

# Andross, Celian E.

## (1891–1982)

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### GLENN O. PHILLIPS

Glenn O. Phillips, Ph.D. (Howard University, Washington, D.C.), although retired, is actively writing, researching, lecturing, and publishing. He was a professor at Morgan State University, Howard University, and the University of the Southern Caribbean. He has authored and published numerous articles, book reviews, and books, including "The African Diaspora Experience," "Singing in a Strange Land: The History of the Hanson Place Church," "African American Leaders of Maryland," and "The Caribbean Basin Initiative."

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Celian Emerald Andross was an American evangelist and church administrator who dedicated his life to working for the Adventist Church. Andross held many successful evangelistic meetings in the American West and along the mid-Atlantic before serving as the youth director of the Columbia Union Conference in Maryland for six years. He later served in the Inter-American Division as president of both the South Caribbean Conference, located in Trinidad, and the Jamaica Conference in the northern Caribbean, leading each for six years between 1927 and 1939. He returned to the United States and continued his administrative and evangelistic work as president of the Arizona Conference and, later, the Hawaiian Mission where he remained until 1955.<sup>1</sup> On returning from the mission field, he continued to pastor churches in California although retired.

Celian Emerald Andross was born on August 16, 1891, in Milton, Oregon, the son of Elmer E. and Sophie P. Miller-Andross. His father was a young Adventist minister who began his ministry during 1888 in the American Pacific Northwest. Celian attended the elementary and secondary schools where his father pastored near San Francisco before attending Pacific Union College, as had his father, graduating in 1915.<sup>2</sup> He later took graduate courses at the University of Southern California.

After his graduation from Pacific Union College, Andross's first appointment was as the manager of the Seventh-day Adventist Book and Bible House in Glendale, California, in the offices of the Southern California Conference. During this time, he began to conduct evangelistic meetings until he was invited to serve as a district pastor. Andross married Jennie Hansen and to this union were born two daughters, Barbara and Sophie.<sup>3</sup>



Celian Andross

Photo courtesy of Robert Folkenberg Jr.

Andross's evangelistic success continued as he pastored churches in various regions of California before he was called to the Columbia Union Conference, where he pastored in Maryland, Delaware, and West Virginia. Throughout his ministry, he continuously promoted the interests of his youth members. This led to his appointment as youth director of the Columbia Union Conference for six years beginning in 1920<sup>4</sup>

In 1926, Andross was called to serve in the Inter-American Division and where he worked to more firmly establish the foundation of Seventh-day Adventism in the newly formed East Caribbean Union Conference headquartered in Trinidad. He was among the leaders who were able—despite strong religious opposition—to have the government of Trinidad officially recognize the Seventh-day Adventist Church's operation within the colony in 1926. The following year he was elected president of the South Caribbean Conference with headquarters in Port of Spain, Trinidad, serving from 1927 to 1933.<sup>5</sup>

During the six years that Andross headed the South Caribbean leadership team, the conference's membership experienced outstanding growth. He supported large evangelistic crusades conducted by very successful Caribbean and American evangelists across Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>6</sup> One of his most significant accomplishments for Christian education was the leading role he played in the establishment of the East Caribbean Training School (now the University of Southern Caribbean) in Maracas Valley, Trinidad.

Andross served as president of the Jamaica Conference, with headquarters in Kingston, between 1934 and 1940 where he continued to support the expansion of the evangelistic efforts of a very active group of pastors and workers. He used the experience he gained in Trinidad to encourage the forward thrust of evangelism in Jamaica.

Returning to the United States after his missionary ventures, Andross was appointed president of the Arizona Conference and the Hawaiian Mission until 1955.<sup>7</sup> After returning to the Southern California region, he pastored several churches, including those in Roseville and Lincoln before his retirement.

Elder Andross died on March 12, 1982, in Spokane, Washington, survived by his wife, Jennie, and their two daughters, Barbara Folkenberg and Sophie Becker.<sup>8</sup> Among his grandchildren was Robert Folkenberg who served the Adventist Church for decades at the Inter-American Division and became president of the General Conference between 1990 and 1999. Andross and his family dedicated their lives to promoting the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church serving in the United States, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

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## SOURCES

"Celian E. Andross obituary." *North Pacific Gleaner*, April 19, 1982.

"Elmer E. Andross obituary." *ARH*, September 28, 1950.

Green, Ian. "Meet the Presidents." In A. B. Noel, ed., *Centenary of Adventism in Trinidad and Tobago 1891-1991*. Port of Spain, Trinidad: South Caribbean Conference of SDA, 1991.

## NOTES

1. "Celian E. Andross obituary," *North Pacific Gleaner*, April 19, 1982, 23.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ian Green, "Meet the Presidents" in A. B. Noel, ed., *Centenary of Adventism in Trinidad and Tobago 1891-1991*, (Port of Spain, Trinidad; South Caribbean Conference of SDA, 1991), 25.
6. Ian Green, "Meet the Presidents" in A. B. Noel, ed., *Centenary of Adventism in Trinidad and Tobago 1891-1991*, (Port of Spain, Trinidad; South Caribbean Conference of SDA, 1991), 25; Eric John Murray, *A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Trinidad and Tobago, 1891-1981*, (Maracas Valley, Trinidad: College Press, 1981), 48, 51.
7. "Elmer E. Andross obituary," *ARH*, September 28, 1950, 20.
8. "Celian E. Andross obituary," *North Pacific Gleaner*, April 19, 1982, 23.

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