

Australasian RECORD



AND ADVENT WORLD SURVEY

Volume 66

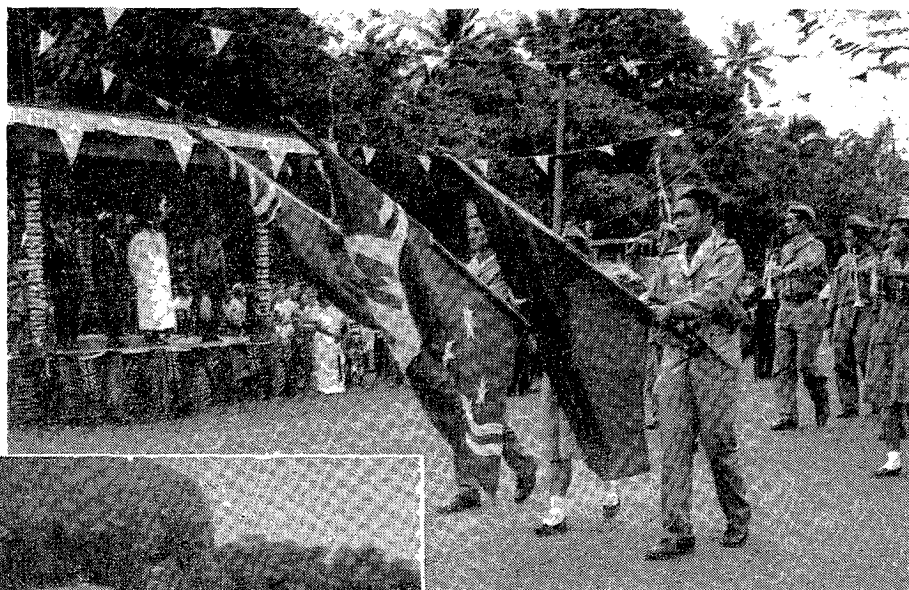
WARBURTON, VICTORIA, MARCH 5, 1962

Number 10

Adventists Celebrate Samoan Independence

R. W. TAYLOR

President, Samoa Mission



THE PICTURES: (Above) The Pathfinder colour party dipping their colours in salute as they marched past the heads of state immediately following the independence ceremony. The party was followed by a goodly number of Pathfinders from different societies. (Left) The Adventist float referred to in the article. It was completely covered with live foliage and flowers, which took the Apia church members almost the whole night previous to arrange.

AS the first minutes of the year 1962 brought the realization of independence to Samoa, the warm, humid silence of the night was suddenly broken by the pealing of bells and an occasional siren.

The political history of this island group has ranged over the past hundred years from tribal warfare, through tripartite government by Britain, Germany, and America, and German colonial rule, to the status of a man-

date territory after the first world war, and a trust territory under New Zealand since the second world war. With the chiming of the bells and the passing of the old year the first Pacific Islands territory to gain independence this century stood on its own feet.

With the advice from the Word of God to "honour the king," the Samoa Mission joined in the independence celebration ceremonies, endeavouring at all times to uplift our God-given

standards. On New Year's eve, as the sun set on the old year, our people throughout the Western Samoa Islands were called to worship; and in the prayer seasons that followed, God's blessing was requested for the new Government and divine wisdom for its leaders.

The morning of January 1 was overcast, and as thousands of people headed for the spot where the New Zealand flag was to be lowered and the Samoan flag raised, many eyes turned heavenward, wondering if the rain would keep away. Speaking later of what he had seen that morning, one old chief remarked to me, "I have read of miracles in the days of the Bible, but I have actually seen one today." For just as the flags were being lowered the sky grew dark and a sudden tropical downpour seemed imminent. But suddenly, when the rain was less than half a mile away, the wind changed, and

the service of hoisting the flag went on uninterrupted. Perhaps God was rewarding the devotion of the Prime Minister, the Honourable Fiaame Mataafa F.M. II, when he requested that all of Samoa's citizens welcome in the new Government by beseeching God's blessing upon Samoa and its newly independent people.

Following the flag ceremony the various youth organizations marched past the official party and we were pleased to see a good-sized contingent of Pathfinders dressed in their familiar green uniform representing the youth of the Adventist Church. In the afternoon a school marching competition was conducted, and a group from our Apia central school gave a demonstration of marching, preferring not to be included in the actual competition.

Journeying to Samoa specially for the occasion, twenty members of our Adventist band from Auckland (New Zealand) took an active part in the celebrations, and played the National Anthem for the actual independence ceremony. The anthem was also "Adventist," in that our Apia elder, Sauni Kuresa, was its composer.

On the Wednesday of independence week, a very long and colourful parade of decorated floats passed down the main beach road and around the harbour. Here, too, our church was represented, as a large float with a Bible six feet wide on the front and surrounded with little girls dressed in the costumes of the nations, indicated the spread of God's third angel's message to all people. On the back were young ladies dressed in white and bearing the words Faith, Hope, Charity, suggesting that these virtues should be found in people everywhere if Christian citizens and peaceful governments are to be established. As the radio announcer described our float as it passed him, he commented, "A beautifully decorated float, and what better virtues could be suggested to the people of Samoa as this day they celebrate their independence?"

The local newspaper brought out a special souvenir issue for the occasion, and in this excellent medium of communication we had the opportunity of offering congratulations on behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission to the Samoan Government and people on achieving independence; and also expressing appreciation for the fact that the Adventist Mission had been able to play a part in preparing Samoa for this step by training many of its young people not only in scholastic attainments, but in the development of Christian ideals and principles which will make citizens of worth to their country.

We trust and pray that as the independent State of Western Samoa takes upon its shoulders the burdens of Government, its leaders will be led by God into wise decisions, and that the freedoms of speech and worship shall ever be granted to its people. And when God calls men and women from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, may there be a goodly harvest from the Isles of Samoa.



