Bishop, Frederick William (1864–1929)

MATÍAS H. LÓPEZ
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Frederick William Bishop, English missionary, one of the first canvassers and missionaries in Chile. He was sent to South America by the Foreign Mission Board of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He led many people to conversion, from which the main pioneers and pillars for the growth of the work emerged.
Early Years and Conversion

The son of Eduard Bishop and Elydia Carl, Frederick was born on July 17, 1864, in Bristol, England! At the age of six he moved to Cleveland, United States, with his parents. They remained in that place until he was 16, when they moved to California. While working in San Francisco, California, he received the first invitation to attend the Adventist meetings. Sometime later, he was invited to a family house to study the Bible. There they taught him about the law of God and the Sabbath.\textsuperscript{2} In California he learned the Bible truths, adopted Adventism, and was baptized at the age of 28.\textsuperscript{3} Shortly after his conversion he attended Colegio Healdsburg (Pacific Union College) in California for two years.\textsuperscript{4} During vacation he used to go canvassing to pay for his study expenses.\textsuperscript{5} When he felt better prepared, he volunteered to work for others where the Foreign Mission Board of the General Conference decided it was the right place for him.

Pioneer in Chile (1894–1897)

One day while attending college, Bishop was approached by F. L. Mead, a representative of the Foreign Mission Board, who gave him the opportunity him to go canvassing in Chile. In October 1894 he went to Chile with Thomas H. Davis (1866–1911).\textsuperscript{6} Together they left with just a few dollars, some bags with books, personal clothes, and some blankets. The trip wasn't very comfortable, because he had dizziness throughout it, and some of the transportation they used was the same used to transport cattle. They went through Mexico and stayed two days in Panama. There he sold his pocket Bible, since they had little money.\textsuperscript{7} On December 8, 1894, after traveling 50 days, they arrived at the harbor of Valparaiso, Chile.\textsuperscript{8} They were welcomed by Clair A. Nowlin (1865–1961), who had been doing a work similar to what they were about to do, but with little success.\textsuperscript{9}

Bishop and Davis knew little of the Spanish language when they arrived in Chile, but together they learned it using the Bible as a base textbook.\textsuperscript{10} When he started to understand Spanish better, Bishop started his work canvassing among English-speaking families in Valparaiso with an English book entitled \textit{Bible Readings for the Home Circle} (Lecturas bíblicas para el círculo del hogar).\textsuperscript{11} In 1895 he decided to go to work in Iquique, northern Chile. While traveling on the ship from Valparaiso, he shared the Adventist message with William Springer, who became the first canvasser in Chile. Then he visited the town of Huara, where he found a tinsmith named Julián Ocampo to whom he presented some pages of the book \textit{Patriarchs and Prophets}, by Ellen G. White. Later Ocampo became an ordained minister of the Adventist Church.

In 1896, with a more fluent Spanish than he had when he arrived two years earlier, he decided to go canvassing with Thomas Davis in the city of Santiago, capital of Chile. Without finding where to stay, they were housed at the home of a Baptist canvasser named Enrique Balada. After many conversations Balada and his wife accepted the Adventist message.\textsuperscript{12}

Marriage, Family, and Ministry

On May 19, 1897, Bishop married Petronila Gabriela Neumann Praast (1872–1949), who had accepted Adventism a few months earlier in Los Ángeles, Chile, thanks to the work of Enrique Balada. Petronila was born on March 18, 1872, in Los Angeles, Chile, and died in the same town on July 28, 1949, at the age of 77. Her parents were Wilhelm August Julius Neumann Pütchcr (1834–1883) and Marie Dorothee Henriette Praast Wolf (b. 1828). From Frederick and Petronila Bishop's marriage eight children were born, three boys and five girls: Benjamín Federico Bishop August Julius Neumann Püttcher (1834–1883) and Marie Dorothee Henriette Praast Wolf (b. 1828). From Frederick and Petronila Bishop's marriage eight children were born, three boys and five girls: Benjamín Federico Bishop (1890–1958), who married German Nohke; Guillermina Enriqueta Bishop (1906–1988), who married Carlos Eugenio Walter Vyhmeister; Tomás Antonio Bishop (1909–1987), who married Estela Sofia Gerber; Mary Esther Bishop (1911–1983), who married Francisco Rodríguez; and Flora Ruth Bishop (1914–1996), who married Carlos Luis Araya.\textsuperscript{13}

In 1901 Bishop built a chapel in Los Ángeles, Chile, where Saturday services were held.\textsuperscript{14} He also continued to be an occasional canvasser, touring the most southern areas of the world.\textsuperscript{15} Among other books in Spanish, he used to sell \textit{Patriarchs and Prophets}.\textsuperscript{16} In 1909 he worked in Punta Arenas, on the Strait of Magellan, with many difficulties.\textsuperscript{17} Later he canvassed among English immigrants from Tierra del Fuego.\textsuperscript{18} In 1910 he returned to work on the coasts of northern Chile, between Iquique and Valparaiso.\textsuperscript{19} He did very well in Antofagasta, where he ran out of books much sooner than he expected.\textsuperscript{20} In 1913 his mother, who would live with him until her death in 1917, arrived in Chile.\textsuperscript{21}

In his last years he recognized that he did little canvassing since he established his family, although he accompanied and helped other workers. He worked hard with his family in Los Angeles. His children were engaged in God's work and steadfast in church.\textsuperscript{22} Bishop had heart problems, especially during the last two years of his life.\textsuperscript{23} Frederick W. Bishop died suddenly in Los Ángeles, Chile, on January 31, 1929, at the age of 64, from a heart disease.\textsuperscript{24} He was buried in the cemetery of that city.\textsuperscript{25}

Together with Thomas H. Davis, Frederick W. Bishop will be remembered as the first Adventist missionary to serve in Chile. He was a dedicated and determined canvasser and evangelist who laid the foundation for Adventism in that country.
SOURCES

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NOTES

1. To consult about his family data, see “Árbol genealógico” [Family Tree], accessed May 30, 2018

2. Leopoldo Zambra Ríos, No con ejército, no con fuerza, sino con su Espíritu [Not With an Army, Not With Force, but With His Spirit]. (Santiago, Chile: Adventist Book Center, 1994), 33, 34.


5. Zambra Ríos, 34.

6. Ibid., 34.


8. Plenc, Misioneros en Sudamérica [Missionaries in South America], 64.


10.


15. Plenc, *Misioneros en Sudamérica* [Missionaries in South America], 64.


22. Ibid.

23. Zamba Rios, 35.
