

Grundset, Ole J. (1886–1957) and Anna Elvira (Sorensen) (1888–1950)

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.

Ole J. and Anna E. Grundset were among the earliest Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to evangelize Manchuria.

Early Years

Ole, son of Johan and Betsy Hansdatter Grundset, was born on November 17, 1886, near Barnesville, Minnesota. Both parents were Norwegian immigrants to America, farming in the rural west of Minnesota. Johan had married Ann Iversdatter and had three children: Hans (b. 1871), Ina (b. 1872) and Anol (b. 1877). Ann passed away and in 1884 Johan married Betsy Hansdatter. The children from the second marriage were Hilda (b. 1885), male twins (b. 1886 but did not survive), Ole (b. 1886), Bennie Luverne (b. 1888), Anna Marie (b. 1891) and Henry (b. 1892).¹ If Scandinavian custom was followed Ole's second name would be Johanson, that is, son of Johan, but his full name does not appear in available documents.

The Barnesville elementary school provided Ole with his early education. He advanced to Maplewood Industrial School in Maple Plain, Minnesota (1904-1907). He was baptized in 1907 at St. Cloud, Minnesota, by Elder C. L. Emerson. He continued his education at Sheyenne River Academy (1907-1908) at Harvey, North Dakota, and Union College, Nebraska (1908-1910). During the summers of 1908 and 1909 he canvassed the books *Great Controversy* and *Daniel and the Revelation* in North Dakota in order to finance his school fees. From 1910 through 1912 Ole attended the Danish-Norwegian Seminary at Hutchinson, Minnesota, and then completed his education with a year at the Washington Foreign Mission Seminary (1912-1913).²

On June 12, 1913, Ole married Anna Elvira Sorensen of Yorkville, Wisconsin. She was of Danish heritage, born June 22, 1888, to Jacob and Kate Hansen Sorensen.³ Her educational path tracked closely alongside Ole's, from Union College (1907-1910) to the Danish-Norwegian Seminary (1910-1911) and the Washington Foreign Missionary Seminary (1912-1913). During the summer of 1909, while he was canvassing *Daniel and the*

Revelation in Minnesota, she was doing the same in Wisconsin. For the 1911-1912 school year, Anna taught church school in Raymond, Wisconsin.⁴

The Manchurian Mission

Soon after their marriage Ole and Anna were appointed to mission work in Manchuria. On arrival they spent some months learning the language.⁵ The Danish-Norwegian church members in America had accepted responsibility for the Manchurian territory as their specific project for financial support. The first recipients of their largesse were the Grundsets together with Bernhard and Bertha Petersen.⁶ While at the language school in Shanghai Ole gave instruction to a class of 25 trainee canvassers, the first time the mission had offered salesmanship lessons.⁷

In October 1914 the Grundsets and Petersens boarded the steamer “Kobe Maru” at Shanghai bound for Dairen to the north. They continued their journey by train to their destination, Mukden (now Shenyang, Liaoning Province).⁸ Petersen was designated director of the newly organized Manchurian Mission and Ole Grundset served as secretary-treasurer for the first two years.⁹ They conducted evangelistic meetings and generated some interest in their message. In less than a year, on July 12, 1915, their first converts, five in number, were baptized in the nearby Hun River.¹⁰

A year later Ole and Anna went further north to pioneer another station at Changchun, Jilin Province.¹¹ Once again, a small group responded and six individuals were baptized initially.¹² Anna Grundset was fully engaged in the mission work and served as head of the Young People’s Department for approximately three years.¹³ Along with his pastoral and evangelistic work, Ole took charge of the Sabbath School department in 1918 and was ordained to gospel ministry during the same year.¹⁴

In a restructuring that took place in March 1919, the Manchurian Mission became the Manchurian Union Mission, made up of two local missions—Fiengtien and Kirin. O. J. Grundset was appointed director of the Kirin Mission, with headquarters at Changchun.¹⁵ Military conflict between the provincial warlords of Kirin and Liaoning was a recurring hazard for mission advances but steady progress was evident.¹⁶ Statistics for June 1921 spoke of five organized churches in Manchuria with a total baptized membership of 110. Sabbath School members numbered 214.¹⁷

Medical Work in America

After eight years in Manchuria, Ole and Anna returned to the United States with their two daughters, both born in China—Ruby (b. 1916) and Pearl (b. 1921).¹⁸ Ole studied at the College of Medical Evangelists, Loma Linda, California, intending to return to the Far East as a medical missionary.¹⁹ He graduated with a medical degree but in the meantime Anna developed severe arthritis, and they sought relief in a warm, dry climate. For this reason,

Dr. Grundset established his medical practice at Imperial Valley, California, a remote lakeside oasis at the Mexican border. Three years later, with little sign of improvement in Anna's condition, the Grundsets opted to return to Minnesota. Ole practiced at Montrose, west of Minneapolis. He generously contributed funds and carpentry skills for the construction of the Maple Plain Church.²⁰

Anna Grundset passed away on August 27, 1950, in Hennepin County, Minnesota, and was laid to rest in the little cemetery alongside the Raymond Seventh-day Adventists Church in Wisconsin.²¹ She was 62 years of age. Dr. Ole J. Grundset died at 70 on June 30, 1957, and rests with Anna in the Raymond church cemetery.²²

SOURCES

"Anna Elvira Sorensen Grundset." *Find A Grave*. Memorial ID 35858676, April 14, 2009. Accessed September 8, 2022. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35858676/anna-elvira-grundset>

Selmon, A. C. "Notes." *Asiatic Division Mission News*, August 1, 1914.

