

Bartlett, Charles Albert (1889–1976)

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Godfrey K. Sang is a historical researcher and writer with an interest in Adventist history. He holds a B.A. in History from the University of Eastern Africa Baraton and a number of qualifications from other universities. He is a published author. He is the co-author of the book *On the Wings of a Sparrow: How the Seventh-day Adventist Church Came to Western Kenya*.

C. A. Bartlett was a notable missionary to West Africa, serving in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Ghana. Although an ordained minister, he was also an educator, founding and running several institutions in West Africa.

Early Life

Charles Albert Bartlett was born on December 4, 1889, in Northolt, Middlesex, United Kingdom. He moved to Canada as a young man and, while there, he became an Adventist at the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia.¹ He joined the British Army and served as a stretcher-bearer during World War I. After the war, he returned to Canada and attended Canadian Junior College before moving to Walla Walla College, where he graduated in 1929 with B.A. and B.Th. degrees.

Missionary Service

During the 1930 General Conference session, Bartlett was called as a missionary to West Africa in the field of education. He returned to England briefly, and in December 1930, he sailed for Nigeria to commence his work.² He connected with the South-western Nigerian Mission at Ibadan, working with W. McClements.³ He later moved to the North-west Nigeria Mission at Awtun, working with W. G. Till.⁴

In 1933, he married Jessie Ruth Bowles, who served as the secretary-treasurer of the Nigerian Union based at Ibadan.⁵ In 1939, Pastor Bartlett was appointed principal of the Bekwai Training School,⁶ located some 25 miles southwest of the ancient city of Kumasi in the Gold Coast (now Ghana).⁷ He then moved there from Nigeria with his wife, and served until 1945. Bekwai Training School, and the seminary that followed, are the forerunner of Valley View University, the premier Adventist institution in Ghana today.

In February 1945, at a camp meeting in Aba in the Gold Coast, Pastor Bartlett was ordained to the ministry together with W. J. Newman.⁸ He moved to Sierra Leone where he began a teacher-training class.⁹ In 1952, he returned to Nigeria, teaching at the Nigerian Training College at Ihie (eastern Nigeria) and also at Awtun in Oyo state, where he conducted a preparatory teacher's course for the Yoruba students.¹⁰

Later Life

In 1955, he retired from mission service and settled in Norfolk, Virginia. He was active in serving the local congregations until June 1975 when his failing sight and hearing caused him to cease his work. He passed away on December 2, 1976, and was laid to rest at the country church in Alington, Norfolk, not far from his home.¹¹

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. G. Martin Bell, "Pastor C. A. Bartlett (Obituary)," *British Advent Messenger*, February 4, 1977, 7.
2. W. E. Read, "With Our Missionaries, Outward Bound," *The Advent Survey*, December 1, 1930, 4.
3. "Southwestern Nigerian Mission," *Adventist Yearbook* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1931), 224.
4. "Northwestern Nigerian Mission," *Adventist Yearbook* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1932), 199.
5. W. E. Read, "More Calls Answered," *The Advent Survey*, October 1, 1931, 1.
6. J. I. Robison, "Items from African Missions Report," *The Advent Survey*, February 1, 1939, 5.
7. W. McClements, "Progress in Nigeria," *The Advent Survey*, November 1, 1939, 5.
8. "Mission News," *British Advent Messenger*, August 10, 1945, 2.
9. Bell, "Pastor C. A. Bartlett (Obituary)," February 4, 1977, 7.
10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

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