

# Bye, Edwin Einar Edward (1888–1927)

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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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Edwin Bye began his ministry in Minnesota and later served for six years in departmental and fieldwork in Manchuria before his premature death.

## Early Years

Edwin Bye was born in Sognedalen, Norway, on November 22, 1888, to Jorgen and Regine (Skredsvig) Bye.<sup>1</sup> He was the eldest of their children and had five sisters. They were named Sarah “Jean” (b. 1892), Caroline Borghild (b. 1893), Joyce Ingrid (b. 1899), Ida Margaret (b. 1904), and Esther Regina (b. 1907).<sup>2</sup> At the age of 11, Edwin accompanied his family to America, living first in Wisconsin and then settling in Hutchinson, Minnesota.

In his teenage years, Edwin trained as a mechanical and structural draughtsman, enhancing his qualifications by studying mathematics through the International Correspondence School. He was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church by Elder Lewis Christian in Minneapolis in August 1910. Abandoning his profession, he worked as a canvasser in the summers to pay his way through three years of study at the Danish-Norwegian SDA Seminary in Hutchinson, which was near Minneapolis. In 1914, he furthered his ministerial preparation by attending evening classes at the University of Minnesota to improve his public speaking abilities.<sup>3</sup>



Edwin Einar Edward Bye family.

Photo courtesy of Cindy. Source: *Find a Grave*,

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/27110195/thora-may-bye>

## Service at Home and Abroad

Edwin commenced work in the Minnesota Tract Society office in June 1914 and continued in that role for two years.<sup>4</sup> On January 2, 1916, he married Thora May Henricksen at Blue Earth in southern Minnesota.<sup>5</sup> Thora and Edwin had met at the Seminary before she transferred to train as a nurse at Hinsdale Sanitarium. Soon after their marriage, they were appointed to nurture the church community at Ada in northwest Minnesota.<sup>6</sup>

In 1918, Edwin was appointed to serve as the secretary/treasurer of the Manchurian Union Mission.<sup>7</sup> They sailed from America, together with infant daughter Ruth, on July 23.<sup>8</sup> For two years he was located in Mukden in northern China. In addition to his designated role, he accepted the portfolio of field agent in charge of the canvassers.<sup>9</sup> For this reason, he was a delegate at a major Bookmen's Convention held in Shanghai in February 1920.<sup>10</sup> In mid-1920, he transferred into evangelistic fieldwork,<sup>11</sup> cultivating a church community in the city of Changchun in the Jilin Province.<sup>12</sup> Their second daughter, Mildred, was born there in December 1922.<sup>13</sup> At the time, Edwin was also serving as the Sabbath School secretary for the Manchurian Union Mission.<sup>14</sup>

During the Spring Council of the Far Eastern Division, April 1923, Edwin was elected to be the Sabbath School secretary for the South, Central, and West China Union missions.<sup>15</sup> He held the position for only a few months before he showed symptoms of a serious illness. They returned to America in 1924 and settled in Beaumont in southern California so they could take advantage of the warm, dry climate. Edwin took part in church activities whenever he was able.

He had prepared his notes to preach the service on June 25, 1927, but sadly was too weak to stand and passed away that same Sabbath afternoon. He rests in the local Beaumont Cemetery.<sup>16</sup> On May 29, 1934, Thora also passed away prematurely and was laid to rest with Edwin.<sup>17</sup>

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## NOTES

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