

Booklet

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**RESCUE HOMES AND REMEDIES WITH WATER
ADVENTIST BENEVOLENT WORK IN AUSTRALIA**

By Milton Hook



Seventh-day Adventist Heritage Series

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Adventist benevolent work in Australasia

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SDA Heritage Series: Entry into the Australian Colonies
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Milton Hook is the author of "Flames Over Battle Creek", a brief history of the early days at the Review and Herald Publishing Association as seen through the eyes of George Amadon, printer's foreman at the institution. Dr Hook's doctoral dissertation researched the pioneering years of the Avondale School, 1894 to 1900, and he has published some of these findings.

He spent three years as a mission director in Papua New Guinea. His teaching years include primary, secondary and college level experience, especially in Bible subjects, in Australia, New Zealand and America. He is an ordained minister, married and the father of two sons.

He would welcome any information which may enhance the content of this series.

There were no medical workers among the first group of Adventist missionaries who came to Australasia in 1885. Other priorities took precedence. But before the turn of the century fifteen or more Australasians sailed to America to train for medical missionary work. With a few exceptions they spearheaded health evangelism on their return.

In 1889 Edgar and Eric Caro were the first Adventists to go to America to study medical lines. Living in the medical students home at Ann Arbor, Michigan, they became acquainted with Daniel and Laretta Kress who were the dormitory caretakers and studying medicine at the same time.

The Semmens Era

Alfred Semmens paid his own passage to America in 1891 and used up all his personal savings while training at the Battle Creek Sanitarium and in charity work at the Chicago Medical Mission. Dr John Kellogg wrote of Semmens, "He is an illiterate man and of no culture, and can only do the simplest kind of Medical Missionary work. But he is a man of excellent spirit". Emma Pallant had gone to America to do similar study at the same time as Semmens. They were married by Uriah Smith in Battle Creek when beginning their nurses' course.

Kellogg, reflecting on the students from Down Under, wrote to Willie White saying, "Send us the brightest and best educated persons you have If you send cheap persons you will have cheap help when they come back. We cannot make pumpkins out of small potatoes".

The Semmens' returned to Australia in early 1894. While on the boat from London Emma gave hydrotherapy treatments to Miss Edith Graham who was suffering from insomnia. For more than a decade Graham had been chief accountant and supervisor of a hundred clerks in a large London warehouse. She was sailing to the Antipodes to help her brother, a branch manager for the Asbestos Company of London. Emma gave Edith a copy of Uriah Smith's book, "Synopsis of Present Truth". Some weeks after arrival in New Zealand Edith wrote to Emma saying she had decided to become a Seventh-day Adventist. Graham herself soon after began a long career in church-office work.

In Melbourne the Semmens' tried to generate some interest in Christian Help work, using the Australasian Bible School as their base and centre of instruction. Similar efforts had been initiated by Marion Davis the previous year as students and teachers periodically visited Alfred Hospital, behind the school, distributing flowers and tracts among the patients.

Dr Merrit Kellogg itinerated throughout some of the colonies in 1894, lecturing on health topics. His half-brother back in America, Dr John Kellogg, was dismayed to learn that crusty old Merritt Kellogg and young Alfred Semmens found it hard to work together. In addition, the Australian Conference finances were so low they could not afford to underwrite any medical work. Semmens, instead, was employed in office work and Bible studies. Dr John Kellogg wrote in scathing terms of the cool reception Alfred and Emma had received in Australia. He also reprimanded the Australian church administrators for being so slow to foster health principles. If they were not willing to use Semmens in medical missionary work, Kellogg vowed, he would employ Semmens back in America.

Kellogg's threats went unheeded. Semmens was transferred to New South Wales to serve as Secretary of that Conference in late 1895. However, he also worked at training church members in simple home treatments. Christian Help Bands based in the local churches

then put into practice what Semmens had taught them. Furthermore, in April 1896 the Conference set up a committee to explore possibilities of establishing a "bath-house".

Plans were realized when a seven-roomed brick cottage known as "Beechwood", in High Street, Ashfield, was rented in August 1896. It was situated directly behind the Ashfield church. Semmens fitted the cottage with a massage table, a sitz bathtub, a faradic or electric bath, a bucket for fomentations, and a gas hot-water system. Space allowed for only one live-in patient at a time. Alfred and Emma visited the local homes and advertised the institution. They called it simply "The Health Home". They offered a hot or cold bath for ten cents. For fifty cents a customer could have a massage and salt glow; a fomentation, shampoo and spray; a sitz bath and massage; or a vapour bath and oil. Board and treatments cost \$4.20 per week. Those who lived nearby were treated in their own homes. No contagious diseases were admitted for treatment. A local non-Adventist, Dr Deck, served as the medic and advisor although Dr John Kellogg wrote from America saying he did not think it a good plan. Kellogg preferred trained Adventists to staff the institutions.

