

Spalding, Ronald Wolcott (1904–1983)

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Ma. Venus F. Borja (*née* Fernandez), Ph.D. in nursing (Silliman University located in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, Philippines), is a registered nurse and an assistant professor in the College of Nursing of Ha'il University, Ha'il Region, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She is an active member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. Borja has a B.S. in nursing from Mountain View College (MVC), Mt. Nebo, Valencia City, Philippines, and an M.S. in medical/surgical nursing from Silliman University, Dumaguete City, Philippines. She had served as nursing theories teacher for 16 years and as a research coordinator in the School of Nursing at Mountain View College, Mt. Nebo, Valencia City, Bukidnon, Philippines. She is married to Benedicto R. Borja and they have three children.

Ronald Wolcott Spalding was an Adventist physician, missionary, and administrator in North America and the Philippines.

Early Life

Ronald Wolcott Spalding was born on December 31, 1904,¹ in Battle Creek, Michigan.² He was one of four children born to Arthur Whitefield Spalding and Maud Wolcott (1877-1953; 1877-1956) who were married on June 13, 1899. The senior Spalding was an educator and author,³ who in his younger years served as secretary for such illustrious men as John Harvey Kellogg, Will Keith Kellogg, and Edward A. Sutherland. Maud Wolcott was



Grave of Ronald Spalding.

Photo courtesy of Keith Burkhead. Source: *Find a Grave*,
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/16014553/ronald-w-spalding>

among the first Adventist church school teachers.⁴ Ronald Wolcott Spalding's siblings included Genevieve Helene (1901-1973) who married Joseph J. Singer;⁵ Arthur Winfred (1906-1967);⁶ Elizabeth Victoria (-1993) who married Roscoe McFadden and served in Pakistan and Taiwan.⁷

Education and Marriage

While a student, Spalding worked as a colporteur in the Tennessee River Conference.⁸ He attended Washington Missionary College (now Washington Adventist University) where he enrolled in the premedical course. It was here that he met his wife, Helen Louise McElmurry (1908-2000), a nursing student.⁹ They married on August 21, 1930. Spalding received his MD degree from the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University) in 1935.¹⁰ The Spaldings had four children—Arthur (1935-2001);¹¹ Elaine¹² who married Donald Halenz, an academic dean¹³ and later president¹⁴ of Mountain View College; Carole Jean¹⁵ who married Larry R. Colburn, publishing department secretary for the South China Island Union Mission;¹⁶ and Sylvia.¹⁷

Career

Becoming a full-fledged medical doctor in 1935, Spalding spent 34 years in private practice in Bloomingdale, Michigan and for more than ten years he served the Michigan Conference as medical secretary.¹⁸ In February 1970, the General Conference Committee voted to send Spalding to the Philippines for one year¹⁹ to be acting medical director of the 50-bed Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital that opened in Taculing, Bacolod City, Philippines on April 16, 1970.²⁰

Later Life and Contribution

After his return to the United States, Spalding opened a private family medical practice in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He died on January 16, 1983, in Sonoma, California,²¹ and was laid to rest in Oak Hill Cemetery, Battle Creek, Michigan.²²

Spalding was active in community service wherever he lived. As a general practitioner in Bloomingdale, Michigan, in the 1960s, Spalding volunteered with the State Medical Placement Bureau, helping new doctors transition to medical practice in Michigan.²³ While medical director of the Bacolod Sanitarium and Hospital, Spalding was a proponent of the 5-day Stop Smoking Plan. He held free clinics in neighboring villages at least once a month.²⁴ As medical and temperance Secretary of the Michigan Conference, he was a regular contributor to the *Lake Union Herald* and *Life and Health* magazines, writing articles promoting health consciousness.

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