



Dr. Floyd Edward Bates and Mrs. Margaret Mildred Peterson-Bates in Canton, China, May 1938.

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Bates, Edward Francis “Floyd” (1892–1971) and Margaret Mildred (Peterson) (1889–1944)

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.

Floyd Bates (貝爾 齊) and Margaret Bates were missionaries in China. Floyd was a teacher and mission director, and Margaret served as the principal of the mission school for girls in Swatow. Later, after obtaining medical training in America, they established the Canton Hospital, Guangdong Province. Floyd served as physician and superintendent, and Margaret was in charge of the nursing staff and a three-year nursing course.

Early Years

Edward Francis Bates was born in Nevada, Iowa, on January 3, 1892. He was the only child of William and Mary (Cook) Bates. From childhood he was known as Floyd. In the 1895 United States Census, his father is recorded as a painter but the 1905 Census lists him as a physician.¹

During his childhood Floyd's parents moved around Iowa, and he attended the public schools wherever his father found work, in places such as Harlan and Sioux City. He was raised as a Seventh-day Adventist and baptized in 1906 by Elder Frank Barnes in Sioux City. His advanced education took place at Union College, Nebraska.² He first worked as a photographer and news reporter. On May 5, 1914, he married Margaret Mildred Peterson, a nurse of Danish heritage.³

Initial Years of Church Career

Floyd's college training prepared him for ministerial roles. In the summer of 1911, he worked as a tent master for an evangelistic crusade in Iowa, and in the summer of 1912, he accepted a similar role in Nebraska. He was the singing evangelist for the evangelistic crusades in Iowa during 1913. In the early months of 1914, prior to his marriage, he conducted his own evangelistic crusade at Lone Tree, Iowa. After his marriage he took part in another evangelistic crusade at Davenport, Iowa.⁴

Floyd and Margaret were appointed to serve as missionaries in China. They embarked from America on October 6, 1914,⁵ locating at Amoy (now Xiamen), where both taught at the mission school.⁶ In 1917 Floyd was elected to the additional role of Education and Young People's departmental secretary of the South China Union Conference.⁷ For a time, Margaret suffered repeated lung haemorrhages indicating tuberculosis, but she slowly recovered and continued her ministry.⁸

In 1919, at Amoy, Floyd was ordained to the gospel ministry. He was elected to a new role in January 1920, serving for almost five years as director of the Swatow Mission. His territory extended south among the Swatowese-speaking people from Amoy, Fujian Province, to Swatow (now Shantou) in Guangdong Province. Margaret served as the principal of the mission school for girls in Swatow. She also preached the Adventist message to the women in their region.⁹ Later, the mission territory was confined to Swatow and the eastern

slopes of Guangdong Province.¹⁰ A statistical summary to December 1922 reported eight churches and 320 baptized members in the Swatow Mission.¹¹ Two sons were born into their Swatow home, Milton Leonard (b. 1920) and Donald Edward (b. 1923).¹²

Medical Ministry

In November 1924 Floyd and Margaret and their young children returned to California. Floyd, as his father had done in mid-life, turned to a medical career. He trained at the College of Medical Evangelists, Loma Linda, and completed his time as an intern. Margaret worked as a supervising nurse at the Loma Linda Sanitarium.¹³

The Bates family returned to China in August 1930, where Floyd and Margaret established the Canton Hospital, Guangdong Province. For almost eight years, they toiled to make the enterprise a success. Floyd served as physician and superintendent, and Margaret was in charge of the nursing staff and a three-year nursing course. Approximately one hundred men and women graduated as nurses. By 1937 the medical staff numbered twelve. The invasion of Japanese forces prompted the return of the Bates family to America in May 1938.¹⁴

On their return to the homeland Floyd and Margaret purchased the Osceola Sanitarium, Iowa. They worked together in the private enterprise until dreaded tuberculosis returned to Margaret in August 1943. She passed away on January 7, 1944¹⁵ and was laid to rest in the Maple Hill Cemetery at Osceola.¹⁶

Next, Floyd served as a staff physician at White Memorial Hospital, Los Angeles, and Glendale Sanitarium and Hospital.¹⁷ From 1959 to 1961, he accepted a similar role at the Davis Memorial Clinic and Hospital in British Guiana.¹⁸ He retired from active medical practice in 1964.¹⁹

Final Years

Floyd married Lavana Birch of Belle Plaine, Iowa, and they remained there, he assisting the only other doctor in town, especially with nursing home patients.²⁰

He passed away at Cedar Rapids on November 19, 1971, and was interred at Oak Hill Cemetery, Belle Plaine, west of Cedar Rapids.²¹

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NOTES

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