Patients flocked from the beginning and Semmens began almost immediately to talk of moving to larger quarters. Their first in-patient was an arthritic woman. The distinctive aroma of coconut oil permeated the cottage as they gave massages, wet sheet packs, hot pours to the spine, galvanism treatments, coloclusters and other esoteric-sounding remedies. This was the first Adventist health institution in Australasia.

The clientele were generally poor and unable to pay the full listed fee for their treatments. While there was a continuous flurry of activity each day from 9 am to 7 pm, except during the Sabbath hours, the monthly balance sheet showed only modest returns. With some real financial doubts in mind further expansion was explored gingerly.

Soon, in the neighbouring town of Summer Hill, a substantial two-storied brick home with sixteen rooms, called "Meaford", in Gower Street, was rented and the transition took place during the Christmas/New Year period of 1896/97. It was rented for \$5 per week and the struggle commenced immediately to work within the precarious budget.

Mary Pallant had come to stay with her sister, Emma Semmens, so she assisted while learning the hydrotherapy treatments. Some other young workers in the early years were "Mimie" Steele; "Lizzie" Hubbard and Louis Currow (who later married each other); Louis's brother, Arthur; and Carl Ulrich. At first the institution was not a place for general nursing or registered as a nurses' training institution. Trainees therefore received no recognized certificates when they completed their course. However, a few who continued in their work did qualify later for a certificate when circumstances changed in the next decade.

The Caro (1897-1901) And Kress (1900-1907) Eras

The early phase of medical work, dominated by Alfred and Emma Semmens, was superseded with the return of Dr Edgar Caro. He, with his American wife, Edith, arrived in Australia just in time for the Australasian Union Conference Session, October 1897. Caro began by promoting and establishing the administrative machinery for his work. At the Session the Australasian Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association was organised with working committees in Melbourne and Sydney. The Association was linked with its American parent, the International Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association.

Caro first lectured at camp meetings in Australia and New Zealand. He then returned to Melbourne to inaugurate and edit a new health journal. It was a sixteen-page monthly called "Herald of Health", first issued in January 1898. It began with only 167 subscribers. Four months later the print run was two thousand. In 1902 its name was changed to "Australasian Good Health".

Caro's return to Australasia occurred in the same year as a number of trained nurses returned from America. Among them were Tom Skinner; Arthur Brandstater and his Australian wife, Flo (Grattage); Leila Harker; Ruth Jones; and George Shannan together with his American wife, Elsie. Edith Hare, who, while studying in America had married another student from the Antipodes, John Reekie, returned early in 1898, just a couple of months ahead of her husband. There was, therefore, a growing pool of Australasians qualified to assist Caro in medical missionary work. George and Elsie Shannan had linked up with "The Health Home" at Summer Hill. George specialized in the laboratory work there until its closure. The Brandstaters, who had married in Battle Creek during their training, went to nurse in New Zealand. After serving as the Avondale School chef and cooking instructor in 1897, Tom Skinner and his wife, Maud, went to Perth, Western Australia as soon as the school year was completed and began a health home. Ruth Jones and Leila Harker accompanied them. This was the first of a rash of short-lived institutions in the flush of the Caro era.

The Skinners rented a two-storied brick building in Fitzgerald Street, West Perth, which served as their living quarters and treatment rooms. However, there were not enough customers to support the enterprise and it folded within six months. They returned to the Eastern States leaving Jones and Harker to eke out an existence on a self-supporting basis for two lean years. The two women tried working out of rooms in a private institution nearby, St Omer Hospital in John Street, West Perth. This effort also failed eventually.

Under the guidance of Jones and Harker a Helping Hand Mission in Perth began in June 1898. Soon after, this was expanded with a Fremantle branch incorporated. Jones, as President of this Mission, used her experience in Kellogg's Chicago Mission to try some initiatives for helping destitutes.

Regular door-to-door soliciting brought in windfalls of cash, clothing, beds, blankets, meat and other groceries. These were distributed

wherever the need arose. But church members saw the need for something more than handouts.

Late in 1898 the members rented a five-roomed house in Charles Street, West Perth, for \$1.20 per week, with a view to provide beds and meals for destitute women. On the property was a large shed which was renovated by volunteers and furnished by public donations as a laundry. The Helping Hand Laundry, as it was called, laundered clothes by contract and was staffed by the destitute women. Walter and Jane Brittain, new arrivals in the colony, were chosen to manage the venture. It made a healthy start but within a few months they realised sufficient business was not being generated to support both the management and the destitute. Before long the management was reduced to the poverty level of those unfortunates they were trying to help. Closure became the only alternative. Church members reverted to giving handouts as part of their Christian Help Band work, as existed earlier. Jones and Harker transferred out of the West by early 1900.

