



The Schweitzer Family circa 1893. Albert is first on the left

SIGNIFICANT DATES & EVENTS IN ALBERT SCHWEITZER'S LIFE

- 1875 - 14th January: born in Kaysersberg in the Alsace.
 - Shortly afterwards the family moved to Günsbach.
- 1880 - 84 - Attended the village school in Günsbach.
 1884 - 85 - Attended the secondary school in Münster further up the same valley.
 Schweitzer later remembers the walks to and from Münster through the countryside with great fondness.
- 1885 - 93 - Secondary School in Mülhausen. Piano and organ lessons with Eugen Münch.
- 1893 - Starts to study Theology and Philosophy at the University in Strasbourg.
 - Begins organ lessons with Charles Maria Widor in Paris.
- 1894 - 95 - Military service in Strasbourg.
- 1896 - Whitsun: Aged 21, he takes the decision to continue with an academic career until he is 30 years old and then to devote himself to some form of direct service to humanity.
- 1898 - First Theological examination.
 1898 - 99 - Studies Philosophy and the Organ in Paris.
 Writes his dissertation on Kant.
- 1899 - Spring and summer term: studies Philosophy in Berlin.
 - 2nd August: masters in Philosophy.



- At the 'turn of the century celebrations' in Berlin, he becomes aware that he does not share the general euphoria and optimism, but only sees "storm clouds on the horizon". The idea of writing a book called "We Epigones" is born, which eventually leads to the concept of the four-volume "Philosophy of Civilisation"

- 1900 - Second Theological examination.
- 14th November: starts as Vicar of St. Nicolai in Strasbourg.
- 1902 - Professor of Theology at Strasbourg University
- 1904 - He reads about the need for medical help at the station of the Paris Mission in the Congo and decides that this will be how he will honour his vow of 1896.
- 1905 - His book on J.S. Bach, in French is published.
- In October he announces to his family and friends that he intends to become a Jungle-Doctor and he starts his medical studies whilst continuing to be Professor of Theology and Philosophy at the same University.
- 1906 - Publication of book on French and German organ construction.
- 1908 - Publication of a new book on J.S. Bach in German.
- 1910 - Completed medical college studies.
- Publication of "The Quest of the Historical Jesus".
- 1911 - 12 - Medical internship.
- 1912 - Publication of the English translation of "Paul and His Interpreters - a Critical History".
- Final Medical Qualification.
- Resignation of his post as Vicar at St. Nicolai.
- Marriage to Helene Breslau.
- Resignation of teaching posts at the University of Strasbourg and bestowal of Honorary Professorship in recognition of services rendered.
- Course in Tropical Medicine in Paris.
- 1913 - 17 - First sojourn in Africa.**
- 1913 - Completion of the medical dissertation "The Psychiatric Study of Jesus".
- 21st March: departure for Lambarene.
- 16th April: arrival at Lambarene.
- 1914 - Placed under house arrest as a German citizen in a French colony (French Equatorial Africa - later The Gabon).
- 1915 - work on the "Philosophy of Civilisation" and first inspirational appearance of the concept of "reverence for Life".
- 1916 - Fatal accident befalls his mother, who is trampled by military horses.
- 1917 - Forced return to France and internment together with Helene in Bordeaux.
- 1917 - 18 - Transferred to the internment camp at Garrison in the Pyrenees where he contracted dysentery and Helene's tuberculosis is aggravated.
- 1918 - Return to the Alsace and after a bowel operation, he returns to his post as Vicar of St Nicolai, and takes the job of an assistant at the skin-clinic of the local hospital. He is in poor health and a depressed frame of mind.
- 1919 - Daughter Rhena is born.
- First sermon on the philosophy of Reverence for Life and second operation.
- First organ recital after WWII - in Barcelona.

- Invitation by Archbishop Söderblom to give lectures in Uppsala in Sweden provides new hope and opportunity.

- 1920
- Spring: Departure to Sweden to give talks, lectures and organ concerts earning enough money to pay off the debts incurred during the war-period.
 - Decision to return to Lambarene and continue his work there.
 - Publication of "On the Edge of the Primeval Forest".
- 1921
- Resignation from his two posts in Strasbourg in order to devote himself to his writing.
- 1921 - 22
- Concert and lecture tours in Switzerland, Sweden, England, (his first visit to London, Oxford, Cambridge and Birmingham) and to Denmark.
 - Work on the "Philosophy of Civilisation" in Gunsbach.
- 1923
- Lectures held at the University of Prague.
 - Publication of volumes One and Two of the "Philosophy of Civilisation", and of "Christianity and Religions of the World".
 - Construction of a house in Königsfeld in the Black Forrest, Germany for Helene and daughter Rhena - for health reasons.
 - Courses in Paediatrics and Dentistry in Strasbourg, and Topical Medicin in Hamburg .
- 1924
- Publication of "Memoirs of Childhood and Youth"
- 1924 - 27** - **Second sojourn in Africa**, February - July.
- 1924
- 21st February: departure for Lambarene without his wife and daughter.
- 1925
- 5th May: Death of his 79 year old father.
 - 18th July: He is joined by the first nurse - Mathilde Kottmann, and on the 19th October by the first doctor, Viktor Nessmann.
 - Following the Dysentery epidemic in 1924, the original hospital site proved too small for further expansion and it was decided to move to a new site upstream. In the Autumn of 1925 the clearing work for the new construction began.
- 1927
- Transfer of the hospital to the new site.
 - Mrs. C. E. B. (Lilian) Russell from Scotland arrives and takes over the supervision of construction and forest clearing work, enabling him to leave.
 - 21st July: Return to Europe.
- 1927 - 29
- Recitals and lectures in Sweden, Denmark Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Tschechoslovakia and the United Kingdom (recordings made by Columbia).
- 1928
- The town of Frankfurt awards him the Goethe Prize and he gives his first address about his relationship to Goethe.
- 1929
- The Maison Schweitzer, built from the money received with the Goethe Prize, is completed.
- 1930 - 31** - **Third sojourn in Africa**



