

Ward, Frederick Percival (1891–1991) and Myrtle Lewis (Marrett) Ward (1894–1987)



Frederick Ward

Photo courtesy of Milton Hook. From the collection in Elizabeth Lodge Retirement Village Archives, Sydney, NSW.

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.

Frederick Ward served the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a printer, teacher, and minister. He and his wife, Myrtle Lewis Marrett, are best remembered for their extended service on Pitcairn Island.

Early Years

Frederick Percival Ward was born in Ararat, Victoria, on June 27, 1891. The Ward family were among the earliest converts to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Victoria. His mother died when he was only five years old. His father and other members of the Ward clan rallied to raise him in the ideals of the Church. By 1902, his father had moved to the Cooranbong area in New South Wales and Frederick Ward completed his basic education at the Avondale School when classes were held in College Hall alongside those for senior students.¹

Career Beginnings

In 1907, Ward returned to Victoria to take up an apprenticeship at the Signs of the Times Publishing Association in their new premises at Warburton. He worked in the composing room. At this same time, 1907, he was baptized by Elder William Baker.²

Wishing to broaden his service to the church, Ward returned to the Avondale campus in 1912 and enrolled in the missionary course. In order to pay his tuition, he worked in the Avondale Press. He graduated from his studies in 1913³ and for the following eighteen months worked as a colporteur in Melbourne. Monthly reports indicate he faithfully labored for long hours with ordinary results. He offered *Heralds of the Morning, A Practical Guide to Health* and *Prophetic Waymarks*, but salesmanship was not his strength.⁴

On June 7, 1915, Ward married Myrtle Lewis Marett (b. July 5, 1894), a member of another family of early converts in Victoria.⁵ A few months later he was appointed as tent master for a mission crusade in Malvern, a suburb of Melbourne. This venture extended into 1916 and then Ward returned to the Signs of the Times Publishing Association for another eleven years, employed as a composer and proofreader. The Wards' only child, Daphne Gladys, was born during this period, May 16, 1917.⁶

A Change of Direction

Towards the end of 1927, Ward made plans to study for the teaching profession. He trained in the Victorian Government system, receiving his certificate in 1933.⁷ During these years his mother-in-law passed away in July 1928⁸ and little eleven-year-old Daphne died of pneumonia on February 8, 1929.⁹

In 1934, Ward resumed church employment. He was appointed to a new school at Rockhampton, Queensland, where he also served as the leader of the local church congregation. During 1936, he was preceptor at the West Australian Missionary College and then he taught at Perth Central School in West Leederville, for the 1937 school year.¹⁰

Pitcairn Island

Frederick and Myrtle Ward are best remembered for their two terms of service on Pitcairn Island. After attending a teachers' convention at the Australasian Missionary College in January 1938,¹¹ they sailed to their remote outpost where Ward would serve as both teacher of the school and leader of the church as he had done at Rockhampton. It was a lonely assignment that they endured for almost seven years, including the worst years of World War II. Not many cargo ships came by at this time. Mail could be seven months in reaching them.¹² A short wave radio system was established during their term, but it had limited capacity.¹³ The only medical assistance available was a local man trained in first aid.¹⁴

In September 1944, the Wards' returned to Australia¹⁵ and recuperated at the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital before Frederick Ward spent 1945 teaching at the demonstration school on the campus of the Australasian Missionary College and for a short period at the Wahroonga Seventh-day Adventist school. During 1946, he filled in with temporary printing assignments at Warburton and Avondale prior to sailing for Pitcairn Island again. Reaching Wellington, New Zealand, the Wards found they had to wait months for a ship that would pass in the vicinity of Pitcairn, so they occupied themselves by assisting in the Wellington Health Food Café.¹⁶

Eventually reaching Pitcairn, Frederick Ward found the Fijian Government (British) had assumed control of the school. Therefore, he engaged solely in the pastoral needs of the islanders for another five years. The Wards left Pitcairn on October 5, 1951, and returned to Sydney. Frederick Ward was sixty years of age and still in good health, but church officials persuaded him to retire.¹⁷

Frederick and Myrtle Ward settled in Carlingford, a suburb of Sydney, and in their remaining years they lived at Elizabeth Lodge, one of the denomination's retirement homes. In 1985, they celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. Myrtle Ward passed away two years later on May 27, 1987.¹⁸ After forty years in retirement Frederick Ward passed away on December 23, 1991.¹⁹

Reflection

Few Seventh-day Adventist employees in the South Pacific Division have served at both the western and eastern extremities of the region. The Wards' remain in that tiny minority. Having trained in two different occupations, printing and teaching, Frederick Ward was able to move with ease between the two whenever necessary and make himself useful to the church cause throughout his entire working life.

