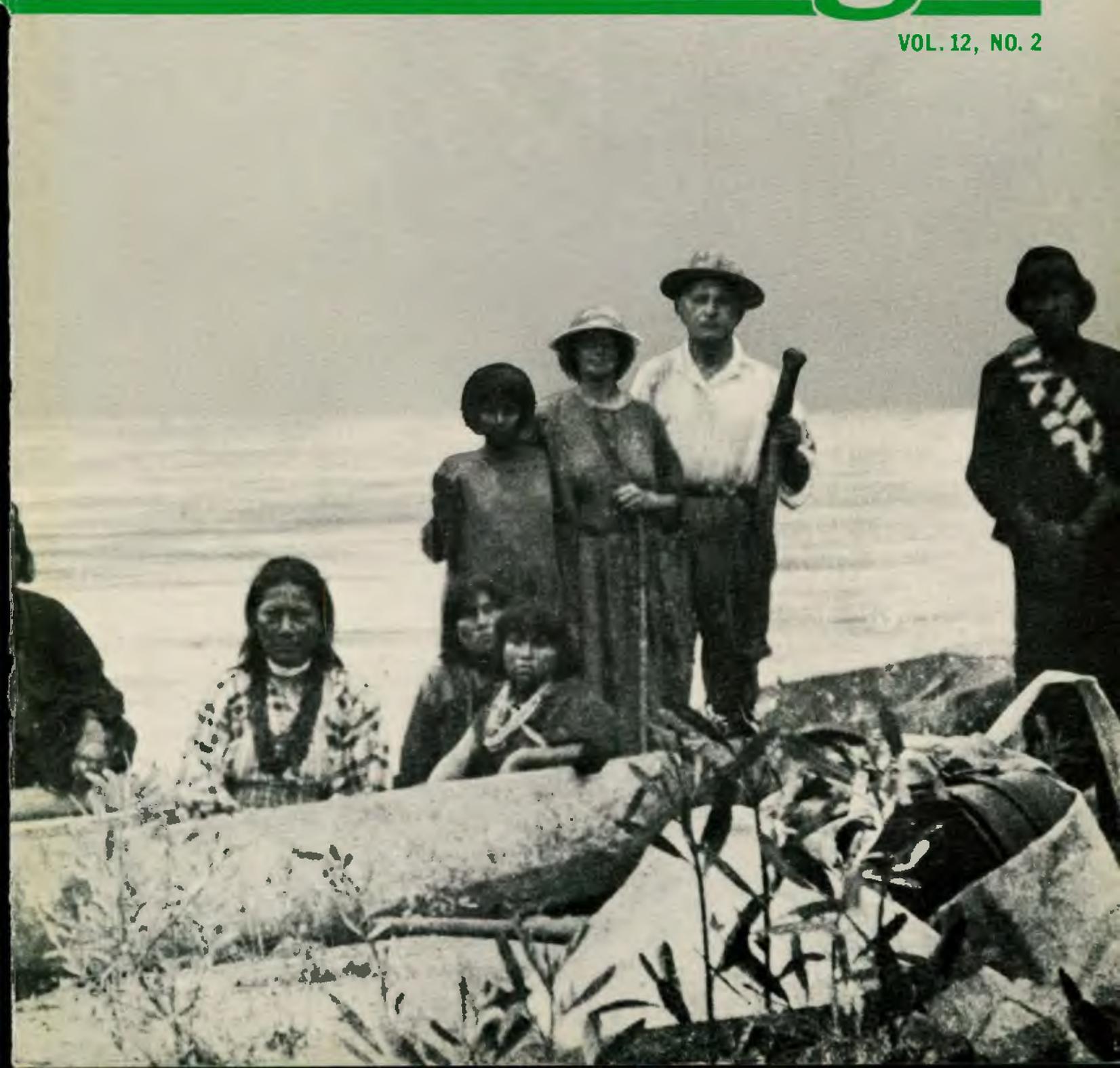


# *Adventist* **Heritage**

VOL. 12, NO. 2



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*All pictures and illustrations used in this issue are courtesy of Loma Linda University Heritage Rooms or the Adventist Heritage collection unless designated otherwise.*



On page 18 of Volume 12, Number 1, the caption to this photo read that Elder Conradi was seated third from left. In the original picture (shown here) this was correct, but for that issue the picture was cut, making the caption incorrect.

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**FRONT COVER:** *Ferdinand and Ana Stahl and adopted daughter, Helen, (left) with Indians of the Campa tribe. Helen or Chave, which means "butterfly," was left by her father, a Campa Indian chief, with the Stahls after she was condemned to die because of witchcraft.*

(From the Stahl family collection)

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# Adventist Heritage

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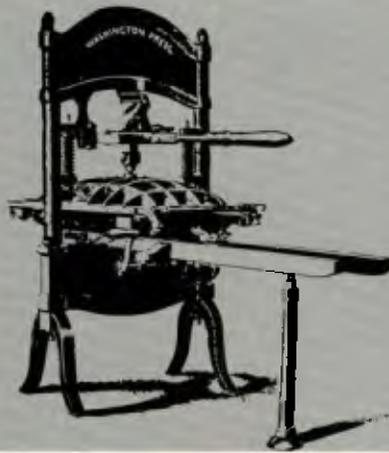
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# THE EDITOR'S STUMP

What? Another issue of ADVENTIST HERITAGE so soon? Yes, we mean not only to hold to our twice-yearly schedule, but to catch up on our publication schedule as well. If current plans prevail, our amazingly patient subscribers will receive our 1888 centennial issue before the year is out. We even aspire to become a quarterly journal as soon as our steadily-growing endowment fund allows.

Our readers are not only patient, they are observant! Imagine your editor's surprise to return from teaching his American History students about the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 only to find two letters on his desk pointing out that the Winter, 1987, issue spoke of the Loughborough's and Bordeau's coming to California in 1868 "via the Panama Canal"! I immediately thought of Annie Smith's "Proof-Reader's Lament."

What news is this falls on my ear?  
What next will to my sight appear?  
My brain doth whirl, my heart doth quake—  
Oh, that egregious mistake!

Dr. Walter Macpherson and Milton Murray both noticed the error and pointed it out in good humor.

To make amends, we offer an issue focussed almost entirely on Latin America. Ronald Wearner recounts the story of the famous mission launch, Luzeiro I. He not only tells of its creation by Leo and Jessie Halliwell, he traces the history of the boat right down to the present day. Ronald's father, Robert Wearner, gives us the first half of yet another "then and now" story, that of Ferdinand and Anna Stahl. While Wearner points out some of the reasons for the Stahl's successes as missionaries, Charles Teel carries the story further, pointing out the considerable social impact the Stahls had on the life of the Indians among whom they worked. Teel's article also reveals the widespread scholarly recognition Stahl's work has commanded.





*Fernando and Ana Stahl*



Courtesy of Dong Havens

*A young Amazon dweller sports a well-worn tee-shirt which reads "Thursday's chid (sic) has far to go."*

# Missionaries, Visionaries, and Revolutionaries

## LOGGING A PASSAGE IN SEARCH OF FERNANDO AND ANA STAHL

**Charles Teel, Jr.**

*Fernando and Ana Stahl are my spiritual forebears. The Christian gospel which they preached came to be enacted not only in Adventist churches and clinics and schools, but also in town markets and provincial law courts and the national legislature. In the truest sense, the Stahls were missionaries, visionaries, and revolutionaries.*

I heard this tribute offered on the eve of Peru's Fiesta of Inti Raymi—the "Day of the Sun" celebrated by the Incas—while leading a Loma Linda University study tour to the Andes and the Amazon. The date was June 23, 1987. The place was Cuzco, high in the Andes Mountains of Peru. And these words were offered not by a Seventh-day Adventist Church official appealing for mission funds, but by a Catholic priest whose mission term to the peoples of Peru's windswept *Altiplano* (highland region) had begun a full half century after the Stahls first set foot on South American soil in the year 1909.

These words were to chart the course of the next few years of my life. They invited a passage that would call me to update childhood remembrances of mission stories, to descend into the bowels of library archives on two continents, to apply for research grants to support study of the Stahls in the context of their times, to project a 1989 Andes/Amazon educational tour highlighting Adventist missions, and to establish the Fernando and Ana Stahl Fund for World Mission at Loma Linda University in order to honor the memory of these and other Adventist "missionaries, visionaries, and revolutionaries."

What follows is a log of discoveries made on this journey to date, a passage that is still just in the beginning stages:

Courtesy of Doug Havens



*Loma Linda University students wave from the "tourist class" section of a thatched-roof Amazon taxi.*

Courtesy of Doug Havens



*(Above) Adventist schools like this one—floating on one of Lake Titicaca's manmade islands—are a lasting legacy of the Stahl presence in the Altiplano.*

4 *(Right) This adobe-walled structure is a portion of the Broken Stone mission complex. Courtesy of author*



*June 21, 1987—Iquitos, on the Peruvian Amazon.* Sixty adventurous souls ranging from twelve to 85 years of age have just docked in Iquitos, a port town on Peru's Amazon River, after spending three days on the river's headwaters. Since the focus of this excursion is broadly historical and geographical in nature, the itinerary does not emphasize denominational history. Nevertheless, a visit to the Ana Stahl Adventist Clinic in Iquitos affords opportunity for me to introduce my group to the Stahls.

Fernando (his Spanish name) and Ana Stahl—I tell my listeners—were Seventh-day Adventist missionaries who, at the turn of the century, paid their own way to the highlands of Peru and Bolivia where they established schools among the Aymara, Quechua, and Uru peoples before pioneering a medical launch ministry to the tribes on the banks of the upper Amazon. Indeed, the Stahls' founding of the Broken Stone Mission on the shores of Lake Titicaca may well constitute Adventism's most famous mission story: an Aymara Indian chief requests that these missionaries establish a school in his village; a stone is broken in two to serve at once as a compact and sign to identify the future teacher; three years later a teacher arrives at the village, the pieces of the stone fit together as one, and a new mission station flourishes. (My fellow travellers are impressed by the ease with which this information is shared; they needn't be, for in fact many published tourist guides mention the Adventist work and call attention to Amazon mission launches as well as Lake Titicaca schools held afloat by oil drums.)

*June 24, 1987—Machu Picchu, high in the Andes.* Few places on earth evoke such stirrings of awe, wonder and mystery as this majestic mountain which towers high above the ruins of elaborate temples and bears mute testimony to humankind's quest through centuries past. I am haunted by the power of religion to impel action and inspire vision—visions of sparkling clarity and visions seen "through a glass darkly." While riding the train through the switchbacks of the steep mountain gorges at the day's end, I wonder what visions were entertained by Fernando and Ana Stahl as they left Main Street, USA, and ventured forth to this vast and uncharted world.