- 1930 - At Easter Helene has to return to Europe for health reasons.
- 1930 - Publication of the "The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle".
- 1931 - Publication of "Out of My Life and Thought".
- 1931 - Work on the first draft of Volume III of the "Philosophy of Civilisation".
- 1932 - He gives the commemorative address on the occasion of the centenary of Goethe's death, on the 22nd March in Frankfurt and on the 9th July in Ulm.
- 1932 - Numerous other lectures and concerts are give in Germany, Holland and the United Kingdom.
- 1932 - Autumn and into the next Spring: intensive work on the first draft of Volume III of the "Philosophy of Civilisation."

- 1933 - 34 - Fourth sojourn in Africa, March - January.**
- 1933 - 18th March: Depart for Lambarene.
- 1934 - January: Return to Europe on the ship 'Amerique' working on the second draft of Volume III of the "Philosophy of Civilisation".
- 1934 - October/November: Hibbert and Gifford Lectures in Manchester and Edinburgh and lectures in Oxford.

- 1935 - Fifth sojourn in Africa, February - August.**
- 1935 - August: Second Lecture in Edinburgh and in December recordings with Columbia in London.
- 1935 - Publication of "Indian Thought and its Development".
- 1936 - Recording session in Strasburg.

- 1937 - 39 - Sixth sojourn in Africa**
- 1938 - Publication of "African Notebook"
- 1939 - Because of the alarming news from Europe, he leaves Lambarene on the 12th January, stays 12 days in Europe - merely to make the most urgent arrangements - and arrives back in Lambarene on the 3rd March.

- 1939 - 48 - Seventh sojourn in Africa.** He remains nine and a half years in Lambarene.
- 1940 - October/November: fighting in and around the town of Lambarene, but both sides leave the hospital unharmed.
- 1941 - Helene arrives at Lambarene after a difficult journey via Angola, partly facilitated by the British agents. She remains until 1946.
- 1942 - First consignment of provisions and medicines from the USA.
- 1948 - Arrival in Bordeaux.
- 1949 - Commemoration speech: "Goethe: The man and his Achievements" given in Aspen, Colorado, USA, on the occasion of Goethe's 200th birthday.

- 1949 - 51 - Eighth sojourn in Africa - until 1950 together with Helene.**
- 1951 - Award of the Book-market Peace-Prize in September in German and in November in Sweden.

- 1951 - 52** **Ninth sojourn in Africa**, December - July.
- 1952 - Recording session at the organ of the church in Günsbach.
 - Bestowal of various French and German medals and honours.
- 1952 - 54** - **Tenth sojourn in Africa**, December - May.
- 1953 - Start of the construction of a village for lepers not far from the hospital compound.
 - He is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (retrospectively for 1952, when he could not come to Europe). The money allows the Leper-Village to be completed in one go.
- 1954 - 28 & 29th July: his last public performance on the organ on the occasion of the Bach Festival in Strasbourg.
 - 4th November: Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance speech in Oslo - "The Question of Peace in our time". With Helene at his side.
- 1954 - 55** - **Eleventh sojourn in Africa**, December - July, with Helene.
- 1955 - May: Completion of the Leper-Village.
 - Autumn: Visits to Paris, Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, where he receives the Order of Merit from the Queen.
 - November: He receives the Order of Merit in Bonn, Germany.
- 1956 - 57** - **Twelfth sojourn in Africa**, January - July, with Helene.
- 1957 - 61 - Publication of the first complete collection of Schweitzer's written works in Japan (19 volumes)
- 1957 - 23rd April: Oslo Radio broadcasts his Address to the world warning of the dangers of atmospheric nuclear tests. The first ever globally transmitted radio broadcast.
 - 22nd May: Helene has to leave Lambarene due to poor health.
 - 1st July: Helene dies in Zürich at the age of 78.
- 1957 - 59** - **Thirteenth sojourn in Africa**, December - August.
- 1958 - 28/29/30th January: Radio Oslo broadcasts his three Addresses warning the world about the nuclear danger under the heading of "Peace or Atomic War?"
- 1959 - 65** - **Fourteenth sojourn in Africa**.
- 1959 - October: After accepting the Sonning-Prize in Copenhagen, he travels through Germany for the last time.
 - November: Spends three weeks in Paris with excursions to Brussels and Rotterdam.
 - December 9th: Embarks for Africa for the last time. Further trips to Europe are planned but not executed.



- 1960 - First postage stamp of the Gabon with his portrait.
- 1963 - April 18th: Celebration of the 50th anniversary of his first arrival in Africa. Vreni Burkhalter is in charge of organising all the catering and festivities.
- 1965 - January 14th: His 90th birthday celebrations are attended by visitors from all over the world.
- August 27th: His last letter: "...my health is good...."
- September 4th: Schweitzer dies peacefully just before midnight.

