



Hubert Barham is seated second from the left in this photo of the 1922 Graduating Class from the Sydney Sanitarium.

Photo courtesy of Michael Rigby.

Barham, Hubert Ernest (1897–1958) and Olive May (Cawse) (1898-2002)

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.

Hubert Barham was an engineer who gave thirteen years of service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Solomon Islands in the first half of the twentieth century.

Hubert Ernest Barham was born in Williamstown, suburban Melbourne, Victoria, on January 7, 1897, to Mary Gertrude (Burch) and Thomas Robert Barham.¹ He had four siblings, Tessie, Roy, Allan, and Eric. Mary became a

Seventh-day Adventist while living in Wangaratta, Victoria, and raised her children in the faith²

In 1917 Hubert attempted selling *Heralds of the Morning* but did not get many orders.³ He waited until September 1919 and entered the three-year nurses' training course at the Sydney Sanitarium,⁴ graduating in 1922.⁵ While doing his training he met Olive May Cawse, who had started her training course in 1920 but was unsuccessful,⁶ and instead found employment in the Sydney Vegetarian Café. After his graduation Hubert continued to work at the sanitarium, waiting for an appointment to mission service in the Pacific Islands. He received his appointment when the Australasian Division Council met in September 1925, nominating him to proceed to the Solomon Islands.⁷ Prior to embarkation Hubert and Olive married in the Wahroonga church on Sunday, September 6, 1925.⁸

Service in the Solomon Islands

Two weeks after his wedding Hubert sailed from Sydney and disembarked in the Solomon Islands⁹ Olive followed five months later.¹⁰ From the outset it was clear that Hubert was appointed for his engineering skills,¹¹ something he had apparently acquired prior to his training as a nurse. He and Olive therefore happily settled at Batuna, the headquarters station on the Marovo Lagoon, where there was situated a printing press, a training school, a marine workshop, and slipways for the mission boats and a small fully staffed hospital. Hubert was given charge of the *Melanesia*, ferrying supplies and personnel from station to station and, at times, conducting communion services during his travels.¹²

Hubert and Olive returned to Australia in 1928 for their first furlough, arriving just weeks too late to see his mother, who died in August 1928.¹³ When they returned to Batuna, Hubert resumed his work with the mission boats and any other engineering work required on the station. He undoubtedly had a hand in building the 35-foot (10.7-meter) mission boat *Vinaritokae* (meaning Everybody Helped) at Batuna in 1931.¹⁴ In 1934 Hubert, Olive, and little daughter Vella, together with a crew, set out in the *Vinaritokae* to pick up mail and supplies. A fierce storm overtook them near Ughele, Rendova Island, casting the boat onto a reef. Everyone on board became badly lacerated while scrambling over the reef and swimming to shore. Some days later the boat was floated off the reef and taken back to the Batuna slipway for Hubert to make repairs.¹⁵

Unlike his fellow missionaries, Hubert rarely published his activities in the church periodicals. He was preoccupied with the boats and his engineering work. However, he did write one article to be used as a Sabbath School human interest mission story about a little-known Solomon Island worker named Zarosopi, who was always whistling hymns.¹⁶ Another was an article about his beloved mission boats, urging church members to donate generously for the purchase of new boats to replace the underpowered vessels.¹⁷

Hubert and family returned to Australia late in 1937 for furlough, and he was replaced by another engineer. His 13 years of service at that time was the longest period given in Pacific Island mission work by an engineer.¹⁸ His

valued contribution was all the more remarkable because he was not a robust man, diminutive in stature, yet one who applied most of his energies to practical work so that the headquarters station at Batuna ran smoothly. His was a pivotal role. Without him the Solomon Islands mission activities would have been brought to a standstill.¹⁹

Permanent Return to Australia

With no prospects offered for a return to the Solomon Islands, Hubert found employment in Brisbane and later settled in Burringbar, New South Wales. He died in Sydney on February 13, 1958, and was buried in Rookwood Necropolis.²⁰ Olive lived to be 104 years of age, dying on July 31, 2002, at the Adventist hostel, Victoria Point, Queensland. Vella predeceased her.²¹

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