was very interesting, and then very highly disciplined life. We...we had to be in a cold bath by six o'clock in the morning, and it was really cold weather, and then running [followed by a run] around the block after that, and then come back for an hour of quiet Bible study and prayer and then the various lectures and a great deal of practical work. And it was a very interesting experience to me because in England, unfortunately, right up to that time the class distinctions were still fairly strong, and I came from a...[an upper middle class family]. My mother's family had been a wealthy family and so we'd had everything done for us and...and I had not had too much touch with those who came from a poorer background. And here in this...in the Colony there were people from every walk of life. There were coal miners, there was a butcher, there was a [were]...people from all different types of...of...of background. And [pauses] they...they brought a...a new dimension into my life and they were extremely zealous Christians, and I had been rather more reserved. And I always remember the shock of going down the streets in London with two or three of the more vocal brethren, and one of them on the other side of the road [started] shouting "Hallelujah" and...and the fellow on the other...across the road answering [answered] back. And...and this was something very new to me. And...coming from a [what]...in England [is] called [a] public school background, and going into this different type of...of experience and then working in the slums of London teaching a very tough group of slum children Sunday school and then going out to speak in the open air. We used to have meetings at Tower [of London] Hill and Hyde Park Corner and other places in London where we were frequently heckled. And so I had to learn how to speak in the open air and how to deal with hecklers and that...that kind of thing. So it was a...it...it was a...for a boy of eighteen, it was really quite an experience. And then in the summertime we had treks, when we went out for a month pulling a cart, twelve people in each team, with one of the staff at the Colony with us. And we would walk for up to fifteen miles with six people on the cart at a time with all our camping gear, and...and then stop at a place and have a...usually sometimes sleep in a church hall or...or in a tent, and then have open air meetings, and then [a special program of] meetings over the weekend. And then one week we were sent out two by two and given half a crown, which would have been a dollar or so, and told not to come back for a week. And I was sent with a senior, older, much older person and we ate our meager loaf of bread and banana in a...in a ditch. We didn't feel we could buy any more with the amount of money that we...we had, and...and then went to a village where we found...after surveying the village, we discovered a little church there was having a prayer meeting that night and we attended the prayer meeting. And they'd never heard of us at all. We took part in the prayer meeting and afterwards were invited to hold meetings for the rest of the week. And the Lord provided for us for the...for the whole week there.

**ERICKSEN:** Now in the course of this, it sounds like it was rather grueling. What were...what were you thinking and feeling about, as far as your missionary calling and...and whatnot?

**ADENEY:** Well, I think I was excited by it and...in the sense that here were these...these young men going out, all of them, most of them going to pioneer mission fields: to Africa, to...to Latin America, and [we were] getting news of...of other Colony men all the time, facing up to the...rather the...some of the tough...the...the challenges of missionary work. And we...we had some very realistic training. And I think that I...I was, as a...as a young lad, I was really quite...quite thrilled with it, and the stories of what other Colony men had done and their experiences was...was very, very challenging to...to me. And [pauses] for me, I was quite sure it was to be China, and Louis Gausson my friend there, was going...was going to China. But, of course, I...I also knew there'd be several years before I could be ready to be going out.

**ERICKSEN:** You said that you had to learn how to handle hecklers. How...how did you?

**ADENEY:** [laughs] Well, I...I don't remember too...too much. I mean I...I...we ...we were taught a little bit how to do deal with...with hecklers, and [laughs]...but I...I...I don't remember in great detail exactly how I answered their questions.

**ERICKSEN:** Did you ever have to deal with hecklers in China?

**ADENEY:** No.

**ERICKSEN:** What about the...working with the...you mentioned the Sunday school in the London slums.... Can you think of any specific examples that illustrate a little more what that was like?

**ADENEY:** No, I...I don't...I don't think I...I mean, there was always a little bit of a problem with discipline with the...these children in the...in the...in the Sunday school there [London slums]. And I...I worked in a parish in a Sunday school in a...in an Anglican parish there, and.... But I don't have...I don't have any very clear memories of what went on there.

**ERICKSEN:** How would you compare the...the kind of training that you had for missionary work with what someone who's going to the mission field today will most likely receive?

