

Karru, Joao Henrique (1895–1961) and Yolanda Pereira (d. 1986)

THE BRAZILIAN WHITE CENTER – UNASP

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João Henrique Karrú, canvasser and pioneer, was born on July 10, 1895 in Paraibuna, Rio de Janeiro.¹ He was the son of Henrique Karrú and Saturnina Maria de Jesus. He accepted the Adventist message at a young age and on May 9, 1917, was baptized at age 21.² After his conversion he started canvassing, where he remained for 15 years. During this period, he worked in the states of Minas Gerais, Sao Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro.³ João married Yolanda Pereira on January 3, 1924. The couple had five children: Nelly, Neide, Nilza, Nelson, and Nimsi Karrú.⁴ They all stood firm in the Adventist faith.⁵

Karrú began canvassing on June 14, 1918 in the west of Minas Gerais state. He worked in several cities, including Areado, Formiga, Divinópolis, and Varginha.⁶ While canvassing in Varginha, south of the state, he met Sebastião Pereira, a Presbyterian who admired the Adventist church and who would become his father-in-law. Through Karrú's influence Pereira became a Seventh-day Adventist along with his family.⁷ Karrú worked in the west of Minas Gerais for almost two years, leaving the region in April 1921.⁸

On May of the same year Karrú migrated to the south of the state, staying there until March 28, 1928. It was there that the young canvasser gained evangelistic experience, selling literature in cities like Alfenas and Muzambinho.⁹ While canvassing in Minas Gerais, João was affected by Chagas disease, which forced him to rest from his work.¹⁰ In 1928, he was transferred to the state of São Paulo, and later to Rio de Janeiro.¹¹ Shortly after, for health reasons, he had to drop the canvassing work. Karrú died on April 18, 1961, age 65, in Dourados, Mato

Grosso do Sul.¹²

Yolanda Pereira Karrú was born in Machadinho, south of Minas Gerais. She was a teacher of the municipal school system of some cities in Minas Gerais. She also taught in schools of the Sao Paulo Conference and Mato Grosso Mission.¹³ In Minas Gerais she worked in the city of Extrema. She served as the principal of Santa Luzia Adventist School, Belo Horizonte metropolitan region. This educational institution had 32 students in 1940.¹⁴ In the Sao Paulo conference and Mato Grosso mission, she also served as treasurer. She did missionary work and developed an important role in the children's department.¹⁵ Besides being a teacher, Yolanda Karrú was also a canvasser.¹⁶ She died November 20, 1986 in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul after working for over 40 years in education.¹⁷

John and Yolanda Karrú dedicated their lives to Adventist ministry. Due to Yolanda's work, the couple moved several times, passing through various regions of Brazil. Their last move was to Dourados, Mato Grosso do Sul, where both collaborated to establish an Adventist church.¹⁸ The couple made significant contributions to the Adventist work, both in the spreading of Christian literature and in education.

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