

Booklet

17

CULTIVATING VEGETARIANS
PIONEERING THE SANITARIUM HEALTH FOOD COMPANY

By Milton Hook



Seventh-day Adventist Heritage Series

Not for Resale

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Health Food Company

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SDA Heritage Series: Entry into the Australian Colonies
By Milton Hook

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.

Not for Resale

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The enterprising Kellogg family in Michigan, U.S.A., once conducted a broom-making business. In time their interests took new directions. Doctor John Harvey Kellogg began experimenting with nuts and grains to develop tasty foods for vegetarians. His younger brother, Will, rose to the fore as the maker and merchant of these relatively simple wares. Their foods, manufactured from peanuts, wheat, oats, and corn, proved to be increasingly popular. Adventists worked in Kelloggs' factory and were the greatest promoters of his products. The Kelloggs' success story was, of course, closely allied to a trend towards vegetarianism in the late nineteenth century, a minority movement heartily endorsed by many Seventh-day Adventist pioneers.

The Kellogg triumph was something which Adventist missionaries to Australasia dearly wished to echo. They believed in both spiritual and physical well-being, aiming to introduce a lifestyle which promoted good health. This agenda included a diet low in flesh foods.

In their published magazine, the "Bible Echo and Signs of the Times", the pioneers included a section entitled "Health and Temperance". The first issue in January 1886, carried anti-tobacco quotations. Subsequent issues pointed out more dangers such as liquor and coffee. The consumption of large quantities of meat was condemned too. "Let a person eat much meat...and he is almost sure to become a fearless, violent, ambitious villain", the paper quoted in February 1886. "To use flesh excessively is, therefore,

sinful", it was stated in the November issue. Pork eating came under special attack and examples of trichonosis were cited.

Twelve years later, when the Adventists in Australia were manufacturing their own foods a much more decided stand against all flesh in the diet became evident. The move toward total vegetarianism is illustrated by the circumstances surrounding Anna Colcord's book, "A Friend in the Kitchen". First editions contained meat recipes but in August 1898 her husband wrote to Ellen White saying they had decided to delete these and in future editions include a chapter entitled "Substitutes for Meat".

By 1898 the "Bible Echo and Signs of the Times" was also clearly advocating total vegetarianism. While the scriptural distinction between clean and unclean meats was maintained the July issues carried articles warning against all flesh foods. Various causes were explained which "make the flesh of the cleanest animals unfit to be the food of Christians". Sheep carcasses examined by the Melbourne Board of Health, it was reported in the August issue, were "honeycombed with abscesses". The very same columns carried the first regular advertisements for Adventist foods produced in Australia.

For a brief period health foods had been imported from Kellogg in America. The decision to establish depots to distribute these foods had been made at the camp-meeting in Armadale, Victoria, October 1895. Achieving this goal took time.

The first shipment did not arrive until late 1896 and was deposited in the Echo Publishing Company, North Fitzroy. George Fisher, then in charge of the packing department, costed and distributed this consignment. It was composed mainly of three kinds of biscuits. Some were a type of cracker, shortened and unsweetened. Another kind was a sample of plain wheatmeal biscuits. The third variety was a thick oatmeal biscuit with a little butter, sugar, and yeast in the recipe. Some Granola and Granose were also received. In 1897 these were advertised briefly in the church magazines.

The sale of the American foods was not a great success. Shipping and import duties made them expensive. Furthermore, the time lag between their manufacture and consumption meant they were quite stale. A local factory was essential. Therefore, enquiries were made for a qualified baker. Tom Craddock had sold his bakery when he became an Adventist and began ministerial work. He would have been a natural choice for the task but the dire need of Bible workers caused church administrators to look elsewhere. They opted, instead, to bring Edward Halsey from America to Melbourne in late 1897. Halsey had worked with Doctor Kellogg during the days of experimentation and development of the health foods. No-one had greater experience or knew the recipes better.

Doctor Edgar Caro returned to Australasia just prior to Halsey's arrival and began work at the Summer Hill Sanitarium in Sydney. There he established a depot under the name Sanitas Supply Company as an agency for Kellogg's Sanitas Food Company. The future of health foods in Australasia looked promising with Caro as an enthusiastic promoter and Halsey as the expert baker.

On arrival in Melbourne Halsey barely had time to catch his breath before he was enlisted to cook for those at the Balaclava camp meeting. This he did single-handedly and without pay. After the camp the organisation of a bakery began in earnest. A committee of five, including Halsey, was set up to implement their plans. Charles Michaels, a former businessman, was on the committee. Nathaniel Faulkhead, who had business contacts throughout Melbourne and was treasurer of the Echo Publishing Company, acted as chairman. American executives at the Echo Publishing Company, Wilbur Salisbury and Edwin Palmer, kept a managerial eye on the enterprise.

Just before Christmas 1897 the St. Georges Bakery and house attached was rented for twelve months at \$1.60 per week. It was a brick building situated on Clarke Street, Northcote, a little north of the Echo Publishing Company. A loan of \$100 was obtained from

the Australasian Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association to pay rent and purchase suitable baking trays, flour, oatmeal, sugar, and peanuts.

Throughout January 1898 Halsey spent time testing the bakery oven and becoming accustomed to its idiosyncrasies. On January 26, as a trial run, he cooked a batch of Caramel Cereal, a substitute for tea and coffee. The following day he made his first batch of Granola biscuits. These he ground at a nearby mill because his own heavy equipment hadn't arrived at that stage.

