DEATH OF A PATRIARCH

Photo: Frank Blewitt

This tribute to the memory of Pastor John Alexander McMillan was paid by Pastor E. H. Foster at the funeral service on 14 September.

Today we meet in this church to thank God for the long life and dedicated ministry of His servant, Pastor McMillan; to express our Christian sympathy, as a church, particularly to the close relatives who have been bereaved of a loving and devoted husband, a kind, affectionate and concerned father, grandfather and great grandfather, whose posterity bear witness to the effective example of a godly, wise, and benevolent patriarch.

We meet to receive comfort, courage and hope from the unfailing promises of God’s Word; but before that to take time but briefly to pay tribute to a Christian gentleman, an esteemed senior colleague, an outstanding Church leader, an able administrator, an author, a careful, perceptive, but positively helpful critic, a preacher’s preacher, a defender of ‘the faith once delivered to the saints’. All of these accomplishments and others that could be mentioned were centred in the life of Pastor McMillan as a committed Gospel minister and dedicated pastor of the ‘flock of God’.

John Alexander McMillan was born in Belfast on 5 February 1901. He accepted the Seventh-day Adventist faith in his early twenties, a lone witness in his family. With his new convictions he embarked on ministerial training at Stanborough Park College and graduated from the prescribed course in 1926. Immediately he began service in the then South British Conference. The following year he was transferred to the Irish Mission. In August 1927 began his lifelong devoted marriage with Erma Georgina Malcolm from which union two daughters were born.

In 1933 Brother McMillan was ordained to the Gospel ministry. For ten years as evangelist and pastor he met the unusual challenges of Ulster and the Irish Free State. Lesser men might have wilted under the pressures of those days, especially during the evangelistic campaign in Cork, but Pastor McMillan persevered and persisted in Gospel ministry.

In 1936 he was transferred to mainland Britain and located in Hull for a brief but fruitful period. 1938 marked the beginning of his appointment to the Union Executive Committee – a relationship he sustained for almost thirty years, first as leader of the Scottish field for seven and a half years, then in various Union departmental responsibilities including Publishing, Home Missionary, VOP, and Radio. In each of these areas Pastor McMillan made a characteristically practical contribution to growth and effectiveness. In 1950 he succeeded to the presidency of the South England Conference and then in 1958 again followed the late Pastor W. W. Armstrong as president of the British Union Conference. This office he held until 1967 when he requested that he be not considered for re-election having completed over forty years service to the Church in the British Isles.

Pastor McMillan was a doughty champion of the SDA cause in these islands within and without the Church.

He discountenanced any defection on the part of national workers for voluntary exile.

He was his own man.

He gave honest counsel holding logic superior to sentimentalism.

He had Christian dignity but delighted to burst the bubbles of pomposity.

He was thrifty but generous.

He was always circumspect but enjoyed good humour.

He was an avid reader and diligent student but despised intellectualism.

He loved righteousness and truth.

He exalted the Law of God but deplored legalism.

He could confidently hold discussions with able theologians yet remarkably communicate with children and youth. He knew no generation gap.

Pastor McMillan never retired. On pension he pastored the headquarters’ church with appreciated energy both physical and spiritual. Later he accepted the pastorate of St. Albans and with it the almost daunting prospect of providing a church home for the believers there. Younger workers might have weakened at the knees at the difficulty of the task but Pastor McMillan seemed to be rejuvenated by the challenge. As he encouraged the churchmembers to pray, to give, to inquire, to search, Pastor McMillan untiringly identified himself with them in their quest for a place of worship. He forged friendships with ministers from curates to bishops and various committees of other Church communions in his persevering endeavours. There were disappointments that turned out to be providential deliverances until the distinctive place of worship was established at St. Peter’s Street.

The priority of domestic needs persuaded Pastor McMillan somewhat reluctantly to withdraw from his St.
1. From 31 August — 4 September the ministry of the United Kingdom, Eire and Holland met at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, to discuss matters of current theological concern within the denomination. Here Dr. Jan Paulsen, eminent theologian and Division secretary, speaks in the Recital Room on 'The Theology of Judgement'.

