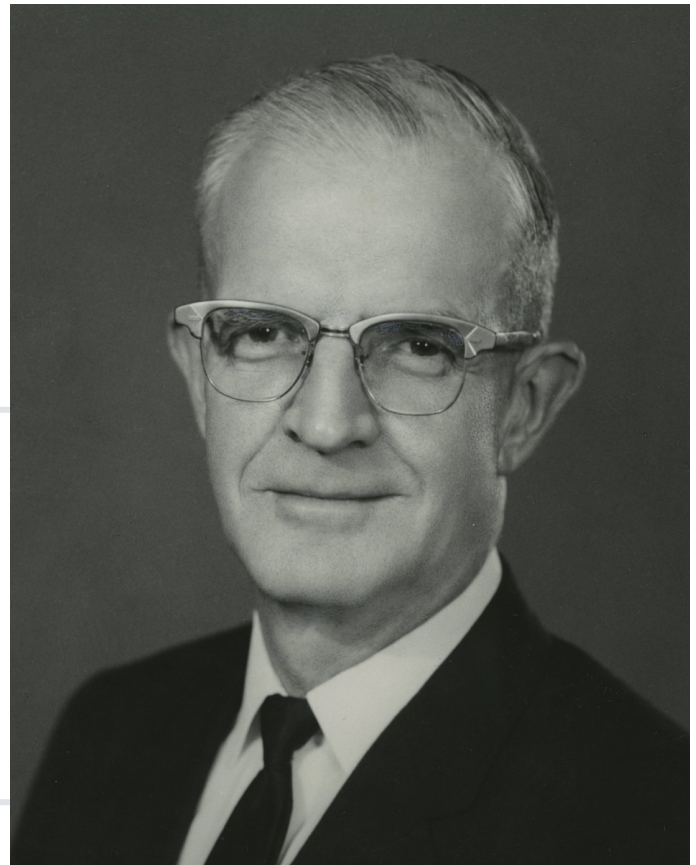


Guild, Cecil Bennett (1908–1974)

CHERYL CHRISTO HOWSON

Cheryl Christo Howson earned a graduate diploma in computer aided interior designing at the Dr. Bhanuben Nanavati College of Architecture for Women in Pune, India. She co-founded an interior design company in Sri Lanka and worked as a copywriter. She contributed to the morning devotional published by Women's Ministries at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the *Shepherdess International Journal* magazine, and the *Adventist Review*. She has written several plays. Currently (2020), she lives in Hosur, India while preparing for a piano exam.

Cecil Bennett Guild, a second-generation minister, was a church administrator who served the Seventh-day Adventist church with his wife Nora, in China, Burma and India.



Cecil B. Guild.

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

Early Life

Cecil Bennett Guild was born March 4, 1908 to Elder Minos C. and Issie Guild in the small town of Beulah, Michigan, U.S.A.¹ He had an older sister Hazle Susan born Aug. 2, 1897,² and an older brother Leonard who passed away from influenza in 1918 while studying at Emmanuel Missionary College (Andrews University)³ His grandparents on both sides were Sabbath keepers, and his father served as a minister.⁴ Cecil was baptized at the young age of 8 in 1916.⁵ The family moved often because of Elder Guild's evangelistic work, and so Cecil attended several different schools,⁶ and yet managed to get excellent grades, even scoring the highest in school.⁷ He completed 12th grade in Cedar Lake, Michigan.⁸

Education and Marriage

Cecil Bennett Guild completed B.Th. degree in theology and history at Emmanuel Missionary College (Andrews University), Michigan, U.S.A.⁹ Also studying there was Nora Myrneath Dunn, daughter of Jesse E. and Jennie Highlen Dunn. She was the only girl among three brothers, A. Orville, Everett O. and Leslie L.¹⁰ Nora was born

September 1, 1910 in Bluffton, Indiana, U.S.A., and was baptized in 1920. She later attended Indiana Academy as a teenager.¹¹ She and Cecil became friends in college, and, after Cecil graduated in 1931, they were married on September 1 of the same year.¹² They did not have any children.¹³

Over the course of twenty years, Cecil Bennett Guild took classes without any special study leave, and completed his M.A. in 1960¹⁴ in Systematic and Practical Theology from Potomac University (now part of Andrews University).¹⁵

Career and Ministry

1931 was a year of many changes; besides graduating and getting married, Cecil was one of only two that the Michigan Conference chose during the Depression as ministerial interns.¹⁶ Wanting to do more to spread the gospel, Cecil, although only 24, and his wife eagerly accepted a call to be missionaries in Central China in 1932.¹⁷ Little did they know they would be staying in a house where two missionaries had been murdered!¹⁸

They spent the first 3 years in China studying the language even as Cecil worked as Treasurer at Yunnan Mission from 1933. In 1935, he was ready to begin work in earnest and was sent to the West China Training Institute as the Business Manager. Next year he became the Director of the East Szechwan Mission, China, for 3 years till 1939.¹⁹ In 1938 he was ordained as a minister.²⁰

