

McLaren, Gilbert Henry Alexander (1913–1989)

LESTER DEVINE

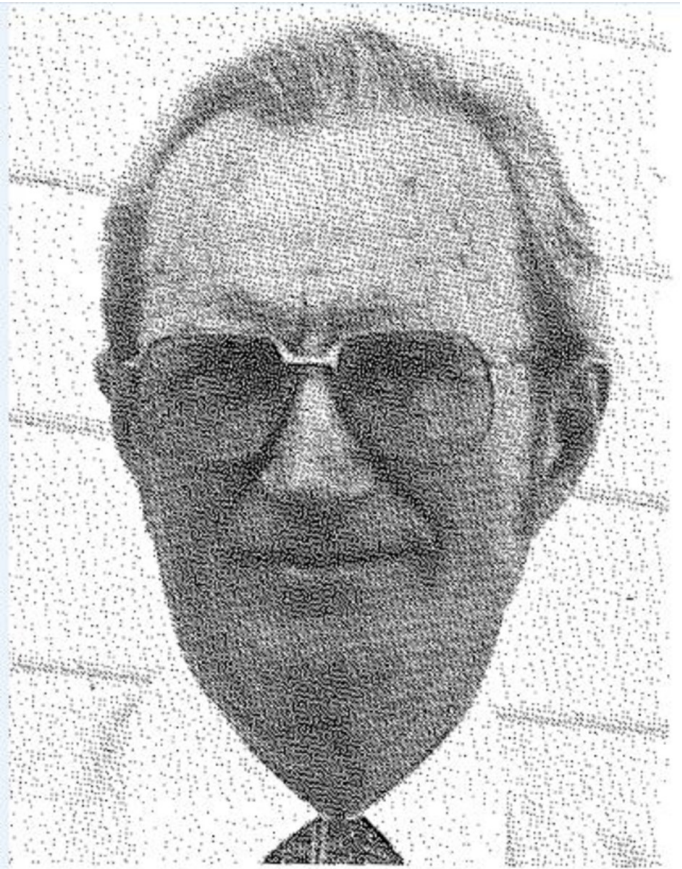
Originally trained as a secondary history teacher, a career long Adventist educator, Lester Devine, Ed.D., has taught at elementary, secondary and higher education levels and spent more than three decades in elected educational leadership positions in two divisions of the world Church, NAD (1969-1982) and SPD (1982-2005). He completed his forty years of denominational service with a term as director of the Ellen G. White/Adventist Research Centre at Avondale University College in Australia where his life-long hobby of learning and presenting on Adventist heritage issues became his vocation.

Dr. Gilbert McLaren, a medical doctor, served in a number of medical and administrative positions for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia, the United States, Singapore, Jamaica, Vietnam, and Hong Kong.

Gilbert Henry Alexander McLaren was born into a Seventh-day Adventist family in Preston, Victoria, Australia, on February 13, 1913.¹ When he was five years old, his family moved to Fiji. Most of his childhood was spent in Fiji and then in Papua New Guinea.²

McLaren commenced studies at Melbourne University in 1931 and graduated from there with a degree in medicine in 1937 (M.B., B.S.).³ He married Miriam Alice Redward in the East Prahran Church, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, on January 12, 1938.⁴ To this union, three children were born: Margaret Elizabeth, Thomas Alexander, and Jillian.⁵

McLaren began his years of denominational service in January 1938, initially for just a few months at Warburton Sanitarium and Hospital before transferring midyear to the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital, serving there as a staff physician until the end of August 1950. During this time, the family spent 1948 in the United States of America, where he undertook further study and gained international experience.



Gilbert McLaren.

Photo courtesy of Lester Devine.

Returning to Warburton in September 1950 for three years as the medical director, McLaren then took up a new appointment in the Far Eastern Division of the Adventist Church as a staff physician at Youngberg Memorial Hospital in Singapore.

After Dr. McLaren worked at St. Johns Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, United States of America, during 1958, the General Conference appointed him to the Andrews Adventist Hospital in Kingston, Jamaica, where he was the medical director for two and a half years before returning to Australia, where he became, once again, in mid-1961, the medical director of the Warburton Sanitarium and Hospital, remaining in that role until April 1965.

Following five years in private practice in Morisset, New South Wales, Australia, Dr. McLaren then returned to denominational service, spending three years, until mid-1973, as the medical director of the Saigon Adventist Hospital in Vietnam. His next posting was as a physician at the Hong Kong and Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospitals. Upon his return to Australia in late 1975, Dr. McLaren served, once again, as a general practitioner at Sydney Adventist Hospital until he retired in late 1977.⁶

Survived by his wife and all three of his children, Dr. Gilbert McLaren died on January 20, 1989, at 75 years of age and was buried in the Avondale Adventist Cemetery at Cooranbong, New South Wales.⁷ Miriam died on May 5, 2006, and is buried beside her husband.⁸

SOURCES

Anderson, O. K. "Gilbert Henry Alexander McLaren obituary," *Record*, April 1, 1989.

Anderson, Ormond K. "Life-Sketch." *Record*, April 1, 1989.

Gilbert Henry Alexander McLaren Biographical Records. South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives. Folder: "McLaren, Gilbert Henry Alexander." Document: "Biographical Information Blank."

Gilbert Henry Alexander McLaren Service Records. South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives. Folder: "McLaren, Gilbert Henry Alexander." Document: "McLaren, Doctor Gilbert Henry Service Record."

Guilliard, E. H. "McLaren-Redward marriage." *Australasian Record*, January 31, 1938.

"Miriam Redward McLaren." Grave marker. Lawn 1, row E, plot 95. Avondale Adventist Cemetery, Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia.

NOTES

1. Gilbert Henry Alexander McLaren Biographical Records, South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives, Folder: "McLaren, Gilbert Henry Alexander," Document: "Biographical Information Blank."

2. Ormond K. Anderson, "Life-Sketch," *Record*, April 1, 1989, 14.
 3. Ibid.
 4. E. H. Guilliard, "McLaren-Redward marriage," *Australasian Record*, January 31, 1938, 7.
 5. Gilbert Henry Alexander McLaren Biographical Records, "Biographical Information Blank."
 6. Gilbert Henry Alexander McLaren Service Records, South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives, Folder: "McLaren, Gilbert Henry Alexander," Document: "McLaren, Doctor Gilbert Henry Service Record"; Anderson, "Life-Sketch," 14.
 7. O. K. Anderson, "Gilbert Henry Alexander McLaren obituary," *Record*, April 1, 1989, 14.
 8. "Miriam Redward McLaren," grave marker, lawn 1, row E, plot 95, Avondale Adventist Cemetery, Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia.
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