Farewell feast in Savaii given in honour of Brother G. Lee and family, who have recently been transferred to Rarotonga. Left to right: Pastor Afaese, and Nu and Suisala, the Administrator of Savaii and his wife (both baptized members of the Siufaga church); R. W. Taylor and the Lee family.

Around the Conferences

Evangelism Doubles Church Membership

L. J. CHERRY

As the curtain of time dropped on 1961, Cairns church in North Queensland looked back on the year with a sense of joy, satisfaction, and gratitude to our heavenly Father for His guidance and care.

What a difference a few months can bring about! We have seen this difference take place in the church here. When we moved to Cairns as a mission team in March, the city had held out against evangelism during the years; but the church folk were thrilled with the prospect of large-scale evangelism, and they were soon helping us with a will. The team consisted of Pastor R. L. Hodgkinson, Pastor E. B. Ibbott, Brother I. Vickery, and myself.

In the beginning it was hoped to form a suitable choir for the mission, but with just seventy members the church did not have a choir, and it was impossible to raise one because of the lack of certain voices. This was a real perplexity, for in all the missions with which I had been associated the choir was an important attraction. Now it was a campaign without a choir.

Halls were also a problem, and certain restrictions were laid down in regard to

the use of the Palace Theatre. Yet through all this God wonderfully led and blessed us. At the end of the year we could look back and say, "God has given us twice as many members as we had at the beginning." Already seventy-three precious souls had been baptized, made up of fifty-one in November and twenty-two in December. A third class of candidates was then formed, planning for baptism in the new year.

We have had to enlarge our church, extending the auditorium into the two rooms at the back by removing the dividing wall. Sixty-five new seats were brought in and still more are to come. The church has been attractively painted and each Sabbath is filled to capacity with happy worshippers.

The trial by jury again proved an excellent means of helping folk to make a decision. Six of the twelve men who acted as jurors have been baptized, along with their wives and families, making twenty new members from this group alone. Others on the jury are still receiving studies and some are attending church; so we have found the trial very convincing, and it helps many who are not quite decided which way they should go.

Because of the excellent interest still existing it was decided to resume public meetings after the Christmas holidays, continue them until the mission team moved to Townsville at the end of February, and then hand the interests over to the new pastor. We opened again on Sunday, January 28, and the hall, with a seating capacity of 250, was packed despite the "wet," which at this time of the year is very wet. Over the week-end about ten inches of rain fell, and as the people left the hall it was teeming. Many

Happiness can be built only on virtue, and must of necessity have truth for its foundation.—Coleridge.

had to back their cars up on the footpath so that folk could get in, while many discarded their footwear to wade through the water, which in front of the hall was two feet deep. The only publicity was two small advertisements in the local paper—not even a handbill or a window card. This shows the interest in the Cairns mission programme, even in the wet weather. Some folk were still at the hall at 11 p.m., waiting for the rain to ease enough to allow them to go home by bicycle.

This is the most fruitful mission ever to be held in the North Queensland Conference; yet it would never have been possible without the regular attendance and the untiring effort of our Cairns members. During the seven months of the mission these dear folk were always ready to go the second mile. No call for handbilling, visiting, or putting up notices, even at a late hour of the night, went unheeded. They responded as one man, and everything was done with a will, including the ushering and the floral decorations. May God richly bless the zealous laity, not only here, but in other places where I have laboured and all around the white harvest field, who quietly and sincerely do their part in the winning of souls in upholding the evangelists' hands. Most times their names are not mentioned because they are so many. But of this I am sure, that many of them will shine as the stars, for they have helped to turn many to righteousness. Their names will be written in gold in the Lamb's book of life.

"We also thank those of our "Record" readers who have been remembering the Cairns mission before the throne of grace. We do need your prayers, so please continue your supplications on our behalf; and as soon as we move on to Townsville to conduct another mission, will you please put that city on your prayer list?

Australia's Most Easterly Church

S. T. LEEDER

The small tourist resort of Byron Bay nestles at the foot of Cape Byron, North New South Wales, the most easterly point of the mainland of Australia.

For several years a small but zealous company of Sabbath-keepers have met each week in a section of the Masonic Hall. There came during the past two years a deepening conviction that with the increase of members and visitors plans should be made to procure a suitable block of land upon which a house of worship could be erected. This would mean sacrifice and concerted effort in a big way; but had not God blessed this group by many manifestations of His Spirit in their weekly prayer and Sabbath meetings? To visit them on these occasions was a benediction.

Some nine months ago the search began, with much prayer, for land that could be purchased with the meagre amount of cash on hand. Month after month, with constant disappointment, went by. There appeared to be no such block available. Finally, toward the close of November, 1961, a special prayer and council meeting was held in the home of Sister Singleton, the treasurer of the company. The usual prayer season was held. Could not God indicate His will in some way? Little did anyone realize that an announcement was about to be made that would demonstrate why the Lord had hitherto closed the door. A brother from a nearby church arose and stated that he was prepared to donate the most central and suitable block of land in the town! Thanksgiving and rejoicing followed, and immediately plans were made to call the conference president, Pastor

W. J. Richards, to organize our members into a church.

January 27 was the big day. Pastor Richards preached that Sabbath morning to a combined congregation in the Mulumbimby church. Then I was happy to baptize four newborn souls who were later accepted into membership, along with twenty-six others, as charter members of the Byron Bay church.

Brothers Reg Taylor and Robert Fayers were elected elders, along with other officers, to care for the flock.

May our heavenly Father greatly bless Pastor O. W. Knight and his lay members as they guide the affairs of this new church and prepare to build a house to the glory of God.

