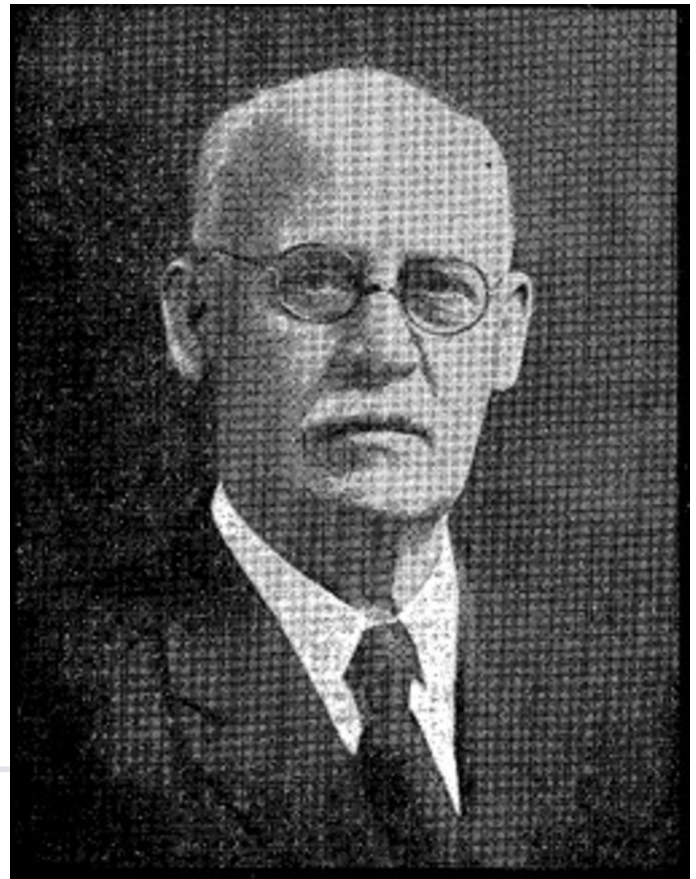


# Woodward, Charles Nathaniel (1864–1934) and Nancy “Nannie” Letta (Spikes) (1866–1946)



C. N. Woodward.

From *Southwestern Union Record*, April 25, 1934, page 1.

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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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Charles Woodward served in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a secretary and treasurer in Texas, China, and the Philippine Islands. His wife, Nannie, worked alongside him as a Sabbath School department leader and fellow missionary.

## Early Years

Charles, the eldest child of Stephen and Lottie Woodward, was born on January 13, 1864, at Burnett, Wisconsin. His father died prematurely, forcing Charles to cut short his schooling and become the breadwinner for the family. He trained as a railway telegrapher, beginning at St. Peter, Minnesota, and advancing to a position in the main office of the company. He retained his role until he joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1887, resigning in order to observe the Saturday Sabbath.<sup>1</sup> In 1884 he had married Ella Kendall at Sleepy Eye Lake,

Minnesota, but the union ended in divorce. They had one child, a daughter named Lottie, after his mother.<sup>2</sup>

## Church Career

Soon after leaving the railway company, Charles was appointed as the secretary/treasurer of the Minnesota Tract Society, a position he held until 1894 when he transferred to Atlanta, Georgia, to work in the branch office of the Review and Herald Publishing Company.<sup>3</sup> While in Georgia he married Nancy "Nannie" Letta Spikes on March 19, 1895, in Hall County.<sup>4</sup> In April 1898 Charles was appointed as the secretary/treasurer of the Texas Conference and the Texas Tract Society. When the Southwestern Union Conference was organized in 1902 with headquarters in Keene, Texas, he was appointed its first secretary/treasurer. He remained in this role until 1910, interrupted briefly in 1906 when he served as president, an unusual turn of events in view of the fact he was not an ordained minister. In 1910 he moved to College Place, Washington, to be an auditor for the North Pacific Union Conference.<sup>5</sup> Their stay in Texas was marked with the sadness of losing their nine-year-old daughter, Fannie, with diphtheria.<sup>6</sup>

In 1911 Charles was appointed to the China Union Mission headquarters in Shanghai as treasurer.<sup>7</sup> He and Nannie, with teenage daughter Mary, sailed from America on December 27, 1911.<sup>8</sup> Approximately twelve months later Charles was reappointed to be secretary/treasurer of the Asiatic Division, still located in Shanghai.<sup>9</sup> The broad territory of his responsibility extended beyond China to encompass Korea, Japan, the Philippine Islands, and the Malay Peninsula, growing later to include the East Indies. The news sheet published by the Asiatic Division office documented his wide-ranging travels to places such as Hong Kong,<sup>10</sup> Japan,<sup>11</sup> and Korea in order to audit financial records.<sup>12</sup> In 1914 Nannie accepted the role of Sabbath School secretary for the Asiatic Division. As a family group, they would travel to various sections of the field, Charles to do auditing and Nannie to promote her Sabbath School department.<sup>13</sup>

The Woodward family transferred in 1916 to the Philippine Islands. Charles served as the manager and treasurer of the Philippine Publishing House in eastern Manila<sup>14</sup> and was a member of the Philippine Academy board.<sup>15</sup> Daughter Mary was in charge of the Primary (Elementary) Department of the Academy.<sup>16</sup> Nannie accepted the role of Sabbath School secretary for the Philippine Union Mission and was a member of the executive committee.<sup>17</sup> Prior to returning to America in 1921 Charles served briefly in the additional capacity as treasurer of the Philippine Union Mission.<sup>18</sup>

A short time was taken for rest and recuperation when the Woodward's returned to their homeland. They made the sentimental choice of living at Keene, Texas, the scene of earlier labors and where they lost Fannie. From 1923 through 1928 Charles conducted the printing department at Southwestern Junior College, capitalizing on his experience in the Philippine Islands.<sup>19</sup> He also edited the *Southwestern Union Record* until just before his death.<sup>20</sup> In 1933, in addition to his other work, he accepted the role of manager of the bag factory in the

Industrial Department of Southwestern Junior College and was a member of their board of directors. Mary was the critic teacher in charge of Grades 1 through 3 at the same institution.<sup>21</sup>

## Postscript

Charles worked until a week before his death. He passed away at his home in Keene on April 22, 1934 and was laid to rest in the local Keene Cemetery.<sup>22</sup> Nannie passed away on December 13, 1946, and rests in the same cemetery.<sup>23</sup>

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