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Journal of Pacific Adventist History serves historians, members and others interested in the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific Islands. It focuses on people and events involved in the establishment and development of the church in preparation for the event of the ages—the Second Coming of Christ.

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- **Cover Picture**

Upper: candidates baptised at Lironessa, Vanuatu.

Lower: Converts studying the Sabbath School lesson in their new church.

- **Usage of the SDA Church Logo is endorsed by the SPD.**

EDITORIAL



PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS traditionally and culturally disseminated information verbally. People used story telling, songs and drama and sometimes drew pictures or created symbols to convey events. Too often the details of various happenings were lost in time only to be fabricated by historians many years later. What has been written may even be a mile from the truth.

One of the first strategies of Adventist pioneers in the Solomon Islands was to teach reading and writing. Schools were established and local people were educated. Before long they were sent to other areas as pastors and teachers. While acknowledging this good work there is an emphasis which has been neglected in the educating of the Solomon Island people—training in recording the precious history of the Adventist Church. Sadly, information about people and events in the past has been forgotten and some has been lost forever.

The keeping of historical records has many advantages for us today. Knowing about the early Adventist unsuccessful attempt to enter Vella la Vella in the Western Solomons would assist in developing successful approaches in new areas. At that time delay in acting on a village request, closed the door on a tremendous opportunity to establish a permanent Adventist presence there. Minimising delay needs to be a priority! Over the years it has taken much time, money and effort for the church to establish its work in the south of Vella la Vella

Then again, understanding the successful endeavours of Adventist pioneer Jugha to establish and develop an Adventist presence in northeast Choiseul would be helpful. In this situation Jugha recognized the special need of the people for their children to sing as well as the Duke youth of Hambere village on the island of Kolobangera. As the children were taught both to sing and to behave, changes came into their lives and into the parents' lives as well. Gradually as beliefs and values



Jugha of the Solomon Is

changed many became Seventh-day Adventists. Thus, fostering the special interests of people is of vital importance. Today the majority of villages in northeast Choiseul are Adventist.

We need to know more of our church history as a guide to the future and to aid us in making decisions for the growth of the Adventist Church. I therefore wish to encourage my Pacific Islands' brethren and sisters to see the importance of recording the history of the church and to begin writing it down now.

Lawrence P Tanabose
Secretary Trans Pacific
Union

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THE BEGINNING — A DREAM; THE FULFILMENT — A NEW CHURCH IN VANUATU

NOS MAILALONG



THE ISLAND OF PAAMA is situated in the central part of the group of islands that make up Vanuatu. The island had a population of roughly four to five thousand people but a lot of these people have migrated to Santo, Vila, Epi, Malekula and even New Caledonia. According to the 1999 census there were only 1,633 people living on the island at that time. As far as religion is concerned the Presbyterian church is the dominant church on the island. The Seventh-day Adventist Church had only been established in two small villages on the whole of Paama.

It was around the 1930's or 1940's that the Seventh Day Adventist Church

first settled in these two villages but unfortunately the church never infiltrated into other areas or villages. There are two reasons for this. The first reason is that a lot of the people who became Adventists during those early days migrated to other islands and never came back to the island. So in a way the church for many years has had a very low profile on the island. Secondly, the Presbyterian Church put up very strong opposition against Adventists and other denominations. All the village chiefs were basically Presbyterians so there was no way they were going to allow Adventists to go into their villages.

My home village of Lironessa, with a

Nos Terry

Mailong was born in the village of Lironessa on the island of Paama in Vanuatu, on 23 July 1963. He obtained his primary school education at the government school on the island before attending Aore Adventist College from 1977-1980. In 1983 he graduated with a Diploma of Theology from Sonoma Adventist College.

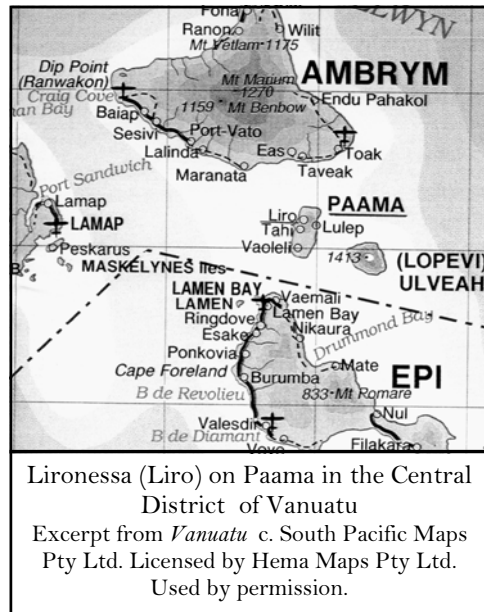
For the next 2 years he served as a ministerial intern at the headquarters church on Santo island. During this time, on 24 February 1985, he married Youna, a teacher at the local Adventist primary school.

Nos then served on Atchin Island (1986-88) and as the pastor of the headquarters church at *Vila on the island of Efate, for 2 years. After four years of study at PAC he was awarded a BA in Theology in 1994. For the next two years he served as the minister of the Sarakata Church on Santo and on 13 May 1995 was ordained to the gospel ministry.

In 1997 & 98 Nos was the Mission Secretary and pastor of the headquarters church at *Vila. Since 1999 he has served as President of the Mission. In 2001 his nationwide evangelistic thrust, known as the "Bible Speaks" led to 830 baptisms.

Nos and Youna have four children: Alicia, Marvin, Keliza & Roan.

(*the mission headquarters was transferred from Santo Island to Vila.)



Lironessa (Liro) on Paama in the Central District of Vanuatu is a small village with a population of around 250, situated on the north-western side of the island, about twenty minutes walk from the sea. As it is the headquarters of the Presbyterian Church on the island it is a very difficult place in which to witness. When I look back over the years as a Seventh-day Adventist, I am pleased to know that there is nothing impossible for my God to do. When it is difficult for people to come into the village, God has other ways of going around the problem. Before I became an Adventist there was a man (Dick Steven) who became an Adventist by his marriage to an Adventist lady. But he was a sickly man who was confined to his bed for over 30 years so he couldn't do anything about witnessing.

Prior to becoming an Adventist Christian I had a very negative perspective on Adventists, because all I knew about them was that they didn't eat pig, they didn't drink tea or coffee and they worshipped on the 'wrong day', Saturday, while everybody else worshipped on Sunday. What a funny group of people I thought to myself, never dreaming that one day I would be a pastor of the SDA Church.

But that is what is amazing about God's grace. When in our humanity it was difficult to come from the outside into this strong Presbyterian village, God picked someone from inside the village, through His own mysterious ways, to do His work.

This is how it happened. In 1975 I sat the grade 6 examinations. When the results of the final examination came out at the end of the year, the selection board in the Ministry of Education didn't select me for any high school even though I had very good marks which should have easily qualified me for a place in a high school. So the head master of the primary school, after much frustration, had me repeat grade 6 during 1976. The same thing happened again. I scored very good marks but I wasn't given a place in any high school. What we didn't know was that God must have been intervening during those times to stop me going to the schools which I had given as my first preferences. I am fully convinced that I could never have become an Adventist or even a pastor if I had gone to one of the government high schools. After giving up hope of furthering my studies in a high school, I thought I would spend the rest of my days just going around with the young people in the village.

Surprisingly, one afternoon I received a message by the Teleradio (as used in those days) through the village health centre. The message was for me to go to Aore Adventist High school. That was very surprising because I had never applied to go to Aore, and besides I never wanted to have anything to do with the Adventist Church. I do not know who sent that message. My parents who were devoted Presbyterian Christians finally gave their permission for me to go to Aore for my high school education. Before I reluctantly left for Aore, my father gave me clear instructions that I was going for an education and should never join the Adventist Church.

I felt like I was going into a new culture, as I had never had exposure to the Adventist life style. I began to ask questions about dressing differently, eating only certain foods, and worshipping on Saturday. And so began my desire for answers to those questions. I had a special interest in Bible classes and the pastor's baptismal class. It now dawned on me that these Adventists were not a funny, confused group of people as I

was used to thinking.

As the 1978 academic year was coming to its end the pastor was preparing every one in the baptismal class for baptism. One Sabbath morning at the conclusion of the class he gave an appeal and I no longer had any doubt in my mind that if this was the truth I needed to accept it. The challenge now for me was to ask permission from my parents.

The church pastor and I prayed about my situation, and then I sent a letter to my parents informing them of my decision. The reply was negative. After more prayer I sent a second letter and then a third, and finally my father reluctantly gave permission. So 1978 was the year I gave my life to the Lord through baptism on the beautiful sandy beach of Aore. I can still vividly remember that experience and the joy of accepting Jesus. There was an eagerness now for me to share my new found faith with my people. When I went home to my village the people thought I was just being stupid and they took no notice of me.

My final year at Aore, 1980, was a very important year in my life. I remember I had a dream and I saw Jesus coming back the second time. Then I recognised people in the dream – my teachers, some students, my family and friends

from my home village. They were walking along a dark path and I knew that the Lord was wanting me to be a minister. The next morning without hesitation I went straight into the principal's office and told him that I wanted to go to Sonoma Adventist College, Papua New Guinea, to do ministerial training.

Ministerial training at Sonoma College took three years (1981-1983) and 1984 was my first year in the ministry. When my people learned that I was now a church minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church the gap widened. Every time I went home for holidays, people would be suspicious of me, so I wouldn't have the opportunity to do any thing in the form of witnessing. It took seventeen years, after my graduation from the theology course at Sonoma College, for me to have the opportunity to be able to run my first public campaign in my own village.

In those seventeen years God was paving the way as certain events took place and the attitudes of the people and the leadership of the community were all changed. The Vanuatu Mission decided to run a nation-wide campaign in 2001 and there was a total of 100 programs all running at the same time throughout

the nation. I had the opportunity to conduct one of those meetings, in my own village from August 25 to September 14. What a joy it was for me to be able to speak the truth to my own people. The message was readily received, 'the harvest was truly ready but the laborers were few'. The meetings were well attended by people who had to walk 2 to 3 hours each night to get to the place of meeting.

Prior to the starting of the 3 weeks meetings I had planned to raise a complete new church at the conclusion of this series. Silently I organized people to secure the land, clear the site, mill the timbers, and ship materials from Vila, using finance generously given by a New Zealand friend. I flew down from Vila with a carpenter. When we got to the island we rallied support from the two Adventist villages. During the day our program was to build a church, twelve metres by



The church at Lironessa

six metres, about a five-minute walk across a creek, from the village. At 4 pm we dropped the hammers and tools and picked up our Bibles so that by 7 pm I was up on the pulpit preaching. Members of the SDA churches on the island distributed handbills and personally invited people to the meeting. We even had musical groups from the Presbyterian Church provide special items each night.

By the time the meetings concluded we were also putting the last iron sheet on the roof. The church was basically finished and we had forty people enrolled for Bible studies that would be given by a layman we had previously trained at Aore Laymen's Training School. One month later I went back to the island and conducted a baptism of twenty-one precious souls. That was the first ever baptism to be conducted in my own village. I had the joy of baptizing my own father and mother (Ariken and Molly Mailalong), other family members and relatives. For me it was a dream come true. Today we have a strong Adventist church in a Presbyterian environment. The church has a lot of potential to grow so I solicit your prayers. I also take this opportunity to thank Cliff Morgan, a church member from Brisbane, Australia, who gave the money for the roof of this church.

What seemed impossible for man to do was possible for our God to do. I give Him the praise, the honor and the glory for what He has wrought in my life and the way He has used me in His service. As long as I live I will continue to serve Him.



BREAKING NEW GROUND—Part 6

Efogi Mission: Entering New Guinea

ALFRED G CHAPMAN



See CV in Vol 3 No 1

Synopsis: The personal work of G F Jones among the Koiari people led to parents sending their children to Bisiatabu. The students, however, needed time to benefit from the subjects in the curriculum as well as from the emphasis on character development. Some, really with insufficient education, left school to meet the urgent need for teachers in the villages.

EXPANSION IN PAPUA

Foundations Laid in Australia

THUS IN 1923 there were prospects for advance moves and the Australasian Union Conference from Australia was ready to increase staff in Papua to handle the developments.¹ At the Executive Committee meeting of 31 December 1923, the New Guinea staff were noted as: G F Jones, G Peacock and Mitieli, a Fijian. Allocations were made for the school at Bisiatabu and for mountain schools. Jones was given the authority and finance to extend as possible into the hinterland. So prospects were bright for 1924. There were prospects of a move into the New Guinea area from the Solomon Islands as well as of the expansion in Papua.



The church at Efogi

G F Jones and the Lieutenant Governor concerning the future growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission.² In this discussion Jones had said that he would move ahead where he could. In reply the Lieutenant Governor had said that any movement would be “blocked by the other missions and the Common-

wealth grant of land.” Jones had indicated then that he planned to approach the problem on the basis that the people would themselves “carry forward our work in their own land.”

In seeking to work out this policy Jones arranged with the leaders of the people living in the mountain villages around Efogi to meet him with a view to arranging for the erection of a school in a suitable location. After some talk, interpreted by Timothy, the second Papuan baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist church, the people asked where it was desired to locate the school. In reply Pastor Jones pointed out that this was for the people to say as the land would continue to be theirs. Upon their invitation to “Come along and see it now”, they all went down to where the leaders were willing to devote a piece of land for a school. Jones reports that he was glad to see that the land was the very piece which he had decided in his mind would be most suitable.³

In 1914, a lease had been granted at Efogi and even though this was in a remote place difficult of access, it was decided to make use of it. W N Lock who recently had been appointed was to establish a station there. Already in February 1924, while on a visit with Jones and Peacock, H C White from the Union Conference office had reported that he had met the villagers of Nauro, not far from Efogi, who desired a missionary to locate among them and indicated their willingness to give their young people to the mission.⁴ In August 1924, after three strenuous days of travel from Bisiatabu, Lock reached the rest house at Efogi where he was to locate until he built a temporary home on the mission land.⁵ It was planned to make this building forty-two feet by twenty feet so that when the permanent house was built it could be used as a church and



Pastor & Mrs G F Jones



The Locks' home, later to be used as a church and school

school. When the building was finished sufficiently he went down to Bisiatabu on 24 October 1924. It had been hoped that fifty men would be available for carrying, as well as some who would work on the track, making it possible for the women to ride horses part of the way. Some confusion reigned on Sunday as the goods had to be rearranged due to the smaller number of carriers and while this was done some of the men went on to make the track suitable for horses, and to make a bridge on which the horses could move across the first major stream. Finally a start was made, Mrs Lock, Miss Heise and the children riding while Pastor Lock walked and the goods were carried by the Efogi folk who had come down. The journey took six days, full of difficulty. The land was either up or down, some parts of the route were best travelled by wading the creek beds, streams had to be crossed and re-crossed, it was not long before the horses had to be left. At night tents were available to some, others used bush shelters. Two of the goats escaped to the bush but at last the Efogi mission station was reached and all could anticipate the future with mingled hopes and fears.⁶

Work continued on the building. A floor was put down for the front verandah, and this was to be the first classroom. Plans were laid for a house for girls who might wish to come to the school and there were prospects that the enrolment of the village policeman's



Pr & Mrs Lock

sister would encourage others to come.⁷ An influenza epidemic which caused panic on the part of the people and at least twenty-one deaths, delayed the school opening but eventually it began to function. For several years from 1924 to 1928, an Australian missionary was located at Efogi, assisted by Fijian missionaries. Those who had the honour of working in this isolated area were W N Lock, his wife and family; Miss Heise, who was not only a companion for Mrs Lock but who also shared in the general medical and educational work of the mission; and C E Mitchell, his

wife and family who replaced Pastor Lock. It was found that once the work of the mission was established the heavy drain on resources and manpower involved in maintaining the Efogi station under an Australian missionary was not justified and the Fijian mission-



Miteli Nakasamai, his wife Fika & their children

aries were placed in charge. Among the Fijians who should be mentioned in this connection are Miteli and Nafitalai Navara. Timothy, a Papuan, was also an able assistant in the establishment and development of the Efogi mission station.

Faole

One of the students of the Efogi school who later became well known in Adventist circles for his faithful mission service was Faole.⁸ He first made contact with the Seventh-day Adventist mission at Bisiatabu when S W Carr was there. At that time Faole signed on as a plantation worker for one year. The influence of the mission remained with him when he returned to his village, where he remained until he helped take C E Mitchell's goods from Bisiatabu to Efogi in 1927. He brought his wife and five children to the Efogi school and with them he went to school supporting them by gardening a plot of land allocated to him on the mission lease. He was baptized in 1927 at Efogi by Pastor W N Lock, the first to be baptized there.⁹ He had only about two years at the school before he was asked to be a missionary at Maibiki, inland from Vilirupu. After several years there he returned to the Efogi district being in charge of the Adventist mission work at Enevologo. During the war he combined mission work with assistance as guide in the Kokoda track area. After the war he continued as a respected patriarch to exert an influence in his area for Christianity and the Seventh-day Adventist mission. S W Carr little knew as he signed on Faole who by that time had killed seven people and had spent a year in jail for one of his misdeeds, that the influence of the program of the Bisiatabu Mission on the life of this labourer would have such a far reaching effect.¹⁰ Almost twenty years went by but the seed patiently sown bore fruit in

the changed attitude of Faole and through him the burden of the later workers at Efogi and Vilirupu was lessened.

While W N Lock and Nafitalai Navara were at Efogi the school began to function chiefly under the care of Nafitalai.¹¹ It was strongly supported by Gobeli, the leading village constable of the area who



sent at least one of his girls to live on the mission and attend

the school. When C E Mitchell was moving up to Efogi his way was cheered by the welcome given by the Efogi school pupils both boys and girls, who with Nafitalai, came down to Maurari to welcome him.