Concurrent with the opening of the Perth Health Home was the birth of a more enduring institution in Napier, New Zealand. For some years Margaret Caro and Christian Help Band members in the Napier church had assisted unwed mothers and women just released from prison. Dr Edgar Caro persuaded them to place this community service on a basis more visible to the public. Two weeks soliciting for community support brought in enough to underwrite the establishment of a home for these philanthropic purposes. The same door-knock appeal brought to their notice a Christian lady willing to rent a spacious home overlooking the Pacific Ocean for \$1.80 per week. On February 16, 1898, the Mayoress of Napier officially opened what came to be known as Bethany Rescue Home. Miss Radford voluntarily served without pay as its first matron for a year. Then Miss Parr and others carried on the work. This institution served the community well for seventeen years when it was finally granted to the Salvation Army because of dwindling operating finances. Furthermore, Margaret Caro, the motivating energy behind the venture, had moved to Australia.

The 1890's in Australia were lean times. Banks had crashed. Drought and grinding poverty year after year had driven families to the cities. Men walked the streets begging work while those who stayed in the bush survived by eating possums, rabbits and kangaroos. There was no dole and home evictions were common. Hundreds of destitute people sifted the rubbish bins for food and slept in public parks with newspapers and sacks as their only covering. Luckier ones rented one-room hovels. They were out of everything except debt. Famine haunted their allow faces.

Amid the poverty Melbourne church members caught the spirit for community aid and set up committees in mid-1898 to begin a variety of ventures. With a larger membership than elsewhere, and therefore greater potential for financial support, they planned on a grand scale. The proposals included an old people's home, an orphanage, woodyard, laundry, electric-light bath house, and a rescue mission.

A small house was rented in North Fitzroy as a home for the aged. Church members donated furnishings and the senior elder of Ballarat Church, Bartholomew Harris, together with his wife, were employed as caretakers. Even though Harris himself was suffering from miner's consumption of the lungs he endeavoured to do what he could. Much of the work, however, fell to his wife. Three elderly people, two men and a woman, were cared for before the enterprise petered out a year later when the landlord sold the house.

Plans for an orphanage apparently never materialized. The Orphans Committee did, however, act for a time as an adoption agency and placed young children in suitable homes.

The proposed laundry, as well as the electric-light bath house, died in the blueprint stage. A start was made with a woodyard in North Fitzroy, but this was aborted in favour of all resources being channelled into a rescue mission on the seamy northern edge of the city.

Melbourne businessmen offered to rent two empty warehouses at \$20 per month. One was a four-storied brick unit on Latrobe Street. The third storey at the back had a bridge over a lane to a three-storied building which faced Little Latrobe Street. Situated between Elizabeth and Swanston Streets, it was in the vicinity of eight hotels, two opium dens, and scores of brothels. The Methodists and the Salvation Army already had similar rescue missions in the same area.

Church members rallied to renovate the buildings. The Board of Health insisted on fire escapes being installed and the water supply connected to every room. The public donated a large proportion of the supplies and furnishings. It was formally opened in grand style on Monday evening, September 12, 1898, by the Minister of Lands and Customs, the Honourable R W Best. Dr Howard, a Melbourne physician who had agreed to act as the consulting doctor for the institution, was also among the honoured guests. Pastor Cole, of the Methodist Mission, and John Reekie, recently returned from medical studies in America, were also invited to speak during the ceremony. Everyone was conducted on a tour through the buildings.

The foyer contained an office where tickets could be obtained for meals, beds, and baths. Current newspapers were left on a table especially for job-hunters. Through the curtains was the gospel chapel decorated with Scripture texts and landscapes. Upstairs was the reading room, manager's office, kitchen and dining room. The two upper storeys were given to bedrooms sufficient to sleep a total of fifty men. Across the bridge in the building at the rear were massage facilities, bathroom and a fumigator. It was there, in the lower two stories, they hoped to begin some self-help industries. A wood yard next door was begun to provide work for those destitutes wishing to earn their board. A few men were given tools to get independent work provided they repaid the cost in easy instalments. Later, furniture making and repairing was attempted as a mission industry but the poor quality of product forced the superintendent to abandon the business. Waste-paper collection was also tried as an industry but they could not sell most of it on the market.

This self-supporting institution was designed to operate on similar lines to Kellogg's Chicago Mission. No smoking was allowed. The cuisine was vegetarian. Skinner was the cook in the early years. Meals could be bought for a cent. A typical supper comprised a bowl of pea soup, two slices of brown bread, a dessert of bread pudding and a cup of cereal coffee. Beds cost five cents per night. New lodgers were required to have a warm bath followed by a quick cool shower as a bracer. This proved to be amusing at times as street hobos cautiously approached the adventure trying not to get wet. They were scrubbed by a bath attendant, given massage if they suffered from rheumatism and the like, then issued with clean pyjamas. Their clothes were fumigated and cloaked overnight then swapped for the pyjamas next morning lest they walk away with their night attire secreted under their street clothes.

