

Truman, Archibald William (1884–1977)

MILTON HOOK

Milton Hook, Ed.D. (Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, the United States). Hook retired in 1997 as a minister in the Greater Sydney Conference, Australia. An Australian by birth Hook has served the Church as a teacher at the elementary, academy and college levels, a missionary in Papua New Guinea, and as a local church pastor. In retirement he is a conjoint senior lecturer at Avondale College of Higher Education. He has authored *Flames Over Battle Creek*, *Avondale: Experiment on the Dora*, *Desmond Ford: Reformist Theologian*, *Gospel Revivalist*, the *Seventh-day Adventist Heritage Series*, and many magazine articles. He is married to Noeleen and has two sons and three grandchildren.

Dr. Archibald W. Truman was a faculty member at the College of Medical Evangelists (later Loma Linda University School of Medicine) for the first decade of the school's history (1909-1919), and subsequently served as a physician and medical director at sanitariums in the United States, Canada, and China, and as General Conference medical secretary for 14 years.

Early Life

Archibald Truman (commonly known as Archie) was born in Mulvane, southern Kansas, on March 13, 1884, to John Gardner Truman and his wife Sarah Anna (Jones). There were twelve children in their family: Foster Penalton (b. 1876), Charles Roy (b. 1878), Roscoe (b. 1880), Luella Marie (b. 1882), Archibald William (b. 1884), Roy Mason (b. 1887), Nora (b. 1889), Milford (b. 1891), Effie Anna (b. 1894), Carl Humphrey (b. 1897), Chester Arnold (b. 1898) and Foster (b. 1899). During the mid-1890s the Trumans moved south to the Oklahoma territory where they operated a farm in Saline Township.¹



A. W. Truman

Photo courtesy of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Archives.

When Archie was nine years old he was baptized by Chester McReynolds at Argonia, Kansas. On completion of public grade school he attended Keene Industrial Academy (1898-1899) in Texas followed by three and a half years at Battle Creek College, Michigan (1900-1904). He advanced to the medical course at the University of Colorado, graduating in 1908. On September 10, 1908, he married Daisy Ethel Nary, a nurse who trained at Boulder Sanitarium in Colorado.²

CME and West Coast Sanitariums

In 1909 Dr. Truman joined the faculty of the College of Medical Evangelists (CME) at Loma Linda, California, chartered that year by the state of California. He was on the medical staff of Loma Linda Sanitarium and taught in the areas of physiology, histology, and neurology at CME until 1918.³ He then transferred to White Memorial Hospital in Los Angeles, a teaching facility of CME, serving as physician and instructor there for two years.

The Trumans moved to northern California in 1920 for nearly two years at St. Helena Sanitarium where Archie served as physician and associate medical director and Daisy as supervisor of the women's hydrotherapy rooms.⁴ In December 1921 they were called further north to Rest Haven Sanitarium in British Columbia, Canada, where Dr. Truman became medical director and Mrs. Truman matron of the institution.⁵

General Conference Years

The family's time in British Columbia was cut short when Dr. Truman was elected in 1922 as medical secretary of the General Conference in Washington, D.C.⁶ Daisy Truman was appointed supervisor of women's hydrotherapy at Washington Sanitarium. They settled into their new responsibilities in the Washington area in early 1923 but later that same year their services were needed at Glendale Sanitarium in southern California. Dr. Truman remained as General Conference medical secretary while serving for a year as medical director at Glendale (1923-1924) and Mrs. Truman supervised the women's hydrotherapy department (1924-1925).⁷

Also in 1923, Dr. Truman was ordained to gospel ministry by A. G. Daniells. In 1928, five years into his work at the General Conference, Truman accepted an additional, major responsibility as medical director of the nearby Washington Sanitarium, holding both positions until 1935. He continued as General Conference medical secretary until 1936.⁸

Dr. Truman wrote numerous articles advocating principles of healthful living in denominational periodicals such as *Life and Health*, *Review and Herald*, and *Signs of the Times*.⁹ From August 1933 through the end of 1935 he was the lead editor for *Life and Health*, supported by a team of two additional editors and four contributing editors, all physicians.¹⁰

Heavy denominational responsibilities did not prevent Dr. Truman from continuing to advance his medical expertise. He completed a four-month post-graduate study program at Zoignus University in Vienna, Austria, in

1932, and took post-graduate courses at Harvard University, the University of Chicago, Stanford University, New York Post-Graduate Medical School and Hospital, and New York Polyclinic.¹¹ The masthead of the July 1934 issue of *Life and Health* carried for the first time the academic letters (F.A.C.S.) denoting that Truman had recently been awarded the title Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

On February 27, 1939, Dr. and Mrs. Truman, along with their son, Archie, Jr., and daughter Myrna, departed from Los Angeles for mission service in China. Dr. Truman accepted the responsibilities of medical secretary for the China Division and medical superintendent of Shanghai Sanitarium.¹² His service there lasted less than a year. The mounting dangers after the outbreak of World War II may have been a factor prompting the Trumans' return to the United States.¹³

Final Years

Dr. Truman served once again as medical director at Glendale Sanitarium and Hospital from 1941 to 1946.¹⁴ He and Daisy spent their retirement years in Loma Linda, California. She passed away on November 3, 1975, at age 81.¹⁵ Archibald W. Truman was 93 when he passed away on April 20, 1977. They rest in Montecito Memorial Park.¹⁶ Their five children survived them: Anetta (b. 1911), Rolland (b. 1912), Violet (b. 1914), Archibald, Jr. (b. 1923) and Myrna (b. 1930).¹⁷

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NOTES

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