The Hidden Influence of Bisiatabu

The Seventh-day Adventist Mission contact with the Efogi people had been fairly longstanding, though intermittent. The visits of the missionaries had been backed up by the continuing influence of the Bisiatabu mission and by the presence of men, particularly Faole, who had been favourably impressed by the program and teachings they had experienced at Bisiatabu. So there was not at Efogi the long discouraging delay that was experienced at Bisiatabu. C E Mitchell notes that “during the last four months we were pleased to welcome ten new students to our school” at Efogi.¹²

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS ENTER NEW GUINEA Lavilai

At the same time as the development of Efogi was taking place in Papua, the Seventh-day Adventist Mission began to extend from the Solomon Islands to the Mandated Territory of New Guinea. In 1916, negotiations with the military administration took place and in a letter from the Administrator, an invitation was extended to enter Bougainville, and an offer of a land grant was made. It was not until much later that the advance was made.¹³ Then the man to lead the way was H B P Wicks, who on 23 October 1924, anchored off the shore of Lapelae (or Lavilai) and the island of Bougainville.¹⁴ On large parts of this island the Roman Catholic Church had a strong influence. With Pastor Wicks came R H Tutty and two men from the Solomon Islands, Nano and Udumu.¹⁵

The importance of education is brought to the fore almost immediately for Pastor Wicks reports a discussion with some of the Bougainville men on the occasion of his visit. There was evidently some knowledge of the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventists for one man said, “The tobacco and betel-nut—that is nothing, we will give that up, but the pig and the turtle

meat is our food, we cannot give that up.” One of the chiefs then said, “When I can read from the book myself and see that pig is bad then I think that I can give it up”.¹⁶ Here was a challenge to educate the people, and this was taken up immediately. Tutty reports less than a year later,

School is being held regularly. Only twenty attend and they are mostly adults.

We have been pleased and surprised that some of these can read their own language a little although they have not had three months' schooling yet.¹⁷

This was at the first station on Bougainville at Lavilai. A second school had already been established by the Solomon Island missionary, Udumu, who had a group of about nine for his school and about twenty attending his Sabbath meetings.¹⁸ After eight months on the island Tutty reported that Nano had had a school running back among the hills at Taki and that after three months people were beginning to read. In order to make use of this desire on the part of the people to read¹⁹ and to provide some reading material, a year's Sabbath School lessons were translated into the Buin language.²⁰

GROWTH—BOUGAINVILLE TO RABAU Not Restricted by Comity Agreement

The contrast between the slow growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Papua and the comparatively rapid growth in Bougainville is quite striking. In four years on Bougainville as well as the head station, two outstations were operating. In each a day school was conducted. There were two baptized members and five others about ready for baptism. There were four hundred people connected with the mission through attendance at school or at worships. One factor which appears to have contributed to this was the ability to move on Bougainville to where the interest in the mission sprang up, to establish a station or school there and to do this without reference to other mission organizations and with a minimum of control by the government. This was in a place where there was already considerable influence by the Roman Catholic Mission which naturally warned its members against what it considered the heretical views of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission. In seeking to establish the Seventh-day Adventist Mission, Pastor Wicks explained to the people that it was his desire to “read from the Bible the things that were good and the things to avoid, and if the people wanted to do what

the Bible said, well and good, but if not, we would not get angry.”²¹ This led to the remark noted earlier by one of the chiefs, “When I can read from the Book myself and see that pig is bad, then I think that I can give it up.”²² While this discussion centred on one particular aspect of Seventh-day Adventist belief, it was surely a discussion that laid down a principle for both mission and government activities that was far more likely to advance the people concerned than the restrictive policy followed in Papua. This principle was to present before the people the various avenues open to them and to allow them the right of making a choice.

Assistance of Solomon Island Missionaries

A second factor appears to have been the availability of a considerable number of Solomon Island missionaries. These people, although they themselves had had contact with the Seventh-day Adventist Mission only since 1914, had made a wholehearted response. They had been keen to attend school and had developed a sense of mission which led many of them to serve in Bougainville and other parts of the Mandated Territory and later in Papua. The combination of the freedom to carry out mission activity in any place in the Territory and the availability of dedicated workers, made possible the rapid expansion of the Seventh-day Adventist influence in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea.

Early Seventh-day Adventist Influence on New Ireland

It was not long after the Seventh-day Adventist Mission became established on Bougainville that its influence began to extend to New Ireland.²³ This came about in an indirect way. Working on a plantation on Bougainville was a labourer from New Ireland. When in 1925, a Seventh-day Adventist missionary was stationed in a village on the plantation boundary, a friendship developed between the labourer and the missionary. The labourer became interested in the mission message and when he returned for a time to New Ireland to his village, he discussed with his people the Seventh-day Adventist Mission. As a result about January 1927, he made a request to the Seventh-day Adventist Mission to begin mission work for his people. The Mission was unable to do anything about this request for some time.

Seventh-day Adventists at Rabaul

When the Mission was ready to make new moves it was decided to seek a headquarters site at Rabaul. This was done in June 1929, and the letter of 1916 served as an introduction to the Government Officers who gave permission to seek suitable land. A site was found on the island of Matupi. There was “on it an old

building formerly used as a store which is being repaired and cleaned and newly painted to serve as a meeting and school house.”²⁴

An Alternative to the Comity Agreement

There was a certain division among the people of Matupi over the new mission. Some favoured the Seventh-day Adventists and some the older established mission.²⁵ Efforts were made to restrict the influence of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission by court proceedings against some of those who favoured the Seventh-day Adventists, but the charges were not sustained. Some of these proceedings took place in the Administration court and some in a native court known as a *vakurai*. Here was an instance where there was the possibility of severe conflict due to competing mission interests and yet the matter was effectively handled so that the two missions worked side by side and the people were able to make their choice.

An interesting incident in connection with the arrival of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Rabaul concerns a man who waited forty years to find a mission which kept the original Sabbath.²⁶ As a young man this Baai villager had helped a German missionary to translate the Bible into his language. When they had discussed the Sabbath, the missionary had told him that they were not keeping the true Sabbath but that there was a mission which kept the Sabbath and that later, it would probably come. When the Seventh-day Adventists arrived he gladly joined them. He prepared some of his land for a school site, he keenly studied the Bible, he learned to read English under the help of Salau, a Solomon Island missionary and invited people of other villages to accept the Seventh-day Adventists.

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POST-WAR BATUNA

Revitalising the Marovo Station in the Western Solomons

LYNDON THRIFT



Lyndon Thrift, BA, BEd graduated from the Australasian Missionary College & the University of Queensland. His service for the Adventist Church began in the secondary department of the Wahroonga School in Sydney in 1943.

He spent time in the mission field as headmaster of several educational institutions—1946-47 at the Training School at Batuna; 1948 at Betikama Missionary School on Guadalcanal, Eastern Solomons; 1949 at Omaura Intermediate School, PNG; 1950-52 at New Guinea Highlands Missionary School, PNG. On returning to Australia, Lyn, apart from 2 years study at university (1960-61), served in a variety of positions—teacher at Avondale High School, 1953; principal of Wahroonga Central School, 1954-59, teacher at Australasian Missionary College, 1962-64; then principal 1965-68; principal of Hawthorn Central School, 1969-71; educational director of the TAUC, 1972-79 & the TTUC, 1980-82.

In 1982 he received the Award of Excellence from the GC, as an outstanding educator in the SPD.

He is married to Grace (Stewart), and they have 3 children, Merlene, Evelyn & Yvonne.

Since 1983 they have been living in Koorainghat near Taree, NSW.

A LITTLE BEFORE MIDDAY on November 25, 1945 the *Montoro* sailed out of Sydney harbour bound for Torokina, Bougainville, via Milne Bay. It had a cargo of fairly volatile materials—aviation fuel and the Christmas beer for the Australian troops. Several military men were on board to care for the cargo but the only other passengers were Adventists, bound for the Solomon Islands.

This group consisted of Pastor R. Hare, then mission supervisor for what is now the South Pacific Division; incoming Mission Superintendent, Pastor Herbert White with his wife, Vera (nee Zeunert) and their twin daughters, Yvonne and Veronica; Secretary-Treasurer Pastor Arthur Robert Barrett and his wife Hilda; Mrs J. Gosling and two children; engineer Frank Aveling with his wife Ida and two young daughters; and myself, minus my wife Grace, whom I was not to see again until one year later.

The voyage was slow but quite enjoyable and just a week after departure there came a brief shore leave in Milne Bay at the site where the 49th American General Hospital had been located, a military hospital staffed by American Adventists. A couple of days later we were met at Torokina by Pastor N Ferris, with the three mission boats, *G F Jones*, *Portal* and *Dadavata* and their crews.

As the *G F Jones* had been borrowed from its government service for this trip, and was already overdue to return, a hasty transfer of the Avelings, the Goslings and myself was made and we sailed for Kukudu and the Amyes Memorial Hospital on the island of Kolombangara, via Faisi in the Shortland Islands. Pastor Hare and the Whites travelled with Pastor Ferris on the *Portal*, and the Barretts were on the *Dadavata*. The only mishap was the

cracking of the *Dadavata's* engine block. The boat was towed by canoe to a local village where the travellers awaited "rescue" by searchers in the *Portal*. The Barretts were philosophical about the delay, calling it their "second honeymoon". Eventually we all arrived at Batuna where a typical Marovo Lagoon welcome, with much handshaking, many smiles and lots of "leanas"



Pr Herbert & Vera White with the twins

(welcome or good) awaited the returnees and the new arrivals

Batuna Mission Station, 1945

The lease of the land had been arranged by Pastor Harold Wicks in 1922, and development started soon after. It was quite a pleasant situation on the island of Vangunu, including an area that projected out into the Marovo Lagoon. The narrow part of the peninsula was low, just a few feet above sea level, but the major portion of the estate provided elevated sites for buildings, with pleasant water views and access to the sea breezes.

By the time the expatriates were evacuated in 1942, due to the war in the Pacific, Batuna was the very centre of the Adventist Mission in the Solomon Islands. There was a church seating 150, a six bed hospital, a school, printing press, sawmill, slipway, engineering plant, wharf and even a boat building shed. There were houses for five expatriate families, dormitories for both

male and female students, accommodation for Kata Ragoso, the assistant to the superintendent, Tasa, Likaveke and later, Pastor Pandahite who taught school as well as Pastor Rini Iwo, who helped in the press, among other things. Boat captains and crews were also there—among them George Rusa an engineer and Sevula, a carpenter. Paths had been laid out to connect the various buildings and the area



The wharf on the Marovo Lagoon at Batuna

beautified with trees and colourful shrubs. Coconuts had been planted on the lower ground. A sizeable area of garden land had been fenced with netting for protection against the marauding pigs.

One interesting feature about the Batuna area was the tides. Coming from Australia I had been used to two high tides daily with the cycle changing on a monthly basis. But at Batuna there was only one tide a day and the cycle changed on a yearly basis. The high tide was about midday in December when we arrived and the repairing of the slipway was a little different from ordinary work, for the placing of new sections in position had to be done at low tide—at midnight under floodlights.

Buildings

The church was of milled timber construction, adequate in size for a community of one hundred and fifty, a neat building that would have been appropriate for a country town in Australia. The school had been built in 1936 by G W Richardson in what must have been record time, and provided good accommodation for the existing needs. The dormitories were partly of sawn timber construction with some of the walls of native materials. The hospital had been built over the water with a gangway connecting it to the shore, and it provided for both in-patients and out-patients. The latter being in the majority. The press was housed in a small two storey building near the school. The actual



The *Portal*, miraculously preserved during the war

machine was old and we understood that it had been donated by the Signs about the time Batuna was started in 1923.

The engineer's workshop was strategically located at the beginning of the wharf, for most of the work had to do with the boats that were very essential to the mission when so few ships operated commercially. The slipway and sawmill were two other essentials in a programme that relied so heavily on boats. In 1945 the slipway needed consid-

erable repairs as that enemy of wooden boats, and any timber that had to be under the water, the shipworm (*torredo navalis*), had been at work and the logs that carried the rails had to be renewed, hence the nocturnal working sessions already mentioned. Power for the sawmill came from a single cylinder Gardner diesel engine that laboured hard when the logs were large. It was such an antique engine that, years later, the manufacturers negotiated a replacement so that it could be exhibited in their museum in England. Many of the logs brought to the mill were what was known as "buni" in the local language and, fortunately, most of them would float and could be readily towed by a boat from the forests that lined the shores of the lagoon.

The Boats

The *Melanesia* had been the flagship of the Adventist fleet before the War, but it was taken to Australia carrying the expatriate missionaries as they fled before the Japanese invasion. That left the smaller boats, *G F Jones*, *Portal* and *Dadavata*. The first did service for the government through the war period and did not return permanently to mission control until early 1946.

At the time of the invasion, as it appeared that the *Portal* might fall into enemy hands, an unsuccessful attempt was made to bum it.¹ This resulted in nothing more than some charring of woodwork. Church members rescued it, towed it into a creek not far from Batuna, camouflaged it and some of the "engine boys" dismantled the engine and distributed the parts to members for safekeeping. When Pastor Norman Ferris returned after a couple of years word was sent out and every piece came back. Soon the engineers had a boat ready for his use.

The *Dadavata* was used by District Officer D G Kennedy (from New Zealand) throughout the war. He operated from a base at Segi, on the strait between New Georgia and Vangunu Islands. On one occasion he was on this boat when what has been called "The Battle of the Marovo Lagoon" took place against a whaleboat with about a dozen Japanese. Prior to this encounter he had picked up Pastor Kata Ragoso

whom he accused of disloyal conduct. Ragoso suffered considerable ill-treatment with the dignity of a Christian gentleman.² Kennedy was later discharged from the government service. The investigation of this matter was one of the reasons for Pastor Hare's visit to the Solomon Islands in 1945.

Early in 1946 the mission acquired a landing barge which proved very useful in transporting surplus U.S. Navy materials to Batuna. Later still the church bought the *Ambon* to do three monthly supply runs to the mission stations throughout New Guinea and the Solomons. With a cargo carrying capacity of about 50 tonnes it was a very useful addition to the fleet.

The School

In such a situation as existed in the Solomon Islands immediately after the war the first essential was



The Ambon

an adequate food supply, and that meant sizeable gardens. Prior to the return of the expatriates an area of several hectares had been planted at Bale, about fifteen kilometres south of Batuna and this gave a good start for when the school commenced early in 1946, with an enrolment of fifty-five students. Tasa assisted with the "senior" class while Likaveke cared for the primary group and was work supervisor. Later Pandahite became the senior national teacher.

A considerable area of land had been fenced pre-war and soon the tropical trees that had grown in what had been the gardens during the four years the school had been closed, were being felled and burned. Sweet potato vines flourished on the land that had been rested for a few years and there were hopes of a good crop, but other than human eyes had been watching too.

It was Likaveke's habit to visit the garden at first light each morning and then come to me to discuss the work program for the day, but one morning his usual cheerfulness was missing. He was most forlorn and announced that the pigs had broken through the rusted netting on the fence and uprooted a large area.

That started a new program—fence mending, replanting, afternoon hunting of pigs with spears and dogs and my shooting pigs at daylight each morning. But still the pigs came until —

One Thursday morning the infectious smile was back on Likaveke's face, and the conversation went like this:

"I know why the pigs are coming," said Likaveke. Pause.

"Why are they coming?" I asked. "Quickly, tell me."

"Down on the flat there are coconuts growing," stated Likaveke.

"Yes, I know that," I said, "but what does that have to do with the pigs?"

"The boys get those coconuts for the kitchen," Likaveke responded.

"That is why they were planted there. What does that have to do with the pigs?" I asked.

"We didn't count the coconuts," he answered.

Silence for a while. "Likaveke, are you telling me that God has allowed the pigs to come because we forgot to set aside the tithe coconuts?"

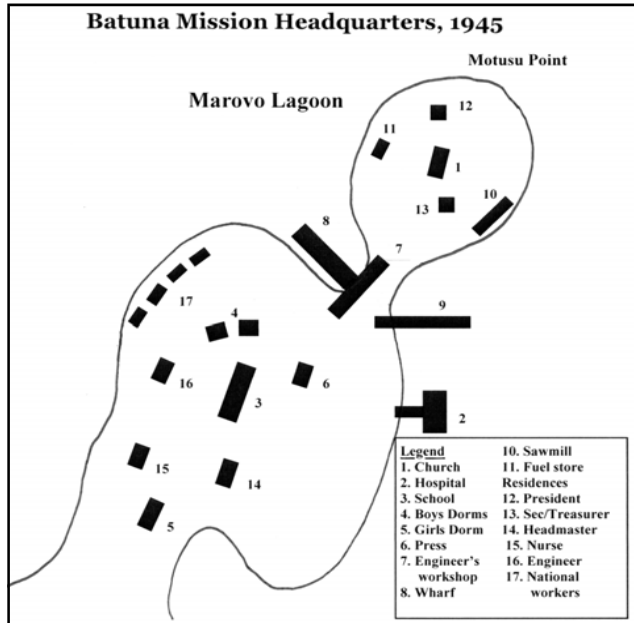
"I am," stated Likaveke.

There was a lot to think about that day but when the mission workers, their families and the school boys assembled for evening worship the text was Malachi 3:10, 11—"Bring ye all the tithe into the storehouse...And I will rebuke the devourer..." We discussed a programme for collecting the nuts, and, on our knees, promised God a faithful tithe and asked that He honour His promise.

Next morning four boys gathered the nuts. At 11:00 am there was a heap that would more than fill a large truck, and, nearby, a small heap, a little bigger than a Mini with a notice—"Meka pa naguru" (one in ten or tithe). Result—no more pigs, at least as long as we were there to know. Coincidence? Never! Providential? Absolutely!³

The school programme was very similar to pre-war days—Worship, Bible, some Maths, English, Social Studies and the morning ended with a singing session that the students really enjoyed. At that stage classes in manual subjects were not possible but there were many opportunities for experience in practical lines with the programme of house and ship repairs. Another activity that gave experience and also a little cash was the bringing in of logs for the sawmill. A log drive was the equivalent of a picnic day.

The 1946 school year closed with a choral festival. The choirs in each village were anxious to take part with the schoolboys. It was easy to bring about such a gathering even at short notice for singing was a national pastime. It was a very enjoyable musical occasion, without competition—a pleasant get-together with the villages within a twenty-mile radius of Batuna.



Possibly the highlight was when the Telina village choir presented a very acceptable rendition of the Hallelujah Chorus, uncondacted, unaccompanied and from memory.

Aftermath of the War

The Japanese invasion did not affect Batuna greatly. It appeared that the soldiers visited rather than occupied the area. The main evidence of their presence was the absence of mirror doors that had been taken from the furniture left behind by earlier missionaries.

The fact that the school had been closed for four years meant that in the first intake of students many of them were older than normal and their wartime experiences had given them a maturity of outlook on life that was valuable in their preparation to become workers for the church.

The US Navy had established a base at Yandina, in the Russel Islands, partway to Guadalcanal and as they moved out considerable amounts of materials became available to the mission. These included boat engines, machinery, timber, food, household equipment, tools, military clothing, and other items. While these things were very acceptable and greatly assisted the work of getting the mission programme going again, it did have a down side in that an attitude of "easy come, easy go: bilong mission, bilong me" arose in some people.