After a 14-month furlough in the USA, he was appointed Director, first in the West Szechwan Mission, China, from 1940, and then at Honan Mission (Henan) from 1942.²¹ During World War II the Japanese were closing in on all sides and the Guilds were forced to evacuate. They left Honan (Henan) by whatever means available: horse cart, truck, railway, and Chinese junk (sailing ship), until they reached Chungking three months later in the western part of China.²² He worked there as an evangelist from 1944-1945.²³

Unfortunately, while preparing for evacuation in 1942, Pastor Guild suffered a near fatal case of amoebic infection.²⁴ Pastor and Mrs. Guild moved to the West China Union Mission, where he first served as treasurer from 1945-1946, and then as superintendent from 1946-1947 before going to the USA on a 16-month furlough.²⁵

Upon their return to Shanghai in November 1948, Guild was appointed principal of the Voice of Prophecy until October 1949.²⁶ When communists surrounded the city, the Guilds were once again forced to evacuate.²⁷

Instead of returning to the United States, the Guilds continued their missionary work, arriving in India on October 14, 1949. They both joined the Voice of Prophecy for 3 months at the Southern Asia Division Headquarters in Poona, (Pune) where Pastor Guild served as Secretary and Mrs. Guild as a full-time instructor before being transferred to the Western India Union. He then served there as president until January 1952.²⁸

The couple was then sent to Burma, where they spent the next ten years until October 1962, with Cecil serving as president of the Burma Union, and Nora serving in various posts where her skills were needed such as director of the Voice of Prophecy, Union Sabbath School Department, and office secretary.²⁹

While attending the 1962 General Conference Session, Cecil Guild was appointed treasurer of the Southern Asia Division and the couple moved to the Division Headquarters in Salisbury Park, Poona (Pune) India.³⁰ Nora Guild began working as a copy editor at the Oriental Watchman Publishing House, and then served as the editor of the *Southern Asia Tidings* from July 1963 until she left India in July 1975.³¹

At the General Conference Session in June 1966, Pastor Guild was appointed secretary of the Southern Asia Division.³²

Later Life

While still serving as the Southern Asian Division secretary, Pastor C.B. Guild became very sick due to amoebic colitis. Eleven days after undergoing surgery in Poona (Pune), he passed away on February 21, 1974.³³ Nora Guild stayed a year longer and left for the U.S. in July 1975 to settle in Berrien Springs, Michigan, then in California, and finally in Cumberland Heights, Coalmont, Tennessee, USA.³⁴

Contribution and Legacy

Pastor Guild devoted 43 years of his life to denominational service, often under harsh or life-threatening conditions. Whichever location he was posted to, he gave of himself fully, seventeen and a half years in China, ten years in Burma and fourteen years, eight months in India.³⁵ Cecil and Nora Guild gave all to the mission and ministry of Jesus, even as they stood by each other as faithful companions and ardent missionaries until death parted them.

SOURCES

"C.B. Guild." *Far Eastern Division Outlook*, June 1, 1974.

"Cecil Bennett Guild." Service Records, Southern Asia Division Archives.

"Cedar Lake Notes." *Lake Union Herald*, November 5, 1924.

"Deaths – Guild, Cecil Bennett." *ARH*, April 18, 1974.

Fowler, John M. "He Lived for Him – Life Sketch and Tribute." *Southern Asia Tidings*, March 1, 1974.

Guild, Minos C. "Fifty-Six years in the Ministry." *Southern Tidings*, August 16, 1950.

"In Remembrance – Dunn, Jennie Highlen." *ARH*, December 31, 1959.

"Meet Our Workers." *Southern Asia Tidings*, February 1, 1956.

"Obituaries: Skeels, Hazle Susan Guild." *ARH*, November 2, 1972.

"Obituaries: Guild, Mrs. Issie Bennett." *Southern Tidings*, March 3, 1937.

NOTES

1. John M. Fowler, "He Lived for Him – Life Sketch and Tribute," *Southern Asia Tidings*, March 1, 1974, 1.
2. "Obituary notice," *ARH*, November 2, 1972, 46.
3. "Obituaries: Guild, Mrs. Issie Bennett Guild," *Southern Tidings*, March 3, 1937, 6.
4. Minos C. Guild, "Fifty-Six years in the Ministry," *Southern Tidings*, August 16, 1950, 10;
"Obituaries: Guild, Mrs. Issie Bennett Guild."
5. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record, Service Records, Southern Asian Division Archives, Hosur, TN, India.
6. Fowler, 1.
7. "Cedar Lake Notes" *Lake Union Herald*, November 5, 1924, 3.
8. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.; "In Remembrance: Dunn, Jennie Highlen" *ARH*, December 31, 1959, 25.
11. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
12. Fowler, 3.
13. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
14. Fowler, 3.
15. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
16. "Deaths: Guild, Cecil Bennett"; Fowler, 3.
17. "C.B. Guild," *Far Eastern Division Outlook*, June 1, 1974, 5.
18. "Meet Our Workers," *Southern Asia Tidings*, February 1, 1956, 16.
19. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.

20. "Deaths: Guild, Cecil Bennett."
21. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
22. "Meet Our Workers."
23. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
24. Fowler, 3.
25. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
26. Ibid.
27. "Meet Our Workers."
28. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
29. Ibid.
30. Fowler, 3.
31. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
32. Ibid.
33. Fowler, 1.
34. Cecil Bennett Guild Service Record.
35. Ibid.

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