SOURCES

"After six years..." *Australasian Record*, September 25, 1944.

"Among those attending the teacher's convention..." *Australasian Record*, January 31, 1938.

"Brother F.P. Ward, who recently..." *Australasian Record*, March 2, 1936.

Frederick Percival Ward Biographical Information. South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives, Wahroonga, New South Wales. Work Service Records.

"From Pitcairn on June 18..." *Australasian Record*, August 7, 1939.

Garrard, Ed[ward] J. "Life Sketch of Myrtle Ward." *Record* [South Pacific Division], July 25, 1987.

Gilmore, Laurence. "Frederick Percival Ward obituary." *Record* [South Pacific Division], February 29, 1992.

Imrie, L[eslie] J. "Agnes Marett." *Australasian Record*, July 30, 1928.

"July 30 of last year..." *Australasian Record*, April 28, 1947.

Lindley, Granville P. "Radio Station, Pitcairn Island." *Australasian Record*, June 19, 1939.

"Monthly Summary of Australasian Canvassing Work." *Australasian Record*, August 3, 1914.

"Monthly Summary of Australasian Canvassing Work." *Australasian Record*, September 7, 1914.

"Monthly Summary of Australasian Canvassing Work." *Australasian Record*, June 7, 1915.

Snow, C[harles] M. "Daphne Gladys Ward obituary." *Australasian Record*, April 22, 1929.

Ward, Frederick P. "Hullo, Everybody! VR6AY Pitcairn Calling." *Australasian Record*, November 21, 1938.

Ward, F[rederick] P. "The Pitcairn Island 'Doctor.'" *Australasian Record*, January 1, 1940.

Ward, F[rederick] P. "Conditions on Pitcairn." *Australasian Record*, March 25, 1940.

Ward, F[rederick] P. "Seven Months' Mail in One Day." *Australasian Record*, November 10, 1941.

Ward, F[rederick] P. "Pitcairn." *Australasian Record*, October 5, 1942.

Ward, F[rederick] P. "'New Look' for Pitcairn Island." *Australasian Record*, November 8, 1948.

Ward, Myrtle L. "A Visit From the 'Yankee.'" *Australasian Record*, March 25, 1940.

Ward, [Myrtle L]. "How They are Faring on Pitcairn." *Australasian Record*, September 1, 1941.

Ward, Myrtle L. "Many Ships Call at Pitcairn." *Australasian Record*, May 17, 1948.

NOTES

1. Frederick Percival Ward Biographical Information, South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives, Wairoa, New South Wales, Work Service Records, folder: "Frederick Percival Ward," document: "Frederick Percival Ward."
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. "Monthly Summary of Australasian Canvassing Work," *Australasian Record*, August 3, 1914, 6.
5. Ed[ward] J Garrard, "Life Sketch of Myrtle Ward," *Australasian Record*, July 25, 1987, 14.
6. Frederick Percival Ward Biographical Information, South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives, Wairoa, New South Wales, Work Service Records, folder: "Frederick Percival Ward," document: "Frederick Percival Ward."

7. Ibid.
8. L[eslie] J. Imrie, "Agnes Marett obituary," *Australasian Record*, July 30, 1928, 7.
9. C[harles] M. Snow, "Daphne Gladys Ward obituary," *Australasian Record*, April 22, 1929, 6.
10. Frederick Percival Ward Biographical Information, South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives, Wahrenonga, New South Wales, Work Service Records, folder: "Frederick Percival Ward," document: "Frederick Percival Ward."
11. "Among those attending the teacher's convention..." *Australasian Record*, January 31, 1938, 8.
12. F[rederick] P. Ward, "Seven Month's Mail in One Day," *Australasian Record*, November 10, 1941, 4
13. Granville P. Lindley, "Radio Station, Pitcairn Island," *Australasian Record*, June 19, 1939, 4.
14. Ibid.
15. "After six years..." *Australasian Record*, September 25, 1944, 8.
16. Frederick Percival Ward Biographical Information, South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives, Wahrenonga, New South Wales, Work Service Records, folder: "Frederick Percival Ward." document: "Frederick Percival Ward."
17. Ibid.
18. Ed[ward] J. Garrard, "Life Sketch of Myrtle Ward," *Record*, July 25, 1987, 14.
19. Laurence Gilmore, "Frederick Percival Ward obituary," *Record*, February 29, 1992, 15.

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000