

Chit Maung (1907–1992)

CONNALLY HLA

Connally Hla

Chit Maung (alias) Eh Saw was an educator and administrator from Myanmar.

Early Life, Education and Marriage

Chit Maung was born on March 20, 1907 at Minzee village, Hpa-an township (Thaton District during British rule in Burma). His parents were U Shwe Lay and Daw Meh Ngon. His father was a Karen and his mother a Taungthoo, called Pa-O. He started his schooling in Minzee village.

When his parents came to know about the Adventist mission school of Eric B. Hare, he was sent to study there from 1920 to 1925. He discovered the truth as it is in Jesus at that Adventist boarding school and became an Adventist in 1924. He passed the seventh standard at Ohndaw, Kamamaung and he went to Meiktila Technical High School. He passed the 9th standard in 1927, and he was called to become a teacher at the Ohndaw School for the academic year 1927-28.¹ His denominational service began on May 1, 1927 as a teacher. While teaching in the Church mission school, he managed to complete and pass the tenth Standard Examination of Meiktila High School. After a few years of denominational service, on May 8, 1930 he married Naw Si, a mission school teacher. They had three daughters: Catherine, Valentine, and Coroline (b. 13 September 1938). The offspring of Chit Maung: 3 daughters, 32 grandchildren.

Ministry

Chit Maung answered the call of God in the teaching ministry taking the challenges of the time. His former teacher and mentor groomed him to become a fisher of men. He successfully discharged his duties at Ohndaw school and Nyaunglebin in Central Myanmar Mission as a teacher-evangelist for one year each. On the third year, he was called to become a preceptor at Meiktila School.

After his marriage, he went back to serve again at Ohndaw school until 1934. In 1934, he was appointed to serve as the principal at Myaungmya Mission Middle School. He was instrumental in the upgrading of Myaung Mya Mission Primary School to a mission middle school. In 1936, the self-supporting boarding department was introduced by Chit Maung in order to accommodate some desperate students who needed education.² Even with limited formal education he was committed to serve God and the Church in his best capacity as the

principal of the middle school until 1940. As a middle school principal, he proved himself as a faithful worker of soul-winning in teaching and preaching ministries. He was ordained for the gospel ministry in 1939.³ With the encouragement and guidance of the union mission leaders, he was sent to take up Middle School Teacher Certification in Meiktila Teacher Training School in 1940. Meanwhile, starting from that year he was called to work as a Boarding Master and Teacher at Union Training School in Meiktila. He worked hand in hand with foreign missionaries in Meiktila Mission High School till the school was disrupted by the Japanese invasion and occupation of Myanmar of the Second World War.

Chit Maung and family survived World War II as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the hills and mountains in the East of Toungoo (now, Taungngu), near the Shwe Nyaung Bin village. There were several other Adventist IDPs in that vicinity like Baw Dee, Ah Chu families who were fellow mission workers in the Church. Despite the difficult circumstances and challenges of that time, Chit Maung and his wife operated a self-supporting church school with their colleagues. During the Japanese occupation, certain Nippon curricular items were taught for the elementary students.

Post war denominational service was officially resumed in 1946 when the officer from the Southern Asia Division came to restart the work; Chit Maung was elected as Burma Union committee member.⁴ A ministerial credential was granted to him along with Myat Po, Deacon David, and Tha Myaing.⁵

Chit Maung resumed the mission work as the superintendent of Tenasserim (now, South East Mission) Local Mission in 1946.⁶ He worked in that capacity until 1949.⁷ When political situations became unstable in the southeast region of the newly independent Myanmar, he was called to serve again at Ohndaw School as the principal. The situations deteriorated and worsened after some time and the school was eventually closed and moved to a temporary place in 1945-55. Meanwhile, he served as a pastor-evangelist in Hpa-an district for a year. For the academic year 1955-56, he was appointed again to be the principal in Myaungmya High School and the Education Secretary of the Myanmar Union Mission.⁸

Post-World War II, the high school for Myanmar Union Mission was re-established by the General Conference in 1957, and Chit Maung was appointed as principal. He was instrumental in the successful operation of the new "Union Training School" which was erected to replace his Alma Mater "Meiktila School."⁹ He worked at that new school as the high school principal until 1963. When medical attention was called for his impaired health, he was assigned as the Yangon Seventh-day Adventist Hospital chaplain and pastor of Kanbe Adventist Church in Yangon. However, due to illness, regular sustentation of his active service for the Church was decided in 1965!¹⁰

Later Life

After his retirement, Chit Maung settled in Taungngu and he continued to support the mission and ministry of the Adventist Church till he was laid to rest to await the coming of his Lord and Master on July 28, 1992.

Contribution

Chit Maung had many contributions for the Adventist Church and for the young people who were poor. Retired principal, administrator, and pastor of the Church, Pastor Kenneth Suanzanang said that "Pastor Chit Maung was the best principal I have ever seen." He led to build all school buildings of the Myanmar Union High School at Kyaut Taing in Central Myanmar Mission. He introduced working students a plan for those who are poor.

SOURCES

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Chit Maung's Employee Service Record. Archives in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

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NOTES

1. Chit Maung's Employee Service Record, Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission.
2. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (1976), s.v. "Myaungmya Middle School."
3. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, 1940, 216.
4. *Burma Union Committee Minute*, 2113-1946. Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission.
5. *Ibid.*, 2119-1946.
6. M. O. Manley, "Report From Burma," *ARH*, May 23, 1946, 16.
7. *Burma Union Committee Minute*, Action No. 1946-2128; 1946-2125. Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission.
8. *Burma Union Committee Minute*, Action No. 55-42; 55-56.
9. *Ibid.*

10. Burma Union Committee Minutes, Action No. 1965-36. Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission.

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