

# Anderson, Albert William (1868–1949)

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## LESTER DEVINE

Originally trained as a secondary history teacher, a career long Adventist educator, Lester Devine, Ed.D., has taught at elementary, secondary and higher education levels and spent more than three decades in elected educational leadership positions in two divisions of the world Church, NAD (1969-1982) and SPD (1982-2005). He completed his forty years of denominational service with a term as director of the Ellen G. White/Adventist Research Centre at Avondale University College in Australia where his life-long hobby of learning and presenting on Adventist heritage issues became his vocation.

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Albert William Anderson was an Australian pastor, editor, writer, and administrator who served the Church in the Australasian Division.

## Early Life and Marriage

Albert William Anderson was born on May 2, 1868, in Melbourne, Australia. He joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1894. He wrote that he joined the Church “by studying the truths in our denominational books for about two years prior to accepting the message, and by Bible Studies.”<sup>1</sup> He, together with his wife, was strongly influenced by Ellen G. White and Pastor G. B. Starr.<sup>2</sup> Before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist, he had been a professional musician and piano tuner.<sup>3</sup>

Anderson married Agnes Margaret Linklater in 1891.<sup>4</sup> She had been born on October 2, 1870,<sup>5</sup> the daughter of David Linklater, a businessman in Melbourne. She was the niece of the Reverend J. Linklater, of Ballarat, and Dr. S. T. Linklater of Portland, Oregon, United States of America.<sup>6</sup> Four boys and one daughter were born to this union.<sup>7</sup> The eldest son was born on July 11, 1892, and, as Second Lieutenant Albert Mendelsohn Anderson of the Australian Flying Corps, was killed in action over France in January 1918 and buried there.<sup>8</sup> Evangelist Roy Allan Anderson, who served for many years at the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, was born on March 25, 1895. Doris Estelle Anderson (later Mrs. R. G. L. Cooper) was born on September 29, 1900. Clifford



Albert W. Anderson

Photo courtesy of Adventist Heritage Centre, Australia.

Russell Anderson, who was later a highly regarded minister-physician, writer, lecturer, and radio speaker, was born on October 25, 1905. Twin brother Ormond Keith Anderson, who spent many years in public evangelism, was also born on October 25, 1905.<sup>9</sup>

## Career and Ministry

Albert Anderson entered the organized work in September 1898 when he became the first resident Adventist minister in Tasmania.<sup>10</sup> Because of his interest in the publishing work of the Church, the Echo Publishing Company soon arranged to “borrow” him for six months so that he could promote the sale and distribution of Adventist literature, a secondment that was to endure for seventeen years.<sup>11</sup> During those years he moved to Warburton when the publishing work was transferred there and was, at various times, editor of the *Signs of the Times* and *Life and Health* magazines, manager of the book and periodical departments, manager of the publishing house, and manager of the sanitarium.<sup>12</sup> He was also for a time the Religious Liberty Secretary for Victoria.<sup>13</sup> He was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1909 at the Box Hill camp meeting in Melbourne.<sup>14</sup>

A man with an incredible capacity for work, and very versatile, in his early days in Warburton he pioneered the church school there, doing some of the teaching himself, and was involved in establishing the presence of the Sanitarium Health Food Company in Warburton. He was a member of the local Shire Council and, as such, was much involved in the opening of the Warburton area to development, especially for tourism.<sup>15</sup>

In 1916, Pastor Anderson was called to work at the Australasian Union Conference office of the Church at Wahroonga on the north side of Sydney. He had already been appointed in 1914 while still at Warburton as Union Educational Secretary, Religious Liberty Secretary, and Press Bureau Secretary.<sup>16</sup> He continued in these and other roles at the Australian Union Conference office.<sup>17</sup> He was also, for a time, the editor of the *Australasian Record*,<sup>18</sup> Field Secretary,<sup>19</sup> Field Missionary Secretary,<sup>20</sup> Manager of the Signs Publishing Company once again,<sup>21</sup> and *Appeal for Missions* editor.<sup>22</sup> He remained there 33 years in vigorous leadership. During this time, he wrote prolifically on a wide range of topics. His publications include *Religious Liberty in Australia: The Attitude of Seventh-day Adventists to Religious Legislation and to Military Service* (1917), *Some Further Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation* (1928), *Through Turmoil to Peace* (1932), *The Battle for Freedom* (1938), and *The Proposed New Calendar: Will It Bring Peace or Confusion?* (1944). A. G. Stewart wrote of his editorial skills: “Pastor Anderson has been editor of the “Signs of the Times,” “Life and Health,” “The Young People’s Magazine,” “The Record,” “The Missionary Leader,” “The Interpreter,” “The Evangelist,” and the “Appeal for Missions” magazine. Of this last journal he has remained editor for twenty-two years.”<sup>23</sup>

Agnes died on August 8, 1933, at the Sydney Sanitarium.<sup>24</sup> Her service at the Wahroonga Church and later at the graveside was conducted by W. G. Turner, A. H. Piper, T. J. Bradley, W. J. Westerman, A. G. Stewart, R. E. Hare, and J. W. Kent. A very moving tribute was given by her husband and later written up in the *Australasian Record*.<sup>25</sup>

Albert Anderson met and married Hilda May Osmond on April 15, 1935. The wedding took place in the Lakemba Church, New South Wales. The service was conducted by Pastor Arthur Allum, who had been a long-time missionary to China. Hilda Osmond had been born at Kangarilla, South Australia, in June 1889. She had graduated from Avondale College and worked as a Bible worker and pianist at the Sydney Sanitarium, and had been an English teacher at Longburn College, New Zealand. She was an accomplished musician.<sup>26</sup>

Albert died in his eighty-second year at the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital on Sunday, September 18, 1949.<sup>27</sup> Officiating at the burial service at the Wahroonga Church were Pastors C. H. Watson, S. V. Stratford, R. E. Hare, E. H. Guilliard, A. H. White, R. Tudor, F. A. Mote, and W. E. Battye.<sup>28</sup>

Hilda Anderson died many years later in the Charles Harrison Memorial Home, Cooranbong, New South Wales, on September 21, 1980.<sup>29</sup>

## Legacy

Self-educated, Albert Anderson was highly versatile, a kindly counselor, and an intelligent man who was a sympathetic friend and had a cheerful demeanor. He was much loved as a pastor, and highly esteemed as a leader. Albert is particularly remembered for his Religious Liberty work because largely through his efforts, the federal constitution for the Commonwealth of Australia was amended to make provision for Religious Freedom in Australia, the securing of Sabbath rights for young men in military training, and the provision of noncombatant service for them as well.<sup>30</sup> Pastor Andrew G. Stewart said of him, "His rare gift of understanding of the fundamental principles of religious liberty and the distinctive spheres of church and state, for which he so valiantly contended, made him a counselor much sought after in private and in public."<sup>31</sup>

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6. Piper, "Sister A. W. Anderson," 6.
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10. Albert William Anderson Biographical Information, "Biographical Information Blank"; W. G. Turner, "In Memoriam," *Australasian Record*, October 10, 1949, 6.

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13. "The Victorian Conference," *Australasian Record*, March 18, 1907, 7; A. W. Anderson, "Victoria," *Australasian Record*, October 1, 1906, 38.
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21. Ibid.
22. "Nominations," *Australasian Record*, September 21, 1936, 31.
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30. Turner, "In Memoriam."

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