2. Not all of the Ministerial Council was taken up with lectures. There were discussion groups. This discussion group met in the main common room. Each group elected a chairman and a secretary and presented a five-minute report. It was the view of many of those interviewed that one of the most outstanding lecture presentations of the Council was that of Newbold's Dr. Sakae Kubo. He spoke on 'The Priesthood of Christ in the New Testament with particular attention to the Book of Hebrews'.

3. W. R. Lesher speaks on 'The Biblical Basis for the Doctrine of the Sanctuary'.

4. W. H. Shea on 'The Validity of the Year-Day Principle'.

5. Inevitably the Council involved much good fellowship. Here Union president, H. L. Calkins (right) enjoys a chat with Welsh president Ernest Logan. The Council concluded with a celebration of the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Pastor E. H. Foster presided. Conference presidents Dr. S. M. Reid and Pastor R. H. Surridge served their brethren.

**GREATER LONDON LITERATURE CONVENTION**

**Sabbath 28 November, 1981**

Central Hall, Westminster

Morning: Special Speaker
Dr. Silburn Reid

Afternoon: Speakers
Pastors R. Appenzeller,
L. L. Preston, L. Elliott
and E. Lawrence

Evening: Book Sale

— PLAN TO ATTEND —
It was one o'clock in the morning, and Ellen White was sitting up, probably using a lapboard as a desk, writing as rapidly as her pen could move across the page. Not long before, she had been shown the like a ship, afloat on a treacherous ocean which many would lose their way, and her shaking, a great collision with error in 1904. Soon it would hit one of those obstacles head-on. The year was 1904.

Already the ghostly outlines of that collision were materializing out of the fog. For one thing, the great Battle Creek Sanitarium was on a departure course from Adventism, its worker ranks infiltrated with brilliant, charismatic persons who — beneath a veneer of professed loyalty — actually had little use for Ellen White or the leadership of the organized work. Even the Sanitarium’s corporate structure had been altered head of the medical work, would bluntly tell the Church that ‘the denomination does not own the property, and never can own it, for it belongs to the public.’

There were other problems. Dr. Kellogg had begun urging the theory that God was present in everything. Even the Holy Spirit physically entered the human body through the air people breathed, he asserted, and the idea — which seemed to make God fascinatingly near — was sweeping parts of the Church, carrying ministers. Zealous young workers urged that Kellogg’s teachings be preached and printed, and warned that if the Church resisted, the General Conference leadership would be ‘rolled in the dust’. Yet these ideas contained profound dangers. If God was in everything, then heaven also must be everywhere. If so, where was the heavenly sanctuary? And where did the atonement take place? The challenge brought Ellen White to her feet in alarm, warning that these ideas threatened the Church in ways Kellogg did not understand. In response, workers at Battle Creek clandestinely prepared a book denouncing her as a plagiarist. And now, just beyond the veil of tomorrow, another problem awaited. In England a 43-year-old Adventist evangelist named Albion Ballenger would soon begin direct attacks on the sanctuary doctrine, leaving divided churches and confused believers everywhere he preached. In a document called The Nine Theses, he would soon declare that Adventists were wrong about the sanctuary in ‘almost every cardinal point’. If one followed Ballenger’s thinking, the 2,300-day prophecy collapsed and the 1844 message went with it. Yet people who heard him were often swept along by his reasoning, and Ellen White’s earlier words of anguish fit everywhere he preached. In a document called The Nine Theses, he would soon declare that Adventists were wrong about the sanctuary in ‘almost every cardinal point’. If one followed Ballenger’s thinking, the 2,300-day prophecy collapsed and the 1844 message went with it. Yet people who heard him were often swept along by his reasoning, and Ellen White’s earlier words of anguish fit the moment perfectly: ‘I cannot express the agony of my mind. Is the Church of God always to be confused by the devices of the accuser, when Christ’s warnings are so definite, so plain?’