*June 25, 1987—Airborne en route from Cuzco to Lima.* I am curious as to why I am not more aware of the story of Adventism in the *Altiplano*. Certainly I have had no negative experiences with persons or events pertaining to world missions. Yet at a sub-conscious level I may have allowed an old anthropology textbook to influence me negatively. This text presented North American Protestant missionaries as ethnocentric and sectarian agents of cultural imperialism; converts who accepted their imported gospel were described as "frustrated and disillusioned," passing from "prominence to marginality," inheriting "a pall of Protestant gloom." I vow that upon completing this tour to the Argentine Pampas, Rio's



Courtesy of Doug Havens

*These boatloads of Loma Linda University students and friends paddle down a small tributary of the mighty Amazon.*

Sugarloaf, and Iguacu Falls, I will return to the Peruvian highlands to ascertain whether the story of the Stahls was in fact closer to those generalizations advanced in the anthropology text or to the testimonial offered so spontaneously by the Catholic priest.

September 12, 1987—*Sabbath vespers in our home.* Family members read aloud from Fernando Stahl's 1920 book *In the Land of the Incas*. We meet Manuel Camacho, the Indian leader who invited the Stahls to the *Altiplano*. We meet a "friendly Catholic shoemaker" named Peralta from Puno who encouraged Camacho. We meet Luciano Chambi, longtime Stahl guide/translator and the first local church worker in the highlands. We meet Samson, the faithful mule who carried the stout Stahl about the rugged *Altiplano*—and who will make it to heaven if any animals are allowed in! And we meet Fernando and Ana Stahl, who preach the gospel, speak the native languages, sleep on the floors of mud huts, heal diseases, deliver babies, name children, found churches and schools and clinics, endure religious intolerance in such far-sounding places as Plateria, Pomata, and Azángaro—and who appear to be the antithesis of "ethnocentric and sectarian agents of cultural imperialism."

December 6, 1987—*Ñaña, Peru, Inca Union University.* I return to Peru with the goal of writing an article on Fernando and Ana Stahl, using the four sons of Luciano Chambi—all Seventh-day Adventist pastors and educators—as my sources.

Sitting at the feet of Ruben Chambi, eldest son of the Stahl helper and chair of Inca Union University's Department of Education, I listen spellbound as he recounts the story of the *Altiplano* and as he retells his father's stories of the Stahl years. He pulls out his soon-to-be published master's thesis from the National University of Cuzco (on the subject of the Adventist education in the highlands) in which population tables establish his point that Peru's elementary school instruction rate is inversely related to the presence of an indigenous population. The tables date from the first half of the century and show the Department of Puno ranking the highest of all departments in indigenous population (93%) and lowest in terms of the percentage of elementary-age students attending school (13%). In short, the authorities were convinced that the Indians didn't need schooling.

Ruben Chambi describes the life of the Indian in a region which has traditionally been isolated from the rule of law and dominated by the powerful white and *mestizo* seven percent minority. The Indian population either worked as serfs on the large haciendas or eked out an existence in their isolated villages. Chambi recounts from first-hand experience how Indians were subjected to forced labor, lands were appropriated, and chickens and horses were taken at whim. This son of the Aymaras describes the Stahls as Christian missionaries who preached release to the captives and who set at liberty those who were oppressed. "Their gospel both converted



Courtesy of Ron Graybill

(Above) Author Charles Teel interviews Ruben Chambi (eldest son of Stahl translator/guide Luciano Chambi) who was elected to the Peruvian Congress.

(Right) Luciano Chambi's witness was instrumental in leading all the people of his village to accept Christ.



hearts and changed the social fabric of the highlands," he asserts. "The Adventist system—which came to number two hundred schools training tens of thousands of students—opened the way for the indigenous population of the *Altiplano* to achieve selfhood and self-sufficiency." (That this same firstborn of the Stahls' guide/translator graduated from these schools and went on to be elected to represent the Puno population in the national legislature suggests the speed at which societal life on the *Altiplano* changed.)

At this point in the interview I scrawl on my ruled yellow pad a question central to this research: did the missionary activity of the Stahls directly and explicitly address the change of the "social fabric," or was the change of laws and practices and institutions solely a by-product of "converted hearts"?

December 7, 1987—Arequipa, Peru, "half way up to the *Altiplano*." Son number two of the Luciano Chambi clan, Ricardo Chambi, greets me as warmly as did his older brother. The memory of the Stahl years and the pioneering task of planting Adventism in the *Altiplano* elicits bittersweet memories: bitter in that they evoke recollections of deprivation and injustice suffered by the Indian population; and sweet because of the hope and help bequeathed to him by a community of faith he grew to love. Ricardo Chambi contends that once the indigenous population of the *Altiplano* learned to read and write, they not only became aware of their rights under law; they also learned how to use the political and judicial system to secure those rights.

A case in point was the existence of *memorias*, formal complaints that citizens could file at the local level or at the national level by way of inviting authorities to investigate alleged abuse of power. For example, notes Chambi, about the year 1914 an Adventist Indian named Mayta from the village of Pomata was murdered. Finding no authorities in Pomata or in the provincial capital of Puno to pursue her case, Señora Mayta herself severed the head from the body of her husband's corpse, wrapped the head in a linen napkin, placed it in a basket, and protectively carried it directly to the office of the President of Peru, where she filed a *memoria*. "Imagine the transforming power of the gospel!" enthused Ricardo Chambi. "Before the Adventist schools were established it was rare to find common persons from the indigenous population who would stand erect and assert their rights; but after we learned to read the Bible and discovered a sense of self-worth, women as well as men were imbued with a sense of bravery!"

Bravery was required on a number of fronts. While progressive forces welcomed the Adventist presence to the highlands, retaliation was swift from the ruling classes: commercial interests demanded the closure of the freestanding markets, landowners burned school houses, and religious leaders incited mob violence. Scores of Adventists were



*Even those with but a nodding acquaintance of Spanish can discern that this building is part of the Fernando A. Stahl Adventist College in Plateria. Courtesy of author*

Courtesy of Doug Havens



*The sun sets on a pastoral scene near the lakeshore as a Titicaca dweller gazes with pride on a prize member of his herd.*

Courtesy of Doug Havens



*An oar rests lazily on the bow of a reed boat moored among Lake Titicaca marshes.*

killed. The popular backlash from one bishop-led attack on Stahl headquarters was so great that the incident is credited with influencing the National Congress to pass legislation guaranteeing religious tolerance in 1915.

*December 8, 1987—The vast Lake Titicaca Basin.* Armed with Stahl's *In the Land of the Incas* and a map of the *Altiplano* marked with the place names of Plateria, Puno, and Juliaca, I am high above the world at 12,500 feet crisscrossing the *Altiplano* in a Toyota Landrover. First stop is Puno City Library where I discover that Puno of the Stahls' day boasted four daily newspapers—and this in a city of but 12,000 persons. While there is no time during this exploratory tour to survey much more than the newspaper files available, it is clear that abundant sources document the daily life of this town during the first part of the twentieth century. Further, a check of the newspaper files suggests that the Adventist presence elicited extensive debate among the residents of the *Altiplano*, with progressives welcoming the Stahl schools and the conservative classes contending that the Adventists represented socialist, communist, and anarchist forces.

There is also time during this library visit for a quick check on census data. Whereas there were virtually no Protestants in the Department of Puno until the Stahls' arrival in 1911, the 1940 census indicated 27,822 self-professed Protestants—almost all of whom would have been Adventists. That the official Adventist church rolls recorded but one fourth of that number suggests that Protestantism was indeed considered desirable by many Puneños. Notes in my backpack suggest that by 1946 the number of Adventist believers in Peru and Bolivia was greater than all other Protestant churches in those countries combined.

Next stop is an extended interview with friends of the priest whose Stahl tribute had inspired this pilgrimage. I take a crash course on the social history of the *Altiplano* from one who, like the Stahls decades before him, has walked in the sandals of the indigenous population, slept in their beds, eaten their food, and talked their language—an exponent of a post-Vatican II Catholicism which stands in stark contrast to that practiced earlier in the century. I furiously scribble notes listing the names of authors, books, villages, events, actors, and groups that have dominated the life of the highlands.

A near-feudal state characterized the *Altiplano* at the turn of the century. The social world of the white and *mestizo* was a closed social order maintained by what Peruvian historians have characterized as an unholy alliance among wealthy landowner, town judge, and village priest. This world was impenetrable by the numerically dominant indigenous population. Well into the twentieth century local representatives of the Peruvian state no less than those of the Catholic religion lent their influence and power to the continued subjugation of the Indian peoples. On the one side stood the landed aristocracy and the Catholic Church ("may their sins

*Reed boats such as this one have traditionally been the primary means of transportation among the manmade islands of Lake Titicaca.*



Courtesy of Daag Havens



*These grade-schoolers who commute to a floating island school via reed boats are but a handful of the over five thousand students enrolled annually in Adventist schools in the Lake Titicaca mission. Courtesy of author*

*Lake Titicaca Mission President David Alarcon and Secretary of Education Roberto Souza stand at the entrance to mission headquarters in Puno. Courtesy of author*



be forgiven them"). And on the other side stood a handful of educators, Indian leaders, a literary set which flourished in the Puno during the 1920s named *Grupo Orkopata*, and—last but not least—Adventist missionaries. "You really ought to check the files of the local Lake Titicaca Mission by way of ascertaining relationships that may have existed between the early Adventists and such movements as *Grupo Orkopata*," counselled my cleric/teacher as we signed off our exchange for the time-being and agreed to keep in touch.

*December 9, 1987—Plateria, on the shores of Lake Titicaca.* The Lake Titicaca Mission president is my host as we visit Plateria, village of Camacho, the Indian leader who invited the Stahls to staff his struggling school. I meet hundreds of Aymara children whose eyes communicate a fascinating mixture of shy reserve and bold curiosity. I meditate in the Plateria chapel, built with wood which the Stahls imported from California forests to this barren spot of earth far above the timberline. And I inspect the Stahl home, lovingly crafted in every detail and still standing straight and true.

The Plateria village square is adjacent to the campus, and in the middle of the square is a sculpture portraying the likenesses of two men: Manuel Camacho and Fernando Stahl. I gaze for some time at the weather-beaten faces of these visionaries who were not satisfied with that which "is" and who fought principalities and powers to achieve "that which ought to be." At that moment my mind whirls with ideas that go far beyond the academic project at hand: why not establish a world mission fund at Loma Linda University to honor the memory of such stalwarts as these? This fund would encourage foreign mission service; sponsor an annual mission lectureship; underwrite the collection and copying of surviving documents and photographs from the Stahl era and place them in the libraries of Inca Union University and Loma Linda University; finance Stahl and Camacho posters to be placed in every school of the Inca Union; and commission the preservation of such mission sites as the Stahl home and the Broken Stone Mission.