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And So We Say Farewell

THE EMOTIONS OF A MINISTER ON TRANSFER

A. S. JORGENSEN

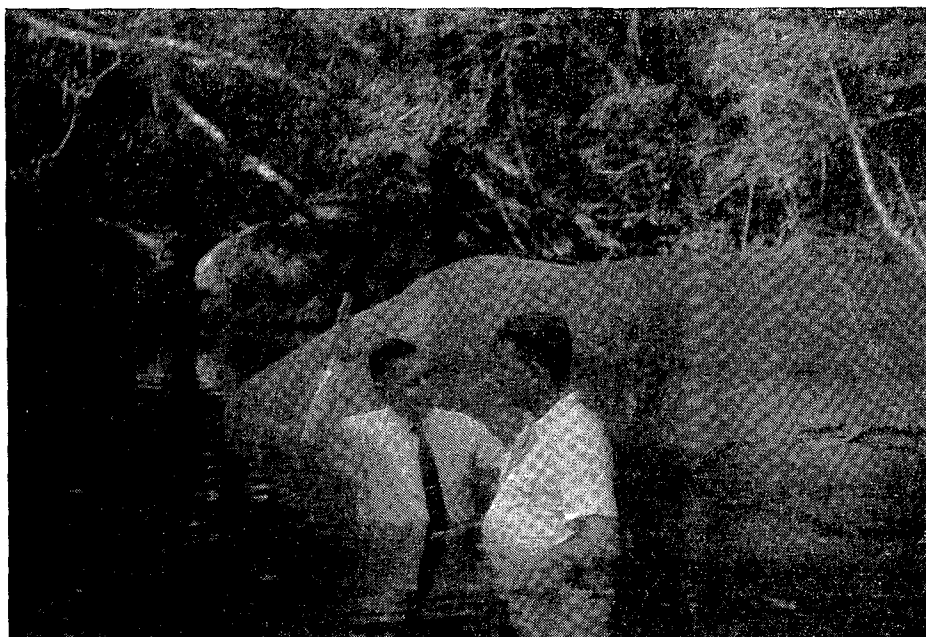
On Tuesday afternoon, January 2, as we were about to cross the Darling Range escarpment, on the East-West Highway, we caught one last glimpse of "the loneliest city in the world."

A flood of memories filled our minds as we recalled the eleven years that had elapsed since we were called to labour in Western Australia. Classroom experiences at Carmel, Appeal campaigns, evangelistic services, the fellowship of faithful men and women who comprise the membership of the remnant church in the far-flung spaces of the West, the host of friends who have become endeared to us through the years—how hard it was to be saying good-bye!

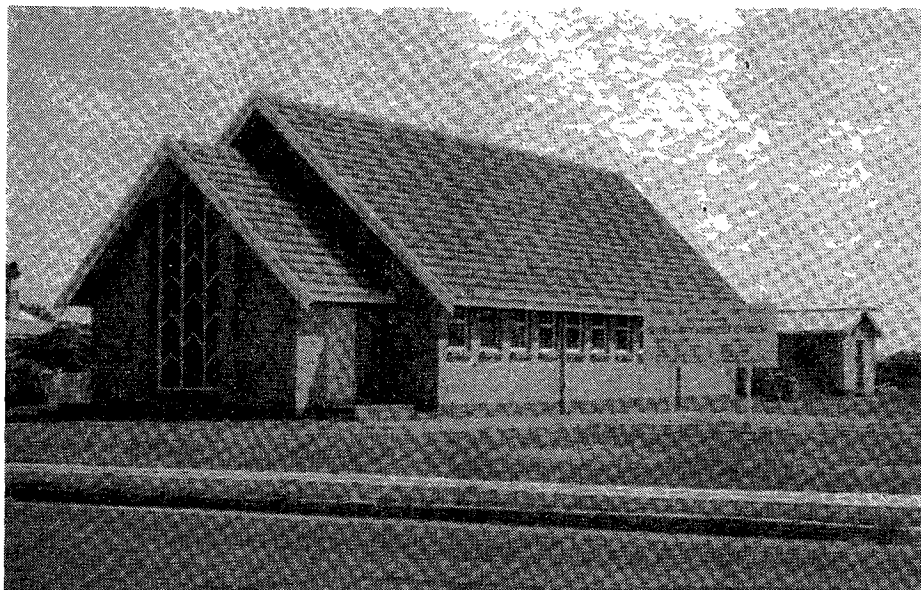
We reflected upon some of the developments that had taken place in the West Australian Conference during the past decade. There were the building projects that had been carried forward; the erection of the conference office in Havelock Street, Perth; the extensions to the West Australian Missionary College; the enlargement of the Victoria Park school; the new Sanitarium Health Food Depot in Victoria Park and the retail stores and cafettes in Perth; also the new and enlarged places of worship that had been erected in the city and country centres. There were the large city missions that had been conducted in turn by Pastors S. M. Uttley, G. Burnside, C. C. Weis, and A. P. Cooke. There was the establishment of the aboriginal missions, first at Karalundi and later at Wiluna and Mullewa. There were the annual camp-meetings, with increasingly large attendances, reflecting the obvious growth in membership. How privileged we had been to share in the work of God in this area of the vineyard!

But especially did we find our minds turning to the parish where we had lately ministered—Bunbury, Capel, Wellington Mills, Donnybrook, Busselton, and Margaret River.

According to the latest census, Bunbury is the most rapidly growing municipality in Western Australia. A large seaside



Amid a lovely outdoor setting Pastor L. J. Cherry conducts a river baptism in which fifty-one were baptized.



The new church in Bunbury, dedicated on November 11.

centre with a population of over 13,000, the seat of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishoprics, Bunbury has presented a challenge to the Advent Message for many years.

It was in Bunbury that Pastor Volrad Reye laboured prior to his untimely death in 1931. He was followed by Pastor Uttley and others, including Pastors R. Stanley, V. Warden, B. Price, V. Heise, T. Brash, and H. Roberts.