Change

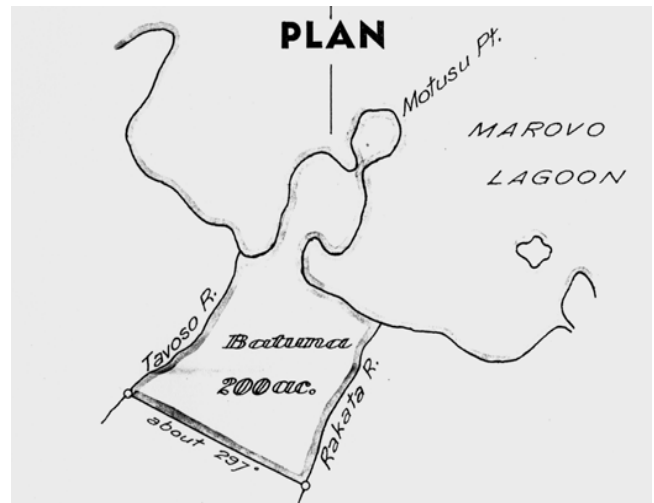
The war brought many changes, even to the Solomon Islands, not the least of which was the pace of life. No longer did it appear possible to operate a mission program from an isolated station, removed from the centre of commerce and communication. The new Superintendent, Pastor H White, was a man with a lot of drive, and he did not take long to find a new site for the mission headquarters at Kukum, on the eastern

edge of the new capital, Honiara, on the island of Guadalcanal. The size of the land was sufficient to build three expatriate houses, national quarters and an office building. The move was made late in 1946.

Another eight kilometres further east an area of six hundred and fifty hectares, adjacent to the Lunga River, was purchased as the site for the mission's main school. Then events moved quickly. Lloyd and Marion Tonkin were called from Choiseul to care for the Batuna School so Grace and I could leave to set up the new school. A group of Batuna students were selected to become the "Betikama Pioneers". They even prefabricated their beds and had all the parts tied neatly in bundles ready for loading on the boat. They were enthusiastic over their new adventure, even though they had been warned of hard work and no school until we had built our own accommodation. A little before midnight, 23 December 1947, Grace and I, along with the thirteen chosen students sailed from Batuna on the *G F Jones*, bound for Guadalcanal, to start the Betikama High School.

References

- 1 Lantry, Eileen. *King of the Cannibals*, Pacific Press, Boise, Idaho, 1988, p 49-50
- 2 Were, Eric. *No Devil Strings*, Pacific Press, Mountain View, California, 1970 p74-79
- 3 Likaveke had a somewhat similar experience before the war, as recorded by Elwyn Martin in his book, *I Saw God's Hand*, Review & Herald, Washington, DC, 1973, p 33-37.



A copy of the plan of the leased land at Batuna. The Description. "All that piece or parcel of land known as Batuna situate in the Island of Vanguna, bounded on the North by High Water Mark between the mouths of two rivers known respectively as Tavoso and Rakata, on the East by the Rakata River, on the West by the Tavoso River and on the South by a line bearing approximately 297° from the Rakata River to the Tavoso River sufficiently far back from High Water Mark to enclose an area of two hundred acres." The lease was registered in the Land Registry Office of the British Solomon Islands on the "twentieth day of January 1937 at 9.00 o'clock before noon in Register of Native Leases Book No. B, Folio No. 13." it is signed by the Registrar. The signature is not clear. It looks like L G P Mills.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE IN THE SOLOMON, VANUATU & KIRIBATI ISLANDS, 1975-2000 —the prevention and treatment of oral disease

DOUG EASTHOPE



Douglas W Easthope MDS (1968) Senior Clinical Associate, is a graduate of the University of Sydney, NSW. Although in private practice since 1951, he has also conducted an orthodontic practice at Royal Newcastle Hospital, NSW, since 1968. In addition he taught graduate and post-graduate classes in orthodontics, and has given numerous lectures to church groups and rotary clubs.

His visits to countries in the South Pacific to carry out dental work and dental education have been extensive—29 in all. For this voluntary work, and for his help to the Australian Aboriginal people in Central Australia, Doug was awarded the order of Australia medal. Remarkably, much of his expenses were self-funded. His authorship of "Dental Health Education" co-funded by ADAB & ADRA has been published in English & Pidgin languages. He was also a Funding Fellow of APBM. Doug served as Board Chairman of the Hamilton Adventist School from 1957-1990, as a member of the TTUC committee for 2 terms, and was the senior elder of the Boolaroo Church. Doug married Marjorie, daughter of Pr C J Reynolds in 1947. They have 3 children, Peter, David & Susanne.

I WAS STANDING by the campfire at a weekend gathering for Aboriginal families at Grassy Head about 30 kilometres north of the city of Kempsey when one of the men came over to me. Putting his hand on my shoulder he said, "You are now one of us." Acceptance is necessary if people are going to remember at least some of the material presented by a speaker, so I was encouraged to hear his expression of appreciation. I was scheduled to present dental health lectures and to provide treatment in response to an invitation from the organisers of the camp. I was accepted because I was willing to sleep on the ground with all the rest of the campers, and didn't go to a motel when the truck carrying the beds failed to arrive. My attendance at this camp commenced a 26 year period of volunteer service in the Pacific Islands. Altogether I visited 26 islands in the countries of Tonga, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Kiribati. I found that learning the language of the people and eating local foods helped to cement good relationships.

This was the situation on the Island of Malaita in the Solomon Islands. On my first visit I was not familiar with Pidgin English and requested a translator. My companion, however, urged me to speak in their language. I tried, but felt I hadn't done well at all. On concluding my presentation I was told that I had spoken very good Malaitan pidgin! Perhaps I had been speaking in tongues!

On a 1976 visit to the Solomon Islands I was working at Talikali in West Malaita. When it was almost meal time the minister asked if I would like some food and I

replied that I would indeed be happy to have some. My plate was piled high with tapioca patties and I was given a glass of water. Worship followed the meal and during the minister's closing prayer he thanked the Lord for the visitor who ate the food put in front of him. A similar experience occurred on the Island of Anatom the most southerly in the Vanuatu group.

My first encounter with the Pacific Islands occurred when I spent three years in army service in New Guinea. Later on when Dr Peter Rosenhain invited me to spend some time at the Atoifi Hospital at Uru Harbour on the east coast of the Island of Malaita, I felt at home for I already had had some contact with the people.

At Atoifi I found rather antiquated equipment and it was with some difficulty it was kept going for the two week stay. On returning to Australia I purchased a new, top of the range high speed handpiece, similar to the one I used in my own practice and I also bought a new petrol driven compressor. Unfortunately there is a philosophy held by some that says if equipment is old and worn out, send it to the Mission



Dentistry on the main road aided by Pr Mike Brownhill. The patient—the local chief. (Vanuatu)

field. I discovered a significant amount of old and worn out equipment in parts of the Island Missions. Because such equipment makes the task more difficult and less efficient, care needs to be taken to ensure equipment destined for the Islands is functioning well before it is sent.

When our clinical team visited a village for the first time it carefully observed correct protocol. Prior to arrival the date and time would have been arranged over the radio and then announced in the local media. On arrival the minister of religion is contacted followed by the village chief. With their support the team then contact the clinic nurse and the headmaster of the school. A suitable site is then selected usually a location outside under a tree.

Now the real work commences. If there is a school teacher in the team he would give simple lectures to a combined gathering of the upper grades in the school. During this time several adults are treated until the arrival of some of the children. When there are two dentists one conducts examinations and carries out extractions, while the other attends to providing fillings. This arrangement, of course, depends on the demand and on the position of the clinic nurse. There are times when the local worker likes to undertake the teeth extractions. One nurse, John Gela from Atoifi Hospital, is a real showman. Before a crowd that has gathered to watch proceedings he waves his arms about with the needle prominently displayed to gain their attention. When someone cries, all the onlookers burst out laughing, and yet there is no ill feeling among them. I was refused entry in to only one village even though the chief's wife was suffering from a raging toothache and indicated that she really wanted me to help her. The power of religious prejudice won out on that occasion.

At Buala, the administrative centre on the Island of Ysabel in the Solomon Islands, I had to give clear and decisive reasons as to why we wanted to help the people with their dental problems. We had flown into the airport in the Mission aeroplane and had been met by the workers on board the Western Solomons Mission boat, *Varivato*. For two days the people at Buala had noticed the boat at anchor in the harbour and were wondering what lay ahead. Members of the boat crew had told me that the European doctor, Mark Wright, at the hospital was the only white person on the Island.

At the wharf an islander introduced himself as the senior Anglican bishop on the Island. After shaking his hand and giving my name I hurried off to the hospital. On reaching the place I asked for the doctor and was directed to his office. He was surprised to see me. He hadn't heard the radio message about the coming of the dental team. To put him at ease I told him that I was a friend of Sir Peter Kenilorea, the Prime Minister, and that I had actually undertaken dental work in his



The dental clinic under the tree.

home village situated in South Malaita.

The doctor then left his office to consult with the Chief Government Officer for the Island. On returning he informed me that I was free to carry out my work but that there was to be no preaching or undertaking activities which would stir up trouble. I assured him that the only preaching that would be carried out would be an educational program on dental health — the best form of practical Christianity I am qualified to offer.

On leaving his office I headed straight for the office of the Chief Government Officer. Following introductions I showed him a report on the past work of the dental team, but he didn't examine it. Instead, he looked at me and said: "Who sent you up here?"

I returned his gaze and said: "I did!."

Curious to know more he continued: "But who paid for it?"

"I did." I replied.

"Who paid for the aircraft?"

Again I repeated: "I did!"

He paused. Now it was my turn to talk. Looking him straight in the eyes I shared further information with him. "I have a business in New South Wales in Australia, and when I return home I will earn some more money and then return to complete dental work on this island." His mouth opened to say something but no words poured forth. On leaving his office I returned to the doctor and after further discussions parted good friends. Interestingly he commented that during his 18 month stay on the island he had never seen the sea without white caps until this time. This was a good sign for we needed fine and calm seas so we could go ashore because there were no harbours on the coast where we were going in the *Varivato*. Later, the local people told us in amazement that this was the first time they had seen a week of calm seas—truly a miracle!

There is a sequel to this story. On finishing the dental work we had time to organise a fly-n-build team to erect a medical clinic on the southeastern coast of Ysabel. When the clinic was built the bishop was there for the opening ceremony. Speaking on behalf of the people he said: "I now declare that all the opposition

between Adventists and Anglicans is now finished.” I couldn't believe what I was listening to. The turning point in his attitude was due to the fact that I was prepared to work as a volunteer to bring help to his people.

One had to plan wisely for visits to the villages in the islands. Careful selection of sleeping equipment and items for professional use had to be made. Following the team's first visit I was able to purchase a mattress known as the ‘Thermal Rest’. It is self-inflating and much lighter than a lilo. After travelling on a wide variety of transport I realised that a backpack would be more suitable than a suitcase. So we used a pack with a 60 litre capacity. We made sure we had two changes of clothing, a mosquito net, toiletries, a torch, one sheet, a hat and a map of the area where we would be working. On the professional side the minimum equipment needed to operate in the field consisted of an air operated high speed drill, as well as a low speed one, and a chip air blower. Everything was fitted into a small carrying case. When needed compressed air was produced by a petrol driven air compressor. For safety reasons Qantas Airways would only take the petrol engine on board if the fuel tank had never previously contained petrol. To meet this requirement we fitted a new spare tank to test the equipment then removed it after the test had been carried out. We packed disposable articles such as swabs etc., tooth filling materials, and hand instruments into two separate suitcases. The total weight amounted to approximately 70 kilograms. As our personal items were additional we had to economise as much as we could.

David Caldwell's help was invaluable. He prepared a picture roll of 20 diagrams covering most aspects of dental health for use in presentations in school classrooms. (They have been used in 17 countries). On the



David Caldwell lecturing with the picture roll

completion of lectures two rolls are given to the school with a recommendation that one picture be used each week in dealing with the requirements of oral health in the curriculum. To help people see the devastating effects of diet on tooth decay I prepared a special display. On obtaining a tooth from the skull of



The effect of sugar solution on the front teeth

a victim of headhunting days in the Western Solomons, I mounted it beside another tooth containing a large cavity. It had been extracted from the mouth of a 10 year old child. As well, sugar from an evaporated can of soft drink which amounted to 6 teaspoonsful was placed in a clear bottle near the teeth for all to see.

In our visits to the islands we placed priority on the use of local foods, asking that our hosts refrain from purchasing imported items. A variety of basic foods was provided. Rice was constantly served as the main dish. Kumara, a staple root crop usually boiled or steamed in stone ovens was in plentiful supply. Tapiok (cassava or tapioca) was either made available as a vegetable or grated and washed and processed into a cake. Taro a favoured root vegetable appeared now and again. Cooked bananas were often included in a stew. Sometimes local cabbage was served and bread, available from local stores, appeared frequently. At times fish or poultry were in evidence, as well as baked beans. Coconuts were used in most cooked dishes. When it came to drinks, fresh green coconuts were provided. We realised that local foods contained less sugar content and were cheaper. Some took more time than others to get used to but we persevered and acquired new tastes. The nationals prepared their best foods for us and while we worried at times about the excessive amount provided, we soon learned that leftovers were for the women and children, and the scraps for the dogs.

I admit that after a couple of days team members yearned for some European food so biscuits and dried fruit were taken along to appease a grumbling stomach. I don't eat meat on my visits to the islands, except a small portion of fish which is supplied at times. Those who do eat meat usually experience gastric discomfort. In the 28 trips I have made I have not suffered any stomach problems.

We learnt some valuable lessons from our visits to the islands. Firstly, that a visit to a village had to be carefully planned if we were to accomplish our dental

health work. We soon realised that proper contact needed to be made with the village as to permission, date and kind of work. On a visit to Genitavara located in the inland bush area on the island of Santo in Vanuatu, plans didn't work out very well. The heathen people had cooked a bullock as a welcome gift and we were welcomed by them. What we didn't know was that the people living on the opposite side of the valley in the village of Nataloi had also prepared a bullock. When we arrived there the next day they were nowhere to be seen. Ashamed and offended by our non arrival the day before they had fled to the bush and we were unable to help them. Incidentally I ate a cubic inch of the first bullock and found it ever so tough! Details relating to both villages should have been checked before setting out to visit them.

We had to plan carefully for transport as well. We found it advisable to work with a local person who could make all arrangements and travel with us. Often the location of a village determined the mode of transport. We walked, rode on a tractor/trailer, sat in a small boat or in a dugout or fibreglass canoe, or flew in an aeroplane. On most occasions transport was paid for at the time it was used and this meant carrying between \$2,000 to \$3,000 in small change, for few people could change money and there weren't any credit card facilities available in the bush.

In the earlier trips we worked from village to village but we soon discovered that by doing so we were missing out on many of the children. We corrected this weakness by working from school to school. This method ensured that the children would be directed to the dental clinic for examination and treatment. Even though some ran away, several of their peers rounded them up and brought them back. The fearful were encouraged to hold my hand and look the other way. Curiosity demands they shake your hand and before letting go I give a gentle tug which directs them into the chair. Rarely do they refuse the invitation. Once the first one was treated the rest gained courage to follow. However, we refrained from carrying out treatment on those who didn't want it or on those who refused it. Their decision was respected.

We found the local school teacher's help invaluable. He or she would explain the customs we needed to know, tell us about the village and especially the location of the toilet, for finding it was often difficult when tidal flush was the only option. Teachers also made sure patients understood the dental procedures and gave permission for them to be carried out. They kept the program running smoothly and wrote up the record book.

Experience has taught us that a two weeks concentrated visit is sufficient. During this time we were constantly on the move and saw upwards of 2,000 patients. We tried 2½ weeks but found we were too tired

to cope with the extra days. Furthermore, it was difficult to carry enough materials for a longer stay.

Some people have asked about the mistakes I made. Apart from the occasional fractured root apex, which is best left in place, I have learnt some good lessons. For example, on my first visit I examined a man's mouth at the Atoifi Hospital and discovered the remnants of what I thought came from chewing tobacco. This prompted me to tell him about the problems involved in using tobacco. Fortunately, the late Len Larwood, Director of Nursing and Business Manager, was with me at the time. He pointed out that the man's problem was native cabbage, not tobacco, for he was an Adventist minister, in fact the Youth Director of Malaita Mission, and didn't smoke. I was thankful for the explanation and decided that I wouldn't open my mouth again unless I had all the facts.

Our endeavours to establish a dental clinic at Atoifi weren't successful. The people in the area found it too difficult to travel there. In a large town like Honiara an established clinic worked well. We found that it was more profitable to take the clinic to the people in the areas around Atoifi. By doing this we were able to help not only those who were aware of their needs but also those who weren't.

Although bleeding from a tooth socket can be a serious problem we encountered only two cases during all the visits we made to the Pacific Islands. Our treatment was simple. After wiping the blood out of the mouth with a large pad of cotton wool, another pad of equal size was used to apply pressure to the wound with a force equal to or slightly more than the blood pressure. At the same time another person used a clock to ensure pressure was applied for a period of half an hour without interruption. When the time was up the pad was gently removed and the bleeding had stopped.

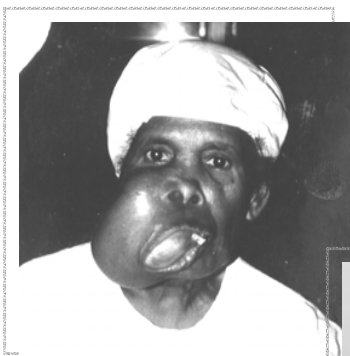
I soon realised the importance of attending to legal requirements when planning volunteer visits to the islands. Before travelling I arranged registration with the Health Departments of the countries we would serve, and liaised with Adventist church administration on my plans. By making contact well in advance of travel times I allowed for various church committees to make any suggestions they felt would be helpful. In every case I had excellent cooperation from the church. Pacific governments were obliging too. ADRA and ADAB (Australian Development Aid Bureau) supported also supported my work. A number of people provided thousands of dollars by way of assistance.

My health never suffered during my volunteer service. Even though malaria attacked me approximately fifty times during my three years army stay in Papua New Guinea, I never sustained another attack in my visits to Tonga, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu

and Kiribati over a period of 26 years. Several of my team members did, however, report attacks.

There have been words of praise for the dental health program. Just some examples will suffice. Following a lecture explaining the causes of tooth loss, a headmaster of a school in the Western Solomons Islands thanked me for the information. He said that the people had no idea that it could be the type of food they were giving their children that was causing dental decay. Thinking over his statement I came to the conclusion that our emphasis on prevention must not neglect the treatment of their problems.