**ADENEY:** Well, my...my training was a little bit mixed, in the sense that I had...I had that seven or eight...eight months at the Missionary Training Colony and the following year I did another trek, another summer trek, so that I had two month-long treks. The second year we went on a ship up the...up the coast to Scotland, and that again was an experience, but.... So that was one section of training, and then I...I went to the university and I had two years of...of history. And then I did a year of theology at...at Cambridge. And that was very liberal theology and that [it] was more of a fight to establish my faith from the intellectual point...point of view. It wasn't ideal training for the mission field, excepting that it taught me how to cope with [pauses] theories which...which were opposed to what I...I believed and...and how to think through the evangelical standpoint in...in the face of...of constant critical lectures, which I received from my professors. And then, the...the training of...of [at] Cambridge was also the [also helped in] learning leadership skills in terms of being a leader in the Christian Union there and becoming extremely active in that. And so that was a form of...a very important form of...of training for me. At the same time I had the work of leading

youth missions in the summertime. And that was a practical training, learning first of all from Hudson Pope, and then afterwards leading a mission myself as...as the...as the leader with a house party of workers. And that was very important practical training. Then, later on, I (after Cambridge)...I had one year at the China Inland Mission training center, where again we had a very godly man, Roland Hogbern, leading us. And a different type of training: Bible training, and.... But a training that [It] was [a] much more disciplined [regime] than say the life at Cambridge, where we had to keep to certain rules and regulations, which... [were] a little bit irksome after the freedom of...of the university. But it was specifically geared towards China, and that was useful. But I didn't have so much training as people have today. I mean I...I...we...we didn't have anything that [like what] we call cross-cultural studies, or we didn't talk about culture shock, and things like that, which...the phraseology was quite unknown in...in those days. And so, I suppose that I lacked the, say the theological seminary training, which most people have today. In some ways, I wish I'd had more training, 'cause I...I went out, I sailed for China when I was only twenty-two, arriving in China when I was twenty-three. So the...the training was, I suppose, a little bit meager compared with what a lot of people have today.

**ERICKSEN:** How...how did you...how did you become the missionary secretary for IVF [Inter-Varsity Fellowship]?

**ADENEY:** Well, when I went to...arrived in Cambridge, of course, I...as a freshman, I joined the Christian Union, [be]'cause I'd...I'd heard all about it for...for ages and [pauses] the story of the "Cambridge Seven" was very familiar to me. And having been at the Missionary Training Colony, I was in a way, a little bit ahead of other students who'd come straight from school. And it...it wasn't... it was at...towards the end of my first year, that I was invited to be a member of the...of the CICCUC [sounds like "kick you"] Executive Committee, this is the Cambridge Inter Collegiate Christian Union. And the one who invited me was Norman Anderson, today Sir Norman Anderson, who is a very well known author and professor of...he was the head of the London University [pauses] Institute of Higher Legal Studies. And he's...he's a...he's [he is] well known for his...as an [expertise in] Islamic scholar [studies] and he's lectured all over the world. He's...he's an outstanding person and his little booklet *Evidence for the Resurrection*, [*World Religions*], and numerous other books that...that he's written. But, he was finishing his law degree at the time at Cambridge, and he was the president of the Christian Union. And every year [clears throat] the CICCUC adds three people to their executive. They had...in those days, they had six people with three new ones coming on every year. And I was invited onto the CICCUC that... [at] the end of my first year. I started with the job as Secretary for Local Activities, which meant looking after [arranging for] the students who were speaking in churches and teaching in Sunday school and organizing that side of practical work that the students...Christian students, did in churches on the...on the weekend. But after a little time, they needed a missionary secretary, and they asked me if I would be the missionary secretary, which meant arranging for missionary speakers and heading up.... We had [pauses] the Cambridge... (what is C?... Cambridge University Volunteer [pauses] Fellowship, which was for people hoping to go to the...to the mission field. And I was the secretary for that. And so I had to arrange all the activities connected with foreign missions, which would be breakfasts, we used to have a breakfast, [including breakfasts with a missionary speaker] and I remember when we...when we got a hundred people out to the breakfast there was great rejoicing, [as] we got a cheaper breakfast! And...and then other...other of that type of meeting. So that was



my work for the remainder of my time at...at Cambridge. And then the second...during my last year at Cambridge, I was asked to be Missionary Secretary for the IVF, the national movement of...of [in] England. At that...that time they had young graduates, mainly, as the officers, of the I...of the IVF. And so I...I took on that job. And that was... [when] we formed the Inter-Varsity Missionary Fellowship. And I had been out to.... My last year before going to China, I'd...my mother had taken myself and my brother on a Mediterranean tour, and we had spent a week or two in Palestine and I had always remembered a morning spent overlooking the city of Jerusalem, overlooking the Golden Gate of Jerusalem. And, reading in the Psalms, (I had seen that gate that is sealed and as the legend says will never be opened till a deliverer comes), and I had read, "Lift up your heads, oh ye gates. And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors. The King of Glory shall come in." And I'd also been reading the story of David fleeing before Absalom and the victory over Absalom and then the cry that went out, (this came in my reading that particular morning): "Why speak ye not a word to bring back the King?" And looking at the Golden Gate and thinking of the coming of the Lord and these words, I...I thought of "evangelize to a finish to bring back the King", [chuckles], which was the kind of vision the Lord gave at...at that particular time. And I went back with that kind of slogan, motto in my mind. And in the end the Inter-Varsity Missionary Fellowship had as its...its motto "Evangelize to a finish." And so there were lots of different types of influences that involved me at the time.