It was to share in the labours of these brethren that we were called to locate in Bunbury in 1961. There we were happy to be associated first with Brother Ron Baird and his family, and after Brother Baird accepted a call to island service, with Pastor John Newman and his family. Pastor Newman assumed the pastorate of the Busselton and Margaret River churches and shared in the Bunbury mission, which ran for twenty weeks, from April 28 to September 13. After we left, Brother D. Currie, who was the song leader on the Cooke programme in Perth, was stationed in Bunbury to carry forward evangelism in Donnybrook.

From the very first the members in the south-west took us to their hearts, and what a wonderful year of fellowship we had! The support we received from them was a source of continual encouragement. We ran our series in the R.S.L. Hall in Bunbury, for we were unable to secure the only theatre in the heart of the town, despite our most earnest approaches to the management in Perth.

The opening day we ran two sessions, both crowded, some 200 attending each session. Thereafter the attendance fluctuated, as did the weather; but there was never an occasion when we did not have cause to thank God for earnest men and women who were giving attention to the special truths for this time. The last meeting was crowded with more than 200 people.

Realizing the important role that music plays in evangelism, we wondered if it

would be possible to raise a choir. But if we could, who would be able to lead it? Little did we realize the capabilities that were later to be demonstrated by one of the young men of the local church—Brother Colin Lockyer. Though new to this type of work, Brother Lockyer not only gathered around him some thirty-six members who shared his enthusiasm, but he succeeded in welding them into a fine vocal group whose singing each Sunday night was widely appreciated.

Clad in Geneva-type royal blue gowns with gold stoles, the choir presented an impressive sight. The devotion of the

choir members was entirely beyond our expectations. Many had to travel long distances for practices and the mission sessions, but even on the bleakest nights there were never fewer than twenty-five present. For the greater part of the programme we were able to have the use of an electronic organ, which was played by Mrs. Jorgensen, with piano support by our daughter Estelle.

During the year two baptisms were held in which twenty-three were added to the faith.

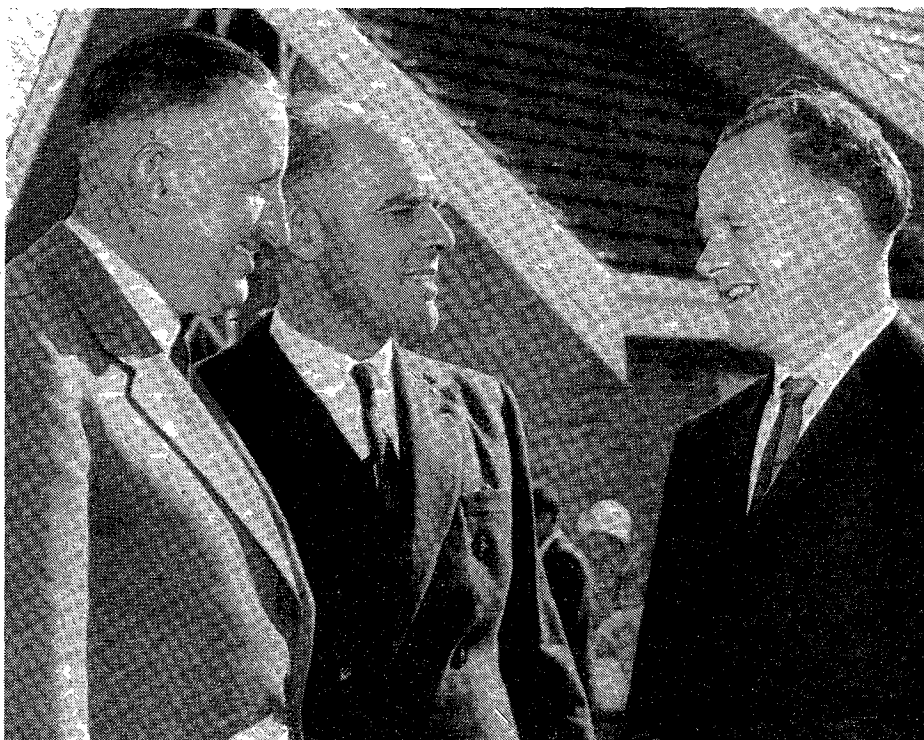
Another happy memory was the dedication of the Bunbury church on Sabbath afternoon, November 11. This was excellently covered with a story and pictures by the "South-Western Times," published in Bunbury. This report is reproduced as a separate article in this issue of the "Record."

Eleven years of service in the West! We thank God for the privilege that was ours, and pray that His blessing will continue to attend the service and the witness of His people in this conference where, in springtime at least, the desert blossoms as the rose.

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Bunbury Church Dedicated

About 500 members and visitors, many of whom travelled from Perth and from country districts as far as Moora and Narrembeen, attended the dedication of the Bunbury Seventh-day Adventist church. At least 150 were unable to gain admission to the church, and heard the service over a public address system. After the dedication, brief addresses were given by the Mayor of Bunbury, Mr. Hay,



Pastors A. S. Jorgensen, V. J. Heise, and F. Maherly chat together in front of the Bunbury church on the day of its dedication.

and the Member for Bunbury, Mr. Roberts.

The sermon was given by Pastor V. J. Heise, superintendent of the Karalundi Native Mission and a former minister of the Bunbury church, who said that he and his family had travelled 700 miles to be present on this occasion.

In addition to conducting the act of dedication, Pastor F. T. Maberly, the president of the West Australian Conference, introduced the official guests.

Mr. J. K. Irvine, the conference secretary, said that the actual church building operations had been carried on during Pastor Heise's term of service in Bunbury, and paid a tribute to him for his personal effort in erecting the beautiful edifice.

Mr. Hay and Mr. Roberts both complimented the church members on a building which was a representative place of worship in the most rapidly growing municipality in Western Australia.