George Hubbard was appointed the first superintendent of this Helping Hand Mission. In 1900 his daughter, "Lizzie", married Louis Currow- a nurse who came to work at the Mission.. William Knight joined the team as the evangelist. Each evening he would organize a small singing group on the footpath outside and advertise the evening gospel meeting to follow in the chapel. By mid-1899 forty-eight professed conversions were reported.

Much of the work at the Helping Hand Mission was done on a voluntary basis. Melbourne Adventists were rostered to assist in this capacity. The whole project began with an overdraft of \$300, but this was gradually whittled down after a couple of years. Later a tiny annual profit was sometimes achieved. More beds were added. By 1901 there were up to one hundred men sleeping at the mission every night. The bridge between the two buildings was made a covered way against inclement weather, and a drying room was installed especially for winter use. The dining room was transferred to the ground level and connected by a lift to the kitchen. Overall statistics in the earlier years showed that approximately one third of the meals and beds were given gratis. The remainder were either paid for in cash or met by work in the woodyard.

The demise of this endeavour apparently began about 1902. Charles Michaels, President of the Helping Hand Mission Board, wrote in April, "Of late we have felt as if we were forgotten". Top level church administration had experienced a change in personnel and hence a different philosophy. The 1905 and 1906 annual reports showed losses of \$122 and \$74 respectively. It was then that the Mission closed with the official blame being put on the popularity of another Methodist rescue mission which opened nearby and offered meat on the menu.

Late in 1898 a Helping Hand Mission had started in Adelaide too. In a narrow two-storied home on West Terrace mid-wife Elizabeth Semple and helpers began dispensing meals and clothes to the needy and providing a rescue home for orphans, destitute women and unwed mothers. It was officially opened on December 27, 1898, but floundered in poverty in March 1901 after caring for a total of about fifty individuals.

In 1898 Hobart church members toyed with the idea of renting a disused building at the Cascades and operating a Helping Hand Mission. Difficulty in raising both funds and staff caused them to dismiss the idea.

Similar humanitarian work was attempted briefly in Sydney during 1899 and 1900. An orphanage at "Comus", Prospect Road, Summer Hill, as well as a home for women, similar to Bethany Rescue Home in Napier, were short-lived efforts. Church members' interest was diverted at that time with plans for a major Sanitarium to be built in Sydney.

Dr Caro had connected with "The Health Home" at Summer Hill, Sydney, in mid-1898. Its hydrotherapy services were thus extended to hospital work and the name was changed to the Medical and Surgical Sanitarium. American physician, Dr Silas Rand, was added to the staff in late 1898. Increasing patronage forced Caro to rent a double-storied home, named "Lindo", across the street for the benefit of male patients. A stone's throw from "Meaford", a third

building, named "Moyne Hall", was rented early in 1900. It, too, was two-storied but had a basement, making it effectively a three-storied house. It was used for female patients and nursing staff. However, the fragmented nature of the Sanitarium made it difficult to manage. Other aspects were undesirable. The American secretary of the Benevolent Association, George Morse, wrote early in 1899,

The Home is generally well filled with patients but quite a large proportion of them are rather low priced patients, and some of them are on charity entirely. .. If we had better facilities, we could command a better class of patronage.

We are running great risks. In consequence of inferior bath-room accommodation we are gaining a very unenviable reputation. In consequence of the extremely inadequate conveniences for performing surgical operations and caring for the patients afterwards we are daily in danger of making ourselves responsible for the loss of precious lives.

These poor facilities prompted administration to begin planning for the large health institution eventually built in Wahroonga.

As soon as Caro had begun his work he recognized the need for properly trained nurses in increasing numbers. His aim was to provide the Sanitarium with low cost staff and then send them throughout Australasia as self-supporting missionaries, joining the American-trained personnel already in the field.

It was a three-year course which Caro offered. Applicants had to be between the ages of twenty-one and thirty. They were asked to sign a declaration that their purpose was not mercenary but simply to prepare for "missionary and philanthropic labour". The hours of work were ten hours each day. During the first year of training uniforms, books, tuition and board were given free. In the second and third years a small wage was deposited on their behalf but from it they

had to meet their own uniform and textbook costs. Among the subjects studied were anatomy, domestic hygiene, hydrotherapy, cooking, bandaging, general nursing, operating room nursing, diseases of women and children (for female nurses), and diseases of men (for male nurses).

