Brown, Walton John (1913–2001)

Daniel Oscar Plenc, Th.D. (River Plate Adventist University, Entre Ríos, Argentina), currently works as a theology professor and director of the White Research Center at the River Plate Adventist University. He worked as a district pastor for twelve years. He is married to Lissie Ziegler and has three children.

Walton John Brown was the son of missionaries, a pastor, educator, writer, musician, and longtime educational manager, and a missionary in North America, South America and Central America.
Early Years, Studies, and Family (1913–1936)

Born in Barcelona, Spain, in 1913, Walton was the only son of John Lewis Brown (1888–1972) and his wife, Esther Alma Janlowiski. The Browns were missionaries for four decades in Mexico, Spain, El Salvador, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina. Walton accompanied his parents in their mission to Central and South America. He was 14 years old when his parents were sent as pioneers to the north of Brazil to create the Lower Amazon Mission based in the city of Belém, state of Pará. In August 1927 Walton moved to the United States to study in La Sierra Academy, California.

After graduating from high school, Walton returned for one year to the mission field with his parents. He then went to Pacific Union College, California, where he got his higher education degree in 1934. He also studied music, specializing in singing and choir conducting. After graduating, Brown worked as a middle school teacher in San Angelo, Texas, United States; it was there he met Doreen Throgmorton, whom he married in 1936. They had two children: John and Betty.

Missionary in South America (Until 1951)

Walton and Doreen served as missionaries in Brazil. Brown served first as secretary of the Department of Education and YPMV (Department of Young People’s Missionary Volunteer) director at Rio-Minas Gerais Mission, based in Rio de Janeiro. He then directed Petropolis Adventist Academy, near the capital of the state of Rio de Janeiro (1942–1943). In 1944 he obtained a master’s degree from the University of California. A new destination was Argentina. From 1945 to 1946 he was the Department of Education director at the Austral Union Conference (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay). Afterward Brown directed River Plate Junior College, at Entre Ríos, Argentina, from 1947 to 1951.

In the United States, Central America, and the General Conference (1953–2001)

Walton J. Brown was the director of Sandia View Academy, near Albuquerque, New Mexico (1953–1955). In 1953 he obtained a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in history from the University of Southern California. He continued his ministry in Central America, where he served as president of Antillian Union College, in Santa Clara, Cuba (1955–1960). From 1960 on, Brown served as secretary of education and public relations of the Inter-American Division, and finally at the General Conference, first as associate director of the Department of Education (1967–1974) and later as director of the Education Department (1974–1980) until his retirement. In 1980 Brown was awarded the Medalion of Distinction of the General Conference Department of Education. After his retirement he continued to visit educational institutions in and out of the United States. Besides his doctoral thesis, he wrote books and papers on education, school management, health, music, church history, and Christian lifestyle.

After a lifetime dedicated to Adventist education, Brown passed away on July 7, 2001, at Sun City, Arizona, United States, after serving the church for 46 years. He left his wife, Doreen; his daughter, Betty Álvarez; and four grandchildren. His son, John C. Brown, had already passed away at the time.

Brown was also an enthusiast of Christian music and an outstanding choir conductor in many countries. He oversaw the 1962 edition of Himnario adventista para uso en el culto divino [Adventist Hymnal for the Sabbath Worship Service]. He left a legacy of genuine missionary spirit, especially with regard to Adventist Christian education.

SOURCES


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