*January 1, 1988—Loma Linda University Library.* Libraries and librarians are among God's greatest gifts! The Heritage Room staff locate *Altiplano* mission accounts by such denominational authors as Andross, Apaza, Bullion, Chambi, Hayden, Howell, Kalbermatter, Larsen, Spicer, Stahl, Westphal, and Wilcox. The inter-library loan personnel work their magic of transforming obscure footnotes into real live books from all corners of the world. Indeed, authors citing the Stahl presence in the *Altiplano* include a French sociologist, a Dutch missiologist, and a Latin American theologian. North American citations stem from a Yale Latin Americanist, a Berkeley sociologist of religion, a University of Texas literary critic, and a University of Colorado anthropologist. Peruvian sources footnoting the Stahl influence include the rector of Lima's ranking San Marcos University, the director of the



*Richard Hayden (here with wife Jo and son Dick) spoke of mission work "in the footsteps of the Stahls" in his book "From Football Field to Mission Field."*



Courtesy of author

*Current members of the Broken Stone Mission congregation pose following a worship service.*

National Library, congressional deputies, and scholars from such fields as social history, literature, education, and the sociology of religion.

These authors do not presume to write a definitive social history of Adventism in the *Altiplano*: with the notable exceptions of Apaza and Chambi, whose work focuses substantively on Adventist education in the Highlands, they tend to offer only chapters or passing references relating to Adventism and the *Altiplano*. Yet even passing references can yield fascinating insights. Who would have thought, for example, that a University of Texas dissertation with the esoteric title, "The Avant-garde in Peru: Literary Aesthetics and Cultural Nationalism," would link Adventism and Puno's protesting literary community through the "friendly Catholic shoemaker" to whom Stahl refers at the conclusion of his book? Indeed, this dissertation identifies Puno cobbler Demetrio Peralta as "an organizer for workers' rights against official Puno bureaucracy," "a founder of the first Protestant church in Puno, drawn in by the missionary activity of the Seventh-day Adventists," and one who "instilled his democratic and anti-authoritarian spirit in his sons." These sons would found Puno's *Grupo Orkopata*, a base of intellectual ferment which aggressively championed Indian movement causes and gained international fame in the genre of protest literature. Exciting! (The next task is to ascertain whether such peculiarly Adventist portents as Daniel's images or

John's beasts might figure as metaphors in their writings.)

And remember the brave Señora Mayta from Pomata who carried her evidence in a basket and placed it on the desk of the President of Peru? All details of this story were corroborated by Manuel Camacho's octogenarian son, Jorge, who indicated that the senior Camacho in fact accompanied Señora Mayta to Lima in her quest for justice. While it remains to consult court and government records to uncover further details, it is, nevertheless, of more than passing interest that a Yale dissertation entitled "The Awakening of Puno: Government Policy and the Indian Problem in Southern Peru, 1900-1955" offers tantalizing additional information. In the course of documenting futile attempts by Camacho and other progressive leaders to found schools for the Indians during the pre-Stahl first decade of the century, a footnote in this dissertation cites a 1907 Puno newspaper account reporting that "Andres Mayta of Pomata had been in prison twenty months for having formed eleven Indian schools." It would indeed appear that the Camacho-Stahl link was forged from the outset in confrontation with the fires of injustice.

Lest some conclude that the Chambi brothers' references to the indigenous self-worth and self-awareness facilitated by the Adventist schools reflects a subjective parochialism, it should be noted that Peruvian historian and National Library Director José Tamayo Herrera offers the same opinion. After observing that the work of the Adventists on behalf of

indigenous education was initiated "with unanticipated and transcendent results," Tamayo concludes with phrases very similar to those employed by the Chambis: "For the first time the Indian acceded to letters, hygiene, and a consciousness of his own dignity." Similarly, San Marcos University rector and National Congress deputy José Antonio Encinas, himself noted for reform work on behalf of Peru's Indian population, saluted the Adventist missionaries as "co-workers" with himself in the "labor of human redemption."

Contemporary U.S.-based investigators join these Latin American scholars in identifying *Altiplano* Adventism as a progressive force. University of Colorado anthropologist Ted Lewellen concludes that "Adventism served to select out that meager group of deviants to whom education had an almost addictive appeal, a group who were not satisfied to be slaves to their *mestizo* oppressors or to their own ignorance." Chiding anthropologist colleagues for fostering the stereotype of converts to Protestantism as frustrated and marginal individuals cut off from their roots, Lewellen characterizes the Adventists in glowing terms as people aggressively "preparing for an unforeseeable future fifty years before it arrives."

Just as Lewellen's conclusions challenge commonly-held misconceptions about Protestant converts, so Yale University Latin Americanist Dan Hazen offers a corrective to those who would label the Protestant missionary as chauvinistic

and paternalistic. Asserting that "Adventists have consistently been in the forefront of change in the *Altiplano*," Hazen describes the Adventist missionaries as being willing "to seek new answers," and embodying "a less status-conscious lifestyle than local *mestizos* and whites, resulting both from more democratic national and religious heritages and from their necessary alliance with Puno's underdogs, the Indians, against abusive church and civil authorities." Implying that the social levelling modeled by the missionaries came to be mirrored in the general membership as well, Hazen observes approvingly that members "addressed one another as *hermano* and *hermana*—'brother' and 'sister.'"

It is left to Latin American theologian Samuel Escobar to offer a shorthand theological analysis of the Adventist presence in the *Altiplano*. His latest book, *La Fe Evangelica y Las Teologias de la Liberacion* sets forth the thesis that the "gospel which came to Latin America through Protestantism came as a liberating force because it brought with it the power of the biblical message." In turn, at the very outset of his book he cites the Adventist experience in the Peruvian Highlands as a "dramatic example" of the social, economic, judicial, and political consequences that can be evoked by biblical, Christian faith. Escobar—along with a host of other witnesses to be ferrited out as the Stahl study continues—is one more voice affirming that the Stahls were indeed "missionaries, visionaries, and revolutionaries."



Courtesy of Dong Evans

Restful reflection on the stark *Altiplano* landscape punctuates a day in the wheatfields for Aymara women.



(Above) A Lake Titicaca dweller surveys one of the famous "floating houses" nesting atop a manmade island.

(Right) Sheep are a constant sight on the Peruvian Hills that overlook Lake Titicaca; here, they "safely graze" next to stone and adobe structures which stand in marked contrast to the reed dwellings on the lake.



The Fernando and Ana Stahl Fund for World Mission has been established at Loma Linda University "to honor the memories of Seventh-day Adventist pioneer missionaries; to inspire students and other church members with a sense of mission; and to report the manner in which Loma Linda University students, faculty, and alumni/ae contribute to the world mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church." This purpose will be accomplished through the promotion of student mission service, research, publications, lectures, the acquisition of archival materials, and the preservation of mission landmarks and relevant personal papers. Tax deductible contributions of \$5,000, \$1,000, and \$100 are being solicited from persons who identify with the Stahls and their vision of World Mission. Make checks to: Loma Linda University Stahl Fund, School of Religion, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, CA 92350, (714) 824-4956.

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# Ferdinand Stahl, Missionary to Peru

Born the year Seventh-day Adventists sent their first missionary overseas, Ferdinand Stahl began, in 1909, a career as one of the church's most famous missionaries to South America.

Stahl and his wife, driven by an inner conviction that God wanted them in a foreign field, traveled from Ohio to attend the 1909 General Conference session in Washington, D.C. There the would-be missionaries met J. W. Westphal, president of the South American Union. The Stahls offered their services as missionary nurses to the oppressed indigenous tribes in the Andes highlands.

Westphal, a pioneer missionary leader, had been touched by the plight of millions of the sons of the Incas, who lived and died without medical attention or educational privileges. He was delighted to find two consecrated workers willing to go as nurses to alleviate the sufferings of the peoples of the highlands of Peru and Bolivia. But he hesitated. There were simply no funds to send another missionary family to South America.

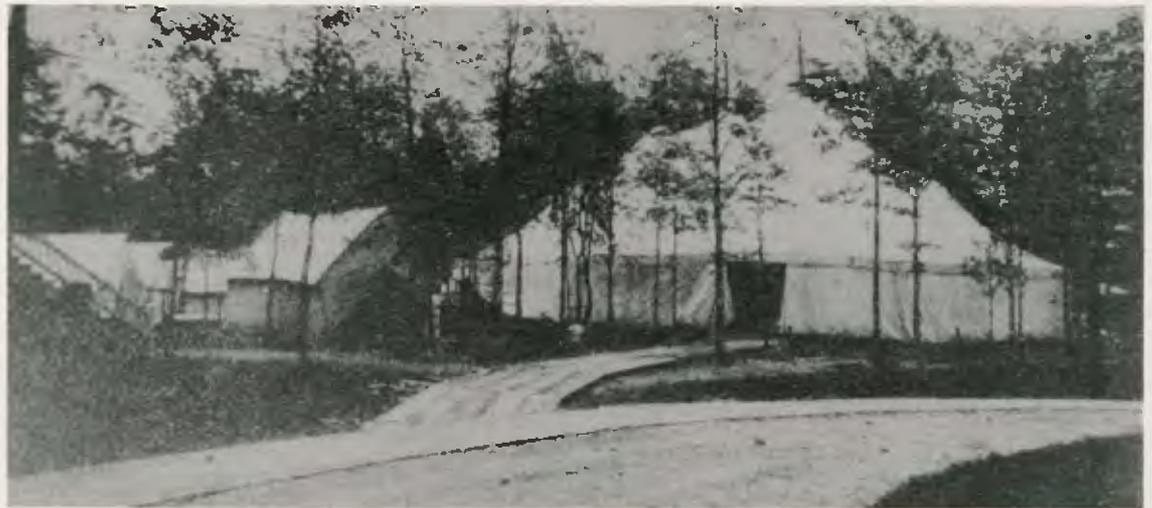
When Stahl discovered the reason for the delay, he said, "If money is the problem, I have the money. We will gladly pay our own transportation to have the privilege of serving God in a difficult field."