The first group of nurses started their training in 1899 at the Avondale School. Only one third of them carried on their studies by transferring to Summer Hill part-way through the year and completing their course later. These trainees included May Paap, Alice Booth, Annie Olsen, Fanny Lucas and Leila Neale. Others accepted directly into this 1899 class at Summer Hill were Annie Harrison, Marie Woolard and Phillip Reekie.

While advances were being made in Sydney and Melbourne the Brandstater work in Christchurch, New Zealand, was showing steady growth too. During training in America Dr John Kellogg had described Arthur Brandstater as "a good faithful nurse".

The Brandstater work began their treatments in a six-room cottage at Linwood, suburban Christchurch, in 1898. Business blossomed and they transferred into a thirteen-room house on Hereford Street, Christchurch. Early in 1900 Dr Frederick Braucht, an American physician, transferred from the Samoan Mission to work with them.

Local church members, especially Sidney Amyes, a farmer at Irwell on the outskirts of the city, became enthusiastic about establishing a substantial medical enterprise in the area. New Zealand Conference President, American Pastor Eugene Farnsworth, together with Amyes, searched for a suitable location even though there was no money in the kitty.

They found an ideal property at Papanui comprising a double-storied wooden home of twenty rooms on three hectares or more of land. Its price was \$3600. The down payment of \$1000 was eventually found and the remainder was agreed to be paid on terms. A double-storied annex was built, providing hydrotherapy facilities and seven extra

rooms for patients. Full capacity was rarely reached, the number of in-patients generally being less than ten.

The institution was opened on July 1, 1900, and came to be known variously as the Christchurch Sanitarium, the Christchurch Medical and Surgical Sanitarium, and the Papanui Sanitarium. Amyes served as the initial business manager. The Brandstater remained. Beatrice Greenfield worked as matron until 1903, when she went to the Sydney Sanitarium to do further training. She then returned to the institution. During her absence newly-weds Bert and Lily Thorpe, fresh graduates from the Sydney Sanitarium, assisted Brandstater.

A procession of doctors started when Braucht returned to Samoa in mid-1901. He was replaced by an American pair, Doctors Martin and Florence Keller. Church members rejoiced in the luxury of having a female physician on the team, but it was not for long because by the end of the year they transferred and were replaced by another American, Dr George Gibson.

Gibson made a favourable impression at first but his reputation suffered as a surgeon when his patients' recovery times were prolonged with complications. To make matters worse he left the Sanitarium in 1903 for an extended holiday, fully intending to find work elsewhere, and did not return for nearly a year. Business plummeted, but there were some who came for hydrotherapy and gave glowing testimonials. In-patients became accustomed to the two-meal-a-day system with no liquids allowed with the food.

During Gibson's absence serious thought was given to employing Dr John Reekie who was then in private practice, but the New Zealand Conference President, Pastor William Baker, had reservations. Gibson, however, did return in mid-1904 and stayed until the end of 1906. Patronage improved slightly. Another Sydney Sanitarium graduate, Jean McCullagh, came to assist. Some remodelling improved the bathrooms and a profit of \$190 was achieved in the first half of 1905.

When Gibson accepted a government position on the Chatham Islands Reekie responded and began work at the Sanitarium in late 1906. He damned the suitability of the building, its location and the climate, recommending a change of location be made to Cambridge where the church's training school was situated. The property was indeed placed on the market for resale, but the move was a flash in the pan. Reekie returned to private practice after only about five months at the institution. Real difficulties were found in finding another physician to replace him. The Sanitarium continued offering hydrotherapy and had moderate success. Sydney Sanitarium graduate nurses worked hard to keep the enterprise open. These included Edmund and Gladys Rudge, as well as Rudge's sister, Waratah, and her husband, Thomas Carr. Annual balance sheets began to show some profits but these eventually were reversed and the institution closed in 1921. It proved to be the most enduring of the small enterprises initiated in the Caro era.

The Electro-Hydropathic Institute in Adelaide, which later grew into the Adelaide Sanitarium, enjoyed an existence in church hands for almost the same span of years.

Dr Hamilton, an ear, nose and throat specialist in Adelaide and a former patient at the Summer Hill Sanitarium, asked Caro if he would consider starting a similar institution in the southern city. Louis Currow, then a partly-trained hydrotherapy hand at Summer Hill, went to Adelaide to test the market and found some success. Consequently, in April 1899 Semmens and his wife, as well as his sister-in-law, Mary Pallant, transferred to Adelaide. Currow was glad to hand over his patients to Semmens because some were beyond his ability to help. Currow then continued his training under the supervision of Semmens.