Mr. Hay said the community owed an incalculable debt to the churches, for it was the teachings of the Christian church that laid the solid basis for the training and guidance of its citizens.

Referring to the oldest member present, Mr. Hay maintained that Mrs. Edith Chapman had for years been the mainstay of the Adventist community in Bunbury. Mrs. Chapman, who is eighty-seven, attended all the services of the day, as well as the concert at night.

—“South Western Times.”

Pliny's letter to Trajan (c. A.D. 109-111). Pliny, who was governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor from A.D. 109 to 111, was one of the first non-Christians to write about Christians. He wrote to Emperor Trajan telling him about the extensiveness of Christianity and how it affected the older temple worship, so that the latter was almost forsaken. In this connection he stated that the Christians worshipped on a certain “fixed day.”—Pliny, “Letters” (Loeb ed.), Vol. II, pages 402-405.

Pliny's letter does not state that the Christians worshipped on Sunday, but that they had a “fixed” day for worship. In a later article it will be made clear that Eastern churches kept the Sabbath for several centuries; therefore, in the light of this fact it is practically certain that the “fixed day” was the seventh day.

“The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles” (c. A.D. 125-150). An early Christian wrote a small pamphlet of less than a thousand words, and in order to give this pamphlet apostolic authority it was called “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.” In the English translation the following statement appears: “On the Lord's Day of the Lord come together, break bread and hold Eucharist.” (“Apostolic Fathers,” Vol. I, pages 330, 331.) This statement does not give any clue as to what day is meant, and Sabbath-keepers could with good reason say that it refers to the Sabbath. Yet we would not make use of this statement to prove the Biblical Sabbath, because the word “day” does not appear in the Greek text. An exact translation of the Greek reads: “According to [or upon] the Lord's (?) of the Lord coming together break bread and keep Eucharist.” In harmony with the whole sentence construction in the Greek, the word could just as well have been “command.”

Dionysius of Corinth (c. A.D. 170). Dionysius, a bishop of Corinth in the third quarter of the second century, wrote a number of pastoral letters. In one sent to Bishop Soter of Rome the following passage appears: “Today we have passed the Lord's holy day in which we have read your epistle.” (“Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,” 2nd Series, Vol. I, page 201.) Since there is no indication in this letter, nor in any other writing up to this time, that Sunday is the Lord's day, it is only reasonable to assume that it must be the Lord's day of the Bible, namely the Sabbath.

Melito of Sardis (c. A.D. 170-185). Eusebius, the great church-historian at the time of Constantine the Great, tells us that Melito, bishop of Sardis, wrote a book “on the Lord's Day.” This book is not in existence now, and all we know about it is its title as listed by Eusebius. Even the title cannot help us determine the actual subject of the book, for the word “day” does not occur in the Greek text, which reads: “Concerning the Lord's word.” It was 250 years later that a Latin translation added the word “day” to Eusebius' list of Melito's writings.

(To be continued)

The Lord's Day in the Second Century

V. NORSKOV OLSEN
Principal, Newbold Missionary College,
England

In recent years a great number of pamphlets and books have been written about sects. Generally these writings have included a chapter about Seventh-day Adventists. I have before me one of these books, written by two well-known English clergymen. Its title is “Some Modern Religions.”

In the latest edition the authors have rewritten their chapter about Adventists, “in view of a recent Adventist book.” They refer here to “Questions on Doctrine.” It is encouraging to note that this book has influenced clergymen to state that “Seventh-day Adventists may be regarded as holding interpretations of Scriptures which are unusual but which are not more unusual than many which are held by groups within orthodox evangelicism.”

Yet the authors take exception to the Sabbath. Their argument is that there is “abundant testimony from the early Church Fathers as to the observance of the first day of the week from the earliest days of the Christian Church.” On the other hand, they state that “Adventists can draw little support from church history for their contentions.”

Most authors writing about Adventists usually quote ten statements from the early Church Fathers of the second century in order to “prove” that the Lord's day observed then was not Saturday, but Sunday. Since pamphlets dealing with the Adventist faith are read by more and more people, all Sabbath-keepers should acquaint themselves with these statements. There is much more need of this today, since modern religious trends indicate that the question of the Lord's day, in many and various ways, will become the subject of great controversy. Describing the closing scenes, Mrs. White writes: “The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted.”—“The Great Controversy,” page 605.

The object of this article is to examine and evaluate certain second-century

statements supposed to “prove” that Sunday was the weekly Christian holy day in that century.

Ignatius of Antioch (A.D. 30?-115). Some time between A.D. 107 and 117 Ignatius, a bishop of Antioch, was sentenced by Emperor Trajan to be sent to Rome and thrown to the lions in the Colosseum. On his way to Rome he is supposed to have written seven letters to various churches, and in one of these letters the following statement appears: “If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day, on which also our life has sprung up.”—“Ante-Nicene Christian Library,” Vol. 1, page 182.

When evaluating this statement of Ignatius, it is important to notice that his writings are considered to be “the most perplexing question which confronts the students of earlier Christian history.”—J. B. Lightfoot, “Contemporary Review,” Vol. XXX, page 399.

The letters of Ignatius were at an early date “interpolated, curtailed, and mutilated by pious fraud (so) that it is today almost impossible to discover with certainty the genuine Ignatius of history under the hyper- and pseudo-Ignatius of tradition.” (Philip Schaff, “History of the Christian Church,” Vol. II, page 660.) Because of this “the cautious student of history of the polity and doctrine will decline to base important conclusions on the unsupported testimony of these writings.”—Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge, on Ignatius.

Even if it could be proved that the writings of Ignatius are authentic, the oft-quoted statement regarding the Lord's day is false. The word “life” appears in the Greek version, not “day.” Thus the sentence should read: “living according to the Lord's life.” “The Lord's Day” is interpolated from a larger writing of the same letter dated around A.D. 300.

