



James Pascoe

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Pascoe, James (1879–1942)

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.

James Pascoe served the Adventist Church for over 30 years in various capacities, including president of South New Zealand and Victoria Conferences.

Early Life, Education, and Marriage

James Pascoe was born on October 8, 1879 in Macetown,¹ originally a gold rush outpost in the mountains of southern New Zealand. His parents were Simon and Caroline (Martin) Pascoe who raised their family on a remote sheep farm in the mountains where the snow covered slopes in winter gave way to grass in the temperate months. Their children were Simon (b.1867), Charles (b.1870), Albert (b.1872), William Henry (b.1874), Emma Jane (b.1875) and James (b.1879).²

As a teenager James accepted Seventh-day Adventism under the ministry of Elder Eugene Farnsworth.³ He remained working on the family farm until he sailed to Australia and in October 1905 ventured to try canvassing *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* in the rural town of Maffra, Victoria.⁴ He returned to canvassing in Victoria during the southern summer of 1906⁵ after spending the year at the Avondale School for Christian Workers in Cooranbong, New South Wales. His earnings helped to pay his school fees. After two more years of study he graduated from the Teacher's (Normal) Course in 1908.⁶

Ministry

Immediately after his graduation James resumed canvassing, selling *Home and Health* in the Richmond River area of northern New South Wales, instead of accepting a teaching appointment.⁷ He married Ellen Dawn in Brisbane, Queensland, on March 22, 1909.⁸ Following their marriage Ellen did some canvassing in Brisbane⁹ but it is unclear how James occupied himself. When their first child, Ernest James, was born in 1910 they were located in the sheep-farming region of Goulbourn, New South Wales.¹⁰ Later, the family returned to New Zealand and James began canvassing again in September 1912.¹¹ He continued in this role with good results for more than three years until in 1916 he was appointed to the North New Zealand Conference evangelistic staff.¹² He assisted with crusades in Gisborne¹³ and Taranaki.¹⁴

In 1923 James was ordained to the ministry in Auckland.¹⁵ The following year, 1924, he transferred to the South New Zealand Conference and nurtured the Greymouth members on the west coast.¹⁶ He remained there for two years and then cared for the Invercargill church, the most southerly in the world field.¹⁷ Early in the 1930s James was recalled to the North New Zealand Conference to minister in the Wanganui area¹⁸ and in mid-1934 he

returned to the Gisborne church.¹⁹

James transitioned from pastoral care to local conference administration in 1937 when he accepted the presidency of his homeland South New Zealand Conference. At times he also held the portfolios of Home Missions, Education and Religious Liberty.²⁰

Last Years

To this point James had served his entire career in New Zealand except for a few months canvassing in Australia. A major change came in 1940 when he was appointed to the presidency of the Victorian Conference. At the same time he held the responsibility of the Education Department.²¹ Two years into his leadership he became gravely ill and despite medical help and Ellen's constant care he passed away the day after his sixty-third birthday, October 9, 1942. He was laid to rest in the Presbyterian section of the Box Hill Cemetery, suburban Melbourne. His closest mourning family members were Ellen and their children, Ernest James (b.1910), Hilda Vespa Hollingworth (b.1912), Cyril (b.1915) and Gwenneth Thrift (b.1924).²²

Ellen found solace in the Adventist community at Warburton, outer Melbourne. She remarried on May 10, 1956, in the Melbourne home of her youngest daughter, Gwenneth. The bridegroom was widower John Henry Mills who had served as Queensland Conference secretary/treasurer for twenty-five years. They settled in his Brisbane home²³ but their happiness was relatively brief because John passed away suddenly on August 13, 1958,²⁴ and a month later, on September 15, 1958, Ellen also passed away. They were both laid to rest in the Lutwyche cemetery, suburban North Brisbane.²⁵

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NOTES

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4. "Monthly Summary of Australasian Canvassing Work," *Australasian Record*, December 17, 1906, 6.
5. E.g., "Monthly Summary of Australasian Canvassing Work," *Australasian Record*, January 7, 1907, 5.
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25. D[avid] Sibley, "Ellen Mills," *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey*, October 27, 1958, 14.

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