**ERICKSEN:** Could you describe the process you went through of applying to and being accepted by CIM [China Inland Mission]?

**ADENEY:** Well, I...I was very much at home with the CIM right from my teenage... [days] at the time when I was at, in fact, at Junior School and was reading CIM literature and as a...as a very young boy joining the Comradeship for China. And so keeping in touch with the mission all during my school days.... In fact I...I would sometimes sit in the school chapel at...at Monkton and...and dream about going to China and wonder how I could somehow cut short the...the training and get there earlier. And then, after I'd left school, I remember visiting the China Inland Mission headquarters in London. And it happened we were there for their... (it must have been in the autumn, fall), it was [at] a time when the new party of recruits was going to China. And we came at a time of the prayer meeting, and the prayer hall there in Newington Green was packed out as a kind of farewell to these...these new workers going out. And we were a little bit late and there was no where to sit, and they took me and put me bang in the middle of the new workers [laughs] 'cause no...no other seats available. And there I was already sitting with the new workers, which seemed a little prophetic. And so I was in touch [clears throat] with leaders of the mission and they knew of my...my influ...my interest. And before I'd made any formal application, I was seeking advice for them. I asked them if I should study Chinese at...at Cambridge. And they said, "No, you can study Chinese all your life. Get something more...general preparation at Cambridge." And so I decided on history. But...so they knew all about me. I was in touch with them right the way through. And I don't remember actually at that time doing [making] formal application. But I know I was accepted for training as soon as I left Cambridge and went to the...went to...went to their training home in London, but I... And then, of course, you had to do an application, while we were in...in training. And towards the end of that time I faced a setback because I had to have a medical examination. And the doctor turned in a report that was not altogether favorable. He said that I was not a very robust type of physique, and he described me as being a poor risk. And I always remember the time

when I was to meet with the candidates committee and a decision would be made regarding my application. And that particular morning, I was studying and I read the...(again it came in my reading) the words, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." And this made a great impression. I felt, "Oh Lord, you've given me this promise for today." And I was to meet with Dr. Northcote Deck, Lucy Shaw's father. And he was a veteran missionary to the Solomon Islands, and he was a member of the board [council] of the...of the China Inland Mission. And he was also a medical doctor, and he was [asked] to interview me and pass a report on to the...to the board [council]. And I went to see him at the office that was usually used was...was taken up [but it was occupied], and he had to look for another office and finally found one. And I went in there and immediately I saw hanging on the wall a text: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." I said, "Well Lord, you've given me this twice." [Chuckles] And I had a good time with him. And then I went to the...to be interviewed by the...by the group there [council]. And I don't...I think they'd already decided pretty well, but I...I went and flunked the Bible question because there was an old Scottish general, General McKenzie. And he said, "Ah, Mr. Adeney, what is the main message of the book of Habakkuk?" And my mind went blank, and I...I was absolutely flabbergasted. And...and he...he hastened to [laughs] help me out and then told me, he said...he said "You know there was an old Scottish lady, and she was found reading the...the book of...of Habakkuk and somebody said to her, 'Isn't this a very hard book for you to be reading?' and she replied, 'Well,' she said, 'I'll soon be going to heaven and I'll meet the prophet, and he'll ask me, "Have you read my wee bookie?"'" And I'm sure the only reason he asked me that question was in order to tell that story [laughs]. But [laughs] in...in spite of that, they...they accepted me as a poor risk for China. And that meant that when I got to China I was designated to [the] province of Honan, which was supposed to be one of the healthiest provinces in...in China [chuckles].

**ERICKSEN:** Now where in the whole training period process did this interview...was it at the end?

**ADENEY:** Right at the end, yes.

**ERICKSEN:** And that training period was a year long?

**ADENEY:** Yes.

**ERICKSEN:** Was that standard for all candidates?

**ADENEY:** No, I think the candidates who'd not had other training would go for two years.

**ERICKSEN:** I see.

**ADENEY:** But they...they felt that one year was sufficient for me.

**ERICKSEN:** Well, moving on to...to China, what were your first impressions of the country when you arrived? You sailed into Shanghai didn't you?