Wedding Bells

BOYD - AGAFONOFF. The College chapel at Avondale (N.S.W.) was delightfully decorated for the wedding on January 28, 1962, of Denis Boyd and Alexandra (Shura) Agafonoff. The bridegroom is the son of Brother and Sister W. H. Boyd of Collie, W.A., and the bride is the elder daughter of Brother and Sister F. Agafonoff of Cooranbong. Both these young people are graduates of the Australasian Missionary College and they will establish their home at Cooranbong until Denis completes the Ministerial course. We wish them much of God's blessing as together they prepare for service in His cause. E. E. White.

SAVILLE-BIGNELL. Into the Gisborne church (North N.Z.) made beautiful with pink and white flowers, came a charming bride, Valerie Gay, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. Bignell of Waipaoa, on December 4, 1961, to exchange vows of fidelity and devotion with Elwyn, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. Saville of Casino, North N.S.W. (now of Cooranbong). The officiating minister was Pastor J. F. Hankinson, and following the ceremony, guests were entertained at a reception in the Kaiteratahi Hall. Here good wishes were expressed and God's blessing again invoked on the happy and consecrated pair. They were both employees of the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital, Valerie in the office and Elwyn at the dairy, and were highly esteemed there.

GABB-WATERHOUSE. In the glow of the afternoon of January 16, 1962, the Hamilton (N.Z.) church was the dedicated place of marriage for Bronte W. Gabb and Mary H. Waterhouse. Mary has served as a church school teacher for several years in Adelaide; and Bronte, already a highly degreed scholar, is in his sixth year of medicine at the Adelaide University. The bride had come home to be married in the bosom of her family, and it was a great day for her Grandma Borman, her parents, and numerous kin, who had spared nothing to make the day a joyous and memorable gathering. Warm hearts joined in praying for Dr. and Mrs. Gabb divine guidance as they consecrate their united lives in sacrificial service, and that they shall be abundantly enriched with God's favour.

R. P. Brown.



UNTIL THE DAY BREAK

HANSEN. After a very useful life of seventy-four years, Louise Lillian Hansen of Hawera, N.Z., passed to her rest on January 6, 1962. For over fifty years our beloved sister was an active member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, holding officership on several occasions in Taranaki branches. The high regard in which she was held by the public was evidenced by the number of floral tributes covering her resting place. To her daughter and two grand-daughters we commend the risen Saviour, who will soon re-unite all our broken families. L. A. Gilmore.

SADLER. Arthur Charles Sadler laid down the burdens of this life on Monday, January 15, 1962, at the age of sixty-one years, in the Royal Adelaide Hospital. The call came suddenly, but our God is merciful and gives grace to all in need. We pray that He will sustain those who mourn the passing of our late friend. How good it is in such an hour to have that blessed anchor of the soul—the blessed hope.

J. H. Wade.

BARKER. Brother Frank Barker of Christchurch, N.Z., passed to rest on January 15, 1962, at the age of sixty-nine years. He loved the Lord and was bright and hopeful even amid much suffering, which he bore with Christian fortitude. Left to miss him are his wife and other relatives. Comfort was brought to the sorrowing in the church and graveside services. Our dear one was laid to rest in the blessed hope of the resurrection at the return of the Saviour he loved and was always ready to confess. May the consolation of the Lord be with the sorrowing.

H. W. Hollingsworth.

JACKA. Mrs. Louisa Elizabeth Jacka, of Parramatta, Sydney, fell peacefully asleep in Jesus on January 14, 1962, in her eighty-third year. For some months she was tenderly cared for by her skilled and devoted daughter, Mrs. W. E. Lamb, and to her we say, "The Lord recompense thy work and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel." Sister Jacka accepted the Advent Message when Pastor C. Griffin conducted a mission in Crookwell over thirty years ago. Three sons and four daughters survive her passing. As we look forward to meeting this godly mother on the grand reunion day we sorrow not.

E. R. Whitehead.

POSSINGHAM. On January 6, 1962, Brother Norman Possingham of the Port Adelaide church passed away very suddenly at fifty-nine years of age. Our late Brother found Christ and present truth just on ten years ago, under the ministry of Pastor G. Burnside, and proved to be a very devoted and intelligent church member. He rendered very loyal and acceptable service as a deacon in the Port Adelaide church and the Advent Message meant everything to him. To his bereaved wife, two sons Robert and David, and two daughters Joyce and Winsome, we tender our sincere Christian sympathy, and with them look forward to the wonderful day of resurrection and reunion.

J. H. Wade.

THOMPSON. John Maxwell Thompson, "Uncle John" as he was affectionately known to all on Lord Howe Island and hundreds of visitors from the mainland over the years, passed peacefully to rest at the age of eighty-five years on January 10, 1962. He was born on Lord Howe Island eighty-eight years after the island was discovered, and there are few families on the island who were not blood relations or connected with him by marriage. Evidences of Uncle John's carpentry are to be seen all over the island. He was a very good tradesman and a faithful Christian, being baptized by the late Pastor A. H. Ferris in 1931. He is survived by his widow, five daughters, one son, many grandchildren and seventeen great-grandchildren, all of whom we hope will be reunited with him in the kingdom he loved so well. Uncle John being such a public figure, the Church of England minister, the Rev. Noble, was invited to assist the writer with the services.

D. H. Watson.

SHARP. Sister Augusta Ada Sharp, a tired pioneer of the Rotorua church, New Zealand, passed away on January 22, 1962, having spent most of her life as an Adventist in this famous place. It was in the home of Sister Sharp that the Rotorua church was born as a small Sabbath school, later growing into the eighty-member congregation of today. At the advanced age of eighty-one she was laid to rest in the hope of Jesus' soon return to give everlasting life to those who have been faithful.