I look back over many years of satisfying volunteer service. Perhaps one person stands out in my mind. Her name is



Tagini—before

Tagini. She had a massive tumour in her mouth. Fortunately, at the time, Dr Marion Barnard and his daughter Dr Jo-Ellen (USA) were doing volunteer medical work there.



—and after

They removed a massive tumour from her mouth and I made a denture for her. On my last visit to the Solomon Islands I called at her home—a grass hut erected over a mangrove swamp. When she remembered me tears came to her eyes and to mine. Now blind she lives alone. We talked for awhile and as I departed she requested I pray for her. What a wonderful change will take place when our Saviour returns soon. Then people like Tagini will be restored to full health and joy.

There is another girl I should mention. At 12 years of age all her front permanent teeth, both upper and lower, had decayed to the level of her gums. As I removed the remnants in one sitting, I knew she would live life, obtain an education, seek work and search for a husband with no front teeth.

Sometimes the effects from my visits have been far reaching. Pastor Nathan Rore, president of Malaita Mission in the 1970s recently sent me a photo of Paul Kukura from the Island of Ulawa, located 50 miles off the southeast coast of Malaita. Twenty years earlier when I had travelled with Nathan Rore and Len Larwood on a visit to schools and villages along the west coast of Malaita, Paul, then only 14 years old, had been appointed to hide in the bushes and spy on the visiting team. In time he became an Adventist and returned to

his home island. There he built a church and encouraged those who chose to worship with him. In this case the entering wedge was not a minister preaching the Word, but a dental health team attending to the physical needs of the people.

One sea voyage stands out in my memory. After two engine breakdowns our team eventually arrived at the island of Uriparapara in the Banks Group. On completing our work there we prepared to return. But there was no reliable boat available. The chief said that there might be a small boat on the outer coast but it was too late to hike over the rugged hills rising to a 1,000 feet. When I offered them money to attempt the journey the response was immediate. In time they brought the second boat into the harbour for taking the team members. The boat which brought us over would take our equipment. Planning to leave at 6am the next morning everyone was up early and loaded the boat.

Once outside the calm of the harbour the boats battled with 3 to 4 metre swells. The 8 hour voyage which should have taken only 4 hours was a nightmare. Everyone sat quietly with eyes fixed firmly on the vague outline of Vanua Lava way in the distance. Both boats performed well even though at times they were hidden from each other by giant swells. How pleased we were to land safely at our destination and walk on firm ground.

I am so pleased to have served in the Pacific Islands, especially when I remember I almost didn't go. Although I refused the first invitation to help out at Atoifi, I am glad I changed my mind and went. My Pacific experience has been a capstone to my whole career in dentistry. Recognising that I had contributed to the improvement in health of Pacific peoples, the Australian Government awarded me an OAM. Their appreciation of the work I have done is appreciated. I would like to again visit the Pacific Islands, but the years are taking their toll physically. I hope others will take up the on-going challenge of providing prevention and treatment of oral disease for the people of the Pacific.



Pastor Paul Kukura and his wife

DECENTRALISATION IN THE AUSTRALASIAN DIVISION

Establishing the Central Pacific Union Mission (CPUM) in Suva, Fiji 1948 and onwards

DAVID HAY



*David Hay, BA Avondale College, commenced service for the church in education at Mona Mona Mission in Nth Queensland in 1955. He spent the next 17 years in Samoa as principal of the Apia Central School, 1958-63, as district director on Savai'i 1964-65 and as president 1966-74. Continuing in administration he served as president of Tonga, 1975; of the WPUM 1976-80; of the Cook Is, 1981-87; of Tonga & Niue, 1988-90; secretary of the CPUM from 1991-93 and president from 1994-95; and president of Kiribati & Nauru 1996. While in Samoa, his wife Fay taught practical subjects to the wives of those attending the Vailoa Lay Training School. They had 2 children, Sandra & Allan. After his wife's death in 1990, he married Cecily Leach, Director of Primary Teacher Education at Fulton College, in 1994. He authored a book on Samoa, *The Isles No Longer Wait*. The Hays retired to Hamlyn Terrace NSW & together they publish the JPAH.*

Early Organisation in the Pacific Islands

THERE WAS A UNIQUENESS about the American scene during the last decade of the 19th century and in the early years of the 20th. Optimism about the future pervaded many sections of society. Life was improving and there was a growing feeling of well-being throughout the land. As business prospered, ambassadors of trade crossed the oceans in search of new markets. Prospects looked good!

Moving with the times Seventh-day Adventists sailed off in the schooner *Pitcairn* to the South Seas in 1890. Motivated strongly by their love for God and the appropriateness of the prophetic message for the times, they were eager to share the 'Good News' with others.

On arrival in the humid Pacific climate they stepped into a new world of tropical islands, friendly Polynesian people, a mix of languages and diverse customs. Wherever they met people in towns and villages they sought to encourage a deeper and joyful experience with Christ the Saviour and preparation for His near return. The visit of Eliot Chapman together with Edgar Bambridge from Tahiti to the island of Moorea lying west of the main island of Tahiti, tells us of one way they went about their task. "We soon made friends with all by giving the children picture cards and the older people tracts on 'The Sinner's Need of Christ', 'Repentance', 'Conversion', 'Confession', 'Judgment', and 'The Life of Christ.'"¹

From 1890 until 1910, there was a permanent Adventist presence on some of the islands. Whether it was sustained by the organisation of the church or by self support it was guided by remote church headquarters at Battle Creek in the State of Michigan in the United States. During these years three sepa-

rate bodies sent out missionaries: the Foreign Mission Board, the General Conference, and the International Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association.

But this situation was not to last. Change came in 1901 at the time of the General Conference Session held at Battle Creek Michigan in April. No longer would decisions affecting the Mission field be made from thousands of kilometres away. At this gathering, delegates approved -

1 "The organisation of union and conference mission boards in all parts of the world where either the membership or the staff of workers made it advisable.

2 "The transfer of the ownership and management of all institutions and enterprises of the cause to the organisations with which they are by location directly connected.

3 "Placing the responsibility of attending to the details of the work in all parts of the world upon those who are located where the work is to be done."²

This new direction in organisation now meant that the South Pacific Islands of Tahiti (established 1892), Pitcairn (established 1890), Cook Islands (established 1892), Samoa (established 1895), Tonga (established 1895), and Norfolk (established 1891), were added to the Australasian Union Conference (AUC). So from this time on Adventist work in the Pacific Islands began to be administered from headquarters in Sydney, New South Wales, in Australia.³

In the years ahead further attempts were made to bring the administrative function closer to the islands themselves. After all, thousands of kilometres still separated the main decision makers from the missionaries in the front lines. Sometimes communication and transport contacts were painfully slow.



ERIC HOWSE

Born of missionary parents in Tahiti, French Polynesia, Eric Howse commenced service for the church at the Signs Publishing Co in Warburton, Victoria. Following 5 years in the treasury department of the AUC in Wahroonga, he spent one year as a student at Avondale College in 1936. He then served in the SHF in Sydney and Perth & as office manager at headquarters in Wahroonga. From 1942 he spent 4 years in the RAAF as a paramedic and after his discharge worked as an accountant of the AIUC in Wahroonga. From 1949-1956 he was the secretary-treasurer of the CPUM. On returning to the SHF he worked in Sydney and Perth. In 1967 Eric was appointed treasurer of the Australasian Division and from 1969 as the director of the World Foods Services located at church headquarters in Washington DC. He retired in 1980. Eric and May Bradley were married on 18 October 1938. The Howses live in retirement at Alton Villas, Cooranbong, NSW.

In 1908 there was another change. In an endeavour to shorten the distance a new grouping of three territories was approved. Fiji, Samoa and Tonga were organised as the Central Polynesian Mission, with Calvin H Parker (Fiji) as superintendent and Joseph Steed (Samoa), and William Palmer (Tonga), as his assistants. Although it was not responsible for the appointment, maintenance and return of missionaries, or for the allocation of financial appropriations, the new structure concentrated on implementing the mission of the church in its territory.⁴ Thomas Howse was appointed superintendent in October. At the AUC Council in September 1911, the Central Polynesian Mission's name was changed to the Western Polynesian Mission.⁵

Five years later there was a change in status. Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Niue Missions were joined to form the Central Polynesian Conference (CPC). Calvin Parker was appointed president, John Nash secretary-treasurer and Joseph Steed vice president.⁶ Although the purpose of reorganisation was to provide the missions with closer and quicker contact with church leadership, conference status did not prove to be the success the AUC had hoped for. These missions were composed of different peoples with different needs and challenges. Because they were separate nations with their own cultural values, they needed separate status—one that catered for their particular administrative needs often beyond that required by a local church. Rather than joining these missions together as one conference, it probably would have been better to organise each separately under union conference leadership. Such a change did happen when, in 1921, the AUC Council dissolved the CPC and established three separate missions—Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga—in its place.⁷

The Establishment of Union Organisation

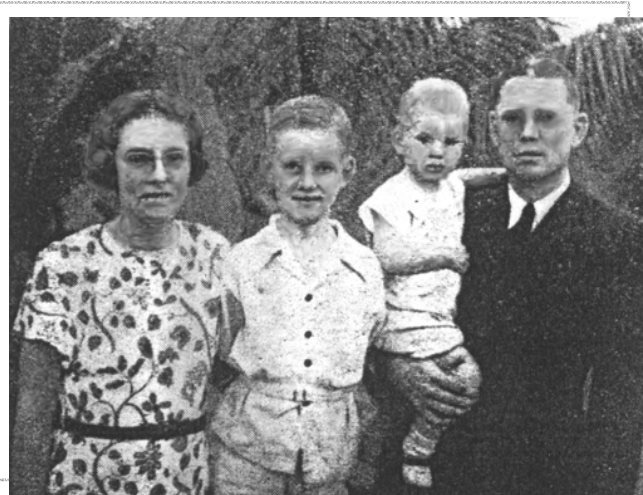
Membership grew from 9269 with 153 churches in 1923 to 23,285 with 492 churches in 1948.^{8a} Commenting on this development Arthur W Spalding wrote: "The growth and complexity of the work indicated the advisability of further partitioning, with appropriate organisation."^{8b}

Recognising the need for change in structure the leaders in the AUC convened a Special Session at the Entrance on the Central Coast of New South Wales on 20 August 1948.

Delegates supported the proposals for improved organisation. "Accordingly," stated Spalding, "there was formed, first, the Australasian Inter-Union Conference (AIUC), identical in territory with the former AUC or Division; and second, constituting this Inter-Union, two union conferences and two union missions," (the TCUC, TTUC, CPUM and CSUM). Spalding went on to say that "This action was confirmed by the 1948 Fall [Autumn] Council by the General Conference Committee." He concluded by stating, "This reorganisation is in keeping with the development of the field, and will better facilitate the promotion and nurture of its work."^{8c} At this Session, Nathaniel C Wilson was appointed president of the AIUC. This article will concentrate on the establishment of the Central Pacific Union Mission (CPUM).

The union's territory was to consist of the islands of Vanuatu (New Hebrides), Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati (Gilbert), Tuvalu (Ellice), the Cooks, French Polynesia and Samoa. Also, Nauru, Niue, New Caledonia and Pitcairn were to be included. Once received into fellowship and approved by the AIUC, organised local missions would make up its membership.

Two officers, a president, and a secretary-treasurer who could also be appointed auditor, were to be elected for a four year period. The president would serve as the chairman of the union committee composed of not more than thirteen members. All presidents and secretary-treasurers of



Pastor Eric & May Howse, Murray and Kevin

local mission territories were to be members by virtue of their office. The committee would conduct the work of the church in harmony with the general policies outlined by the AIUC committee.

Quadrennial Councils were to be held where reports on the activities of the church would be made and elections to office carried out—presidents and secretary-treasurers of local missions, departmental secretaries of the union, members of the union committee, and institutional heads and their board members.

Funds for the operation of the new union were to come from the following sources:

1 a tithe of all tithe received by each local mission territory, as well as from churches not directly under the mission territories.

2 a tithe of the net gains of union institutions

3 appropriations from the AIUC

4 special donations and funds

Annual salary and expense reviews of all expatriate and other union workers, were to be undertaken by the ex-officio members of the union committee. An officer or representative appointed by the AIUC Committee would assist with this task.⁸



Gordon Branster

Moving Forward

Following a further special session held between 1-12 December 1948 at the Australasian Missionary College at Cooranbong, NSW,⁹ the AIUC Committee met for its Annual Meeting. There, several appointments were made to the CPUM: Gordon Branster (Greater Sydney Conference President), as president, Eric Howse (Accountant AIUC), as secretary-treasurer, Alfred Martin (Principal West Australia Missionary College), as a departmental secretary, and Leslie Wood, a teacher in WA as principal of the Fulton Missionary School.¹⁰

Excited about prospects for a stronger work in the islands, the newly-appointed officers moved quickly. At different times they called together available missionaries from their territory and dealt with matters requiring attention. Meetings were held at AIUC headquarters at Wahroonga in Sydney, with the first occurring on 12 December. At this time the Fulton Missionary School became a union institution from 1 January 1949¹¹, and in the next day's meeting its board of management was established.¹² A later meeting approved recommended names for Samoa Mission's Committee, classified local missions as either organised or unorganised missions, and approved presidents of all organised missions to serve as members ex-officio of the union committee.¹³ Also, union officers were authorised to purchase equipment required for the union

office.¹⁴

There was an air of expectation as the leaders planned ahead. They knew that establishing new headquarters would be a challenge but their courage was strong, and their trust in God's leading was evident.

Early Days in Suva

Within a short time three families were on their way to Fiji, and early in January 1949, they arrived in Suva, the administrative centre for the group. Following extensive searches around town and in the suburbs, arrangements were made to rent suitable dwellings. Gordon and Ida Branster and daughter Beryl took up residence in Miss Hunt's home in Waimanu Road to the east of the city, Eric and May Howse with their two sons Murray and Kevin in Holland Street behind the main city area and from 1 May further west in Dwarka Singh's place in Denison Road, and Alfred and Enid Martin with daughters Betty and Jennifer and son Lynn in Mr Lowe's house in Robertson Road, inland from the city wharves. In June Eunice Thomson arrived from Australia to take up office duties and she lived with the Bransters. Early the next year Robert and Joyce Aveling with son Graham and daughter Sheryl arrived in Suva to serve as the Publishing Secretary.



Betty Martin with her kindergarten children

The union office functioned in the front room of Branster's house and remained there for several months. Around August it was transferred to the upper floor of Fiji Trading Company's building in the business section of town on the corner of MacArthur Street and Victoria Parade. Tom French's service station operated on the ground floor.¹⁵

Decisions were needed on a variety of matters so committees were called. The first to be held in Fiji took place on 11 January when all previous actions were confirmed. The second, with AIUC officers in attendance, occurred on 21 February. At this first annual meeting organisational and operational matters within the parameters of the already established union structure were worked through and approved. A Union Education Board was established,¹⁶ officers of organised missions were appointed,¹⁷ departmental responsibilities were allocated,¹⁸ credentials and licences were issued, Fulton's name was changed to Fulton Missionary College, Beulah School's to Beulah College and the Sabbath School overflow offering for the 3rd quarter in 1950 would be for the purchasing of a vessel for French Polynesia (Society Islands).¹⁹

Once the meetings concluded, union personnel made plans to assist the missions in their work by at-

tending their sessions. Within a few days Branster, Howse and Martin were on their way from Nadi headed for French Polynesia in a WW II Catalina converted for amphibious operations. On the way the aircraft landed in Upolu on an airstrip adjacent to the colourful Satupuala Lagoon. Then later it landed on the unruffled waters of the Aitutaki Lagoon in the Cook Islands. On arrival in the Papeete Harbour the three delegates were warmly welcomed by missionary F A MacDougall. As in subsequent sessions held in all the missions, workers and members who had gathered for meetings were pleased to have the union officers with them. They accepted them as leaders of experience and they appreciated their counsel

After landing on the calm, clear turquoise waters of the Aitutaki Lagoon on the return journey, the visitors caught a local boat south to Rarotonga, the main island in the Cook Group. There they were met by James Cormack, mission president, and Donald Watson of the Training School. On the conclusion of a well attended session they continued their journey home to Fiji.

Further session visits were made around mid-1949. A New Zealand Airlines DC3 flew the union leaders to the Kingdom of Tonga where they were met by Walter Ferris, the mission president. Meetings were conducted at Beulah College located at Vaini on the main island of Tongatabu. When the busy days were over the visitors were on the same plane one week later, this time headed for Samoa. On arrival they were welcomed by Herbert Christian, the mission president. Meetings, held in the new and attractive church building on the Lalovaea mission compound in Apia, were well supported by the members.

In April, UTA a French Airline, flew the leaders westward from Nadi to Noumea, the capital of New Caledonia. From there a Qantas flying boat took them north to Vila and on to Santo in Vanuatu. On the last leg of the journey to Aore they travelled on a small mission boat. Freeman McCutcheon, mission president, was on hand to greet them following their long and tiring journey. The Training School on the property served as the venue for the meetings.

On the return flight they visited Cecile Guiot in Noumea—the long serving and only missionary at the time in New Caledonia. Also, they travelled to Poum, a centre in the north of the island where several Adventist lived²⁰

A Permanent Home

The search for a permanent site on which union headquarters could be established, one which would also provide ample room for expansion, commenced right from the time the missionaries arrived in Suva. A breakthrough came early in 1949 when Sir Henry Scott, acting on behalf of the church, was told of the availability of the Garnett Estate located on high ground in the suburb of Tamavua. Nathaniel Wilson,

president of the AIUC, flew over from Sydney on BOAC to inspect the property. Located on several ridges sloping southward on the eastern side of the city, the 21 acres 2 roods and 31 perches (over 8 hectares), in spite of some steep valleys, provided ample space for both the erection of buildings and for future expansion. There was also a magnificent panoramic view from most parts. It stretched out across the colourful waters of the bay to the island of Beqa, and then over the sea to the undulating hills dominated by a pinnacle known as Joski's Thumb on the main island of Viti Levu. Sunsets bathed sea and land with a soft orange glow which gradually faded before the oncoming stars lit the tropical heavens. Indeed, the land was a place of beauty. The property was purchased and the Deed of Transfer registered on 13 April. All agreed that its acquisition by the church was not only timely but indeed providential.²¹



Pr C E Sommerfeld with the graduates of Fulton College, 1949

Considerable funds would be needed for the establishment of union headquarters on the Tamavua property. So it was with some relief that the missionaries greeted the news of an allocation of money for the project by the AIUC in April 1949. There was F£4500 for the land, F£4000 for building houses, F£1000 for the erection of an office, F£1000 for transportation, F£500 for standard furniture, and F£500 for office equipment. All together, funds totalled F£11,750!²²

Moving Ahead on the Building Site

Once the layout plan was approved and funds were actually available, construction commenced in April 1950. An experienced Chinese builder and his team erected an office with a house on either side, in the centre of the highest ridge. They were built of dakua, a local pine timber. The outside walls were covered with rusticated weatherboard and the inside was lined with fibrous plaster. Overlooking Princes Street, the new facilities began to take shape and present an attractive appearance. They were convincing evidence to all that Adventist regional administration had come to stay.

