



A group of Sabbath-keeping Maoris in New Zealand in front of a building characteristic of those used for communal and religious purposes.

From *Review & Herald*, December 14, 1916, page 11.

# Te Karere o te Pono ("Messenger of Truth"), Australasian Union Conference

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## 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.

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*Te Karere o te Pono* ("Messenger of Truth") was a magazine printed for the Maori people of New Zealand in their own language. It commenced in 1909, but ceased production about 1916. There are no extant copies available in the Seventh-day Adventist archives.

## A Periodical for Maoris

In the early days of the Avondale Press at Cooranbong some tracts in the Maori language were printed for distribution by New Zealand Seventh-day Adventists,<sup>1</sup> but no regular periodical for the Maori people was available until 1907.

William Smith was in charge of mission efforts among the Maoris in 1907 when the first issue of *Te Karere o te Pono* was published in July. By the end of the year he reported that one hundred annual subscriptions were secured.<sup>2</sup> It was a four-page monthly printed under the auspices of the New Zealand Conference.<sup>3</sup> In 1908 the Australasian Union Conference (AUC) voted to donate £100 to establish a printshop at Pukekura School, near Cambridge, New Zealand, in order to print Maori literature, but apparently these plans did not eventuate.<sup>4</sup> The following year, 1909, it was reported the periodical was being published in Gisborne, the closest main town to where most of the medical and evangelistic work for the Maoris was taking place.<sup>5</sup> The editor of the periodical was never named, but from 1908 through 1911 it was most likely William Carswell, at that time in charge of the Maori Mission. Another possibility was that Frances Waugh, who understood the Maori language better than Carswell, may have done the translation work at Avondale Press and mailed the copy to him to arrange the local printing. One thousand copies were printed each month.<sup>6</sup> Carswell found it difficult to sell the periodical because the Maoris, who had become accustomed to receiving goods from the government without payment, expected everything from Europeans would be free.<sup>7</sup>

## Significant Changes

Carswell's associates in the Maori Mission, Read and Lucy Smith, were engaged primarily in medical work.<sup>8</sup> They were 1908 graduates of the Sydney Sanitarium. Tragedy struck in September 1910 when Read passed away with typhoid fever after being infected by a patient. He was the first sanitarium graduate to die in mission service.<sup>9</sup> Less than 12 months later Carswell himself was obliged to return to Australia to seek medical help for his wife.<sup>10</sup> Mission efforts among the Maoris lapsed for three years, until Reginald Piper began work among them in 1914.<sup>11</sup> During the three-year lapse the printing of the periodical was transferred to Avondale Press. In 1912 it was still listed as a four-page monthly.<sup>12</sup> Frances Waugh was acknowledged as the editor for the first time in 1914.<sup>13</sup> The following year, 1915, Carswell and a Mrs. J. A. Moore were listed as editors.<sup>14</sup> In 1916 the periodical was reduced to an eight-page quarterly and the annual subscription rate halved to one shilling in order to entice more subscribers.<sup>15</sup> Piper had spoken of some success in obtaining subscriptions<sup>16</sup> but the Maori Mission itself ceased to be mentioned in the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* from 1916 onward, and no further references were

made to *Te Karere o te Pono* in the denominational magazines. No copies exist in church archives.

A final effort was made in 1919 to revive the Maori Mission when the North New Zealand Conference asked the AUC to adopt the work. The AUC voted to defer their response, but they took no further action.<sup>17</sup> Eventually no distinction was made regarding evangelism among the Maoris and Europeans.

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## NOTES

1. E[lliott] C. Chapman, "The Avondale Press," *Union Conference Record*, July 17, 1901, 7–9.

2. W[illiam] J. Smith, "Our Maori Mission," *Union Conference Record*, December 16, 1907, 3, 4.

3. "Periodicals," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1908), 169.

4. "Plans and Recommendations," *Union Conference Record*, September 21, 1908, 39.

5. W[illiam] R. Carswell, "Visit to Gisborne and Tolago, New Zealand," *Union Conference Record*, September 6, 1909, 4, 5.

6. F[rances N.] Waugh, "Our Island Papers," *Union Conference Record*, October 4, 1909, 8.
7. W[illiam] R. Carswell, "A Visit to Wairoa, New Zealand," *Union Conference Record*, April 12, 1909, 3, 4.
8. Read Smith, "Among the Maoris," *Union Conference Record*, January 11, 1909, 8.
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10. W[illiam] R. Carswell, "The Maori Mission, New Zealand," *Australasian Record*, September 28, 1914, 49, 50.
11. R[eginald] K. Piper, "The New Zealand Maoris," *Australasian Record*, June 29, 1914, 5, 6.
12. "Foreign Periodicals," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1912), 191.
13. "Foreign Periodicals," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1914), 193.
14. "List of Periodicals," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915), 198.
15. "List of Periodicals," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1916), 203.
16. Piper, 5, 6.
17. Australasian Union Conference minutes, March 20, 1919. Avondale College Archives, Box 545, Cooranbong, NSW (Folder: "Australasian Union Conference Minutes, 1919").

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