



John and Katherine Martin with children, Carolyn and Warren.

Photo courtesy of Milton Hook from the collection of Warren Martin, Wahroonga, NSW.

Martin, John Radley (1912–1965) and Kathleen Josephine O'Connor Martin Tucker

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.

John and Kathleen Martin served the Church in Australia and the Mandated Territory of New Guinea. Kathleen Martin trained as a nurse and John Martin was a printer, pastor, and mission administrator. He served as a non-combatant in the Australian armed forces during World War II.

Early Years

John Martin was born in Parramatta, New South Wales, on October 24, 1912. He was the second son of George Frederick Martin and Alice Radley. At the time, George Martin was an attendant at the local hospital for the insane.¹ Later, he worked as a day laborer at various jobs including landscape gardening. In 1914, the family moved north to Martinsville near the Australasian Missionary College (AMC) campus where John Martin benefited from a Seventh-day Adventist education in the elementary and academy levels.²

After John Martin completed his basic education, he worked at the Avondale Press to pay the AMC tuition fees. He enrolled in both the ministerial course and the building course. Among the students was Kathleen O'Connor from Victoria who was studying nursing prerequisites before training at the Sydney Sanitarium. She had previously worked at the Signs Publishing Company (SPC) in Warburton, Victoria, from 1926 through 1929. A lasting friendship developed while they continued their studies. Church leaders were keen to enlist John for evangelism and advised the young couple to marry. They abandoned their studies in order to wed in the Wahroonga church on June 24, 1937.³ When the manager of the Avondale Press heard of Martin's plans for an evangelistic career, he vigorously objected, saying he could not do without Martin's assistance. For that reason, Martin continued working as a printer for another five years, transferring to the SPC in 1941. It was an unfortunate turn of events, for neither John nor Kathleen Martin completed their college degrees.⁴

War Service

Martin was scarcely settled at SPC when he was obliged to register for military service in January 1942. When he enlisted, he was told that John Martin was such a common name that he would have to supply a middle name. On the spur of the moment, he chose the name Radley, his mother's maiden name. His service record papers show that he chose not to carry arms.⁵ For six months, he did basic military training and then a further six months medical training at Heidelberg Military Hospital in Melbourne. In January 1944, he was transported to Lae, Papua New Guinea, and assigned to work in the 2/7th Australian General Hospital, otherwise known as the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU). In the months after the war ended, Martin was promoted to corporal and then sergeant. When the ANGAU unit ceased to function in January 1946, Martin was one of the last to return to Australia. He was discharged from the army in February 1946.⁶ During John Martin's absence

Kathleen Martin was on the nursing staff at Warburton Sanitarium.⁷ After wartime service, John Martin returned to the SPC and family life. Their first child, Warren, had been born prior to military service. Their second child, Joan, was born several years later.⁸

Mission Service

Ministerial studies and nursing experience provided a sound basis for John and Kathleen Martin to be chosen for overseas mission service. John Martin was especially pleased to respond to an appointment in Papua New Guinea, familiar to him because of wartime service. The Martins, along with their two children, sailed from Sydney aboard the *Bulolo* on June 4, 1949, bound for Mussau Island in the Bismarck Archipelago Mission.⁹ The headquarters station for the mission was at Boliu on Mussau. They conducted a clinic that eventually grew to be the Boliu Adventist Hospital. John Martin was often occupied with the mission boat, visiting the church members on Mussau, Emirau, Tench, New Ireland, and New Hanover Islands.¹⁰

After a furlough in 1952, Martin was transferred to the Madang Mission with similar visitation duties, but with the added responsibility of secretary.¹¹ He also later added responsibilities for the Sabbath School, education, and Young People's Missionary Volunteers departments.¹² In connection with his role as education director, he was instrumental in establishing the Panim Central School near Madang. On January 24, 1959, he was ordained in a service at Madang in a service officiated by Elders John Keith, Ken Gray, and Robert Salau.¹³ At the time, Martin was president of the Madang Mission in addition to all of the other positions.¹⁴ The burden was heavy and he began to have chest pains. An electro-cardiogram revealed his life was seriously at risk. He was flown to Australia in 1961, leaving Kathleen Martin to pack up their goods for permanent return from the mission field!¹⁵

Back in Australia

The Martins settled in the Cooranbong district, New South Wales. John Martin appeared to regain a measure of health, sufficient to do some part-time work in the Sanitarium Health Food Company. Then he began to serve as minister at the nearby Dora Creek church.¹⁶ While tending a troublesome cow, he suffered a major coronary occlusion on April 11, 1965, and died at the relatively young age of 52 years old. His funeral at Avondale Cemetery was conducted by Pastors Frame, Campbell, and Boulting.¹⁷

After John Martin's death Kathleen Martin found work in various roles including nursing, supervisor of the nurse's dormitory at the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital, and cook at the Charles Harrison Memorial Home.¹⁸ On April 17, 1974, in the Brightwaters Seventh-day Adventist church she married Charles Tucker and remained in the Cooranbong district.¹⁹ She died on April 24, 1996, in the Wyong Hospital and was buried in the Avondale Cemetery.²⁰

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NOTES

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