But costs soon escalated. Prices had increased on all the materials purchased for the three buildings, and

labour costs had risen. By August expenditure had exceeded allocated funds by approximately F£1600. Also a further F£600 would be needed to complete the second house. With support from the union committee, Howse requested the AIUC for special financial assistance in their 1951 budget to care for the additional spending.²³

To add to the seriousness of the situation, further financial difficulties were being experienced by both mission field unions. The cost of day-to-day operation had soared beyond budgetary restraints. The AIUC was not in a position to meet this overspending as well as other needs, so a plan was devised to help them. The AIUC asked all churches in its territory to give liberally to a special offering aiming at £10,000, to be taken up on 23 June 1951. The amount received would be shared between the two unions.²⁴

Progress and Challenges

The program at Fulton College provided for students enrolled in training classes, theoretical and practical education at a creditable standard. The union institution performed well in its first year. Charles Sommerfeld and Eunice MacIntosh provided 12 ministerial and teacher students for its first graduation in December 1949. The college had now come of age and was taking its place alongside other respected training institutions in Fiji. Students from Samoa, Tonga and even French Polynesia enrolled to obtain training in their chosen vocations. It was evident to Pacific Island Adventists that God's favour was indeed upon the school at Tailevu.²⁵

Statistics tell their own story, and in the Central Pacific give a clear picture of the position of the union at the end of 1949 after one year's operation.

A General							
Missions	Baptisms	Members	Populat	Expat workers	National Ord Minist	Teachers	Other workers
Fiji	140	838	277,400	9	13	28	20
Vanuatu	50	481	43,000	6	3	32	23
Samoa	55	352	90,000	3	3	4	14
Cook Is	30	272	14,061	2	2	3	9
Tonga	47	210	43,000	2	2	12	10
Fr Poly	36	200	60,000	1	2	0	8
Pitcairn	3	87	124	2	0	0	0
Kiribati /Tu	12	12	35,000	1	0	0	3
New Caledon	0	9	57,000	1	0	0	0
Niue	0	1	3,700	0	0	0	0
Union				4	0	0	0
Fulton College				6	0	9	5
Total	373	2462		37	25	88	92
B Educational							
Training Schools	Students	District Schools	Students				
Fulton College Fiji	225	Samabula Indian Fiji	267				
Beulah College Tonga	104	Naqia Fiji	86				
Vailoa College Samoa	30	Neiafu Tonga	120				
Aore Vanuatu	92	Total	473				
Vatuvonu	93	Primary Schools	42	1531			
Cook Islands	30	Total-all students	2578				
Total	574						

There was some forward planning at this meeting held between 5—9 February 1950: 6 delegates were appointed to attend the 1950 AIUC Session, Ratu Meli

was appointed to the union committee—the first national member—and to ensure that the smaller groups of islands were not neglected, they were placed under the direct care of the union.²⁶



Ted & Ivy Jones with two of their children.

Ted Jones arrived in Suva with wife Ivy, and children Robert, Peter and Pauline in August 1950. They first lived in an Indian home (rented from Ram Singh) on the right-hand side of Princes Road close to the union office, then in Martins' house. He had transferred from the Australasian Missionary College where he had served as business manager to become the assistant secretary-treasurer and auditor of the union.

The union officers attended the AIUC Session meetings held at Cooranbong from 19-25 November 1950. There they spoke feelingly on two needs in their territory. Desiring to ease the financial burden faced by the union in supporting the work of the church in the islands, Branster highlighted the importance of working towards the local missions becoming self-supporting. He stated that the task could be accomplished by encouraging faithfulness in tithing and in developing agricultural, cattle and poultry projects.

Howse made a plea for the literature ministry. He told his listeners that there was a great need for small books which could be sold by trained students in their school vacations. He felt that by setting up a union publishing house this could be done. After all, Ellen White had counselled: "At various points in mission lands publishing houses must be established." Both brethren received a sympathetic hearing and it was encouraging to note that early in the new year (1951) Mr and Mrs I Snelgar from New Zealand took up the challenge of colporteur work in Fiji.

Howse wanted to know more about the isolated mission far to the north of Fiji. Being of an adventurous spirit he travelled to Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) on the mission boat *Fetu Ao* over long and lonely stretches of ocean. He was away from August to October 1950. Although he obtained a clearer picture of the challenges there, he didn't exactly show any great enthusiasm for the many days on the boat, being tossed around on threatening seas. It was an experience he



**DELEGATES TO FIRST SESSION
CENTRAL PACIFIC UNION MISSION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
SUVA, FIJI FEBRUARY, 12-17, 1951**

Back Row: R W Taylor, J Ryan, Tini Inu, S Neru (Samoa), J Vati, Matamua Vaine, Matamua Matamua, (Cook Is), J Moala, M Niu'afe, A H Dawson (Tonga)
Third Row: Sam Dick, Simon K, Solomon, E N Hokin, A C Thomson, A R Hiscox (New Hebrides), Ratu Timoci, Isimeli Seresere, Alipate Gonerogo, Tereti Niqara, Epeli Naqase, Ratu Semi, (Fiji).
Second Row: W G Ferris (Pres, East Fiji), J H D Miller (Fulton Missionary College), G R Miller (Superintendent, Gilbert & Ellis Is), R Wright (Gilbert & Ellis Is), Subbarao, K D L Brook, J C H Collett, C Adams, C Sawyer, N C Palmer, G Lane (Fiji), L S Wood (Principal Fulton M C), A E Jones (Accountant CPUM), O D F McCutcheon (President Tonga).
Front Row: H B Christian (President Samoa), J B Keith (President West Fiji), A D Pietz (President New Hebrides), E W Howse Secretary-Treasurer CPUM), W L Pascoe (Treasurer AIUC), N C Wilson (President AIUC), A V Olson (Vice-President General Conference) G Branster (President CPUM), G Butler (HM & SS Secretary AIUC), A W Martin (Education, MV & Temperance Secretary CPUM), R L Aveling (HM, SS & Publishing Secretary CPUM) J E Cormack (President Cook Is), P Nouan, (President East French Oceania, ie French Polynesia).

wanted to forget—forever!²⁷

The union's first Quadrennial Session convened in Suva from 12-17 February 1951. Thirty-two expatriates and 18 national delegates were there. Others present were Albert V Olson, a General Conference Vice-President, Nathaniel C Wilson, AIUC President, William L Pascoe, Treasurer and George Butler, Home Missions and Sabbath School Secretary.

His worship the Mayor of Suva, Councillor Alport Barker Kt, addressed the gathering and opened the conference. His speech surprised many for they were unaware of his knowledge of earlier Adventism. After recognising the contribution the Church had made in the Pacific Islands, he recalled his first contact with the Adventist organisation and his observations about the church's mission work.

I can still remember 60 years ago when as a cub reporter I watched a little vessel sail into Suva Harbour and was asked by my chief to go out and see what the boat was. The vessel turned out to be the *Pitcairn*, a Seventh-day Adventist Mission ship. It was the first we had heard of the Seventh-day Mission. More than half a century has passed since that time, and your pastors and teachers have worked well. They have worthily upheld the teachings of their church and have been very helpful to the island people, especially in health matters. Wherever you go you will hear a kindly word for the Seventh-day Adventists.

Reporting confidently on the two-year period, the un-

ion officers told of significant progress in a number of areas. There'd been a record 676 baptisms, 800 JMV's invested compared with 200 previously, and 2,257 pupils were attending 51 Adventist schools.

A significant decision was taken on Fiji. With a view to giving closer administration throughout its territory, delegates approved its organisation into two separate missions from 1 January 1951. There would now be the missions of East and West Fiji and their officers were appointed for a four year period.

More than 300 people attended the Sabbath services held in the Suva Town Hall. At that time Graham Miller, Robert Aveling and Manase Niu'afe were ordained to the gospel ministry.

At the annual meeting on 22 February, a more uniform wage schedule for national workers was adopted for the territories in the union. Based on the ordained ministers' rate of 100% equalling a monthly amount of F£15, it assigned percentages to all workers, taking into account their position, training and experience. But the unexpected is always a present reality in the Pacific Islands. Members of the committee, especially the presidents of local missions, were surprised and disappointed with the budget. They felt that the funds allocated were far too small to cater for significantly increased costs of maintaining their present operations. "There is no provision whatsoever," stated Jim Cormack from the Cook Islands, "for the demands of a rapidly expanding program...We had

all come to Suva with well-laid plans—plans carefully formulated by men...whose one thought and purpose is to finish the task as quickly as possible...The failure of our expectations... sent us back to our fields with heavy hearts to recast our programs.” Not the least of their worries by a long way was the providing of funds to cater for increased living costs incurred by national workers. On the other hand the setting up of two union missions had been costly and maintaining their operations involved additional funds. At this time there just wasn't enough money to meet all the needs.

Towards the middle of 1951 the buildings on the union compound were completed, and with undisguised enthusiasm Branster and Howse moved into the new houses, and the office also became operational. They were pleased that union headquarters were now permanently established on the Tamavua property. Also, Martin took up residence on the upper floor, and Aveling on the lower floor of a two-storied house on the seaward side of Princes Road, on land situated west of the present Wairua Road, and about 1½ kilometres down from the union office.



Eunice Thomson and
Phyllis Kilroy

Missionary College early in 1952 to serve as accountant and head of the Business Training Department. Phyllis Kilroy of the Greater Sydney Conference replaced her in the union office.²⁸

An Unexpected Setback

Several months later on 28 January 1952, after the completion of the annual meeting of the union on the night before, a howling, destructive cyclone swept into Suva unannounced. On that fateful Monday the unthinkable happened. The new union buildings were demolished by wind and rain gusting at times in excess of 200 kilometres per hour. Martin reported on what happened.

We were in a committee meeting [Fulton Board] on the outskirts of Suva. Usually the radio announces warnings when a cyclone is approaching, and police cars with loudspeakers attached, travel along the roads giving the warnings. In this way preparations can be made, and everything movable can be stored



Branster's house after the cyclone

away safely. But this day there had been no warnings, so everyone went about as usual. We found out later, that the cyclone had come suddenly to one of the outlying islands and had killed the radio operator, so that no warning of its approach had reached Suva...Soon we noticed the cars outside the window rising and falling on their springs as the wind grew stronger. The attention of the chairman was drawn to this fact, and the committee was dismissed.²⁹

Within minutes all available hands were feverishly putting cyclone shutters in place on the windows and doors of the office and on the two nearby homes. Taking refuge inside Branster's home, Fred Mote, AIUC president, and Paul Wickman, General Conference Radio Secretary, secured movable furniture. Soon torrential rain driven by wild and powerful winds pounded the buildings and tore at their weakest parts.

Just as Branster's front wall was about to collapse it was struck by an airborne Indian house. Immediately the new building's roof sheered off and flew away while the walls of the upper story crashed to the floor. Quickly everyone fled to the basement for protection. The office fared no better. The roof lifted, and together with a whole section of wall careened off down the valley. Equipment was left in disarray. Howse's roof blew off too and was never found. A few hours later Cormack visited the scene of devastation. He commented on the situation.

...the fibrous plaster ceiling, twisted and mangled,



The Central Pacific Union Office after the cyclone

hung over the furniture; all walls fallen in; and only the floor remained. Everything was rain soaked. [Branster's house]
 ...what a sorry mess it was in! Its roof had gone, its plaster was down! Some of its walls had collapsed; its household goods were rain-soaked and damaged. [Howse's dwelling]
 ... in its place lay a heap of tangled debris. We remember the joy when all was complete and the increasing efficiency as the staff gradually got things into satisfactory shape—and now this!... It means commencing again from the beginning. [Union Office]

When the storm eased attempts were made to salvage materials and retrieve office items. Fortunately the visitors travel documents were located among the wreckage of the union office.

Cyclone damage throughout Suva had been extensive but there had been no loss of life among members. Temporary accommodation and office space was



Suva Harbour after the cyclone

arranged for the union officers in the Samabula Indian School. However, they were only there for a few weeks as they were able to move to more adequate premises in Suvavou made available by Mr Bish. ³⁰

Fortunately help was not long in coming. By early March funds totalling more than £20,000 became available from overseas allocations. Within a few weeks C Jenson and Terry Sowden were on their way from Australia to make a start on the rebuilding program. This time the office was to be built in brick and the two homes again in timber with additional strengthening. Jim Gathercole arrived in March 1953 to continue supervision of the construction of the new homes and office. He also built a new church on land situated at the corner of Thurston and Gorrie Streets



The President's new house

in the suburbs on the western side of the city. In this rebuilding work he was assisted by A A Mills.³¹

Not long after Branster and Howse had moved into their new houses on the Tamavua Compound, a sharp earthquake jolted Suva on 14 September 1953. As the new buildings were of sturdy construction no major damage occurred. Later on in November shortly before the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Fiji, between 17 and 22 December, John (Ted) and Betty Fletcher with daughter Bronwyn arrived in Suva. They were replacing the Jones family who were transferring to Santo in Vanuatu (the New Hebrides). Ted served in the Union Office until June 1957 when he and Ivy returned to Australia on furlough. Unfortunately tragedy overtook Ted. Not long after surgery for a hernia in the Sydney San he unexpectedly passed away.

After occupying four different temporary headquarters since the 1952 cyclone, the union office moved into its new and permanent building on the Tamavua compound in April 1954. Built of reinforced concrete the new facility would provide adequate protection against future cyclones. In reality it served as a symbol of what the Central Pacific Union Mission had become—a stable and strong organisation serving the church in the missions it represented. Difficulties experienced in establishing the new structure in the days of its infancy were faced and solved. Setbacks along the way, like the terrible cyclone which wrecked havoc on the union compound were overcome. God prospered the Central Pacific Union Mission, and it has gone from strength to strength. Indeed, time has proved the wisdom of establishing the union in Suva for the advancement of the mission of the church in the Pacific Islands.³²



The visit of the queen in 1954
 Pastor Branster & others.

Missionaries who served the CPUM in its early years.

Gordon Branster	1949—1959	President, Radio
Eric W Howse	1949—1956	Sec-Tr & Auditor
Alfred W Martin	1949—1955	YPMV, Educ, Temp
Eunice Thomson	1949—1951	Office Secretary
Robert L Aveling	1951—1958	H Miss, SS, Publish.
Ted E Jones	1951—1953	Asst Sec-Tr & Auditor
Phyllis Kilroy	1952—1963	Office Secretary
Alfred J Gathercole	1953—1954	Building construction
John (Ted) Fletcher	1954—1957	Accountant
C.Richard Thompson	1956—1961	YPMV, Ed, Temp, SS.
Walter H Simmonds	1957—1962	Sec-Tr and auditor
John M Sherriff	1958—1959	Accountant
O D F McCutcheon	1959—1963	President, Radio-TV
H CliveBarritt	1959—1962	H Miss, SS, Publish.
Kelvin J Bailey	1960—1963	Accountant

Ken J Gray 1962—1970 YPMV, Ed, Temp.
 A Gordon Gilbert 1963—1970 Secretary-Treasurer
 Ron W Taylor 1964—1966 Pres, Radio-TV
 Reg A Millsom 1963—1974 H Miss, SS, Publish.
 (Full names of abbreviations: Secretary-Treasurer, Young Peoples
 Missionary Volunteer, Education, Home Missions, Sabbath
 School, Temperance, Publishing, departments.)