ROBERT G. WEARNER



*Ferdinand Stahl felt "privileged" to pay his own travel costs to the Peruvian mission field in 1909 so that he and his wife Ana, their 15-year old daughter Frenita, and four-year old son Wallace, could serve as missionaries.*

From the Stahl family collection



*At the 1909 General Conference session held in a tent in Takoma Park, Maryland, Elder and Mrs. Ferdinand Stahl volunteered for overseas mission service.*



*(Left) J. W. Westphal, president of the South American Union, was pleased to find in Ferdinand and Ana Stahl the dedication and willingness to work with the people of Peru and Bolivia that he himself felt.*

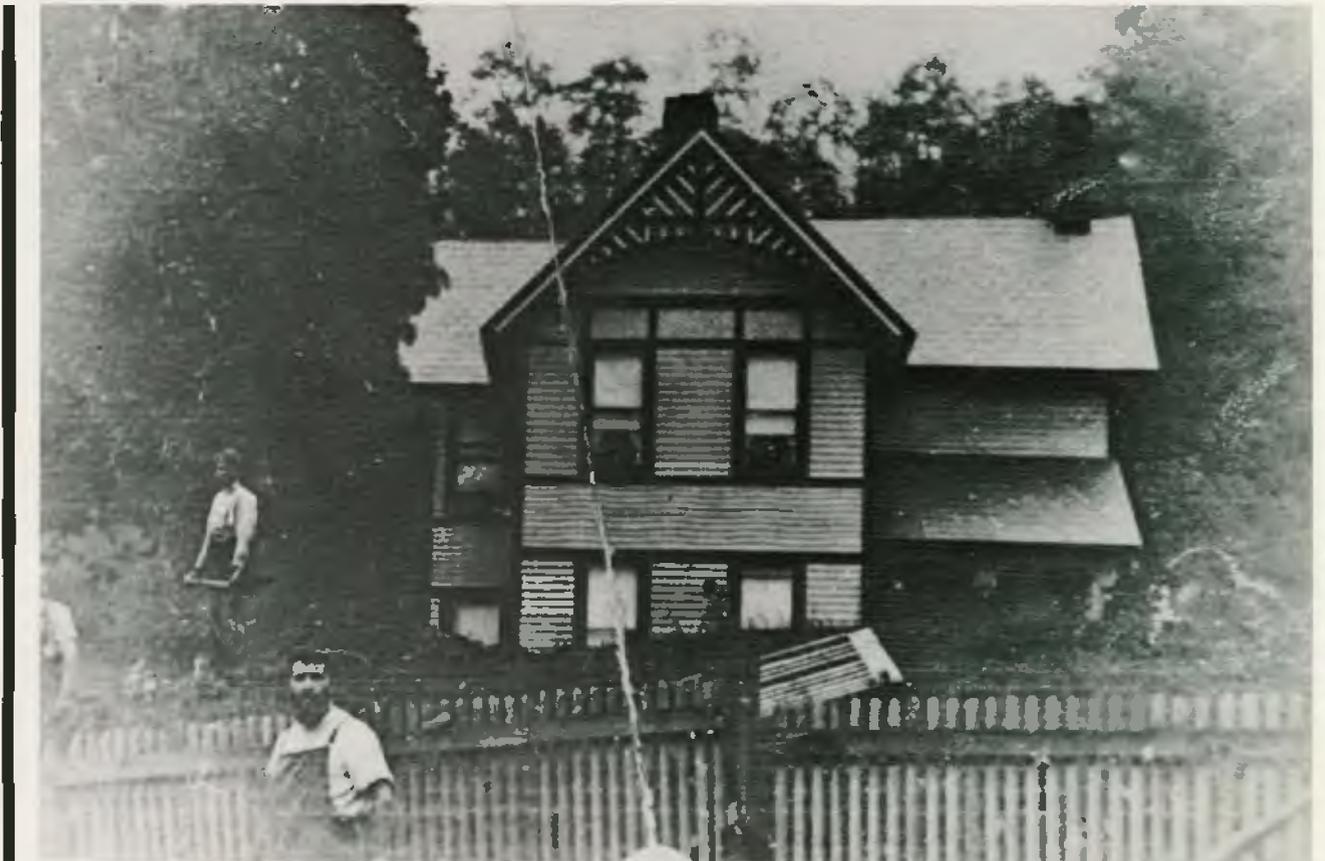


*(Above) Before the mission acquired its own launch, F. A. Stahl used Indian canoes made from a dugout tree, with just an outboard motor attached, as on this trip from Iquitos, Peru.*

*From the Stahl family collection*

*(Below) After graduating from the nursing course, the Stahls settled into this home in Ohio where they operated a small sanitarium at Akron.*

*From the Stahl family collection*





*When the Stahl family arrived in Bolivia in 1909, they settled in the capital city of La Paz until they could learn the language and become acquainted with the culture of the people.*

The General Conference accepted his offer and within weeks Ferdinand, Ana, their 15-year old daughter Frenita, and little son Wallace, age four, sailed from New York. They were headed for Peru to start a missionary career that would stretch over nearly three decades.

Careful observers, both Peruvian and North American, both Adventist and non-Adventist, freely admit that Ferdinand Stahl set in motion a major Christward movement in the Peruvian highlands and the jungle below. This People Movement has transformed the lifestyle of myriads of South America's indigenous peoples.

Who was Ferdinand Stahl? What motives drove him? What methods did he use to bring a change in outlook to people thought to be hopelessly submerged in vice, filth, ignorance, and superstition?

Born January 3, 1874, in Pentwater, Michigan, Ferdinand Stahl lost his father when he was only eight months old. The father he never knew had been an officer in the German army before immigrating to the United States. Ferdinand inherited from his German ancestors a strong physique, an invaluable asset which helped him survive the cold of high altitude and the heat of the jungle.

Unable to adjust to his stepfather, young Ferdinand escaped from his home when he was ten years old, never to return permanently. During these tumultuous adolescent

years his education was often interrupted. He never finished the elementary grades.

After working on a farm for a time, he joined a boys' gang. Soon tiring of the rough life of drinking, stealing, jail-breaking, and riding freight cars, he found steady work in a foundry. He took his work seriously and was soon promoted to foreman.

At eighteen he met and married a young Swedish girl, Ana. For the first time he found love and security. Much of his later success he owed to his wife.

After buying a book from a Seventh-day Adventist literature evangelist, the couple studied the Bible and together accepted Jesus as their Savior and Guide. In order to fulfill their promise to dedicate their lives to service for others, they enrolled in a nursing course in Battle Creek. Then they settled in Akron, Ohio, where they operated a small sanitarium.

Not satisfied to merely enjoy the comforts of life, husband and wife determined to sell out and offer themselves for service in some underprivileged area of Africa or South America. With no more definite call than their own conviction of duty, they left all and presented themselves to church leaders at denominational headquarters in Washington. Since funds were not available to send them, they gladly paid for their own tickets and accepted the \$12 a week salary offered them.



*(Above) When Stahl arrived in the Lake Titicaca area of Peru in 1911, he found 46 church members—a number that grew to over 2,000 by the time he left nine years later.*

*(Right) As a missionary, Ferdinand Stahl found himself performing a variety of duties, including extracting teeth.*

From the Stahl family collection

*(Below) This modest dwelling was erected in Plateria, Peru, for the Stahls after they transferred there in 1911.*



Arriving at the port of Mollendo in south Peru in mid-1909 they immediately traveled by train to La Paz, Bolivia. Their two years in the Bolivian Andes offered them an opportunity to learn the language and immerse themselves in the life and culture of a people who for centuries had been exploited by the white man. Even though they suffered from the determined opposition of ecclesiastical authorities, they soon set about to treat the infirmities of the people. At last an abused population found a white couple who loved them.

In order to understand the people better, Stahl traveled down into the jungle and up into the mining area. Once, while traveling with a mine owner who did not trust the "savage Indians," they could not find a place to spend the Sabbath. Against the protest of the mine owner, Stahl asked a peasant woman in a small hut if they could stay with her family and if they could buy feed for their mules. Much to the surprise of the mine owner, the woman and her husband were very hospitable and did their best to provide for the travelers' needs. Stahl did not mind sleeping on the hard dirt floor of the hut nor eating the food offered by the humble country people.

Before Stahl and the mine owner left, the missionary told the peasant couple about Jesus and His soon return. Tears flowed down weather-beaten cheeks. Even the hardened mine owner was affected.

Stahl's success was built on an almost uncanny ability to identify with the people. He ate and slept with them. He showed them that he loved them. He treated their sicknesses and taught them the simple story of Jesus.

After two years in Bolivia, the missionary couple was asked to transfer to Platería on the shores of Lake Titicaca in Southern Peru. Adventist work had already begun in this high mountain basin and Stahl found 46 baptized members in the area. When the Stahls left nine years later, the growing Lake Titicaca mission numbered over 2000.

How did this remarkable miracle of modern missions take place? A strong family life was established. Improvements were made in the personal and home cleanliness of the people. The filthy coca vice was abandoned. Observers were amazed.

The Stahl family moved to Platería in mid-1911. They set up housekeeping in a room of the adobe home of the village chief, Manuel Z. Camacho, who had invited them. In time a modest mission home was built.

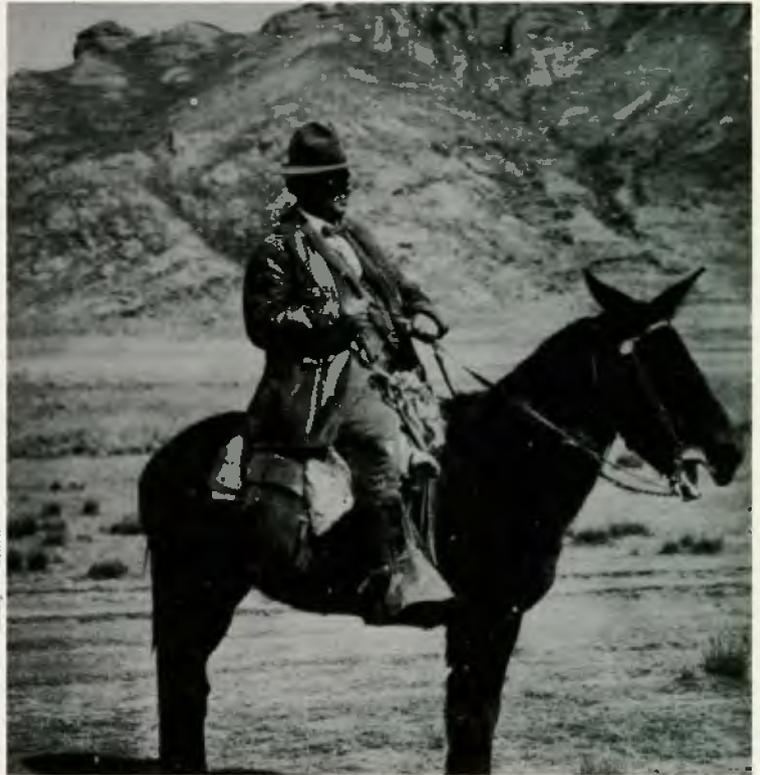
The news of the arrival of the missionary nurses spread like wildfire among the Aymara people. Hundreds were brought in for treatment. Soon they recognized that the teaching of personal hygiene was one of the most urgent needs. "Washing classes" were organized where up to twenty persons were lined up with basins, soap and towels. Their vermin-filled



*Chief Manuel Camacho invited the Stahls to minister in Platería where his adobe home served as their first residence until a modest mission home could be built.*

*(Right) Elder Stahl travelled far and wide on his trusted mule Samson.*

*One of the first of many students to live in the Stahl home, Luciano Chambi began as a translator and later worked as teacher, local elder and missionary aide.*



From the Stahl family collection

clothing and houses were cleaned up.

