

Winter, Charles Ernest (1914–1982) and Betty Louise (Schaefer) (1915–2010)

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.

Charles Winter was an outstanding science teacher and microbiologist who served two mission terms in China under hazardous war conditions. He taught science at Southern Junior College and Washington Missionary College. The last thirty years of his career were at Loma Linda University, teaching and researching in the Department of Microbiology.

Early Years

Charles Ernest Winter was born on September 9, 1914, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. His father, Ernest Winter, was of German heritage, and his mother, Christina (Senning) Winter, was born in America. Christina was a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and raised Charles and his brother, William, in the faith from childhood. Charles was baptized by Elder Claude Lickey in Colorado Springs in 1934.¹

For the first eight grades of schooling, Charles attended church school. He then went to the state high school at Colorado Springs, advancing to Colorado College to earn a Bachelor's Degree, then to the University of Nebraska for his Master's Degrees in Science.² During his studies, he married Betty Louise Schaefer in Reno, Nevada, on June 15, 1937.³

Career

Following his marriage, he began to think more seriously about the direction of his life. He concluded he would like to teach science in Adventist church institutions. To prepare himself, he enrolled at Union College, Nebraska, in the summer of 1938, taking Bible courses and generating contacts with church officials. At the same time, he worked as a laboratory assistant, impressing college staff with his good character and diligence. He was also known as a practical man, able to build and paint houses and do the electrical wiring.⁴ In less than twelve months, he and Betty accepted an appointment to China for mission service.⁵ They sailed from San Francisco on

August 17, 1939.⁶

Incoming missionaries were obliged to attend several months of language studies in Shanghai.⁷ On completion of this assignment, Charles and Betty went to the China Training Institute for Charles to begin teaching physics and mathematics. The institution was temporarily situated in Hong Kong because of deteriorating war conditions.⁸ Betty wrote to homeland headquarters, "We were no more than settled in Hong Kong when our first evacuation scare came...."⁹ Conditions became more dangerous, and Betty joined others in a scramble to flee. She left Hong Kong on May 5, 1941,¹⁰ aboard the S.S. President Pierce, bound for San Francisco.¹¹

Charles chose to stay in Hong Kong. He wrote to Betty, telling of his welfare and volunteer activities. He had food, water, and living quarters in an abandoned French convent while he drove trucks carrying supplies for the local hospital. The Japanese tolerated his activities, but eventually he became part of a group rounded up for a prisoner exchange.¹² He was put aboard the M.S. Gripsholm to make the circuitous route from Hong Kong to New York via Lorenço Marques (now Maputo), Mozambique, and Rio de Janeiro. He arrived safely in August 1942.¹³ After the War, the British government awarded Charles a bravery medal.¹⁴

During his first academic year after returning from China, Charles taught biology at Southern Junior College, Collegedale, Tennessee. In 1943, he transferred to Washington Missionary College, Takoma Park, Maryland, near Washington, D.C., to be the associate professor of Biology.¹⁵ He specialized in bacteriology.¹⁶ At the same time, he began studies at the University of Maryland. In the academic year of 1945/1946, he received a fellowship from the university and further financial assistance from the General Conference to enable him to study full-time.¹⁷ In 1946, he was awarded his Ph.D.¹⁸

When the China Training Institute re-opened in Hong Kong in the summer of 1947, Charles and Betty returned to Hong Kong. Charles taught specialized bacteriology to pre-medical students.¹⁹ Once again, war conditions cut short their stay. They were forced out of China and arrived back in America on July 4, 1950.²⁰

It became clear in 1949 that expatriates may have to leave China. Offers of appointments for Charles began circulating in the homeland because of his excellent credentials.²¹ He eventually accepted a teaching and research role in the Department of Bacteriology at the College of Medical Evangelists, now Loma Linda University, California. He arrived at the institution in 1951, and his expertise and gracious nature became well known. He was appointed chair of the Microbiology Department in 1960 and held that position until his retirement in 1981. He was chairman of the Loma Linda University Church Building Committee. He also took a special interest in the Chinese Church on campus.²²

Final Tribute

Charles was not only dedicated to science, but he was a loyal supporter and served as an elder for the Loma Linda University Church. He and Betty were blessed with two daughters, Robin and Christie.²³

Charles had taken retirement only twelve months before he suddenly passed away. On the evening of June 22, 1982, he did not return home at his usual time, and Betty raised the alarm with the local Police Department. He was found about midnight in Riverside, having suffered a major heart attack.²⁴ Approximately 300 people attended his funeral. He was laid to rest in Montecito Memorial Park, Colton, California, among the cypress and magnolia trees.²⁵ Betty passed away at the age of 94 on January 30, 2010. She rests alongside Charles.²⁶

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