**The editor — in cooperation with Pastor Eric
 Howse**

References

- 1 Benjamin Cady, *The Home Missionary*, Vol VII, Jan 1895, p 4. On its first voyage, the schooner *Pitcairn* sailed from San Francisco on 20 Oct 1890 to the South Seas. The boat reached Pitcairn Is on 25 Nov and then sailed on to the other island territories: Fr Polynesia, Cook Is, Samoa, Tonga. The missionaries on board were Edward & Ida Gates, Albert & Hattie Read and John & Hannah Tay who stayed in Fiji.
- 2 *SDA Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev ed, vol 11 (Hagerstown, MD: R & H Pub Assoc. 1996) pp 266,7.
- 3 *Ibid*, pp 654 & 187.
- 4 *Union Conference Record*, The Fijian Council, 3 Aug 1908, p 2 & 3. O A Olsen, *Review & Herald*, 26 Nov 1908, p 23. The 1906 recommendation was for 3 mission field groupings—Eastern Polynesia Mission (Society, Cook, Marquesas, Tuamotu, Gambia, Austral, Easter & Pitcairn Islands); Central Polynesia and Malaysia Mission (East Indies & Singapore).
- 5 *Australasian Record*, 2 Oct 1911, pp 2, 3 & 8.
- 6 *AR*, 25 Sep 1916, p 5.
 AUC Minutes, 115th Meeting, 9th Council, 7 Sep 1916.
- 7 *AR*, 5 Sep 1921, p 5.
 David Hay, “Samoa & Samoan Churches in NZ, Australia & USA” Unpublished Manuscript. To be published in 2004.
- 8 Minutes, 5th Mtg, Australasian Inter-Union Conference Session, The Entrance, NSW, 20 Aug 1948.
^{8a} AUC Statistical Report, 1924 & 1948.
^{8b} Arthur W Spalding, *Origin & History of SDA's*, Vol 3, pp 366, 367.
^{8c} *Ibid*
Review & Herald, 7 Oct 1948, p 15
- 9 AIUC Minutes, Special Session, The Entrance, NSW, 20 Aug 1948.
 In a meeting of the AIUC Committee on 7 Sep 1948, W C Ferris (Fiji) & J E Cormack (Cook Is) were invited to attend the next session.
- 10 AIUC Minutes, 2nd Special Session & Annual Meeting, 3-21 Dec 1948, held at Cooranbong, NSW. On 23 Dec 1948, further appointments were made to the CPUM by the AIUC Committee: J B Keith, President Fiji Mission; H B Christian, President Samoan Mission; R N Heggie, Pres. Society Islands Mission; J E Cormack, Pres. Cook Is Mission; J T Howse, Superintendent Gilbert & Ellis Is Mission; W G Ferris, Superintendent Tongan Mission; C Sawyer, Sec-Treasurer Fiji Mission; F P Ward, appointed to Pitcairn Is.
 Action was also taken to approve the functioning of local mission committees until union mission representatives met with the missions to appoint new committees.
- 11 CPUM Minutes, 12 Dec 1948 (Wahroonga), p 2. Members present were Gordon Branster (chair), Eric Howse, John Keith, Herbert Christian, James Cormack, Albert Pietz & Alfred Peterson (Aust Educ & MV Secretary).
- 12 CPUM Minutes 13 Dec 1948 (Wahroonga), p 3. The same members were present as in # 11, but Alfred Peterson was not in attendance, and Walter Ferris was present.
 The Board of Management was structured as follows: President CPUM—Chairman; Principal Fulton Missionary School—Secretary; Sec-treasurer CPUM; Departmental Secretary CPUM; Presidents Local Missions; Head of Bible Dept, Fulton Missionary School; Ratu Semi. 5 persons constituted a quorum.
- 13 CPUM Actions, 20 Dec 1948, p 5
 The personnel approved as members of the Samoa Mission Committee were: the president (Herbert Christian); principal of Vailoa (John Dobson); district director of Savaii (Ronald Taylor); Siaoisi Neru, Sanika Afa’ese, John Ryan, Sauni Kuresa.
- 14 CPUM Actions, 20 Dec p 7.
 Classified at the time as Organised Missions were: Vanuatu (New Hebrides), Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, The Cook Islands, French Polynesia (Society Islands). The Unorganised Missions were New Caledonia, Kiribati (Gilbert)—Tuvalu (Ellis), and Pitcairn.
- 15 CPUM Minutes, 9 Mar p 26; 23 May p 23; 12 Jul p 38; 13 Sep p 51; 9 Dec p 260, 1949.
 (Today Fiji Air occupies the premises.) “The CPUM was fortunate in being able to rent homes for its staff and an office in the town of Suva, Fiji.” stated William Pascoe, AIUC treasurer at the 1st Session of the AIUC held at Cooranbong, NSW from 19 Nov 1950.
- 16 CPUM Minutes, 21 Feb 1949, p 9. The Union Education Board was constituted as follows:
 Ex-officio: Union Mission Ed Sec—Chairman; Union Mission President; Union Mission Secretary-Treasurer; Presidents local missions; Principal Fulton Missionary College; Headmasters of the following— Training Schools: Cook Is, Vailoa, Aore, Beulah College, Vatuvonu School; Educational Superintendents, local missions; Elected; John Kamea & Narain Singh.
 Union Executive Committee members present at meeting on 21 Feb were: Gordon Branster (Chair), Eric Howse, Nathaniel Wilson, Fred Mote, William Pascoe, Alfred Martin, Alfred Peterson, John Keith, Albert Pietz, Les Wood, Walter Ferris, Ron Heggie, and by invitation, John Howse & Arthur Dyason.
- 17 CPUM Minutes, 21 Feb 1949, p 11.
 The following local mission officers were appointed: Fiji Mission—President John B Keith, Secretary-Treasurer Colin Sawyer; Fiji-Indian—Pres. John B Keith, Sec-Treas Colin Sawyer; New Hebrides—Pres. Albert D Pietz, Sec. Aubrey R Hiscox; Samoa—Pres. Herbert B Christian, Secretary to be appointed; Tonga—Pres. Walter G Ferris, Sec. John Cernik; Cook Islands—Pres. James E Cormack, Sec. Donald H Watson; Society Islands—Pres. Ronald N Heggie, Sec. F MacDougall.
- 18 CPUM Mins, 21 Feb 1949, p 9. Union allocation of departmental responsibilities were as follows: Gordon Branster, Publishing & Radio; Alfred Martin, Education, MV, JMV & Home Missions; Eric Howse, Sabbath School.
- 19 CPUM Mins, 21 Feb 1949, p 12-14. Credentials & Licences granted by the union were as follows:
 Ministerial Credentials—Septimus W Carr, Herbert B Christian, James E Cormack, David A Ferris, Walter G Ferris, Algernon Gallagher, Ronald N Heggie, John T Howse, John B Keith, Albert D Pietz, Alfred W Martin, O D Freeman McCutcheon, Joseph D Miller, Raymond B Mitchell, Charles E Sommerfeld, Donald H Watson.
 Ministerial Licences—Cyrus S Adams, Karl D L Brook, John R Dobson, Aubrey R Hiscox, F MacDougall, Paul Fua, Nelson W Palmer, Colin Sawyer, Lindsay V Shields, Alec C Thomson, Charles Tucker, Tavita Niu, Frederick P Ward, Leslie S Wood & John Cernik subject to ordination.
 Ministerial Teachers Licences—Bert P Cozens, John Pearce, Narain Singh, Paul Ramswarup.
 Teachers Licences—Miss E MacIntosh, E Jackson, Caroline Osborne, Saula Sacu, Laitio Qio, Tinai, Puran Singh.
 Missionary Credentials—Miss Eva E Edwards, Miss Cecile Guiot.
 Missionary Licences—Nola Adams, Ida Branster, Helen Brook, Edith Carr, Lois Cernik, Melva Christian, Linda Cormack, Norma Cozens, Mary Dobson, Christine Ferris, Edna Gallagher, May Howse, Merle Howse, Mrs Hiscox, Margery Keith, Enid Martin, Norma Mitchell, Kenneth Mitchell, Rita Mitchell, Mrs MacDougall, Dulcie McCutcheon, Betty Palmer, Ruth Pearce, Mary Pietz, Irene Satchell, Edith Sawyer, Mrs Shields, Grace Sommerfeld, Shirley Thomson, Myrtle Ward, Una Watson, Dorothy Wood, Paula Turaga, Samson, Mrs

Singh.
 The Beulah School in Tonga was classified as Beulah College.
²⁰ Eric Howse, discussions with David Hay at Cooranbong, NSW, June 2002.
²¹ Ibid. At this time in 1949, members of the Suva English Church met in a hall on the corner of MacArthur & Butt Streets. The Garnett Estate was given by High Chief Cakebau to Garnett, a European settler, in appreciation for his work of developing the Colony. Garnett even provided finance for establishing the Colonial Sugar Company.
²² AIUC Mins, 14 Apr 1949, p 77.
 At the CPUM Committee in Suva on 12 Apr 1949, the recommendation of the Society Is Mission for the 1949 committee was approved as follows: President (Charles Flohr, acting), Secretary — , A Johnson, J Parker, K Milland, T Teirapa.
²³ CPUM Mins 13 Sep, p 50; 17 Nov, p 58, 1949; 10 Aug 1950, p 138. In the early months of 1950 2 single women commenced service at Fulton College: Daphne Chapman—teacher training & primary school teaching; Daphne Pegler—accountant & business teacher. *AR*, 6 Feb 1950, p 8; AIUC Mins 11 Jul 1950 p 342.
²⁴ AIUC Mins, 2 Nov 1950, p 178.
²⁵ C Sommerfeld, *AR*, 10 Apr 1950, p 4.
 The union discontinued Government's Grant in Aid program because the education department was assigning teachers to schools that suited their needs. eg Louise Whippy was assigned elsewhere when she was already teaching at Fulton.
²⁶ CPUM Mins Annual Mtg Feb, pp 65-69; 10 Aug p 131, 1950. 2nd Annual Mtg held at Suva from 5-9 Feb 1950. F A Mote, W L Pascoe & A W Petersen, all from the AIUC were in attendance
 Delegates to the 1950 AIUC Session were: Gordon Branster, Eric Howse, Alfred Martin, John Keith, Archie Gallagher & John Cernik.
 The small Island groups in the care of the Union were: Gilbert and Ellice, New Caledonia, Loyalty, Pitcairn, Wallis, Nauru, Phoenix & Line.
 Although Ratu Semi was appointed a CPUM Exec. Member in early 1950, his name doesn't appear in the union minutes until 12 July, 1951.
²⁷ CPUM Mins, 5 Feb 1951, p151. Papers on "Working Towards Self Support", on "Literature Evangelism in Union Missions", by Branster & E Howse respectively. Presented at the AIUC Session at Cooranbong, NSW 19-25 Nov 1949.
 AIUC Mins, 8 Dec 1949, p 250.
²⁸ *AR*, 12 & 19 Mar, p 8 & 16 Apr, p 6 & 8, 28 May, p 5, 16 July, p 6, 1951; 21 Feb 1952, p 8.
 CPUM Mins, 15 Feb, p 10, 22 Feb, p 166, 19 Jun, p 541, 12 July, p 185 13 Sep, p 609, 26 Sep, p193, 1951.
 Details of the reorganisation of Fiji into 2 missions are:
 1. (a) That Vanua Levu and adjacent islands, Rotuma, North & South Lau groups, Lomaiviti,— excluding Ovalau, comprise the territory of an organised mission known as the East Fiji Mission of Seventh-day Adventists.
 (b) That Viti Levu and adjacent islands, Kadavu, Yasawa group, Ovalau, comprise the territory of an organised mission known as West Fiji Mission of Seventh-day Adventists.
 2. That the *Viking Aboy* and crew be allocated to the East Fiji Mission.
 3. That the following committee give study to dividing the Assets, Liabilities and Base Budget of the Fiji Mission as at 31.12.50: W L Pascoe, G Branster, E W Howse, J B Keith, President-elect of new mission.
 At the end of the session the union and local mission personnel were as follows:
 CPUM—President & Religious Liberty secretary, G Branster; Secretary-Treasurer & Auditor, E W Howse; Educational, MV & JMV secretary, A W Martin; Publishing Department, Home Missions & Sabbath School Secretary, R L Aveling; Assistant Auditor & Accountant, A E Jones.
 Missions: Cook Is.—President-Treasurer, J E Cormack; Secre-

tary, J Cernik; East Fiji Mission—President-Treasurer, W G Ferris; Secretary, M P Cozens; French Oceania—President-Treasurer, P Nouan; New Hebrides Mission—President A D Pietz, Secretary-Treasurer, E N Hokin; Samoa Mission—President-Treasurer, H B Christian, Secretary, J R Dobson; Tonga Mission—President-Treasurer, Freeman McCutcheon, Secretary, A H Dawson; West Fiji Mission—President, J B Keith, Secretary-Treasurer, C Sawyer; Gilbert & Ellice Islands—Superintendent, G R Miller; Fulton Missionary College—Principal, L S Wood.
 In June 1951, John L. Shuler, an American evangelist, commenced an evangelistic series in the Suva Town Hall which led to several baptismal services in the months ahead. Lyn Burns from the Queensland Conference cared for the music and conducted Bible Studies. AIUC Mins, 7 Mar, p 504; 2 Aug, p 588; 1951.
 An explanation of the wage schedule stated, among other things, that "men & women beginning their service should be rated at, or near the minimum and gradually advance in harmony with the responsibility involved and efficiency developed..." CPUM Mins, 22 Feb 1951, p 166.
 It was a widespread practice everywhere in developed & undeveloped countries to pay men & women at different rates: eg Teachers at Fulton MC—Men 62-97.5%; women 46-73%. This anomaly was rectified some years later.
²⁹ Alfred Martin, unpublished sundry stories, "A Cyclone", 1951.
³⁰ F A Mote, *AR*, 25 Feb 1952, p 4, 5. J E Cormack, *AR*, 17 Mar 1952, p 3, 4. A E Jones, *AR*, 24 Mar 1952, p 3,4.
 E. Howse discussion with Hay at Cooranbong, NSW, June 2002.
 Bishop's house in Suvavou was rented until 31 Dec 1951 in order to secure housing for possible staff adjustments. CPUM Mins, 26 Nov 1951, p 208.
 P Nouan and James Cormack accompanied Ted Jones to his home. As they were staying there they helped to make it secure by nailing up doors and windows. Eventually 60 Indians sheltered in the basement. From 200 yards away they saw the roof of Albert Martin's home blown off. Freeman McCutcheon was on board the *Tofua* which was left stranded on a shoal close to the reef in Suva Harbour. He fully expected the ship to turn over at any time. Fortunately it was floated at full tide. The *Viking Aboy* in Suva Harbour was damaged during the cyclone and £75.1.6 was provided from the Mission Vessels Replacement Fund at the AIUC for repairs. AIUC Mins, 18 Aug 1952, p 823. Mote and Wickman were staying in Branster's home during the annual meetings in Jan 1952.
 Betty Adrian (Martin) letter to David Hay, 2 Feb 2003. Betty says: "I remember walking home from the kindergarten I operated in central Suva after the cyclone...and am amazed at the distance I had to cover. I had to climb over roofing iron and debris to get home...I can remember our roof was off and there were stains on the wet carpet from the book covers."
³¹ *AR*, 14 Apr, p 8; 2 Jun, p 8; 4 Aug p 8, 1952. CPUM Mins, 52:97-98. *AR*, 27 Apr 1953, p 8.
 By 4 Mar 1952, the GC, AIUC, TCUC & Victorian Conf as well as other authorities had provided funds for rebuilding. AIUC Mins, 4 Mar 1952, p 750.
 On behalf of the union and those affected by the cyclone, R L Aveling officially thanked all who had provided food and clothing parcels to assist the needy.
³² *AR*, 17 May 1954, p 16. 19 Aug 1957, p 15
 Betty (Fletcher) Were in discussions with David Hay, 19 March 2003.
 Three of the locations occupied as temporary headquarters were: Samabula School, Bishop's house at Suvavou and the new house occupied by the Bransters.

TRAINING PRIMARY TEACHERS AT FULTON COLLEGE 1941–1959

DAPHNE HALLIDAY



Daphne began her teaching career in 1942 at Victoria Park School, WA as a junior teacher. In 1943 she went to Teachers College and completed a one year course, shortened because of the war. She then spent 3 years in various state schools and a year in each of the SDA schools at Mt Lawley & Victoria Park. She then went to Avondale College for a year where she concentrated on Bible subjects.

In 1950 she was called to Fulton College spending eight years in the teacher training department. She supervised the 2 primary schools & the practice teaching lessons and also looked after the girls dormitory. Her time there was interrupted when she went to Avondale for 2 years to teach in the high school.

After her marriage she looked after her two daughters until they went to school and then taught again in most of the places where her husband Don was appointed. At Fulton she taught a class of teachers from Vanuatu, methods and practice teaching for a year, and English classes for several years. At Avondale she taught English to business students, and at Mt Diamond (PNG) taught English & Bible for a year, the small primary school for the second and was the school nurse for the 3rd. After retirement there were short spells relieving at Sonoma & Paglum. The Hallidays are living in retirement at Alstonville, NSW.

IN THE EARLY DAYS of Fiji Mission, national workers received some advanced education and some training at one of four boarding schools: Buresala, on the island of Ovalau; Vatuvonu, on the second largest island, Vanua Levu; Samabula, a suburb of Suva, mainly for Indians whose parents or other forebears had settled in Fiji; and Navuso, a school for girls along the Wainibuka River. A need for better teacher training had already been recognised, for in September 1939 the Australasian Union Conference Committee in Wahroonga had voted to release Miss J Mitchell from her position as assistant inspector and demonstration teacher in the Education Department at head office and send her to Vatuvonu to conduct teacher training.¹

As Arthur Dyason was later to recall,

Certain people on the mission committee had realised that we were beating our heads against a wall, the way we were trying to do things. Every school was understaffed. We couldn't do any specialising like teacher training when we had insufficient staff. It was felt that we ought to do something about getting more staff at one school, or else pooling all our schools into one. When the matter was fully discussed, it became very obvious that we should unite our efforts and bring the boys school in Buresala, the girls school in Navuso, and the Indian school at Samabula into one. As Vatuvonu was so far away at Buca Bay on Vanua Levu, it was decided to leave it as an intermediate school, and shift the teacher training to the new school.²

Thus it came about that in April 1940, the Executive Committee at the Wahroonga headquarters considered a request from the Fiji Mission Commit-

tee to combine three of the boarding schools and the teacher training at Vatuvonu into one central training college, which would include pastoral training, teacher training, technical instruction, and Indian and Fijian primary schools. This was to be Fulton College. A P Dyason was suggested as principal, A.E Watts as deputy and head of teacher training, and Miss J Mitchell as demonstration teacher. The Executive Committee approved the request, later voting £2000 towards the cost, the rest being met by the sale of a launch and the land for the existing schools. Later in the year Pastor A G Stewart, then Union Vice-President for the island fields, agreed to go out as Principal.³ Evidently this was to supply Dyason's place while he was absent in New Zealand.

Fulton's First and Second Decades

Records for the 1940s, Fulton's first decade, are rather sketchy. With the transfer of A E Watts, a good deal of the burden of teacher training appears to have been borne initially by Miss Jo Mitchell, who was transferred from Vatuvonu. After her departure, Ken Gray supervised teacher training, and then for a year Hugh Dickens.⁴ Then Miss Eunice MacIntosh came from the Papanui school in South New Zealand, and in her last year, 1949, according to available records, a graduate class of teachers included two Fijians, three Fiji Indians, a Samoan and a Tongan.

During the 1950s, Fulton's second decade, the supervision of teacher training was mainly my responsibility, except for the two years 1953 and 1954 when I was back in Australia on the staff of Avondale College, and Mrs Florence Collett took over with Wal Dawson helping out in 1954. I worked under three principals, Pastor Les Wood, Pas-

tor A. W. Martin, and later Pastor Arthur Dyason, and these men were officially in charge of teacher training. Pastor Wood did indeed take a class in Principles of Teaching, and also helped occasionally with the supervision of teachers during their practice periods away from the College. I also had to take charge of the primary section of Fulton College. This consisted at first of two schools, one for the Indian children and one for the Fijians. Each school was comprised of four primary classes and each school had a staff of two teachers. Our teachers-in-training did a good deal of their observation and practice teaching in these two schools and, indeed, they were being trained to teach those four classes. These schools catered, of course, for day pupils, but any students above class 4 were taught in the College, and many of them were boarders.

From 1951 and Onward

In 1951, because of a shortage of staff in our primary schools in Fiji, I was asked to run the Fijian primary school with the twelve second-

year trainees. I made out the programs of work and the weekly daily book showing exactly what was to be taught in each period during the week for both classrooms. Each teacher trainee had four successive weeks in either classes 1 and 2 or classes 3 and 4, and was supervised closely. For the last three months the school became two rural school classrooms both containing classes 1 to 4, and the trainees had two weeks each with this arrangement—the only time this was ever done. This arrangement made it difficult for trainees to prepare for exams, and they did not see demonstration lessons. The month of continuous teaching, however, gave them a real taste of what was before them while they had the help and supervision of their lecturer.

