

# Arloo, James Awurade Miezah

## (1899–1980)

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### KOJO POLLEY-KWOFIE

Kojo Polley-Kwofie, M.B.A. (Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, Ghana, Africa), is an author, associate treasurer of South-West Ghana Conference, and member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing, Ghana. He worked at the Ghana Education Service for 12 years before joining pastoral ministry. He has worked as a district pastor in South Ghana Conference and Mid-South Ghana Conference and as treasurer of Pioneer Ghana Conference. He is married and has five children.

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James Awurade Miezah Arloo was one of the first seven ministers ordained in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ghana, and one of the pioneering Adventist workers in the country.

## Early Life and Education

James Awurade Miezah Arloo was born in 1899. His father was Egya Arloo Ekyi and his mother was Mame Etweba. He joined the Adventist Church with his father in 1903 at four years old. His mother, Mame Etweba, was the sister of C. A. Ackah.

When he was five years old, Arloo attended the Adventist school established by C. A. Ackah in Kikam in 1908. At the age of ten, Arloo's uncle took him to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, to continue his education. He returned to Ghana after his basic education in Côte d'Ivoire in 1917.<sup>1</sup> He joined his alma mater, the Adventist school at Kikam, for evangelistic training in 1917. Arloo was baptized into the Adventist Church by William H. Lewis in 1917, before Lewis left for America.<sup>2</sup> In 1918, the head of the Adventist school at Kikam found him to be zealous for evangelistic work. As a result, he recommended that Arloo be included in the third group of trained gospel workers to be sent to Agona and other areas for missionary work.<sup>3</sup>

## Work-Life and Marriage

In 1918, Arloo and M. K. Markeh were sent to the Agona school in the Ashanti Region.<sup>4</sup> In 1920 Arloo worked as an evangelist under L. F. Langford in several towns in the Ashanti Region in 1920 followed by the Ghana Mission. He was paid two pounds month until 1923 when his salary was slightly increased. In that year, more Nzema personnel joined the Adventist labor force in Asante and served in the hinterlands. Arloo, J. W. Menlah, and M. K. Markeh were sent to Asokore, Yonso, and Kofiase respectively as evangelists.

Arloo married to Sarah Ansah (Nwiah Raaleh) in 1923. Among his children was James Arloo, an educator who served in the Swedru-Bawjiase area and finally settled at Bawjiase where he died and was buried. Among his grandchildren was Samuel Bonya Arloo, a minister who became president of the East Ghana Conference, Koforidua, in 2016.

Later, Arloo was sent to Brong Ahafo Region to spread the Adventist message there. He worked at Takyiman and its environs with colleagues Andrews Agyei, Owusu Ansah of Akrofoso, and Bernard Christopher Bamfo Debra of Obomeng, Kwawu. Arloo later worked at Kyiraa and Tubodom, both in Tekyiman District. As a result of hard work, he became one of the first seven ministers ordained in the Adventist Church in Ghana between 1921 and 1948.<sup>5</sup> The president of the Ghana Mission, Jesse Clifford, ordained Arloo and J. K. Amoah at an annual camp meeting in Kwame Danso in the Brong Ahafo Region, thus increasing the number of ordained ministers from five to seven.

A few months after his ordination, Arloo became a member of the nine-member executive committee of the Gold Coast Mission (1948-1951). The executive committee members were Jesse Gibson, president; P. H. Stearman, secretary-treasurer; W. B. Ackah; S. B. Essien; C. B. Mensah; Aikins Amponsah; J. C. Vetter; and H. J. Welch.<sup>6</sup> Gibson divided the mission work in the Gold Coast (Ghana) into seven districts and gave one to Arloo where he supervised fourteen teacher-evangelists. He later worked at Obuasi and its environs before being sent to the Winneba-Swedru area.

In the Winneba-Swedru District, Arloo succeeded his cousin, S. B. Essien, in 1955. During Arloo's tenure, while living in Winneba, he secured land at Agona Swedru from a businessman named Mr. Doherty on which to build a mission house. Arloo supervised the construction of the mission house and district office at Agona Swedru, which was to separate Swedru from Winneba as an independent district. He served as the first pastor of the Swedru District from 1955 to 1959. In 1956, Arloo and his family finally moved into the Agona Swedru mission house.

The Agona Swedru mission house continues to be used as the headquarters of the Pioneer Ghana Conference.

Arloo retired in 1959 and settled at Kikam, his hometown. He died in 1980 in Kikam and was buried there.

## Legacy

During his tenure of office as an executive committee member, Arloo advocated for the employment of more professionals in the field. Secondly, he made the ministry attractive to many young men and encouraged them to enter the gospel ministry, which he believed to be the best of all professions on earth. Thirdly, he advocated that pastors must refrain from church politics and be allowed to be led by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit only. Among the evangelists he influenced to enter the gospel ministry were Oyina and Nuako, both from Ashanti Region, and several others from the Western Region.

Finally, Arloo advocated for donations to support the work of God of which he set an example for posterity. On retirement J. A. M. Arloo, along with I. A. Benson, donated all their Bible commentaries, Spirit of Prophecy books, and other denominational books to Kikam Seventh-day Adventist church. The author has personally read some of these books donated to the church.

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## SOURCES

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Owusu-Mensah, Kofi. *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism*. Accra, Ghana: The Advent Press, 2005.

Polley-Kwofie, Kojo. *The Beginnings of Seventh-day Adventism in Ghana: The First Fifty Years*. Accra, Ghana: Agape Publishers, 2010.

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## NOTES

1. Nathaniel Ndede, nephew of J. A. M. Arloo, interview by author, Takoradi, Ghana, January 30, 2019.
2. I. A. Ansah, interview by author, Kikam, Ghana, October 1, 2002.
3. I. A. Ansah, *A History of SDA Church in Ghana* (Accra, Ghana: New Times Corporation, 1976), 10.
4. Kofi Owusu-Mensah, *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism* (Accra, Ghana: The Advent Press, 2005), 154.
5. Kojo Polley-Kwofie, *The Beginnings of Seventh-day Adventism in Ghana: The First Fifty Years* (Accra, Ghana: Agape Publishers, 2010), 84.
6. Kofi Owusu-Mensah, *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism* (Accra, Ghana: The Advent Press, 2005), 237.

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