

Allbon, Rhae

(1885–1927)

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.

Rhae Allbon was qualified as both a government and church school teacher. She taught on the campus of the Australasian Missionary College, Avondale from the end of 1908 until the beginning of 1927. For most of that time she was head of the English Department at the College.

Rhae Allbon was born in Bromley, southeast London, on May 2, 1885, to Francis and Clara Allbon.¹ There were eventually seven children in her family.² When Allbon was scarcely a year old the family emigrated to Australia and settled in Brisbane, Queensland, where she received her education. Following

graduation, Allbon qualified as a government schoolteacher. At that time, the family had removed to Warwick, then a small country town southwest of Brisbane. Seventh-day Adventist evangelists conducted a tent crusade at Warwick beginning in January 1904. Despite strident opposition from another church group, they acquired about ten initial converts among whom was the Allbon family.³ Henry Allbon, Rhae Allbon's grandfather and a leading Plymouth Brethren in the district, was the first member of the family to join the Adventist Church.⁴

Rhae Allbon's father, Francis Allbon, tried his hand at canvassing *Home Handbook* in Warwick during 1904. He had some success but did not continue the work.⁵ The family attended their first camp meeting in October 1904



Rhae Allbon

Photo courtesy of South Pacific Division Heritage Centre.

at Laidley. It was at this function that Rhae Allbon met Dr. Daniel Kress who persuaded her that it would be a noble work to teach in church schools rather than the government education system.⁶ Subsequently, in early 1907 she arrived on the campus of the Avondale School for Christian Workers to study her new-found faith more deeply. At the same time, she was given charge of grades 1 to 3 in the elementary school⁷

In 1908, Allbon graduated from the teacher's course at Avondale, now doubly qualified as both a government and church schoolteacher. She was made principal of the elementary school on the Avondale campus, an institution where the trainee teachers did their practical classes. She held this important role until 1912. In 1913, Allbon became head of the English Department at Australasian Missionary College. She held this position for the rest of her life.⁸

Allbon became seriously ill towards the end of 1926 and died on February 16, 1927. She was buried in the Avondale Adventist Cemetery the following day according to her wishes. She wanted to be close to the institution that she had served with distinction throughout her career. Her teaching skills and personal piety left a marked impression on all her students and peers.⁹

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. C. V[ere] Bell, "Miss Rhae Allbon," *Australasian Record*, March 7, 1927, 6.

2. W[illiam] H. Pascoe, "Clara Allbon," *Australasian Record*, August 8, 1932, 7.

3. R[ollin] D. Quinn, "Warwick, Queensland," *Union Conference Record*, April 1, 1904, 3; C. V[ere] Bell, "Miss Rhae Allbon," *Australasian Record*, March 7, 1927, 6.

4. Rhæ Allbon, "Henry Allbon," *Union Conference Record*, July 15, 1907, 7.
5. E.g., "Monthly Summary of Australasian Canvassing Work," *Union Conference Record*, August 1, 1904, 6-7.
6. S[yvester] W. Nellis, "Queensland Conference," *Union Conference Record*, November 15, 1904, 2-4; C. V[ere] Bell, "Mis Rhæ Allbon," *Australasian Record*, March 7, 1927, 8.
7. L[ewis] A. Hoopes, "Opening of the Avondale School, 1907," *Union Conference Record*, January 21, 1907, 8.
8. C. V[ere] Bell, "Miss Rhæ Allbon," *Australasian Record*, March 7, 1927, 6.
9. Ibid.

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