It seems that at the beginning of 1953 (when I had left for Australia) all the primary children in classes 1 to 4 were accommodated in the building originally used for the Fijian school, while classes 5 and 6 were moved into what was originally the Indian school. Classes 1 to 4 were shared by an Indian and a Fijian teacher, and were generally taught in English, but vernacular lessons in Hindi or Fijian were taken by the Indian and Fijian teachers respectively. In the following year, class 7 also moved in with classes 5 and 6, and after another year class 8 also! Brian Townend was supervisor of the primary school at that time, but that,

he says, was mostly a mere title.⁵ With the movement of these upper classes into the primary school, teachers-in-training could be given practice teaching in any of those classes, but usually only trainees with a good level of general education were allowed into the two top classes.

Teaching seemed to be a popular option during those years. During the ten years of 1950-1959, of Fulton's 113 graduates, 58 completed the teaching course, leaving the remaining graduates for the ministerial, business, and building construction courses. At first there was only one teacher training class, and this took the two years, 1950 and 1951, to finish. The class that



Daphne Chapman supervising and teaching

should normally have started in 1951 was instead required to do an extra year of secondary education, as the entry standard for all training courses was raised from Form 3 to Form 4.⁶ In 1952 we started a new class, and in the next year another, so that from then on, there were always two levels of training and a graduation every year. Those who sat in Form 4 had not necessarily passed

a public school exam there. Those who did pass often went elsewhere. For example, Pastor Filimoni Beraniliva remembers⁷ that after arriving at Fulton from Vatuvonu, he went through Forms 3 and 4 with seven other students, all Indians, and that at the end of the Form 4 year all the others took the Junior Cambridge exam, which was administered from Britain. Six of those passed, and all went on to the government teacher training college at Nasinu, a suburb of Suva. Filimoni could not take the exam because he did not have the rather high entry fee. When he joined the teacher training class he studied a Bible subject with Pastor Sommerfeld, Principles of Teaching with Pastor Wood, and English and Teaching Methods with me. For practical teaching work there were the two primary schools at Fulton, both of which were taught in English; and during practice teaching weeks, students went to Naqia (in the Wainibuka Valley), Samabula (the Indian school in a suburb of Suva, until it closed), Suvavou (next to the Fiji Mission office), or stayed at one of the primary schools at Fulton. It is likely that most other teacher training students did not have Filimoni's level of education when they began their training course. As Fulton had the only secondary classes in the Central Pacific at that time, these students had to spend a couple of years completing their required secondary education before joining the teacher training

class.

“With Some Trepidation”

Not long before I arrived at Fulton, the College had been transferred from Fiji Mission’s control to that of the newly-formed Central Pacific Union Mission. Students began to arrive from Tonga, Samoa, the Cook Islands, Tahiti, the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), Pitcairn Island, and the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (now Kiribati and Tuvalu). Thus the first teaching class to complete their two years of training with me in 1951 included not only such well known Fijians as Filimoni Bera, Wapole Talemaitonga, and Josateki Naituku, but also Tongans like Pita Manu, Pole Hale, and Tevita Fonokalafi. Some Cook Island students graduated in 1953; New Hebrideans and Tahitians were represented in the graduation class of 1955, and Gilbertese and Samoans in 1958.⁸

When I first arrived at Fulton, I approached the training of teachers with some trepidation, having had no previous experience either in teacher training or in teaching island students. I was fortunate to find that Jo Mitchell had laid out a general outline of the course to be followed, and had even made out some sample lessons. I remember one on local hygiene, where it was suggested that latrines should be located near paw paw trees, the leaves of which might be a substitute for toilet paper! I found that the primary school staff were reluctant to adopt new methods of teaching, or to demonstrate the use of teaching aids to our trainees. There was always a tendency for our teaching staff to use the same ineffective methods which had been used when they themselves had attended primary schools where the teachers had only a primary school education, and sometimes had not even completed that, and where the only aid to teaching was a blackboard and chalk. The trainees made a few teaching aids for themselves, but it was not always easy to use them, as there were few storage facilities in schools or in the homes where teachers lived. They would not have made many aids after leaving college, as they did not have access to many pictures or to supplies of cardboard, texta pens, and other materials.

The mix of nationalities did not make it any easier, either. We found, for example, that Tongan students needed much more practice in pronouncing English words. The Tongan language uses only fourteen letters and so Tongan students had trouble in distinguishing the many vowel sounds used in English, and they also had trouble in telling the difference between, for example, *ramp* and *lamp*. Words like *Jesus* and *jump* became *Yesu* and *syump*, since there is no *g* in their language. Students from other backgrounds had similar difficulties. Over time these drawbacks became less obvious, as more students spent time in Fulton’s secondary classes, taught by English-speaking teachers, before

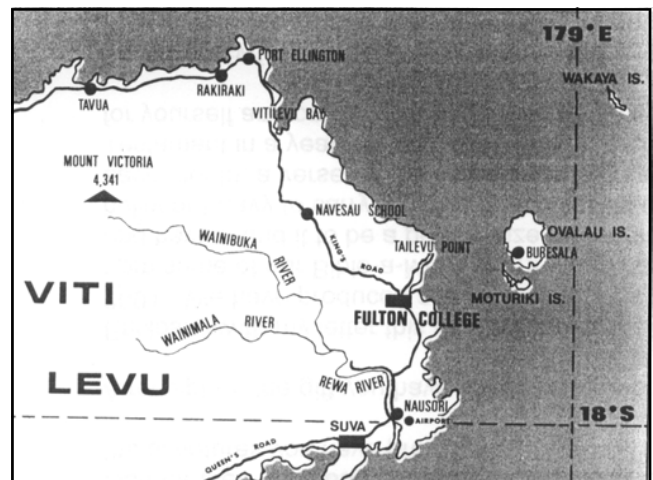
transferring to the teacher training class.

However we did our best, training teachers-to-be in speech training, singing, art and craft, physical training, Bible, health, natural science, and social studies as well as the basic subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Many of those early graduates went on to make their mark on our educational work in the Central Pacific. Filimoni Bera eventually transferred to the ministry and became President of Fiji Mission; Pita Manu was for some years the senior teacher in Fulton Primary School; Marika Tuiwawa started the school at Navesau; Pole Hale served for years at Beulah College; Teina Taivairanga served in the Gilberts, Fiji, and his homeland of Cook Islands; Wapole Talemaitoga and Samu Ratulevu both had turns as education directors in Fiji, and Japheth Folau in the New Hebrides. In all these classes boys were definitely in the majority; but many of the girls have also served as teachers, besides standing by their husbands as wives and mothers. In later years I had the privilege of seeing many of those teachers in action in schools around the islands and so I felt that God blessed our efforts in those early years of teacher training at Fulton.

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Over the years Fulton has been known as: Fulton Training School (1941-44); Fulton Missionary School (1945-48); Fulton Missionary College (1949-71); Fulton College (1972 and onwards).



Fulton College is a co-educational boarding institution in the south-east corner of the main island of Fiji, (Viti Levu), 50 kilometres from Suva. With the establishment of the CPUM in 1949, the school became the Training College for the South Pacific area.



ESTABLISHING THE FIRST PERMANENT BASE OF OPERATION IN VANUATU—Part 5

North-east Malekula—Matanavat, Tanmiel & Emilawap villages

LES PARKINSON



See CV in Vol 1 #2

Synopsis:

Due to the killing of ni-Vanuatu teachers in north-east Malekula the Presbyterians refrained from sending more teachers there. Undeterred by events, Adventist missionaries visited the area on several occasions in 1915 and 1916. In spite of local disputes among the people small groups of Sabbath keepers were established in the villages of Rel and Lalip.

Matanavat and Emilawap

IN THE LAST WEEK of April 1915, Parker and Wright sailed on the *Eran* on an exploratory voyage along the northeast coast of Malekula. However, they were not the first missionaries to venture into this area. In the late nineteenth century the Presbyterians had made a trip around Malekula and in 1904 in a report given to the Presbyterian Synod, in mid 1905 Dr. Crombie reported the opening of a new station on west Malekula near Espiegle Bay. In December 1904 two adults of north Malekula had been baptised and admitted to the church. He had made frequent boat trips to the west coast and the ni-Vanuatu teacher at Matanavat was Kalorib from Efate Island.¹

Parker and Wright took with them a number of students from the Atchin school. They proved to be a great help in singing and explaining many things to the people that the Europeans were unable to do. The first village welcomed them with a 'great deal of friendliness' and pleaded with Parker to come again and come often. At the second village the reception was not so enthusiastic.

In September of 1915, Calvin Parker and Norman Wiles travelled further along the coast and visited Matanavat. Wiles wrote how he and others on board were cautious about landing because bush people at the back of Matanavat village had previously threatened to come down and shoot them. When they did eventually go ashore the people were glad to see them and the old chief asked Parker if he could travel with them back to Atchin for a few days. When he was returned to Matanavat he encouraged his people to build a school for the mission. The chief showed Parker and Wiles a piece of land about half an acre in size which

was near the sea and about one and a half kilometres from the village.

In the last days of December 1915 another trip was made to Matanavat and the two Europeans visited the villages of Emilawap and Taniel (Tanmiel) where keen interest was shown in the meetings. The people of these three villages looked forward to the time when the mission would settle in their midst.

Parker and Wiles were elated for Matanavat was a key to both the Big Nambas and Bush tribes. The people of Matanavat were friends with both groups. In the vicinity of Matanavat there were six Small Nambas villages and five more along the coastline between Atchin and Matanavat.

The land that was given to the mission at Matanavat in the latter part of 1915 was soon cleared and



The church at Matanavat

buildings commenced. The church/school building was completed by the people and Pastor Parker held the first service in it on Sabbath 8 April 1916. Parker reported that the Matanavat house was completed on 26 April 1916. Norman and Alma Wiles had moved in.² He commented that it was a new experience for them to be alone but that they "shouldered their new responsibility with true Christian fortitude".³

The home was to be a temporary one for them for it was planned that when another European couple arrived in the field they would relieve the Wiles' and enable them to take up the work for the Big Nambas tribes. In the meantime they were to work in the Matanavat area and visit the Big Nambas Tanmaru village on a frequent basis to become acquainted with them and gain a working knowledge of their language.

Alma Wiles wasted no time in making contact with the women of Matanavat village and as Parker

was about to leave and return to Atchin she handed a note to him which read, "I have spent the afternoon with the women in their town, and they are so glad that we are to stay with them. I am so happy."⁴

Soon after the arrival of Andrew and Jean Stewart in Vanuatu Parker introduced Andrew to the field. He took him to Matanavat and coastal and inland villages. At Matanavat the church and mission house was dedicated. This was followed by a visit to the Big Nambas village of Tanmaru.

Concerning Matanavat Norman Wiles wrote:

...there is a desire for better things among them, and we see much room for encouragement. There are not many people, about seventy altogether ... there are several other villages a few miles away with larger numbers.⁵

The young men of Matanavat were an immense help in taking the Wiles to visit inland tribes and it was not long before one of the inland village chiefs, Billy, wanted the them to come every week. In his village fifteen to twenty men regularly attended meetings. In another village everyone attended. The mode of communication was in the widely known Bislama as each village had a language or dialect of its own.

The first man to take a real interest in the mission at Matanavat was called Jonnie. Because of his interest his life was threatened. Later, when Alma Wiles was left at Matanavat after the death of her husband, this man and his wife cared for her immediate needs.

Four months after settling in at Matanavat, Alma and Norman Wiles visited inland villages about eleven kilometres from Matanavat. Alma described the walk to the villages.

Most of the way the track leads through deep grass up to our faces. In the first village we found only two men as the others had gone to their gardens. The people of this town remain home on Sunday, so we arranged a meeting for them on that day. [These people had previously had contact with the Presbyterian mission]. At the second town all the people were at home.⁶

Norman Wiles program was to leave Matanavat as soon as possible after the early morning service on



The Mission house at Matanavat



Alma and Norman Wiles with Big Nambas people

Sabbaths for the village of Emilawap and to arrive back at Matanavat about mid-day. As Alma Wiles was not having too much success in gathering the women together in Matanavat she sometimes would accompany her husband.

Around the beginning of September 1916 the British Commissioner left word to say the Wiles ought not to stay any longer at Matanavat, and if they did so it would be at their own risk. His remarks were the understatement of the year. He was referring to a current situation. The bushmen had committed several murders. A trader named Bridges, and his wife and children had been murdered. One of the children had been carried away, dismembered and cannibalised.⁷

How long the Wiles were away from their station is not known but one year later on 9 November 1917 Captain G F Jones, accompanied by A G Stewart visited Matanavat on the Mission Vessel *Melanesia*. He wrote:

Here we met Brother and Sister Wiles, who were both suffering severely with fever. Brother Wiles was emaciated and weak and unfit to remain there longer without a change and rest. Matanavat is a hot and malarial place with abundance of flies.⁸

The Wiles departed on furlough in early 1918 and in the same month Ross and Mabel James arrived at Atchin. In the latter part of March Jope Laweloa and his wife Torika and their son arrived from Fiji. The Matanavat people immediately requested that Jope and his family be located among them.

On 29 October 1920 Stewart called in at Matanavat. There was a note of discouragement in his report about his trip. He wrote:

We shall be glad when some help comes along, as the scattered district, the various dialects, and the condition of the people makes the work so difficult that we feel with our present force we can do no more than hold the ground already reclaimed.⁹

Harold Blunden's itinerary in August and September, 1921 took him from Atchin to Matanavat. On Monday



Expatriates working in Vanuatu (NH) in 1918.
BR: Andrew Stewart, Ross James, Norman Wiles, Jope Laweloa

FR: Jean Stewart, Mabel James, Alma Wiles, Torika Laweloa

5 September the *Eran* came into the village anchorage. Blunden noticed a discarded row boat that had been built by Norman Wiles. He observed that the site of the old mission residence was a few yards in from the beach on low land and in the heart of a dense forest. There was absolutely no outlook from the house and the only path was a trail through the bush for about half a mile ($\frac{3}{4}$ of a kilometre) which ended in a village. The flies were as a plague constantly.¹⁰

Blunden, Stewart and Nicholson walked along a narrow bush track toward the village. They arrived in the midst of a festival in which two hundred pigs of all sizes from sucklings to big tuskers were being offered. Blunden estimated that the value of the pigs being killed was \$2,000.

As his visit to Vanuatu was after the death of Norman Wiles he was interested in meeting Jonnie and his wife who had assisted Alma Wiles and given her a place to sleep when the trading vessel put her ashore near Matanavat on Wednesday night, 5 May 1920.

Tanmiel

The Wiles made a significant impact upon the people of the village of Tanmiel in Northeast Malekula. Alma Wiles wrote:

We had a good time at Tanmiel yesterday. I found nineteen women waiting for me and Mr. Wiles had the same number of men at his meeting. They were able to answer questions on the details of the lesson I had given them the week before. These people are going ahead with their school-house. They are planning to make the church large enough so they can all meet together, the men to sit on one side and the women on the other. This is wholly their own idea and was a surprise to us, as it is entirely a new departure for any of these people.¹¹

Donald Nicholson visited the village after the death of Norman Wiles. He was amazed at the attitude of the Tanmiel people toward the mission. He wrote:

At Tanmiel ... the response has been beyond our most sanguine expectation. They have actually finished their ceremonies, so they informed me on my last visit, and they say they are not even going to look at the heathen feasts of neighbouring villages. Six months ago, [February 1922] we saw them in the busy activity of pig killing, and today they came down in a body to tell the almost incredible story that it is all finished; and they are waiting for us to give them a teacher, and are respecting the Sabbath day in their isolation.

In my surprise I asked the reason for such a decision, and the soul thrilling reply came, "We cannot forget the death of Mr. Wiles and in our sorrow we feel we must belong to the mission".¹²

A few days later forty men and women came down to the coast and a mission site was chosen. Their intention was to leave their old village and build a new one on a slope near the water's edge.

At this particular time there were students from Ambrym attending the school at Atchin and two of them agreed to go and help the people of Tanmiel for two months and then two others would relieve them. Nicholson said, "These boys have been keeping Sabbath only six months and they have a burden to tell their own friends on Ambrym and when they heard the story of the people of Tanmiel tears rolled down their faces and they agreed to help them."

Back on the island of Atchin the news of the decision of the Tanmiel people brought about a change in the attitude of the students attending school. Both Atchinese and Ambrymese students decided to accompany Donald Nicholson on his next trip to Tanmiel and assist the village people to cut down the bush for the mission station. The Ambrym students also told Nicholson that they were keen on opening up a line of mission stations between Atchin and the Big Nambas.



Donald Nicholson

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FIJIAN DAYS, 1934-38

Reminiscences

IRMA BUTLER



Irma Okwyn Butler was born at Quirindi, NSW, on 6 July 1907, to Charles & Mary Bridge. She was followed by her brother Jack & sister Mary.

After completing her education at Quirindi Superior Public School & Canterbury High School, Sydney, she was baptised by Pr Mervyn Whittaker and joined the Adventist Church in 1921.

Irma married a church schoolteacher, Edward (Ted) Butler and they were blessed with 4 children, Joan, Jack, Ron and Allan.

Our church has much to thank Irma for, as she has held many positions over the years including SS Superintendent, SS Teacher, youth leader, organist, treasurer and elder.

She is never idle. She has many hobbies including keeping in touch with her family (10 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren), reading, music, crochet, cross-stitch & crosswords. This sprightly lady is one of the most active of her age. She wrote this article at 95 years of age.

God bless her for leaving such a splendid heritage.

THE MEMORIES I HAVE of my Fijian days are still in my mind, even though nearly seventy years have slipped by. I was much younger in those days of course, but the memory lingers on—happy memories, anxious memories, memories of ups and downs, some of which I used to shudder at the mere reflection. But time has wiped away some of the heartaches and disappointments and somehow I can smile at things that upset me when I was so young, and today I remember the many times when God intervened on our behalf.

I remember the call to Fiji my husband received on that Sabbath in 1934. Ted was the headmaster of the Hawthorn school, Melbourne, and in those days to be a teacher was automatically to be a preacher on nearly every Sabbath. This particular Sabbath was no exception and he was off somewhere doing his Sabbath duty. Usually, I would pack up the children, Joan, aged six, and Jack, aged four, and we would trundle off to the Auburn church. But not this day, for I had had a wisdom tooth extracted the day before and was still feeling the effects of the anaesthetic. My eighteen-year-old sister, Mary, was staying with us (from Quirindi, NSW) and I was glad to have her with me. Besides, I was four months pregnant and hardly ready to go to church that day.

At lunchtime, a married couple, friends of ours, dropped in to see me and to ask me how I felt about going off to Fiji. At the church where Ted was preaching, he was asked the same question. He guessed that the matter was more than a mere rumour, and he hoped that he could get home to me before anyone else with the shock news. No such luck! Ted told me afterwards that he didn't know how he managed to get through that sermon; his

thoughts were otherwise!