The intrepid missionary traveled far and wide on the back of his trusted mule, Samson, to treat the sick and to tell the simple story of the love of Jesus. The people were taught to sing gospel hymns. Stahl led out in a recreational program to take the place of the liquor-soaked fiestas.

Another factor in the transformation among the Aymara tribes people was the establishment of schools. The native peoples saw in education a means of participation in the "new life." In the early twentieth century the state offered no educational advantages to them. Prof. B. Rojas and his wife came from Argentina to establish a school. Unfortunately they soon fell sick and had to return to their homeland.

Although Ana Stahl was a nurse and not a teacher, she undertook the operation of the school with the help of a young man by the name of Luciano Chambi. Eventually other teachers arrived to take over the school. Soon there were more calls for schools. As fast as young men could be prepared as teachers they were sent out to fill the many requests.

The villagers provided a schoolroom and housing for the teacher. These schools became evangelistic centers. Before long a number of new stations were established, each with its satellite schools.

Young missionaries from the United States helped Stahl in these new centers. Among those who helped were C. V. Achenbach, J. M. Howell, E. P. Howard, Robert Nelson, L. J. Barrowdale, Orley Ford and Reid Shepard. Others came from Argentina: L. A. Rojas, David Dolinger, Ignacio and Pedro Kalbermatter. By the time Stahl left south Peru in 1920 there were thirty schools in operation.



*Ferdinand Stahl (second from right with others from South America) reported to the delegates of the 1918 General Conference session in San Francisco, California, on the mission work in Peru.*

With the rapid expansion of the work in the highlands of Peru, the missionary leader sensed the urgent need for indigenous teachers and ministers. One of the first was Luciano Chambi, mentioned above. As a teenager he had presented himself at the Stahl home asking to be prepared as a worker. He wanted to learn by doing. He became the first of many boys and girls who lived with the Stahls and called them "Mama" and "Papa".

Coming from a higher class home, the youth already knew how to read and write some Spanish. Thus he served as a translator for the missionaries. Later he became one of the first local elders and missionary licentiates. Chambi dedicated a long lifetime of faithful service to his countrymen. Today his children and grandchildren are following in his footsteps.

Unfortunately, the preaching of the Advent message incited bitter opposition. Pastor Stahl told the delegates at the 1918 General Conference session: "We are insulted on every hand; stones were thrown at us . . . and many times we were threatened with death. Our Indian brethren were imprisoned and some were almost beaten to death."

In 1913 one bitter attack against the Platería mission had an unexpected result. The bishop of Puno, the nearest city, accompanied by 200 men, descended upon the mission. The Stahls and Camacho, the local chief, happened to be away from home at the time.

The mission was entered by force. The mob tried to compel some of the mission helpers to kneel before the bishop and kiss his ring. This they absolutely refused to do. Five Adventist converts were seized and bound with stout leather cords. At this point Camacho appeared and he too was taken prisoner. The six were marched off to jail, together with two more who were picked up on the way. After the eight had been detained a few days, Stahl succeeded in securing their release.

The case was carried to Lima, the federal capital. The Supreme Court handed down a decision of acquittal. This shameful attack caused a strong reaction throughout the country. Soon a senator introduced a bill to amend the constitution. The clause which forbade all non-Catholic worship was struck from the constitution by an edict which passed congress on Nov. 12, 1915. Thus Adventist missions played a part in the century-long struggle for religious

## IN THE LAND of the INCAS

by  
F. A. STAHL

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" Isaiah 52: 7.

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*By 1920 when Elder Stahl wrote this book about his experiences in the highlands of Peru, the work had grown so much that he asked to be transferred to do pioneer work among the Indians of the Amazon jungle.*



*(Above) The mission station in Iquitos, Peru, included the mission office on the left, the church on the right and a Brazil nut tree in the foreground.*

*From the Stahl family collection*

*(Left) Travel in the highlands of Peru was often treacherous having to be done on muleback or on foot over roads like this.*

*(Below) Wherever Elder Stahl went he treated the sick as he is shown doing here on one of the tributaries of the Amazon.*

*From the Stahl family collection*





*As he travelled in the tropical Amazon, Stahl stayed in many places not nearly as nice as this typical worker's home.*

tolerance in Peru.

By 1920 the Adventist mission enterprise around Lake Titicaca had grown large. Stahl never enjoyed administrative work. He asked to be relieved of his duties in the high country, and sought permission to pioneer mission work among the nomadic tribes of Peru's vast jungles to the east.

The Inca Union Mission authorized him to take a trip of exploration up over the Andes and down into the high jungle on the eastern slope. After a long, difficult journey by train, automobile and muleback, he arrived at a coffee plantation at 2000 feet elevation.

Here Stahl found conditions very different from the highlands of south Peru. Instead of the cold air of the high altitude he felt the humid heat of the rain forest. Instead of treeless plains and rugged mountains, he found dense vegetation, immense trees, tangled vines, and fast-moving streams running down deep gorges. Instead of the settled Quechua and Aymara tribes of the highlands, he set about to work among nomadic peoples such as the Campas, who knew little of the ways of civilization.

Due to the generosity of the company which operated the coffee plantation, land was donated for a new mission station. Mrs. Stahl came to join her husband in the task of evangelizing the tribal people who had been untouched by the gospel.

Leaving the construction of the mission buildings to the supervision of his wife, Stahl hired a guide and disappeared into the jungle in search of the people. He suffered great hazards because of the rapids and whirlpools, insects and snakes, as well as enemies who did not appreciate his work. Wherever he found the inhabitants of the rain forest, he treated their diseases and pointed them to the Savior.

In a letter to mission headquarters, Pastor Stahl wrote about the Campa tribespeople: "I like them very much, and

believe there is a good opportunity here for our work." Soon a school was started at the jungle mission outpost. Rufino, an Aymara teacher from the highlands, was called to teach. Stahl was successful in part because he made it a practice to call converts from one section of a country to work with people in underdeveloped areas elsewhere.

Stahl carefully instructed the native people in the doctrines of the faith. The simple story of the love of Jesus touched the hearts of the inhabitants of the rain forest. They counted the days by putting notches on a stick so as not to forget the Sabbath. The work progressed slowly in this sparsely-settled area. Five years of labor netted fewer than a hundred converts. However, the foundation was being laid for a great future work.

On a recent trip to this River Perené upper jungle area, the author met a few believers who remembered the Stahls. Virginia Espinoza, now a grandmother, recalled the days of her childhood a half-century ago. She lived with her family up the river from the mission station. When the pioneer missionary approached her village the rumor was spread, *Dios ha llegado, Dios ha llegado* (God has come, God has come).

This strange idea may have been based on the Inca legend of Wirakocha, the great Creator God. The aborigines of Peru centuries ago looked forward to the coming of their deity. He was expected to return by sea as a tall man with a flowing beard. Although Stahl wore no beard, that small discrepancy did not seem to concern the people.

In the jungle, as in the Lake Titicaca area, the missionary couple took children into their home, some of whom became missionaries to their own and other tribes. One jungle mother begged him to take her little six-year old daughter to live in his home. Thus it was that Virginia and her cousin, Telma, came to live in the Stahl home. Virginia stayed with the Stahls



*Elder and Mrs. Stahl are shown in Iquitos with a group of Indians from the interior who came asking for a teacher.*

From the Stahl family collection

until she married. Care for needy children can be included among the Stahl's successful missionary methods.

Before the Stahl family went home on furlough, Ferdinand made the difficult trip down the river to Iquitos, the largest city on the upper Amazon. When he arrived, the dauntless missionary cabled the General Conference headquarters in Washington: "Iquitos Peru, Great prospects, (Signed) Stahl." Although he had passed his fifty-first birthday, he was ready to conquer new worlds for Christ.

The missionary couple spent their furlough attending the General Conference session of 1926 and visiting many churches in North America. A Campa girl, Chave, travelled with them, adding her voice in song to their fascinating stories of mission service. When church leaders requested that the missionary family visit Britain and Western Europe to tell their story, Mrs. Stahl took the opportunity to squeeze in a visit to her native Sweden. There she was surprised to find that inheritance money belonging to her was waiting in a Swedish bank. She later used the funds to buy property and build a home in Iquitos in eastern Peru.

When the Stahls returned to the jungle, a self-supporting missionary nurse by the name of Anna Jensen accompanied them. Like the Stahls, she too would have a long and fruitful missionary career.

When he returned to Peru in 1927 Stahl organized his program for the longest period of his eventful career. Not until 1938 would he return to his homeland on permanent return.

First he gathered about him a group of workers. The Peruvians included Bernabé Chavez, J.P. Ramos, and Rufino

Pacho. William Schaeffer and his wife came from Germany. Henry and Barbara Westphal arrived to begin evangelistic work in previously unentered urban areas.

Henry was the son of missionaries to Argentina and had known the Spanish language from childhood. He did excellent work in preaching the gospel to large audiences while his wife assisted in the organization of a new school.

As usual, Stahl was at his best visiting the scattered tribespeople, treating their diseases, and talking to them about the love of Jesus. He did not seem to mind the constant dangers of the tropical forest—mosquitos, snakes, spiders, ants, horseflies, pirañas, jaguars, and ocelots, to say nothing of human beings who sought to hinder him.

Since the lower jungle is a vast area of many rivers, the need of a launch became apparent to all. A missionary launch, christened the *Auxiliadora* (Helper) arrived in Iquitos in 1930. The boat had been purchased with donations from missionary-minded friends in the United States. Eventually the boat proved costly to operate and was replaced by a diesel-powered launch patterned after the mission boats constructed by Leo Halliwell on the lower Amazon.

Always anxious to employ every means for the advancement of the gospel, Stahl soon took to the air, thus cutting the trip to Lima from six weeks to two days. He bought the first ticket on the first scheduled flight out of Iquitos, but his first trip almost proved to be his last as the plane crashed on landing. Fortunately he escaped with only minor injuries.