Their search for treatment rooms resulted in locating a disused auction mart, at an annual rental of \$286, fronting Victoria Square East and little more than a stone's throw from the Post Office. It was simply four bare brick walls which they sub-divided into thirty-four rooms. Only one room was set aside for an inpatient. The remainder

were out-patients' rooms for consulting, massaging, bathing, shampooing, and changing. Hamilton loaned the enterprise \$100 and the Adelaide church members, with a little help from the public, financed the fittings. Late in July 1899 the Institute opened its doors for custom. This created a stir among the local physicians who summoned Semmens to a meeting where they plied him with questions about his methods and intentions. He was able to enlist their favour and a number even became regular customers themselves. Furthering his reputation, in 1902 Semmens was appointed honorary teacher of massage at the Adelaide Public Hospital.

Throughout its life the Institute gave an increasing number of treatments. Except for the first year, when expenses were heavier and loans had to be repaid, there was usually an annual profit made. Early in 1902 an electric-light bath was installed and its novelty attracted even more people.

Semmens lamented the lack of a resident doctor but as early as 1905 began to talk of establishing a small sanitarium in Adelaide. He began casting about for properties. In the meantime he and his wife cared for a few in-patients at their own home despite the fact they had two growing sons to care for. Before Semmens transferred at the end of 1907 Dr Howard James had begun as the resident doctor. Charles and Beatrice Baron managed the Institute when Semmens left but clientele had begun to fade and debts mounted.

The arrival of the Barons coincided with the purchase of almost a hectare north of the city on Barker Road, Prospect. Charles Davey built two attractive brick cottages, each with seven rooms, for approximately \$4000 of borrowed money. The opening of the Sanitarium was repeatedly postponed but patients were treated on an irregular basis until about September 1908 when it was in proper running order.

William and Mary Symonds, graduates of the Sydney Sanitarium, came to work as the head nurses. Dr James shared his time

between the Institute and the Sanitarium. Electricity was too expensive to install at first so all electrical treatments had to be done at the Institute, a tram's ride away. Twelve months later electricity was added at the Sanitarium and they inherited all the Institute's equipment, as well as debts totalling \$194, as the Institute closed.

Sufficient work was not forthcoming at the Sanitarium to warrant a resident doctor so James transferred in 1910. Half-way through that year nurse Esther MacDonald had arrived to be matron. She was a young widow whose husband had died prematurely of tuberculosis. In 1914 she married William Clapp, the jack-of-all-trades employed at the Sanitarium. They never left the establishment, for in 1920 they bought the institution with its liabilities, conducted it as a private nursing home, and, in time, doubled its bed capacity.

Back in New South Wales yet another health institution began to take shape when the Adelaide Institute was still in its infancy. At Cooranbong an Adventist settlement had begun to sprout around the Avondale School. In this remote neck of the woods various medical emergencies prompted School pioneers to plan for a small sanitarium. The presence of American nurse, Sara McEnterfer, on the school estate had simply demonstrated the value of trained assistance in such emergencies.

On one occasion McEnterfer was called to the shanty of a Roman Catholic boy in the village. Two weeks previously the boy had gashed his ankle on a tin can while chasing a cow out of his backyard. The parents, in their ignorance, had dressed the wound with lard. Days later a doctor ordered a bread poultice. These nostrums made matters worse. With the boy in constant pain, his leg turning black, and his whole body shrinking to a skeleton, the parents turned for help to McEnterfer and her fomentation treatments. These remedies saved his life.

In the same month, September 1897, an Adventist fisherman named Bill Clouten, galloped his horse from Lake Macquarie to report that a friend with a high fever had sunk into a coma. McEnterfer rushed to

the ailing man's side, reduced his high temperature with cold compresses and that afternoon left with instructions not to close the hut windows and not to give the patient alcohol. The man died before Clouten visited again early the following morning. Later, relatives admitted to Clouten that they had given the patient alcohol. Adventists recognized that if there had been a sanitarium available such a sufferer could have received in-patient treatment for a few days and a life would have been spared.

Plans were therefore laid for Metcalfe Hare to build a health retreat at the entrance to the Avondale School property, just opposite their new church. The two-storied wooden structure was erected in the latter half of 1899 and officially opened on December 28 by the New South Wales Minister for Mines and Agriculture, the Honourable J L Fegan. Dr Rand regularly visited from Newcastle as the physician. Herbert Hellier and his wife, who had gone from Victoria to train in America and worked successfully in South Dakota, returned and provided the nursing staff. Ada Bowhey, from South Australia, worked as the cook.

The isolation of the institution, together with its unfinished appearance and inadequate treatment rooms, spelled disaster from the start. It was, indeed, a boon for local emergencies but it needed a steady stream of in-patients over a long period to pay off the initial costs as well as the running expenses. A lucrative clientele did not develop. By September 1900 Hellier resigned, feeling discouraged and responsible for the feeble beginning.