**ADENEY:** I sailed into Shanghai, and we had a few days in Shanghai. We'd had six weeks journey on the...on the way out, and our [pauses]...in a sense the journey was a very educational experience, because going by ship you stopped all along the way. And I remember one shock, in a way, because we...we stopped in...in Colombo. And there was somebody from my hometown, Bedford, who was a Methodist missionary there. And he had...he...he actually had...had a butcher's shop in...in Bedford. And he had invited me to visit him. And I went off the ship to the Methodist mission station. And I'll never forget the kind of shock to find a...a beautiful bungalow with all kinds of servants running around and having a man pulling a punkah, which is the...the ceiling fan, all the time we were eating our...our meal. And here in these beautiful surroundings I thought, "Well, this is missionary life." [Laughs] And it kind of the...the...the...the shock of seeing that...that kind of, in [gave a shock to see that] the old days when [of] imperialism with the...the great white father [laughs] kind of idea [were still there]. And it...it...it...it was a little bit of a shock to me. That's not what I expected of missionary life. And then going on and arriving in...in Singapore. (We'd been in Penang. I'd seen the beautiful Botanical Gardens there). And then in Singapore, I was met by a Chinese family. I had a Chinese friend at Cambridge, and he came from Singapore, and he'd written to his family, and my first contact with a Chinese home was there in...in...in...in Singapore. And I...I really enjoyed that fellowship in that...in that home. And then a stop in...in Hong Kong, where we went up The Peak [top of mountain on Hong Kong island] and...and then we also went...went and looked out from The Peak over the islands that belonged to China. My first view of China. And while there I met Donald Grey Barnhouse, who happened to be there in Hong Kong taking meetings; [I] met him on the beach. And...and then the journey to...to [pauses] Shanghai, during which I had my twenty-third birthday, and there were all kinds of high jinx connected with that on the ship with the group of people. But, arriving in Shanghai we went to the China Inland Mission mission home and had a few days there. And while there I...I met Mr. [Dixon] Hoste, who was a member of the Cambridge Seven, and the last member of the Cambridge Seven on the field. And he was already pretty old, but he was the general director, and he was the successor to Hudson Taylor, the only...there'd just been Hudson Taylor and then Mr. Hoste. And this was coming at the end of his time as general director. And he was...having been at Cambridge I was very enthusiastic telling him all about what was going on there and the student work and...and so on. And I always remember how he...he...he probably spotted a danger because he turned to me and he said, "Mr. Adeney, beware of national pride which shows itself like a person who has been eating garlic." [Chuckles] And in my enthusiasm, I was probably unaware of that national pride, as I think...being a...a son...a child of my age...and [a member of] the British Empire and all that...that I'm sure that I was affected by the...the pride of English people at...at that time. [At] that time, I had also asked whether I could do student work, but I was told that it would be better for me to go into regular church work and country work for my first term, that student work might come later, but I...I should be prepared for general missionary work in the countryside. And so we were just busy getting ready to go up country. Those days, of course, it was...any journey took a long time, and we got on a riverboat and went up the Yangtze to the Anking, where we were to have the...the men's training home. And there we were about, something like thirty men living...living together with a senior missionary and Chinese language teachers. And the first experience was to get adjusted to an international fellowship, because we...we had people from Europe: Germans and Scandinavian; and then people from America and Canada, Australia, New Zealand, a very international group. And we gathered together there for intense language study and we had to learn to live together, as well as beginning our Chinese language. And then there was the



shock of the death of John and Betty Stam [in 1934], because just outside...just not too far away they were captured by guerrillas, probably Communist brigands, and were beheaded. And this news reached us and made a profound impression upon us. And [As a result] we were not allowed to go out of the city. We had...used to walk outside; now we were confined to the city. And then, quite un-...unwanted, a gunboat, I think...I think probably a British [or American] gunboat anchored off the...off the city, supposedly to protect us, [laughs], which was [pauses] an insight into...into gunboat diplomacy which.... [laughs].

**ERICKSEN:** What was the mood at the language school at...once the Stams had been killed?

**ADENEY:** Well, it was, I...I think very much a very of...of a challenge to further dedication of our lives [dedicate our lives] to the Lord, and it was...it was a very challenging thing to us. And then, another thing that happened, was that the...at Christmas time, the party of children going back to the mission schools, the Chefoo schools, the ship on which they were travelling from Shanghai going up to the Chefoo in the north was...was captured by...by pirates. And children of our senior missionary, who was one of the senior missionaries with us, who had...actually who had come out to China, who had taken us...no, who was with us at the...at the language school, I think, and were also on that boat. And there was [sic] the days of...of suspense not knowing what had happened to the...to the children. In the end they were rescued and none of them were in any way injured. But that was another [chuckles] experience so that we were, from the very beginning, used to the fact that life in China could be dangerous, there could be...could be problems.

**ERICKSEN:** Going back to a comment you made a few minutes ago: you said you had asked...asked to do student work and were told that would have to wait. What...how involved were CIM missionaries in student work at that point?

**ADENEY:** Not...not greatly involved, because the CIM emphasized work in the countryside and going out to the unreached areas, and they were not in the big cities, and therefore they were not very much connected with the universities. The student work that they do [did] would be much more the...on the high school level. And...and even in Honan, we had some camps for school boys, that...that kind...that kind of thing. But CIM wasn't very much involved at that time. Later on they were, but not...not when I first went to China.

**END OF TAPE**