When Stahl started missionary activities in the jungle of Peru there were no baptized Adventists in the vast area which covers the eastern half of the country. When he left, a smoothly-running mission organization was in operation (called the Amazon Mission and now known as East Peru Mission) and there were 541 baptized members.

What made Stahl so successful? Foremost was his ability to treat the diseases of the people. He also provided the indigenous people with the education they longed for so that their children could enjoy a better life. Stahl identified with the people and their needs. Therefore he could present Christ in a most powerful way. He was able to show the value and relevance of the Christian religion because he understood the people's situation. Instead of suppressing all indigenous music, Stahl offered a naturally musical people an outlet by teaching them gospel songs. He did not take his converts from their own habitat, but taught them how to work for their own relatives and friends. He educated a large corps of native teachers and ministers. He established a strong Christian community where all believers were brothers and sisters in the faith. He not only taught the evils of social vices; he found meaningful substitutes in a recreational program. He built and strengthened a wholesome family life and stressed cleanliness of person and home surroundings. Finally, with a deep sense of mission, Stahl rode the crest of a revolutionary wave of rebellion against vested powers. Thousands found liberty and fulfillment in a God of love.

Richard A. Hayden, who worked with the pioneer missionary in the Iquitos area, summed up his measure of the man. First, Stahl was a man of prayer. He was sometimes heard praying aloud at 3:00 a.m. Second, he had the "know-how" for mission activity, and was capable of quick decisions. Third, he was a determined man. This firmness sometimes



*(Above) Ferdinand Stahl was anxious to discover ways to speed up the progress of the mission program—including the use of mission boats. Here he is shown on a trip on one of the rivers of Peru.*

From the Stahl family collection



*(Left) Amazon Indians have brought their offerings of bows and arrows to church to give to Stahl since that was one of the most valuable things they could give.*

From the Stahl collection



*Chief Ticoli's family is being treated by F. A. Stahl at their home on the Uramba River in Peru. This chief is one of those who pleaded with Stahl to start a mission for the people as mentioned in the Review and Herald in 1926.*

From the Stahl family collection



F. A. Stahl and his associate Dick Hayden start out on one of their medical-evangelistic trips in the mission launch.



One of the reasons for the remarkable success of Ferdinand Stahl was his ability to treat the diseases of the people as he is shown doing here in the interior of Peru.

From the Stahl family collection

made him enemies. Fourth, he possessed great self-confidence and knew how to gain the goodwill of the oppressed peoples.

At one time Stahl was called to appear before civil authorities to answer malicious charges against him. When asked who had sent him to work in the Peruvian jungle, he replied, "God sent me." Thus he revealed a real sense of mission—the work was not his, but God's. Later he wrote: "We are so glad that God is in this message; nothing can stop it. May God help us to live such true and faithful lives that we can keep up with it."

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Courtesy of Richard and Jo Hayden



Courtesy of Richard and Jo Hayden

## *Andes to Amazon*

### THE INDIANS AS THE STAHLS KNEW THEM

*"Never will I forget my first impressions of the Amazon jungle; it was so different from the high mountain plateaus where I had labored for many years for the Quichua and Aymara Indians. In that high altitude the sun bathes the earth with marvelous brilliancy, and the air is always cool, tonic, and clear. As there are no trees, one has an unobstructed view of many miles.*

*But in the vast forests of the Amazon of Peru, he is in an immense wilderness of over 750,000 square miles, cut through by the many rapid rivers. The sun may shine brightly in the heavens above, yet oftentimes not a ray of sunlight penetrates the thick jungle." — Ferdinand Stahl, In the Amazon Jungle.*

Shirley M. Chipman

*Pictures used in this article are courtesy of the Stahl family collection.*



*(Above) The Stahls trained the Indians to teach their own people, thus reaching many who would otherwise never have been contacted. Pictured is Samuel Condore and his wife and baby at their mission station among the Campa Indians.*



*(Above) Although the Stahls had been told that the Indian children would never stay in a classroom, they found the children eager to learn from the Bible.*

*(Left) "La Hermana Ana" (Sister Ana) treats one of the Indian women in the highlands. The smoke-filled huts of the Indians often caused infections and damage to their eyes.*



*At times over eight-hundred people would arrive at the Plateria mission on a Sabbath morning.*



*Small earthen-floor huts covered the shore of Lake Titicaca. With no windows and only a small opening for a door, the interior had little light. These Indian homes had no furniture. Clothes were hung on ropes and poles.*



*(Above) Buildings in the tropical Amazon jungle are often simply poles covered by a thatched roof.*

*(Below) F.A. Stahl was pleased to baptize large groups of Indians who had committed their lives to Christ. This baptism is in the jungle interior in Cascades.*





*The abundant fruit of the tropics in Iquitos was a welcome treat for Ana Stahl after years in the barren highlands.*



*(Above) Hideous costumes and masks were sold to the Indians for religious feast days. The large amounts of alcohol, consumed by men, women, and children, led to drunken fights. The same celebrations also featured a procession through the streets, led by a priest with an image of Christ or one of the saints at the head.*



*The cushma, the loose-fitting garment of the Campa Indian, was worn by both men and women. The only differences were the men's V neck and the women's square front.*



*(Below) A frequent task for the highland Indian woman was grinding barley, one of the staples in their rather monotonous diet. Since fruit did not grow in the high altitudes, their diet mainly consisted of barley, mutton, potatoes, quinoa (a small grain used for porridge), and chunas — a frozen, then dehydrated potato.*



*Scoffers warned Ferdinand and Ana Stahl, "These Indians cannot comprehend the gospel. They are worse than beasts." The changed lives and requests for baptism, however, were evidence that God had spoken to their heads and the hearts.*



*(Above) These men had once been hired by traders to raid villages, kill the men and take the women and children as captives. They converted at one of Ferdinand Stahl's meetings.*

*(Below) The shrunken heads of unfortunate victims indicate that human life was a cheap commodity to many Indians before they became Christians.*



*The women of the cold Andes area wore colorful, heavy wool skirts. For special occasions they wore ten or twelve of these at once, tied at the waist to reveal those underneath.*

The Indians in the high altitudes of the Andes raised large herds of llamas and alpacas to trade for other items to supplement their diet.



(Above) Campa Indian women weave cloth from cotton they've grown. The cloth was at first a light, creamy color, decorated with herb-dyed designs. As it was worn and became soiled, it was again dyed until it became dark brown.

(Below) This hand-drawn map of the Lake Titicaca region shows the area where the Stahls spent so many years of mission service.





A well-attended Sabbath morning service in Plateria. At times when convicted that it was wrong to chew the addictive coca leaves, individuals would take them from their mouths during the service and throw them away.



(Left) The Huawa Indians of the Amazon region, who made their clothing from long grass, did not like strangers in their territory. When Ferdinand Stahl entered their large settlement, he was accosted by armed warriors.

(Below left) Superstition ruled the Huawa Indians, but the missionaries' care of their sick opened their hearts to a loving God.

(Above and below) These Inca Indian teachers were ready to travel to the interior of the Amazon. The natives could often travel where outsiders found the manta blanc (white blanket) of mosquitoes during the night, the snakes, wild animals, and the jungle itself formidable.





*Insistent on cleanliness, the Stahls organized washing classes for the Indians, providing towels and soap for their use. The Indians came with matted hair, their clothes rotting on them. But they were enthusiastic and soon enjoyed being clean.*

*Fond of music, the young men of the Plateria mission asked if instruments could be sent from the United States to form a band. The instruments arrived, and Ferdinand Stahl had to admit that not another band could beat them for noise. These young men played for the Stahls on their last visit to Plateria.*



*Adornment of the typical Amazon Indian woman included silver discs in the nose and on the neck. Often the men wore tatoos on the face and small wooden decorations stuck through holes in their noses and lower lips.*



*The Indians had a strange habit of looking at pictures upside down. When visitors turned them right side up, they would gently turn them back down again. They thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful picture rolls.*



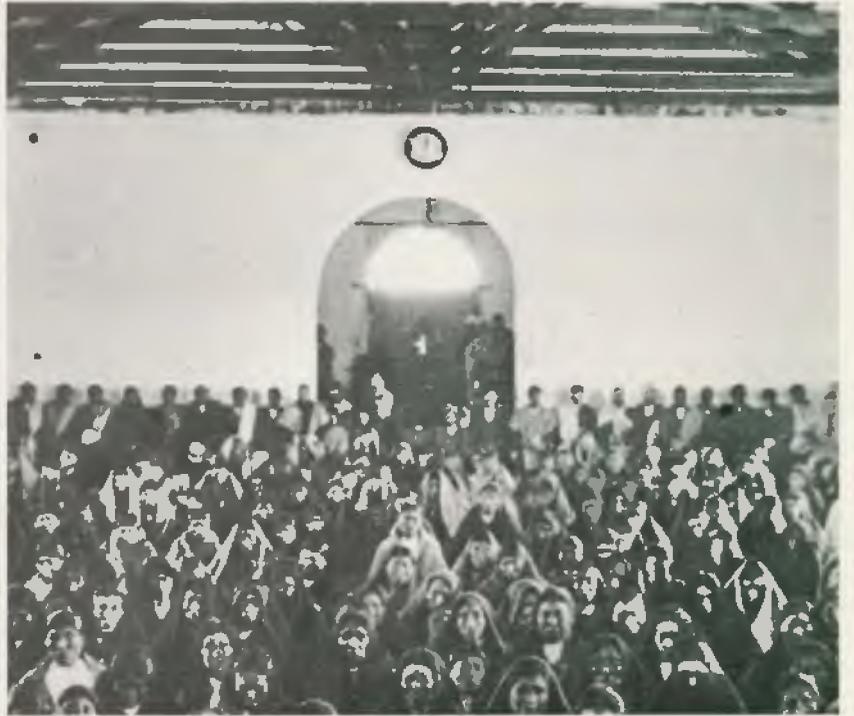
*A large group of the Shepebo Indians on the Ucayali River built this spacious church building and pleaded with the Stahls for teachers.*

*The poncho "blanket", warm knitted cap with ear flaps, and low-pulled hat were part of the homespun and woven outfit of the highland Indians.*



*Helen (Chave) Stahl draws water from the well at the Iquitos mission home. In the past, the people had drawn their water in dirty jugs from contaminated springs, resulting in much typhoid fever.*

*The tall "tortori" grass on the shores of Lake Titicaca was used to build boats and sails as well as to feed the cattle.*



*Although he did not know their language well at first, Ferdinand Stahl would play his guitar, sing gospel hymns and communicate the best that he could. The people would crowd in as shown in this Inca church.*



*The chief of the Amuesha tribe and his family were visitors at the Stahl's first mission station in the Amazon.*

*(Right) Dressed in her native Campa costume, Helen (Chave) Stahl, posed with Ferdinand and Ana Stahl during a visit to the General Conference meetings in Europe in 1926.*



*(Below) Helen (Chave) Stahl on the right and Rosa Rivas were two of the Indian girls who took the nurses course at Chulumani Hospital.*



*The Stahls had great difficulty restraining the people of the "broken stone" village from kneeling and kissing their hands. They directed the people to worship God alone.*



*The "broken stone" church on the north shore of Lake Titicaca acquired its name when Stahl broke a stone in half and gave one half to the village chief, promising that he would send a teacher.*



*Leo and Jessie Halliwell spent the major part of their adult lives in mission service in Brazil. At the time of their retirement, the Brazilian Government awarded them each the coveted Brazilian Cross in appreciation for the work they had done.*

# LUZEIRO I

## *Ronald L. Wearner*

"Halliwell and missions," to many Adventists, seem to go together like the words "bride and groom." Love, dedication, excitement were all bundled up in this unique electrical engineer turned preacher, pilot, dentist and doctor.