E. A. Robinson.

FLETCHER. On January 7, 1962, at Longford, Tasmania, the death occurred of Sister Elsie Adelaide Fletcher, whose mother was one of the earliest members of the Adventist Church in South Australia. Miss Fletcher was in her eightieth year, and even in failing health she had devoted her energies to blessing humanity and helping speed the gospel story. Her nimble fingers were ever busy on some project to hasten the day of Jubilee. Her words even as she entered "the valley of the shadow of death" expressed assurance of the resurrection. Blessed is the one who has such a hope.

C. C. Winter.

FOR SALE. 4-bedroom house, 14 sqs.; 2 flats if desired. Mod cons., v.p. Big sheds, laying cages. £3,100. A. C. Mackay, Crawford Rd., Cooranbong. Phone 322.

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SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON HELP

GENERAL CONFERENCE SABBATH
SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

For Sabbath, March 24, 1962

(Please preserve for reference)



A YOUTH WHO FULFILLED HIS MISSION

"The darkest hour precedes the dawn, and it was just at this point that Old Testament predictions must have been so eagerly scanned by those who watched and waited. That the Messiah was nigh they could not doubt. The term of years foretold by Daniel had nearly expired. The sceptre had departed from Judah, and the Lawgiver from between his feet. Even the Gentile world was penetrated with the expectation of a King. Sybils in their ancient writings, hermits in their secret cells, Magi studying the dazzling glories of the eastern heavens, had come to the conclusion that He was at hand who would bring again the Golden Age.

"And so those loyal and loving souls who often spake together, whilst the Lord hearkened and heard, must have felt that as the advent of the Lord whom they sought was nigh, that of His messenger must be nearer still. They started at every footfall. They listened for every voice. They scanned the expression of every face. 'Behold, He shall come,' rang in their hearts like a peal of silver bells. At any moment might a voice be heard crying, 'Cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up an ensign for the people. Say ye to the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy salvation cometh.' Those anticipations were realized in the birth of John the Baptist."—Meyer, "John the Baptist," pages 16, 17.

1. Birth and Childhood of John the Baptist

Luke 1:76. "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways."

Zacharias was a priest of the Abijah order, and therefore a direct descendant of Aaron. Because of the large number of priests, the priesthood was not a full-time occupation. Each priest received a chance to serve only one week at the Temple twice a year. The number of priests at this time could have been as high as 20,000. They were divided into sections approaching 1,000 for each section, and their special duties were assigned by lot. With such a large number of priests some never had the privilege of burning incense (verse 9) on the incense altar before the daily morning sacrifice and after the evening sacrifice. So when this duty was assigned to a priest it was the great day of his life.

"There were several remarkable formative influences operating in this [John's] young life," F. B. Meyer states. "Among

them was 'The School of Home' with its religious instruction from his parents, the great festivals of the church, the daily study from the Holy Scriptures, and the lessons from nature and history.

"There was the 'School of His Nazarite Vow,' with its abstinence from all stimulants, his unshorn hair, and separation from that which might contaminate. Then finally there was the 'School of the Desert.'"—"John the Baptist," pages 32-44.

The divine purpose and advantages of the desert school may be seen in the following quotation from Ellen G. White:

"In every stage of this earth's history God has had His agencies to carry forward His work, which must be done in His appointed way. John the Baptist had a special work, for which he was born and to which he was appointed—the work of preparing the way of the Lord. . . . His wilderness ministry was a most striking, literal fulfilment of prophecy." (MS 112, 1901). "There was a great work appointed for the prophet John, but there was no school on the earth with which he could connect. His learning must be obtained away from the cities, in the wilderness. The Old Testament Scriptures, God, and the nature which God had created, were to be his study books."—S.D.A. Bible Commentary, E. G. White Comments on Luke 1:76, 77, 80, page 1115.

2. Message of John the Baptist

Matt. 3:1. The Jews, being God's favoured people, felt there was one standard of judgment for the Gentiles and another for the Jews. In fact, they taught that a son of Abraham was exempt from judgment. But here is this "man sent from God" declaring that Abrahamic racial privilege meant nothing. It was a man's life, not his lineage, that counted. He shook them out of their self-complacency by demanding: "Let everyone who possesses two shirts share with him who has none, and let him who has food do likewise." (Luke 3:11, Moffatt.)



Matt. 3:5, 6: The characteristics of John's message are summarized by Barclay who gives us an insight into the reasons for the effectiveness of his ministry upon the lives of the people who flocked to hear him. "(i) He fearlessly denounced evil wherever he might find it. . . . Wherever John saw evil—in the state, in the church, in the crowd—he fearlessly rebuked it." "(ii) He urgently summoned men to righteousness. John's message was not a mere negative denunciation; it was a positive erecting of the moral standards of God. . . . He not only rebuked evil, he also set before men the good." "(iii) John came from God. . . . He came, not with some opinion of his own, but with a message from God. . . . The preacher, the teacher with the prophetic voice must always come into the presence of men out of the presence of God." "(iv) John pointed beyond himself. The man was not only a light to illuminate evil, a voice to rebuke sin, he was also a signpost to God. It was not himself he wished men to see; he wished to prepare them for the One who was to come."—Barclay, "The Gospel of Matthew," Vol. 1, pages 35, 36.

3. His Mission Completed

Matt. 3:13-15. "Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him. But John protested strenuously, having mind to prevent Him, saying, It is I who need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me? But Jesus replied to him, Permit it just now, for this is the fitting way for (both of) us to fulfil all righteousness—that is, to perform completely whatever is right." ("The Amplified New Testament.")

"Jesus was our example in all things that pertain to life and godliness. He was baptized in Jordan, just as those who come to Him must be baptized. . . . The Lord had promised to give John a sign whereby he might know who was the Messiah; and now as Jesus went up out of the water, the promised sign was given; for he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God, like a dove of burnished gold, hovered over the head of Christ, and a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' ('Youth's Instructor,' June 23, 1892)."—S.D.A. Bible Commentary, E. G. White Comments on Matt. 3:13-17, pages 1077, 1078.