As it was, the story was true. Pastor G G Stewart conveyed the information the next day, thus making the rumour a reality. In those days, a call was a call, and nobody thought of rejecting it. In a matter of days we were on our way with our luggage, two small children and one tucked away, travelling free of charge.

The Arrival in Fiji

We travelled on the American ship, *S S Mariposa*, in January 1935. We had not travelled alone, however, for with us were the Wilkinsons, the Lansdowns, the Penningtons, the Dyasons and Raglan Marks. (If I have left anyone out I apologise; my memory is not quite what it used to be.) Some of our fellow travellers were returning from furlough; for us it was our maiden voyage. We were met at the wharf by the Superintendent, Roy Lane, and the office staff, and a Fijian chief, who shook hands with my five-year-old son who didn't know whether to run away and hide, or just hope he wouldn't get eaten!

The next thing was for us was to be driven to Suva Vou to meet the mission workers who were in Suva for a committee meeting and to welcome the new arrivals. The day was hot and humid and we wondered if this kind of heat would be normal. We would learn from experience but that day we certainly felt the heat. In the afternoon we were driven to Samabula to an empty house, apart from some makeshift beds and our few bits of furniture. (We had been advised to sell our piano, sewing machine and oak furniture as it would not stand up to the tropics. We had been taken in!)

The fixtures in the house were less than encouraging. The fuel stove had not only seen better days; it was a

wreck. A new one was on order, we were informed, and was coming from New Zealand. So I cooked on a Primus stove, scared all the time that the contraption would explode and me with it! In the islands you learn to wait. We had to wait for new furniture to be made for us for how long I am not sure, but waiting for new white clothing for Ted was just as long or perhaps longer.

Our house was on a rise and overlooked the ocean, and on the first day, a little after 5 pm we watched the *Mariposa* steam past *en route* to America. Our last link with home, it seemed, was severed, and I have to admit some tears were shed.



Irma & Ted Butler, Joan, Jack and Ronald

Learning to be Missionaries—Both of Us

My husband's main work was teaching. He was headmaster of Samabula Indian School which was a day and boarding school. There were about one hundred and fifty pupils. There was a house master for the boys who were boarding. I think the name of

the house master was Bakshish Narain Singh who was also the first assistant teacher; next was Jacale Budhu, Govind, Luxmagit (?) and another whose name escapes me. They taught mainly in English.

There were only a few girl boarders, and a Mr and Mrs Baird looked after them (they were Pastor Dyason's in-laws). Later Eileen and Dwaika Singh (Narain's older brother) cared for them.

My husband's only Indian word was "Salaam," either in Hindi or Urdu; he had a big task in front of him. (Pastor G M Masters eventually went to India for a year to learn the language.) Ted had to supervise the running of the school, including purchasing of food for the boarders (on a very tight budget).

Because of his many tasks, Ted was always on the go, what with teaching and trying to learn Hindi, apart from the general running of the school. Narain Singh was a great help, and he became a very dear friend, as did his wife Dorothy. Other Adventist friends were Eileen and Dwarka and Nellie and Paul Ramswarup, Gorgie Singh and her children Dulcie, Shanti and Mulchand, not forgetting Roshni. Gorgie's husband went

to India and never came back.

I have spoken of my husband's problems and difficulties, but I had my own. I hope I may be forgiven for mentioning a few. The first few months were rather trying. Being pregnant, I really felt the heat (did I mention that?). Waiting for the furniture to be made meant the house wasn't as tidy as I would have liked. All things come to those who wait, they tell us, and they were right: the new furniture and the new stove finally arrived.

Then there was the problem of the children. We had no way of sending them to school in Suva, so I taught them by correspondence. A Mrs Hoodless was head of that government department and the lessons were easy to follow.

On 2 May, Ronald Edward Butler was born at Nurse Morrison's private hospital in Suva, delivered by Dr Paley who looked after me and my family all the time we were in Fiji.

Because of some exchange situation, we were asked to do our shopping at Bums Philips. They delivered our groceries and we became good friends with the head grocer, Mr Spears, and the dear old lift driver. I still have a chopping board he made for me, carved out of Fijian wood.

The office rang and said that there was a second-hand car for sale, owned by a miner who was returning to Australia. It was in pretty poor shape, but the tyres were fairly good, so we bought it—for £26! We painted it and repaired the upholstery, but we soon learned that cars don't run on paint and upholstery. That car kept us poor. However, one of our senior boys had a driving licence and he drove our five and seven-year-olds to the Grammar School each morning and Ted picked them up in the afternoon.

We had the use of a piano, so we were able to have music lessons for the children. Having a Welsh grandfather, I was very interested in music and could sing "Jesus Loves Me" and "Land of My Fathers" when I was two years old. Having been pregnant for the first few months, and then having a new baby to look after, I didn't get involved in any mission projects that first year.

The following year we had Young People's Meetings for the boarders and invited day students to attend and take part in the programs. At school they had Bible lessons, but I can't recall any being baptised. We got to know our Indian neighbours and were invited to their weddings and funerals. Sad to say, one of the latter, one of our bright day boys, was being forced by his parents to marry a girl he hardly knew. It was too much for him and he committed suicide.

Some of the mothers brought their babies to me to ask my advice on how to care for them. One baby boy was very sick and I persuaded the mother to let me look after him. With Dr Paley's help, in a couple of weeks I was able to hand him back, all well again. The



Narain Singh (centre) and some of the students at the Indian School at Samabula

mother could speak only a few words of English, and I could speak only a few words of Hindi, but we became very good friends.

I can't remember the year when Pastor Walter Hooper became superintendent and a little later Mr Adrian became secretary-treasurer. He came to Fiji ahead of his wife and family and was setting up house and looking forward to their arrival from New Zealand. He was a lovely man, well liked by everyone.

We were friends with Hilary and Edna Lansdown, and with Olive Frame and Flo Schmidt, two girls who worked at the mission office at Suva Vou. Our friendship with Flo and the Lansdowns lasted all our lives. (Flo married Pastor Weslake after his first wife died.)

A Day We Would Never Forget

It was committee meeting time, and Pastor Hooper decided that he and Bert Adrian would drive up in the mission car, a Ford V8, and bring the Lansdowns, their toddler Shirley Mae, and Ratu Mosese to Suva. On the return journey they would have breakfast at our place, about 9 o'clock, and the Lansdowns would stay with us. The Lansdowns were stationed at one of our missions on the Wainibuka River. It was planned that the mission boys would drive them by boat to the roadside meeting place.

The luggage was placed on the back of the car, Pastor Hooper and Mr Adrian in the front seat and Edna and Hilary and Mosese in the back. At the last minute, Mr Adrian thought Edna and the baby would be more comfortable in the front, so they changed places. At that time the roads were very narrow and hilly, with deep drops, sometimes one side, sometimes on another

About halfway to Suva, rounding a sharp bend, instead of hugging the bank the car was too far out and, with the added weight of the luggage, it went over the bank 150 feet down the hill.

Back at our house, we watched and waited for the

mission car to arrive. Well on into the morning, Pastor S W Carr rang us to tell us of the terrible accident and that Bert Adrian had been killed, Edna injured, the others bruised and shaken and in shock in Suva Hospital, and that Mrs Lansdown was calling for me.

We rushed to the hospital and found Baby Shirley safe and well. Edna had one ear nearly cut off and a deep gash in one leg, bruised and shock. We did all we could to comfort everyone. We took little Shirley home with us and later we were told of a miracle. Shirley was asleep in Edna's arms when the car went over the bank. She was found, still asleep, on a bed of grass! (A lovely girl, Shirley married Clive Pasco.)

I will never forget that day, and of the grief it caused when Mrs Adrian was told of her husband's death. The Lansdowns left Fiji as soon as Edna recovered.

This was a catastrophe, the like of which can bring disaster even with a careful driver, anywhere, anytime. We who were there to watch the result of the tragedy will never forget the preservation of all in the car—except the death of one, a Christian gentleman, one of God's men, Bert Adrian. We know that we can look forward to meeting him again in God's Eternal Home.

A THUMB-NAIL SKETCH OF TED BUTLER

EDWARD ADRIAN BUTLER was born on the fourteenth day of April in the year 1900. He was the youngest son of Lewis and Lilian Butler. He was educated at Avondale College and graduated from the Normal course in 1919, and from the Teacher's course in 1920. His mother died in December of that year.

In 1921, he received his first appointment as headmaster of the Bathurst Adventist School. After two years he was transferred to Quirindi, NSW, where he met and later married Irma Olwyn Bridge.

Ted was a teacher all of his working life, and taught at North Sydney and Marrickville (Sydney), Hawthorn (Victoria), Fiji, Collinsvale and Hobart (Tasmania), Rockhampton (Queensland), Auburn and Strathfield (Sydney). It can be said that wherever he worked he was well respected and greatly appreciated.

His daughter Joan married Henry Ludlow, the brother of Pastor John Ludlow. She died in 1963. His son Jack taught at Newington College for 34 years and was a Director of the Senior School. His second son was employed by the Sanitarian Health Food Company, where he rose to be a manager. His youngest son Allan was an ordained minister, and before he died in 1994, was chaplain of the Adventist College, Strathfield. This was a family of whom any family could be proud.

Ted passed away in 1973. He was a Christian gentleman, loved and respected by all who knew him.

Letters

A Dream and an Inner Voice Vol 3 No 1. Shirley Tarburton has sent a picture of Robert Jonathan's mother as she was the prime mover behind establishing a church in Tangara Village.

Also Shirley supplied further details on schools mentioned in her article.

- a) The two schools that were closed were Nindinumbo and Whambe primary schools, and
- b) the two schools still open are Tangara Primary and Nagum Central School known as Kubulia High School.



Robert Jonathan's mother



Pr & Mrs Alwyn Jonah

Life Sketch of Pr Alwyn Jonah. Vol 2 No 2

Pr Paul Jama has sent a picture of Alwyn & his wife Peppy Jogo.

With H R Martin in Fiji—1915-1932

Firstly we found the article by Martin Ward most interesting. This was especially so as it showed the photo, and told the story, of the first house we lived in as newly weds, for three years from 1947. We were amazed at the vigour H R Martin showed when building that house at Nadarivatu, five miles and about 2½

thousand feet up and down, as well as doing other things, running workers programs, preaching etc. I added a septic tank, a flush toilet, washhouse and bathroom at the back. The old toilet was a pit one on the side of the hill behind the house.

When visiting Fiji in about 1980, I was shown a building beyond Naqia on the Wainibuka River. They said it was the house from Nadarivatu. It had been cut into sections apparently and transferred to the new site for a teacher's house as it was no

longer being used up on the hill. So the original timber he used must have been good heart timber and very well put together to last that long.

The village at the foot of the hill where he lived while building the house would have been Waikubukubu, which means water or vapour like a misty or smoky cloud.

It was interesting also, to read about the school at Nadrau, which was still standing in our time; also the tremendous job of building a church at Nasoqo. His intense commitment throughout his ministry no doubt contributed to, or hastened, his painful arthritis and fairly early death.

Adventist Responses to the War in the Southwestern Pacific

I would also like to say what a tremendous amount of research Arnold Reye has done to produce the informative articles on the effects of the war in the Western Pacific. It was most interesting.

Pastor Cyrus Adams, WA

Adventism's Explosive Presence. Vol 3 No 1

Yori Hibo's years should be 1991-95. A G

Readers have their say

"It is indeed interesting and a valuable record." W P—NSW

"Thanks for a valuable publication." R D—NSW

"I placed it in the library for staff and student access" S L—NSW

"Keep up the good work. It is greatly appreciated." R P—NSW

"Have really appreciated reading the history of our work in the Pacific area. It gives us a great confidence to trust in a God who is showing His care by the way He continues to lead his people. K A—TAS

"The article on Malaita by Baxton Riimana was an eye-opener." H R—USA

"Missions and their history excite me. M P—USA

"It was an excellent and most interesting issue. Keep up the good work." D H—Germany



Book Review

Bett Bett

by E C Rosendahl

Published by Mirriwinni Gardens Aboriginal Academy, via Kempsey NSW 2440.

Bett Bett, the story of Dolly Bonson, tells the life story of the aboriginal girl better known from Mrs. Aeneas Gunn's book, *The Little Black Princess*. We are introduced by a flashback to the night of Tracey, the never-to-be-forgotten cyclone that hit Darwin on Christmas Eve, 1974. Dolly and her son Joe endured the frightening night, awaking in the morning to find their entire home crushed to the ground and their belongings blown who knows where.

Likened to the tragedy Tracey brought to Darwin, has been the decimation brought to indigenous Australians by the white man. Dolly alias Bett Bett, was almost killed by her own mother Mordi, the morning after her birth. It was only the love for the babe by Aunt Joodi that prevented the pale skin child from being strangled because of the shame her light colour would bring to other members of her race. Her early years were spent in the open plains and by the billabongs brightened by the colourful flowers of the waterlily.

In time her father, a worker on the overland telegraph, sent her to serve on Elsey station under the care of Mrs Gunn. Soon after Jeanie Gunn's husband died of blackwater fever. This neces-

sitated her return down south, but she was unable to take her Bett Bett with her. To protect the girl, she had arranged that her father would now care for her.

When Mr. Cummings claimed his daughter, he took her with him to send her to Darwin into the care of a Mrs Sprigg. At eight years of age Dolly, as she was now called, was transferred to the care of Mrs Ward. At twelve years of age, the Wards took her south to Adelaide, then to Melbourne where she met the "Missus," Mrs Gunn as the Wards made their return to the North. Mrs. Gunn wanted to keep her Bett Bett so she could be given a better education, but the "protection" rules for aborigines at that time made this impossible. Dolly returned to Darwin where she suffered various difficult and at times inhuman situations including working at Hotel Darwin for the Fosters. This involved beatings and an attempt to have her married off to a much older man. After running away she was summoned to appear before the "Protector" who allowed her to live with a Mrs Tyndall. Here she was taken to church where she became a Christian and where she met a Mr Bonson, whom she married when she was about 21.

Bonson was a good husband. In time five children were born and all learned to read and write. When war came, the family was moved south to a Balaklava north of Adelaide. Here the family learned the 'truth' of being aborigine. Dolly could not send daughter Florence to school. They could not try on a warm coat unless they bought it. When Father visited he had to stay at the hotel, not with the family at the racecourse because they were 'coloured'!

The family returned to Darwin and after many years, son Fred brought home *The Great Controversy* by Ellen White. Dolly could not read but she saw the pictures and her children read her the words. This led to her accepting the Seventh-day Adventist faith and joining their church. After cyclone Tracey had devastated their home, they were able to set up a trailer home where in the 1980s she passed away, hoping for the day when Jesus will return to take her and her loved ones to be with Him.

Dr Glynn Litster, Cooranbong, NSW.

Life Sketches



TESESE TASI was born at Taga on the island of Savai'i in Western Samoa on 3 July 1917. His primary school education was obtained at the Marist Brothers School in Apia and at the Tuasivi Training School, and his secondary at the Leulumoega High School. From his boyhood years he had wanted to be a missionary so he spent four years at the LMS Malua Theological College. Through the influence of a friend he attended Vailoa Adventist Training School. He responded to the leading of God and was baptised in 1940.

After graduation in 1942 he commenced a long and fruitful service for the Adventist Church—teaching and evangelism at Siufaga, Savai'i (1943), at Samatau (1944), at Satomai (1945), and at Siufaga (1946-47). For the next four years he taught at Vailoa and in 1952 ministered at Palauli on Savai'i. From 1953-58 he served as a mission departmental director and in 1959 became the district director for Savai'i. He spent the next six years in American Samoa as a district director.



OFTELIA OLITA'A was born on Laulasi Island in the Langalanga Lagoon in the Western Province on the island of Malaita in the Solomon Islands on 1 January 1949. He gained his primary and secondary education at Betikama

Adventist School, Kabiufa Adventist High School & Fulton College. He obtained his B Ed in Secondary Education from PAC in New Guinea. His 22 years of service for the church with his wife Meri (Baraki) commenced as deputy-principal of Kauma from 1975-77, and continued as deputy principal of Betikama Adventist High School, SI, in 1978, as deputy-principal of Aore Adventist high School, Vanuatu from 1979-81 and 1985-87, again as deputy principal of Betikama from 1988-89. From 1990-91 he went to PAC to upgrade. From 1992-99 he was the HOD History at Fulton College,

From 1966-68 he was the minister of the Fasitootai Church on Upolu. He returned to departmental work in 1969 carrying the additional responsibilities of district director of Upolu and editor of *O le Tala Moni*.

Following a year as minister of the Apia Church he became principal of Vailoa. He commenced overseas service in 1975. The next five years were spent in ministry at Westmere and Balmoral at Auckland, New Zealand. He cared for South Auckland in 1981-82 before spending three years in retirement. He was called to Brisbane in Australia where he cared for the Scarborough Church from 1986-89. After two more years in retirement he again ministered there from 1993-96.

Tesese and Nofoa Puni were married in May 1945 and Tesese was ordained to the gospel ministry on 21 March 1959. His children are Talafulu, Emoni, Iosefa (deceased), and Iosefa.

As educator, minister, administrator, editor and evangelist, Tesese served his Lord well. He was keen to see the work of God advance.

He passed to his rest on Sunday, 6 July 2003, fully confident of his Saviour's soon return.

Fiji. For the three years from 1982-84 he was the HOD English at SIOTA, for the SI Government.

Oftelia's and Meri's children are Gloria Lomani, Christine Naivolasia, Diana Ledua & Oftelia Jnr.

A competent teacher, Oftelia took a personal interest in his students and sought to motivate them to higher levels of educational attainment. His service in a variety of cultural areas also enriched his teaching experience. His interest in music was well known and he was respected for his musical accomplishments. On retiring in May 2000 due to ill health, he returned home to the Solomon Islands. It was on 25 May 2003 in Number Nine Hospital in Honiara that this servant of God passed to his rest. He will be missed by the many students who not only knew him as a teacher but also as a friend. Others well remember him as a caring husband, friend and team worker.

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SYDNEY SANITARIUM *GRADUATES AND °STUDENTS FROM THE FIRST 10 YEARS (1903–1912) WHO SERVED IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

1903 *Sara Young

1905 *Gordon Smith

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son



1912 *Winifred Osborne FIJI 1913

*Melville R Adams (m) Miriam Currow PITCAIRN IS 1913-18 NORFOLK IS 1920-28

*Oscar V Hellestrand (m) Ella Louise Sharp SOLOMON IS 1915-17 SAMOA 1920