Few projects have caught the imagination of God's unique people like the idea of making a little wooden craft and churning the brown waters of a massive maze of rivers, lakes, and flooded jungles to bear the Light of the World. Such a venture meant facing mosquitoes and malaria, piranhas and parasites, snakes and skin disorders of many types. But this man with a mission, with his dedicated wife, spent decades leaving an ever-widening wake of hope, health, and happiness.

Pastor Leo, as he was known, hired a new boatboy for one of his trips. After dark the young helmsman wondered how to find his direction on the black water. "Do you see that star?" questioned the senior man. "Steer the launch in that direction."

A bit later came the question, "Pastor, where do we go now? We have passed that star!"

Imperceptibly, the lad had turned the craft around and was heading in the opposite direction. Although the waters were at times choppy and dangerous due to logs, rocks, and

sandbanks, God's jungle prophet never lost sight of the Morning Star. But where and how did this story begin?

### **The World's Greatest River**

Only 85 miles from the Pacific Ocean, a tiny little trickle bubbles up out of the side of the Andes Mountains beginning a 4,000-mile trip toward the Atlantic. Adventurous Vicente Pinson discovered this mighty waterway in 1500. Forty-one years later, Francisco de Orellana added a footnote to history as the first white man to sail down the Amazon.

Legend claims that his forces met the savage Tapuy women warriors on his way down stream, so he gave the river the name of the Greek women warriors, Amazonas. One tenth of the running water of our globe surges down this water system and pours five million cubic feet of fresh water into the Atlantic Ocean every second. Its 207 mile-wide mouth holds an island the size of Vermont and New Hampshire together.

Until airplanes provided a second option, boats were the only way to reach the deep jungles. In 1973 a masterpiece of engineering, the Manaus-Cuiabá highway, for the first time linked the state capital Manaus with the rest of the country.

In spite of modern transportation, the 40,000 miles of navigable rivers flow on, providing the vital paths for communication, commerce, and travel.

### Early Efforts

In 1918 the deep tones of howler monkeys still rolled through the trees and tangled undergrowth, but nowhere in city or interior hut could the Three Angel's Messages be heard.

President Oliver Montgomery and Secretary/Treasurer W.H. Williams of the South American Division decided it was time for action. Their gospel exploration adventure took them first to Lima, Peru, up over the Andes and down the Amazon all the way to Belém, Brazil. Here was a distance equivalent to that of New York to San Francisco, and not a single Adventist missionary!

An American missionary family working in the Minas Gerais Mission topped the list of prospective pioneers for the task, but due to the wife's poor health they declined the invitation. Elder and Mrs. John Brown, working in the same mission, accepted the challenge. The calendar the Browns unpacked and hung in their little apartment in Belém read 1927. The courageous couple faced the unknown with André Gedrath and Hans Mayr, two of Brazil's best colporteurs.

Down at the docks they found a wood-burning riverboat named *A Gaiola* (The Cage) being loaded for Manaus. With tickets in hand, they waited for the departure whistle to blow. Days later the steamer gently nudged the beach at Maués.



*(Above) Hans Mayr and André Gedrath, the first two Amazonian colporteurs, sold about \$1,650 worth of literature in their first two weeks of labor.*



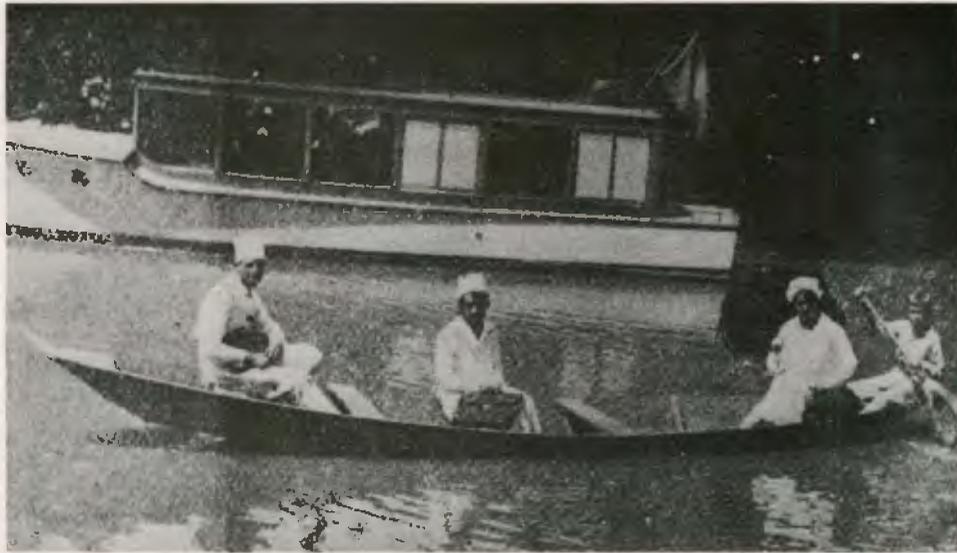
*(Left) In 1918 South American Division President Oliver Montgomery determined to expand the work of Seventh-day Adventists to the interior of the continent.*



*Sites of native dwellings similar to this one along the Amazon caused the Halliwells to dream of the day when they could have their own mission launch to reach the people.*

*The first Adventist mission boat in South America, named A Mensageira (The Messenger), served on the Amazon River.*





On July 4, 1931, the first Luzeiro (Lightbearer) mission launch on the Amazon River in Brazil was christened by Mrs. Jessie Halliwell.

While visiting with a local resident, Elder Brown heard about a José Batista Michiles who was studying the Bible.

In a matter of time Mr. Michiles' name appeared on one of the first three baptismal certificates prepared in the State of Amazonas. Sadly a sunstroke cut short Elder Brown's ministry in the North and soon he and his family returned to the United States.

When the Munson liner *Aeolus* sailed from New York in 1921, Mr. and Mrs. Leo B. Halliwell and their son waved good-bye to friends from her deck. Interestingly, their sailing date, October 15, was Mr. Halliwell's thirtieth birthday. The Halliwells spent their early years of mission service in the Brazilian state of Baía and in Sao Paulo. Then they were called to take up the work begun by the Browns.

The Halliwells, now with two children, Jack, 10, and Marian, six, arrived at their post on the Amazon in January of 1929. The Brazilian colporteurs faithfully carried on their work, but public transportation along the rivers inadequately filled their special needs.

The idea of a mission boat thrilled the small team and before long the very first Seventh-day Adventist mission vessel in South America proudly awaited its name. Seventeen feet measured this canoe from stem to stern, but it was enough to carry her rather long name: *A Mensageira* (The Messenger). Halliwell made arrangements to put the new canoe on the deck of a riverboat for the ride up to Parintins, where he put it in the water for the trip up to Cinco Kilos, Maués, and Fazenda Centenário where Mr. Michiles lived.

Furlough time for the Halliwells in 1930 provided many opportunities to tell about the need of a launch for medical-missionary work on the Amazon and its tributaries.

The appeals sparked the interest of Sabbath School members and soon the project had \$5,400 to make a little white launch a reality.

#### A Dream Comes True

Although an electrical engineer and not a boat-builder, Halliwell designed the first medical-missionary launch from the hull up. On his drafting paper, he drew to scale a 33 foot long craft with a 10 foot beam. It would draw two and a half feet of water to make the shallow areas accessible. The keel called for a hardwood known as *pau de arco*; the ribs, *piquiá*; and the planking *itaúba*.

The engine compartment housed a 20 h.p. German marine diesel. The box on the plans labeled "displacement" read seven tons and the "projected speed" promised to be nine knots.

On July 4, 1931, Mrs. Jessie Halliwell broke a bottle of soda water on the bow of the new boat, christening her the *Luzeiro* (Lightbearer).

The rays of a new day began to stream across the vast Amazon basin as a new chapter in Adventist missions opened. Very soon the eager missionaries started loading the sparkling new vessel with provisions for their first trip. The bedding went into the large forward room which would serve as a living area, a dining room and navigation room. Their bunks hung from ceiling and wall anchors at night, but during the day chains kept them up out of the way. Necessary tools took up what little space there was near the engine. Sanitary installations and the galley neatly fit at the stern. The roster of passengers and crew for the first trip upriver simply read: Four Halliwells and Andre Godrath, the faith colporteur.



*(Above) After the 1937 remodeling, sufficient additional space was made available on the Luzeiro to hold a refrigerator for medical supplies.*



*(Right) Five children had already died of malaria in this family before medical treatments of the Halliwells helped save the life of this child.*

*(Below) At this stop on one of their trips on the Amazon in 1934, Leo Halliwell treated 168 people.*



### To Make Man Whole

The Halliwells soon discovered men and women, boys and girls hungering not only for the Bread of Life, but also suffering malaria, skin diseases, parasites, and many other diseases. They realized that sick people care little about preaching no matter how good. Wouldn't it be better to prevent sickness than to treat sick people? Why not vaccinate?

The government could provide the vaccines, but the little *Luzeiro* did not have any type of refrigeration. When a group of doctors and nurses in the United States learned of the problem, they provided the funds for the needed refrigerator. Remodeling in 1937 provided just enough space for the new equipment and the boat was shipshape again.

A 1935 report typifies the work of the early years. Halliwell worked the Belém to Manaus stretch. Upon his return his log recorded 7,000 kms (4,200 miles), 25 baptized, 500 treatments given, and \$500 worth of Bibles sold. To the accompaniment of a million mosquitoes, Halliwell preached every night on the basic Christian gospel as well as on the law, the judgment and the Second Coming.