"Brother O.J. Grundset writes from Manchuria . . ." *Asiatic Division Mission News*, June 1, 1916.

Crisler, C. C. "Notes from Spring Council." *Asiatic Division Outlook*, March 1, 1919

Crisler, Clarence C. "Since the Close of the General Conference." *Asiatic Division Outlook*, August 15, 1922.

"Dr. O. J. Grundset." *Northern Union Outlook*, July 16, 1957.

Evans, I. H. "The Manchurian Union Meeting." *Asiatic Division Outlook*, June 1, 1919.

Evans, Irwin H. "Laboring Under Difficulties in China." *ARH*, March 10, 1921.

Grundset, Ole and Anna. "Welcome." *Asiatic Division Newsletter*, October 1, 1913.

Grundset, Ole J. and Anna E. Secretariat Missionary Files, RG 21, Record 114916. General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, MD (GCA).

"Ole J. Grundset." *Family Search*. Accessed September 6, 2022.

<https://www.familysearch.org/tree/pedigree/landscape/GMG1-MD6>

"Ole J. Grundset." *Find A Grave*. Memorial ID 35858557, April 14, 2009. Accessed September 6, 2022.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35858667/ole-j-grundset>.

Neergaard, T. N. "Mrs. Anna Elvira Grundset." *Northern Union Outlook*, October 10, 1950

Petersen, Bernhard. "First Baptism in Manchuria." *Asiatic Division Mission News*, August 15, 1915.

Petersen, Bernhard "From Shanghai to Mukden." *Asiatic Division Mission News*, November 1, 1914.

Petersen, Bernhard. "Manchuria." *Asiatic Division Outlook*, March 15, 1918, March 15, 1919.

Petersen, Bernhard. "Progress in Manchuria." *Asiatic Division Outlook*, September 15, 1917.

Petersen, Bernhard and Bertha. "En Route to Manchuria." *Asiatic Division Mission News*, April 1, 1914.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbooks. General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Online Archives.

<https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/Forms/Allitems.aspx>.

"Statistical Summary." *Asiatic Division Outlook*, November 15, 1921.

NOTES

1. "Ole J. Grundset," *FamilySearch*, accessed September 6, 2022, <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/pedigree/landscape/GMG1-MD6>.
2. Ole J. Grundset Biographical Information Blank, September 14, 1914, Secretariat Missionary Files, RG 21, Record 114916, GCA.
3. "Dr. O. J. Grundset," *Northern Union Outlook*, July 16, 1957, 6.
4. T.N. Neergaard, "Mrs. Anna Elvira Grundset," *Northern Union Outlook*, October 10, 1950, 11; Anna E. Grundset Biographical Information Blank, September 14, 1914, Secretariat Missionary Files, RG 21, Record 114916, GCA.
5. Ole and Anna Grundset, "Welcome," *Asiatic Division Newsletter*, October 1, 1913, 3-4.
6. B[ernhard] and Bertha Petersen, "En Route to Manchuria," *Asiatic Division Mission News*, April 1, 1914, 3.
7. A.C. Selmon, "Notes," *Asiatic Division Mission News*, August 1, 1914, 6.
8. Bernhard Petersen, "From Shanghai to Mukden," *Asiatic Division Mission News*, November 1, 1914, 5-6.
9. "Manchurian Mission," in *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* for 1915 and 1916.
10. Bernhard Petersen, "First Baptism in Manchuria," *Asiatic Division Mission News*, August 15, 1915, 2.
11. "Brother O.J. Grundset writes from Manchuria . . .," *Asiatic Division Mission News*, June 1, 1916, 4.
12. Bernhard Petersen, "Progress in Manchuria," *Asiatic Division Outlook*, September 15, 1917, 2.
13. "Manchurian Mission," in *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* for 1917-1918.
14. "Manchurian Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* for 1919.
15. C. C. Crisler, "Notes from Spring Council," *Asiatic Division Outlook*, March 1, 1919, supplemental news sheet; I.H. Evans, "The Manchurian Union Meeting," *Asiatic Division Outlook*, June 1, 1919.

16. Irwin H. Evans, "Laboring Under Difficulties in China," *ARH*, March 10, 1921, 7-16.
 17. "Statistical Summary," *Asiatic Division Outlook*, November 15, 1921, 6-7.
 18. "United States Census, 1940," *FamilySearch*, accessed October 24, 2022, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KSJB-MV7>.
 19. Clarence C. Crisler, "Since the Close of the General Conference," *Asiatic Division Outlook*, August 15, 1922, 3-4.
 20. "Dr. O.J. Grundset," *Northern Union Outlook*, July 16, 1957, 6.
 21. "Anna Elvira (Sorensen) Grundset," *Find A Grave*, Memorial ID 35858676, April 14, 2009, accessed September 8, 2022, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35858676/anna-elvira-grundset>.
 22. "Ole J. Grundset," *Find A Grave*, Memorial ID 35858557, April 14, 2009, accessed September 6, 2022, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35858667/ole-j-grundset>.
-

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000