Perhaps the supreme tragedy in all of this was that it was happening at one of history’s golden moments. At the dawn of the twentieth century the world was largely at peace. One could go anywhere and present before them such glowing representations . . . that often they change their penitence for defiance. Evil angels in human form. There was no hope of surviving such a challenge in human strength. Humanity had no answer for the logic of an angel’s mind, where memories of paradise twisted crazily into a deception so powerful that it had drawn down one third of heaven’s forces. No amount of education or experience equipped a person to face a trap like that. And those who left the Church had walked straight into it while bells rang and lights flashed from the pages of Ellen White’s warnings.

Desperate to warn God’s people, baffled by the amazing power of error, she reached for a symbol to describe what was happening. This apostasy contained the ‘alpha of deadly heresies’, she warned, and then — in the midst of an engulfing crisis — she took an extra moment to shout a warning for God’s Church in later years. All of it would happen again. The alpha had come; somewhere in the future the omega waited, and Ellen White ‘trembled for our people’.

Omega — a mysterious danger that waits for the Church at the end of time. For generations Adventists have puzzled over that cryptic warning.

Once God’s people had a chance to finish the work in the sunlight. Now, beneath the wind-swept skies of winter we face the same job, knowing that somewhere ahead we will confront a crisis called omega. And out of the future comes a challenge to us from the past — will we let it happen again?


This article represents a condensed version of Lewis Walton’s book, OMEGA, and was written by its author. The book may be ordered through your LA secretary and costs £2.90.
STOKE: Anglicans welcome Adventists

At 10 am on 5 July, St. Paul's Anglican church, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, opened its doors to the Seventh-day Adventists of the district. Their minister, Reverend Colin Crampton, and the Stoke minister, Trevor MacGowan, have known each other for some time now and Colin has visited the Stoke Adventist church on a number of occasions. So it was with great pleasure that our minister accepted his invitation to speak to the congregation of St. Paul's on the beliefs of Adventists. After an introduction and welcome from Reverend Crampton we had a delightful little ceremony of 'Make Peace' where all the congregation mingled together shaking hands and wishing God's blessing on each other. Then, after a hymn and a prayer Brother Ray Wild read the Scripture reading. Our minister's story held the children spellbound waiting for the inevitable dramatic climax. Time allotted to Trevor MacGowan's sermon was short so that only two subjects could be introduced, the Second Coming and the Sabbath, after first giving a little of denominational history.

Sister Vera Wright delighted us all with a beautiful solo, 'Great Lord of Life', and our group, 'Sunset' sang one of their own compositions, 'What is a Prayer?'.

The organist was Brother D. G. Mansfield and Michael Taitt accompanied the group on his guitar.

Drinks and biscuits were provided at the close of the service.

Great interest was shown by the Anglican parishioners and they said they hoped we would come again. We replied that the pleasure was mutual and we would be happy to welcome them to the Adventist church at any time.

We left this beautiful, modern church of St. Paul's happy in the knowledge that we had been able to share our faith. Our minister has since been asked to preach there again.

MARGARET E. WILD, Communication secretary

CHISWICK: Holiday Bible School

A daily average of thirty-five children from 3-13 years attended a Holiday Bible School in Chiswick church during three weeks of August.

Daily morning worship included Bible
LEEDS: Summer Youth Camp

For months the Leeds young people had been planning this holiday. Friends from Bradford, Sheffield, Birmingham and Leicester had been invited. As usual it rained when we got there but the weather brightened up for the last two days.

Sabbath services were held at the All Saints church in Cockermouth. Sabbath school was taken by Victor Harewood and Divine Service was taken by one of our young people, Curtis Griffin. His theme was: ‘Becoming as a little child’. Even though we were on holiday there was no reason for us to forget God, for we met with Him in our worship in the early morning and evening. These worship sessions were taken by different groups of young people in turn. Some of these sessions were attended by other children who were also on the campsite.