Every Thursday night the meeting featured ways to better take care of one's health. This work of love attracted the attention of the authorities. While in Manaus in 1937, the Governor of the State of Amazonas, Dr. Alvaro Maia, accepted an invitation to visit the launch. In 1944 the mayor of Maués brought his family to the boat to be treated. As a result of contacts like these, the government, over the years, has given large quantities of medicines to assist Adventist workers in caring for the sick.

The mission boat came in handy for other purposes, too. As the membership grew, the believers built little chapels and churches. On occasion the *Luzeiro* hauled wood or other building materials. If the limited space on the *Luzeiro* proved insufficient for boards or bricks, the empty hull became a barge and the launch a tug.

The *Luzeiro* linked the church organization and the scattered jungle people. The members gave the launchman their tithes and sometimes chickens, *farinha* (cassava meal), or the like as offerings. The captain, in turn, brought along Sabbath School supplies, and denominational publications for the groups and churches.

*The Halliwells practiced the best medicine they could considering the conditions, a fact greatly appreciated by both the people and authorities.*





*The Luzeiro was often piled high with supplies during its travels on the Amazon.* Courtesy of Fred Pritchard

### Groups and Schools Established

John Brown and the two colporteurs were the first to work in Manaus, the largest city in the jungle. As soon as the *Luzeiro* began plying the muddy Amazonian waters, Halliwell also took an interest in the work in the Amazonas state capital.

The colporteurs had continued to visit the area from the time Elder Brown made his first trip there. The ground lay ready for the evangelistic series conducted by Halliwell in 1932. The work in Manaus, which today includes the offices for the Central Amazon Mission, a small hospital, plus some 30 churches, 20 groups, and many elementary schools, owes its beginning in part to the launch work. In the early years, the fastest growth of interest occurred in the Maués area when Elder Brown baptized "Velho Donga" as Mr. José Batista Michiles was affectionately known.

This rancher lived out in the country three hours downriver from Maués. The ranch is still known as the Fazenda Centenário. Every year the folk at the *Pazenda* eagerly looked forward to the visit of the pretty white launch from Belém. The Adventists there wanted a teacher, someone to teach them more than they could learn during the missionary's brief visits.

In February, 1934, João Gnutzmann came to Centenário. Willing hands helped erect a palm branch house and school, and soon the teacher had 42 students to keep him busy. Captain Halliwell and his nurse/wife left some medicines for Professor Gnutzmann, but these were rarely enough to meet

*John Brown and his travelling companion were not the only ones who found travel conditions very difficult.*





*Jessie Halliwell examines a patient on board the Luzeiro.*

the demand. The school continued to grow until students had to be turned away.

Interest mushroomed around the Fazenda Centenário so in 1939 the union conference voted to purchase an outboard motor for the school. Naval carpenters built a small boat to be known as *Monte Azul* (Blue Mountain). The group in Maués also prospered and in time reached 200 Sabbath School members.

Excitement ran high at campmeeting time each year as speakers came from the city for the spiritual feast. Free medical treatment drew crowds of non-Adventists as well. The people loved these special occasions, some rowing for many hours or even days to attend the meetings. At times as many as 400 attended the five-day series.

The large Sataré Indian tribe lives some five hours upriver from Maués. Their domain reaches the Andirá River further north. Halliwell made early contacts with these people. Although not the most savage tribe, they at times gave him less than a warm welcome. In time an interest developed and the chief requested a teacher. None was available at first.

When the *Luzeiro* came into sight on the 1934 trip, Honorino Tavares, his wife, and little daughter stood on the deck anxious to start a new school at Ponta Alegre among these Indians on the Andir. By this time the chief had changed his mind, so the little white launch moved on up the river with the Tavares to see if others there might want a teacher and a school.



*Though he could neither read nor write, Old Chief Antonico listened intently as Jessie Halliwell read Bible stories on board the Luzeiro.*



*Leo Halliwell greets an Indian chief who had come requesting that a school be established in his village.*

When the chief saw what was happening, he decided he wanted a school after all, so the Tavares unloaded their belongings which included a cow, a bull, a calf, and some chickens. Ponta Alegre village did not have a single house available for its new inhabitants so the chief put them up in the *pajé's* (witch doctor's) house because he was out of town. When the local spirits man returned, he furiously commanded the little family expelled from his house!

A partially covered house frame offered some protection from sun and rain. The indignant *pajé* immediately started a campaign to drive the teachers away. The Tavares grieved when they found their livestock dead.

One night a storm came up and the wind drove the rain under their shelter wetting everything and chilling the family. The little girl got sick and soon the heartbroken parents dug a little grave. This tragedy won the hearts of the Indians, and hatred melted into toleration and even admiration. The patience of these saints began to change attitudes and before long the Indians helped them to build a house and a school building.

Three years passed before anyone declared himself a follower of Christ, but by 1940 Professor Tavares reported 35

church members and 58 Sabbath School members. One by one lights were lit across the jungle basin as the Lightbearer churned up and down the watery highways. The Adventist message brought hope to people in Manaus, Maués, Fazenda Centenário, Ponta Alegre, Santarém, Paran da Eva, Novo Remanso, Curupira and Matupiri.

#### **The First Mate**

Rearing children and keeping house in a small boat proved to be a real challenge to the missionary wife and mother; however, Jessie Halliwell did far more. While her husband organized evangelistic meetings, she took the Brazilian sisters aside and taught them how to sell *Atalaías* (Watchman). Her training as a nurse proved invaluable as she gave physical examinations and treated the sick. One elderly man who remembered the caring launch nurse, came later to the *Luzeiro* asking for a physical examination just like "Dona Jessie" used to give. At campmeeting time, "Dona Jessie" provided special programs for children.

This brave lady's duties were not limited to nurturing. Often she took a turn at the helm navigating the winding rivers, even at night. To cover greater distances at their slow

speed, the Halliwells frequently sailed all night. Mrs. Halliwell would take the wheel at 8:00 p.m. and run till midnight!

### The Captain

Leo B. Halliwell's training as an electrical engineer served him well in wiring the launches and churches he built. He also served as mechanic, navigator, painter, engineer, and administrator. His talents enabled him to minister as mission and union president, preacher, doctor, and even as a musician. After many years on the launch, Elder Halliwell was called to Rio de Janeiro to direct the launch work in all the territory of the South American Division.

Brazilian government officials, recognizing the unique contribution made by this fearless missionary pioneer, honored him with the Southern Cross medal. By the time Halliwell left for his homeland in 1958, he had completed 37 years of mission service. No one since has ever come close to this record of service on mission launches.

### Later Workers

When Halliwell constructed the *Luzeiro II* in 1941, he took charge of the larger, new boat. The *Luzeiro I*'s new captain, Fred C. Pritchard, took the added responsibility of organizing the newly-formed Central Amazon Mission. Both Elder Pritchard and his wife offered ideal qualities for medical work along the rivers as they were registered nurses with additional training in tropical diseases. Downriver from Manaus, the Pritchards worked on the Paran da Eva and established new groups at Varre Vento, Careiro, and Terra Nova. Upriver they held a series of meetings at Manacapur and along the Purs River.

Their efforts resulted in new groups and companies as well as many new friends for the Adventist Church. When the Pritchards left on furlough in 1945, Walter Streithorst became the captain of the valued little vessel as well as mission president. Streithorst labored for nine years, ministering to the needs of the jungle dwellers as a launchman. Benito Kalbermatter then took charge.

The next *Luzeiro* captain was Eduardo Gutierrez, who was on the boat by June of 1955. Another Argentinian, Carlos Boock, succeeded Gutierrez as captain. Through the 1960s, the *Luzeiro I* passed from one worker to another. Dates are difficult to fix with certainty, but Carlos Boock's period ran from 1959 through 1961. Next, Joao Pinheiro had her for two or three years. He was followed by Digenes S. Melo who concurrently led the departments in the mission in Manaus. Cipriano M. da Silva apparently had the boat for a short time.

When Anibal Pittau arrived in Manaus from Argentina, he found a badly deteriorated launch whose motor, in parts and pieces, sat in various boxes. With great mechanical expertise he fit it all together and got it to run. Pittau then made the *Luzeiro I* his home, pulpit and clinic until the *Luzeiro V* became available.



*Jessie Halliwell not only christened the Luzeiro I, but she spent many hours at the wheel piloting it on the Amazon.*

*In 1941, the second Advent mission launch was built for service on the Amazon. Appropriately, it was named Luzeiro II.*





*Several vessels built after the Luzeiro I are shown here coming to port for supplies.*

Parintins, near the eastern Amazonas state line, became the next home port for the first medical-missionary launch. Pastor Mário Matos headed this district during this period. The hot tropical sun, the frequent rains, and high humidity took their toll on the *Luzeiro's* wooden hull and superstructure. Due to the extensive work needed and to the lack of mission funds, she was dry docked for two or three years before being put back into service. The engine had also seen better days.

When Anibal Pittau started an Adventist colony in the early 1970s, he needed a boat to haul bricks, so off she went to Mamiá near Coari. After a year or two of service there, the colony failed and the launch was neglected. Some folk at Mamiá thought the mission had abandoned the once-pretty white mission launch, so they sold her for Cr\$2,000 (US\$350). When Mission President Luis Fuckner found out about the sale, he made a quick trip up to the site and was able to repossess what was left of the boat. He made arrangements for it to be towed back to Manaus for repairs.

In 1975 the mission bought a brand-new Brazilian-made MWM 61 H.P. marine diesel engine for the "One." Remodel-

ing, repainting, and replacing the engine got the small ship in shape for a new period of service which began under Pastor Natan Tavares de Araújo in his Baixo Amazonas district. This period of service ran from 1975 through 1976. The mission board next assigned her to the upriver district of Coari for the 1977 to 1981. Fábio Pimenta and Luiz Carlos Pereira worked from her decks two years each. From 1982 up to the present the *Luzeiro I* continues to faithfully navigate the waters of the Carauari district which is under the direction of Natércio de Melo Uchoa.

For a time the leadership of the Central Amazon Mission toyed with the idea of shipping the little *Luzeiro* to the United States. The plan called for her use as a monument to the brave missionary pioneers who so lovingly and caringly traveled thousands of miles in her cabins and on her decks to bring health and hope to Amazonian shores. But since this plan has not gotten out of the water, she continues to ply the muddy rivers far upstream from Manaus, bearing the Light of the gospel. Halliwell's missionary spirit lives on, and so far, so does the little, white, wooden launch he built in 1931.



*The spirit of Leo and Jessie Halliwell is carried on today by the crews of the various Luzeiro mission launches that still operate on the Amazon River.*

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