



## **Mr and Mrs G. Ritchie – 1943 (Edition 1)**

Mr Gordon Ritchie who had gone out to India from Dunedin in 1933 and Mrs Ritchie who went out from West Australia in 1934, resigned from the Poona and Indian Village Mission in 1943 and joined in fellowship with assembly missionaries in Belgaum helping with work amongst lepers. In 1945 they moved into the city of Belgaum to engage in Bible teaching and to commence an assembly there while still retaining an interest in the lepers.

In subsequent years they preached the gospel and taught the Scriptures in other centres as Changdad Hubli, Tambulwadi and Sankeshwar, while in the last named Mrs Ritchie helped in the hospital. A constant programme of village visitation with Indian brethren, encouraging scattered believers and teaching in local assemblies over a wide area involved so much work that most places were not visited more than once a year and sometimes once in two years. There were at times opposition and on one occasion books were tipped on the ground and the crowd tried to set alight to them. In 1951 the Marathi magazine was recommenced and as a result of regular preaching and teaching people were saved and baptised.

In 1952 Mr and Mrs Ritche moved to Bombay and began work amongst the Marathi speaking people there. Mr Harold McGregor was at that time introducing his radio broadcasts, and Emmaus Bible Study Courses were being distributed. They were able to help in the Marathi side of the work. During the 1950's their interests included the production of "Living Waters" broadcasts, ministering at Bible Schools and special series of meetings in different centres in Andhra Pradesh, Mysore State, Kerala, Calcutta and the Godavari. From 1958 they worked in Poona where there were up to a million Marathis. There they concentrated on cottage meetings, holding as many as ten each week.

As well as responsibility for the "Gospel Steward" magazine in the 1960's Mr Ritchie undertook an active role in itinerating with Indian brethren in many areas. Some of their activities were special teaching sessions for evangelists and teachers in Andhra, Bible camps in Belgaum, visits to the thickly populated areas of North India and a Bible selling mission to Goa. That was followed the next year by a further visit of eight months when a number of Navy personnel were saved and baptised. Conferences at Madras, Mysore and Andhra were other activities undertaken.

In 1969 they moved back to Bombay to spend their last year in India in a very busy programme of meetings in and around that huge city where the testimony had grown to 13 assemblies in several different languages. They returned to New Zealand in November 1970 and the following year Mr Ritchie joined the Treasurers of the New Zealand Missionary Funds.

[Source entry includes an uncaptioned photo of Mr and Mrs Ritchie]