Matt. 11:13. "All this seemed a mystery beyond his [John's] fathoming. There were hours when the whisperings of demons tortured his spirit, and the shadow of a terrible fear crept over him. Could it be that the long-hoped-for Deliverer had not yet appeared?

"But the Baptist did not surrender his faith in Christ. . . . John was troubled to see that through love for him, his own disciples were cherishing unbelief in regard to Jesus. . . . John would not discuss his doubts and anxieties with his companions. He determined to send a message of inquiry to Jesus."—"The Desire of Ages," page 216.

BREVITIES

Refreshed after several months of visiting among home folk and friends, Miss Olive Fisher returned to duty at the Mt. Hagen Hansende Colony, New Guinea, on February 12.

Gaining her B.A. with Honours in 1960, Miss Pamela Hammond followed this at the end of last year with the Diploma of Education. She attended the Armidale University, N.S.W., and is the twenty-one-year-old daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Charles Hammond of North Queensland. We pray that God will bless Pamela in the practice of her high profession.

Two families who have been serving in India returned to Australia last month. Pastor and Mrs. T. R. Potts and family disembarked in Melbourne and will join the Victorian Conference staff. Pastor M. G. Townend, with his wife, son, and daughter, landed in Sydney on February 13. He has resumed his former position of Sabbath School and Home Missionary secretary in the Greater Sydney Conference.

Commencing on Monday, February 5, a new programme was heard over the B.B.C. radio station at Honiara, British Solomon Islands. Announced as a Seventh-day Adventist programme, four of our teachers sang four items and were then introduced to the listeners. No sooner had the programme finished when the phone rang, and we were congratulated on having such a fine quartette. Since then we have been approached by several people who enjoyed the singing very much. The standard attained by these performers is a credit to them.

On February 19 a Dragon aircraft flying from Christchurch (South N.Z.) to Milford Sound was reported lost, and when the news came that two of the four passengers aboard were Adventist young people on their honeymoon, gloom overspread many places in Australia and New Zealand where they were known. They were Brother and Sister Elwyn Saville, who had been married just over two months previously and were expected back at Wairoa early in March. At first hope was entertained that they would soon be found and restored to their anxious loved ones. Many earnest prayers ascended that this might be so; but as we go to press a week after the disappearance of the plane with no word of its being found, hope has dwindled. The weather in the area where the plane was flying was stormy, and snow and rain hampered the search immediately instituted. We join with all the friends of the Saville and Bignell families in expressing our heartfelt sympathy in the irreparable loss it seems they have sustained, and which has also been sustained by the church. At this time we must trust the Lord where we cannot trace Him, being confident that this seemingly dark providence hides a purpose of love.

In this issue we begin publishing in short sections a series of articles on the Sabbath by Pastor V. N. Olsen. Readers will notice that he gives reasons why we should be thoroughly acquainted with certain arguments used by Sunday-keepers, and we believe we shall be wise to keep Pastor Olsen's articles for restudy and reference.

We rejoice in the 1961 matriculation examination success of Prudence, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. J. W. Kent of Melbourne, who topped the State with First Class Honours in Theory of Music. She also received First Class Honours in both French and German, winning a Commonwealth scholarship and a University Women's College scholarship. Prudence plans to do the Bachelor of Music course, joining at the University her elder sister Sally, who successfully passed first year Medicine and is also a scholarship winner. These young people are fourth generation Adventists on both sides, granddaughters of Pastor and Mrs. J. W. Kent of Sydney and Mrs. M. Miller of East Prahran, Victoria. Their great-grandfather was the late Brother W. H. B. Miller, a manager of the Signs Publishing Company and author of "Uncle Ben's Cobblestones," and other books known to early Adventists. The girls are active both in their North Fitzroy church and Melbourne Adventist youth affairs. We wish them every success in their studies and every blessing in their witness at the University.

Have You Made Your Will?

E. J. JOHANSON

Treasurer, Australasian Division

From time to time the cause benefits under the wills of deceased church members and others who may have been interested in the work of the church. This is as it should be, and is in harmony with the counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy. Sister White has admonished us, however, as far as possible to make our gifts to the cause of God during our lifetime and thus become our own executors. Having done this, we should then remember God and His work again in our wills in the final distribution of the residue of our property.

Many have done or are doing this. But there is ample scope for many others to also participate in such a plan. It is almost trite today to refer to the needs of the work, but never have they been so pressing or the opportunities so great. The time will come—it certainly is not here yet!—when our gifts will be valueless and may have to be returned unused, or be refused. But now they can accomplish much in the winning of souls and the finishing of the work entrusted to the Advent people.

In the interests of his family and of those who will carry on after he or she is gone every person should make a will. Great perplexity has often been caused to the family and others when this has not been done. But in making your own

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will do have regard to the admonitions of the servant of God and the needs of His work.

In leaving property or money to the cause, please remember that the legal body of the church in the Australasian Division is the Australasian Conference Association Limited, with its head office in Wairoa, New South Wales, and it should be named as the legal beneficiary. This legal body in turn will give full effect to the wishes expressed in your will as to the use to be made of your gift. Some wish this to be used at the discretion of the governing body of the church. Others designate it to be used in island mission work, for local conference activities, or for the Voice of Prophecy, Faith for Today, etc. In that case, name the Australasian Conference Association Limited as the beneficiary and then indicate the particular interest or interests you desire to have benefit.

Further information in regard to this aspect of the preparation of a Will may be obtained by writing to the treasurer of the Australasian Division at Wairoa, New South Wales, or your local conference president or secretary will be glad to advise you.

God will bless you as you remember the needs of the work, as should a faithful steward for the Lord.