We went on a few walks and climbs. Some were able to say they had been to the top of the mountain, while others could only dream they had been to the top of the mountain.

To close the Sabbath everyone took part in a grand Gospel style song service, which lasted well after the Sabbath had ended.

PATRICK HERBERT

DAY OF FELLOWSHIP
WINTER GARDENS
Weston-super-Mare
Sabbath 24 October 1981

Guest Speakers:
Dr. Sakae Kubo
Newbold College principal
Dr. Silburn Reid
South England Conference president
Pastor Victor Hall
Stanborough Park pastor
Miss Doreen Irvine
Vibrant Evangelical Christian

This will be another high day in this part of the West Country. If you are in the district or live within reach of us for a day, then plan on it – we will welcome you gladly.

Bring your own food and drink this time.
Children well cared for in Sabbath School
Sabbath School begins at 9.45 am
Day closes at 5.00 pm
COME FOR THE FULL DAY — THERE’S A BLESSING IN FELLOWSHIP

The ‘Adventist Ascot’ drew capacity crowds once again this year. Unlike the other Ascot it did not rain. The Lord answered our prayers and gave us hot weather and cloudless skies. Cars and coaches came from most parts of the Union. Among our celebrity visitors were Hayley West of nation-wide fame, James Erondu, Publishing director of the Nigerian Union, Harold Calkins, president of the British Union, Silburn Reid, president of the South England Conference and Ron Appenzeller of the Division. The recipe of good books, good food, good music and fine magazines had once again worked its wonders. Praise God for the commitment of the membership of the British Union.
FOCUS ON TOMORROW'S WORLD

This FOCUS special – by popular demand from both members and ministry – deals with the great themes of Bible prophecy, 'Hope of the World', 'The Man who Discovered Tomorrow' and 'Christ and the Twentieth Century' are among its banner headlines.

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DEATH OF A PATRIARCH
Continued from page 1
Albans’ pastorate just before the completion of the building project but his outstanding contribution to that achievement will never be forgotten. The members of the St. Albans church have especially requested that their gratitude for the pastoral ministry of Pastor McMillan be expressed at this time of tribute.

With no specific church responsibilities Pastor McMillan continued to devote his time to the study of great themes of Adventist biblical doctrine; to prepare and present sermons for the establishing of the SDA Church in the British Isles has bade farewell to an outstanding leader.

The world-wide international Church has been bereft of an illustrious worker.

Although diminished by his death, our lives may be enhanced by following the example that John McMillan has left us of fidelity, loyalty, courage and perseverance. This would be the finest memorial to his memory, the strongest evidence of our esteem and gratitude for his life-work.

What better epitaph can we append to this adequate tribute than the words of Holy Writ?

‘And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever’ (Daniel 12:3).

PASTOR JOHN ALEXANDER McMILLAN – 5 February 1901 – 7 September 1981. While participating in a discussion group at the Division Ministerial Meetings at Manchester in early September, Pastor J. A. McMillan suffered a severe stroke which left him unconscious for about a week, except for a brief period of recognition of his daughters, shortly after which he peacefully passed to his rest. The funeral service was held in the Stanborough Park church on Monday, 14 September, in the presence of a large number of colleagues, churchmembers and friends. The family mourners to whom we hereby extend sympathy to his wife, Sister Frances Moore, and his family. We look forward to the coming of Christ to be reunited with our faithful brother. Ken Davey

MOORE, Joseph – d. 11 May 1981. Brother Moore was a committed Christian and faithful in his witness. He was baptized by Pastor M. K. Taylor in 1975 after having been associated with the Jehovah’s Witnesses for twenty years. The family served under the direction of Pastor Ken Davey, and the burial was at Ballykelly cemetery. We extend sympathy to his wife, Sister Frances Moore, and his family. We look forward to the coming of Christ to be reunited with our faithful brother. Ken Davey

TODD, Joseph – d. 11 May 1981. Brother Todd was a committed Christian and faithful in his witness. He was baptized by Pastor M. K. Taylor in 1975 and served under the direction of Pastor Ken Davey. The burial was at Ballykelly cemetery. We extend sympathy to his wife, Sister Frances Moore, and his family. We look forward to the coming of Christ to be reunited with our faithful brother. Ken Davey

TEACHER WANTED. Experienced Junior teacher needed at Lauriston School, Leeds, for January 1981. Denominational scale and allowances. Apply with c.v. to Education Director, British Union Conference, Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts., WD2 6JP.