Quite the opposite was happening in Newcastle. A medical mission had been initiated there the previous year as a branch of the Summer Hill Sanitarium. It was located on Hamilton Road. Dr Rand and nurse Katherine Hungerford nurtured a thriving business to the point where American Pastor Asa Robinson who, among other duties, was then superintendent of the Health Retreat, took steps to amalgamate the Avondale and Newcastle medical work. At the Summer Hill Sanitarium Caro and his Business Manager, Fred Sharp, opposed and tried to stall the merger. Nevertheless, in

December, what was known as the Hamilton Treatment Rooms became an adjunct of the Avondale Health Retreat.

The Helliars returned to Melbourne. In November 1900 American nurses Alfred and Carrie Robie replaced them at the Avondale Health Retreat and another American new-arrival, widow Maud (Sisley) Boyd, became matron for a few months. In an effort to redress the inadequate facilities Hare was instructed to spend more money to complete the structure. At the rear he built a two-storey annex connected by verandahs which extended around the original building to the front entrance. This provided proper bath and treatment rooms as well as additional bedrooms and a finished appearance.

American doctors, Daniel and Laretta Kress, had also arrived in November 1900. They first joined with the Summer Hill Sanitarium, Laretta connecting with the Avondale Health Retreat as a consulting physician. In May 1901 both doctors transferred to the Retreat, living and working in the institution. Their association with the Robies only lasted for about three months because of the Robies transfer to Queensland. However, the Kresses residency for nearly two years proved to be the peak of the Retreat's service. The number of patients increased and some debts were paid off.

When the Robies left Kress decided the best way to acquire more nurses was to train some. In July 1901 he began a class of seven trainees who graduated in Sydney in 1903. In mid-1902 he commenced a second group of trainees, thirteen in number, who graduated in 1904. When the Doctors Kress and the nurses all transferred to Sydney at the end of 1902 the Retreat and the Hamilton Treatment Rooms were closed. An attempt was made in 1905 to reopen the Retreat with Metcalfe Hare's wife, Maria, as matron, but it fell through.

A second attempt occurred in 1911/12 when a West Australian, Margherita Freeman, graduated from the medical course at Sydney University and was asked to re-open the Health Retreat. (Fellow

classmate, Thomas Sherwin, who had grown up on a sheep and cattle station on the Queensland border, was appointed at the same time as physician at the Sydney Sanitarium). After having been used as an overflow boy's dormitory for the nearby Australasian Missionary College, the Retreat was refitted and registered as a private hospital. A formal re-opening tea was held on July 21, 1912. Freeman and Sherwin were married at the Retreat on September 18, 1912. It was the marriage that sealed the fate of the doomed Retreat for the couple did not wish to work in two widely-separated places. Instead, they chose to work together in Sydney. Later, Sherwin wrote,

Next morning [September 19] my wife and I caught the early morning train from Dora Creek to Wahroonga to attend a Sanitarium board meeting. We then separated, Dr Freeman returning to Avondale to close up her work there and I to my work at the San. We did not see each other again for a week.

One final desperate attempt was made in 1914 to revive the Retreat. Dr Archelaus Stuttaford, assisted by "Teenie" Judge, located there and tried unsuccessfully to develop a viable clientele.

When the Robies transferred from Avondale they were under instruction to try and rescue the Rockhampton Bath House from certain ruin. Skinner and his wife had begun the enterprise a year earlier, in July 1900. A few months later, Charles Brandstater and his American wife, Margaret, had opened a similar establishment in Brisbane. However, both treatment rooms floundered, heavily in debt. In mid-1901 the Brisbane venture was closed and the Rockhampton one was left stranded when Skinner resigned. The Union Conference, then in session, signalled for Robie to rush north. To refloat the Rockhampton work the Conference delegates donated one hundred gold sovereigns (\$200) and the Victorian Conference gave \$250 that had been earmarked for their own Helping Hand Mission.

Still \$90 in debt, Robie relocated the treatment rooms, moving to Campbell Street with slightly better results. Nurse Louisa Tuxen went to assist. But lingering drought in the hinterland starved Rockhampton of cash-flow and by mid-1903 the enterprise had slipped to \$246 in debt. The Union Conference recommended they close. Not wanting to admit defeat, Robie offered to continue in a self-supporting capacity providing the Conference pay off \$200 of the debt. This was paid, but a year later the Robies had to concede they could not make ends meet and they returned to America.

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Fourteen different medical or benevolent enterprises functioned at some time during the Caro era (1897 - 1901). Only one, the Summer Hill Sanitarium, was running when he arrived. Few, however, survived. The building of the Sydney Sanitarium at Wahroonga, which Caro had little to do with except in its early planning stages, coincided with Caro's fall from favour.

