

## **John Robert Shaw M.B.E. (1889 - 1963)**

My Grandfather, John Robert Shaw, was born in Yorkshire on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 1889 to Thomas Shaw and Mary Ann Baron. Thomas Shaw was a Primitive Methodist Minister and my grandfather followed in his footsteps.

John Robert served the whole of his ministry in Africa beginning in 1914 when he was sent to Aliwal North, Cape Province in South Africa. In 1916 my grandmother, Rosa Jane Whitworth Davidson, sailed from Aberdeen, Scotland and landed in Cape Town, to marry my Grandfather. They were married on the day of her arrival, 18<sup>th</sup> June 1916, and set out to my grandfather's second missionary appointment at Kasenga Mission in the Nanzila area of Northern Rhodesia. It was at this Mission that my Father was born, followed closely by a brother and a sister. Two further brothers and another sister were born as my grandfather continued to move around Northern Rhodesia.

In 1932 John Robert was transferred to the capital, Lusaka, where he worked until 1941 when he answered a call to become Chaplain to the Forces in the Northern Rhodesia Regiment. It was during this time that he met and influenced many soldiers from many parts of Africa.

Returning to civilian life in 1947, he served on the Copperbelt and then became secretary of the United Society for Christian Literature which involved extensive travelling throughout Northern Rhodesia.

He superannuated in 1956 and became an elder statesman of the Church, living in Lusaka. It was during this time in his life that I really got to know my grandfather. He had the most amazing eye-ball co-ordination and spent many happy hours entertaining his family by juggling everything he could lift into the air!

He was an examiner in the Government Ila language examinations and the people loved to hear him preach in their vernacular. They called him "Mundakatila" (a man of speed) and he led many souls to Christ through his preaching.

On the 1st July 1963, in the seventy fourth year of age and the forty ninth year of his ministry, John Robert Shaw died in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia.

As his granddaughter I feel that the writing on his gravestone epitomizes my grandfather perfectly. It says "He devoted his life to Africa and her people".

Susan Neuwirth (nee Shaw)