H. I. Dunstan

MEET NEWBOLD WEEKEND
30 October – 1 November 1981

If you would like to stay at the college for a weekend of free charge, enjoy the Sabbath services and Saturday evening entertainment plus a Sunday morning of authentic Adventist classes, fill in the form below and send it to: Helen Savage, Newbold College, Bracknell, Berks. RG12 5AN

I would like to receive an invitation to Meet Newbold Weekend

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DID YOU LOSE a green Parker biro at one of the conferences? If so, please contact Pastor Stan Hensman, 135 Hebben Avenue, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA2 6TN.

18-YEAR-OLD GERMAN GIRL would like to spend her holiday in the UK. She is an Adventist as yet but wishes to be in contact with Adventists to get better acquainted with our faith. Write: S. Schulz, Gemeinschaft der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten, Fischerstrasse 19, 3000 Hannover 1, W. Germany.

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Did you know? Example – female candidate aged 25 at marriage could invest £5,000 in a high maturity bond with a first year interest of 6% and capital gain of £52,036, for a net monthly investment of only £24.14. Details from: Gary Keegan, P.O. Box 911, FLIA. American Life Insurance Co. Tel. 01-429 1088.

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SINCERE appreciation is expressed to all who have contributed to the ‘Don and Ann Lale Memorial Fund’ which was established earlier this year by Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Lale and Andrew who lost their parents so tragically. Funds received up to the end of August amount to £4,794.57. Official acknowledgements have been sent direct to all contributors, with the exception of the following anonymous donors, to whom we hereby express our thanks:


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THE GOLDEN CHORDS
‘KEEP THE FAITH’

Evangelism can and does take many forms. One of these forms — more effective than we often realize — is Gospel music.

The late 1960s saw a rash of Gospel singing groups develop in Adventist churches all over Britain. Many perished. The 1970s produced more. They have had varied fortunes. All, however, have contributed to the triumph of the Gospel, more especially in communicating its message to the minds of the young.

In 1968 the largest — and many would say the best — of the Gospel singing groups was formed at Brixton. They are still going strong. Their name is The Golden Chords.

For many years this group have brought inspiration to many congregations, evangelistic meetings, days of fellowship and conference sessions. The Golden Chords sang on the conference Sabbath at both the SEC Session at Portsmouth and the BUC Session at Harrogate — and, on both occasions, greatly enhanced the quality of worship.

The Golden Chords appeal to all age groups and a wide range of tastes. Their style is pure ‘Gospel’; they have made no concessions to worldly music and herein lies one of their strengths and the secret of their continued success.

The fact is that The Golden Chords have never been more successful than now. Their performance is highly polished. Their latest LP *Keep the Faith* is made to the highest technical standards and the quality of their performance is excellent. Many who have heard this record have already retraced their steps to the Saviour. Its evangelistic potential is vast.

Should you wish to order copies, your order should be addressed to Mr. N. Kennedy, 20 Chasefield Road, London SW17 8LN. Brother Kennedy may be contacted by phone on 01-767 4198. The records cost £4.95 per copy. (£5.30 if they have to be packed and posted.) Cheques should be sent with orders. The easiest method of ordering is for churches to co-operate together to send a bulk order. Delivery is free for orders of five or more.

The Golden Chords will appear live in the afternoon service at the Greater London Literature Convention at the Central Hall, Westminster, on 28 November 1981.