In some ways Caro resembled his mentor, Dr John Kellogg. Both were excellent physicians with grand ideas, magniloquent and, at times, pontifical. Both were dedicated to the concept of conducting a large medical institution for the wealthy and middle class so that the profits could generate funds to raise up smaller sanitariums as well as support benevolent work for the poor. But Caro's church career apparently began to unravel in late 1899 at the Maitland camp meeting. It was alleged some Adventists in the audience were filled with dismay by his promotion of optical supplies for which he was acting as agent. They felt he was being mercenary: His alleged reluctance to identify himself as an Adventist when dealing with the medical profession did not endear him to Adventist affections either. Furthermore, when Kellogg fell from favour at this time in America then the same mistrust and disdain was served on his disciples, including Caro.

By late 1900 Caro seemed to become entangled in many predicaments. His personal secretary, Emma Steed, and her

minister husband, dropped out of church employ. His Summer Hill Sanitarium was running up debts every year. In addition, the coming of John Burden from America to Sydney in January 1901 eroded Caro's reputation. Burden came with the reputation of being a financial whiz. As he surveyed the fiscal situation of the medical work he determined on some tough measures to reverse the slide. Thousands of dollars donated by Dr John Kellogg and other Americans had allegedly been siphoned to the Summer Hill Sanitarium from funds meant for building the new sanitarium at Wahroonga. The friction that had developed between Caro and Robinson over the amalgamation of the Hamilton Treatment Rooms with the Avondale Health Retreat had only been a prelude to developing suspicions. Robinson and Burden relayed this to Ellen White who, in turn, wrote a series of letters to Caro denouncing his attitudes and tactics.

Caro was politically astute enough to foresee that whoever administered the new sanitarium at Wahroonga would also oversee all the medical work for the church in Australasia. At that time (1900) Caro was superintendent of all the medical work, but the coming of Kress in November 1900 unnerved him. Kress was immediately appointed by church leaders to the building committee for the new sanitarium and also linked up with the Summer Hill institution. To lessen Kress's influence, however, Caro tried to persuade him to work in small treatment rooms in the inner city of Sydney. Caro did not want him gaining the upper hand at Summer Hill. There was chafing at such close quarters. Eventually, Kress became upset by a public scandal which broke at the Summer Hill Sanitarium. Caro, on the other hand, was not impressed with Kress who was being sued by a patient of the Sanitarium for malpractice. This suit was settled by a pay-out.

Expediency drove Kress to transfer to the Avondale Health Retreat, first to recuperate his fractured emotions and then to build a practice. Kress was a former Baptist minister and was ordained an Adventist minister in mid-1901. At the same time the Australasian Union Conference nominated Kress to work at the forthcoming

sanitarium at Wahroonga, while Caro would remain at the Summer Hill Sanitarium with its \$3910 debt. These were significant omens.

Caro could see the inevitable. The owner of the main building, "Meaford", at Summer Hill Sanitarium was not prepared to renew the lease for anything less than twelve months so Caro moved out and functioned in "Moyne Hall" and "Lindo". It was an unhappy arrangement that lessened the already limited facilities for treatments, but Caro was already walking towards the exit door of church employment. A few months later, November 1901, he resigned and recommended the closing of the Summer Hill Sanitarium. Over the Christmas/New Year period it did indeed cease to function and Caro returned to New Zealand to begin a private practice.

Conclusion

The pioneering period of Semmens, followed by the Caro era, were times of infectious optimism in the medical arm of the church. A decentralized network of health care and benevolent institutions sprang up despite the bane of drought in the colonies and the competition of the fledgling Avondale School for church members' pockets. But by December 1899 Ellen White had concluded that Adventists should not get involved in benevolent work for the destitutes. The Salvation Army, she said, could do that type of work. Herdampers on the ventures contributed to their demise.

The Kress era (late 1900-1907) ushered in a policy of centralization. No new small institutions were begun. Four were terminated- the Avondale Health Retreat, the Hamilton Treatment Rooms, the Rockhampton Bath House, and the Melbourne Helping Hand Mission. Energies and finances were channelled instead into the large new sanitarium and nurses training institution at Wahroonga. The denomination was on the verge of a medical evangelization of the East Indies and Pacific Islands. This preoccupation, rather than the homefields, captured the imagination. In the early years only one more enterprise was initiated - the Warburton Sanitarium in Victoria,

which began in 1910, despite the low patronage and continuing debt of the Sydney Sanitarium at Wahroonga.

Major sources for this booklet are the "Bible Echo and Signs of the Times", the "Home Missionary", the "Australasian Record", the Minutes of the Medical Missionary Committee (Sydney Branch), the Minutes of the Summer Hill Sanitarium Board, private letter collections stored at Avondale College, and the author's personal collection of pioneer data.

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