Halsey worked six days a week. In mid-February Edgar Hollingsworth came from Sydney to assist him. A youth, Fred Williams, was also employed at ten cents per day. Halsey had the cartons printed at the Echo Publishing Company for his products. He experimented with Melbourne yeasts, and baked bread and toasted zwieback for local sale. A trial batch of Graham crackers was made too. The most time-consuming work was shelling and blanching peanuts by hand prior to roasting and grinding them into peanut butter. By April Halsey had sub-contracted Adventist women and their children to do the shelling in their own homes.

The Melbourne enterprise was operating under the name Sanitarium Health Food Agency, borrowing the title from Kellogg's company in Battle Creek, Michigan, where his factory was located close-by the Battle Creek Sanitarium. On April 27, 1898, Halsey's little factory was legally registered as the Sanitarium Health Food Agency. Early in May Philip Rudge transferred from Tasmania to relieve Salisbury and Palmer of management. Rudge had been a businessman in Zeehan prior to becoming a Seventh-day Adventist. He and his wife, Isabella, then canvassed books in their area before moving to Melbourne. He operated out of the Australian Tract Society office, 251 St. Georges Road, North Fitzroy.

Rudge's task was to superintend production, arrange sales, and keep accounts. Quantities of Caramel Cereal, Granola, and Nut Butter had been shipped to other colonies. The Sanitas Supply

Company at the Summer Hill Sanitarium, Sydney, acted as the depot for New South Wales. Alfred Hughes at Eagle Junction, Brisbane, had agreed to be the Queensland agent. Elsewhere people could order direct from Rudge's office or the Echo Publishing Company's branch office in Flinders Lane, Melbourne. Colporteurs were asked to introduce the foods wherever they travelled. Adventists everywhere were urged to follow Hughes' example and earn their living by starting an agency. Optimistically it was predicted, "We anticipate that very soon all the leading grocers in this country will be handling these goods". It was not clear whether management meant Adventist agents would eventually serve as retailers in opposition to these grocers or simply act as wholesalers.

Soon after Rudge began his promotion the following notice appeared in the church paper,

We invite all our readers to improve their diet by eating Granola and Nut Butter, and by drinking Caramel Cereal. They are the great food correctives for indigestion and constipation. We also invite you to assist this good enterprise by selling the food to others. Liberal discounts are offered to all agents. Address, Sanitarium Health Food Agency, 251 St. Georges Road, North Fitzroy, Victoria.

Rudge reported a consignment had been dispatched to the West Australian Tract Society. He also published testimonials. One satisfied customer was quoted as saying, "We find Nut Butter better than represented. We like it better than anything else that is used with bread". Additional agents were enlisted in other colonies. Joseph Steed acted as the agent in Adelaide and James Eyre in Hobart.

Beginning in July 1898 regular advertisements for the three foods appeared in the church missionary magazine, "Bible Echo and Signs of the Times", in an effort to educate Adventists and non-Adventists

alike. Granola was billed as "the food par excellence for brain workers" with three times more nutritional value than beef.

Descriptive articles were published explaining the advantages of the foods. Granola, it was claimed, contained "the right proportions of nitrogenous and carbonaceous ingredients" with 92 per cent of its bulk being nutriment compared with only 28 percent in the case of beef. Caramel Cereal, the articles assured, had none of the dangerous qualities of tea and coffee "and really cheers but not inebriates". The advantage of Nut Butter over ordinary butter was said to be its emulsified form of fat, making it more easily digestible. Recipes containing these foods quickly began to appear also in the church magazine.

One of the first grocers to retail the foods was Moran and Cato in Best Street, North Fitzroy. However, it was not an easy task to wean the colonial from the traditional fare. Stocks stayed long in the retail outlets and became incubators for weevils. One angry vegetarian wrote to Rudge objecting to the animal content, dead and alive.

By mid-1898 it was patently obvious that the entire business must be terminated or restructured at great expense. The fault lay in poor marketing strategies rather than Halsey's recipes. All the original investment monies were lost. A fresh start was favoured. In keeping with the Adventist shift in centre from Victoria to New South Wales, it soon became clear that the Avondale School campus at Cooranbong was the best site for a new factory. Ella Hughes, the school principal's wife, wrote home to her American parents on August 11, 1898, saying, "They are talking of starting a health food factory here on the estate The school has sold the mill to the Health-Food Company; and they will turn it into a health-food factory as soon as a few logs are sawed up". The School Board was delighted with the plan to sell because the sawmill had become a burden to them.

The old sawmill on the banks of Dora Creek, together with almost a hectare of land surrounding it, and the accompanying cistern,

steam-boiler and engine, was purchased for \$800 for the health-food work. One advantage in this transaction was that credit could be obtained simply by a ledger entry in the church accounts and no bank officer had to be persuaded about the viability of the new venture. But there were other advantages too. Students at the school could be offered employment in the industry. Furthermore, the creek was navigable and barges and small boats could transport supplies and products to and from the railway at little cost.

Warren Morse, one-time newspaper editor and book salesman, came from America in July 1898 to succeed Rudge as General Manager of the Sanitarium Health Foods Agency. His wife, Lizzie, worked as his secretary. Rudge became superintendent of building operations and food production. Morse had no previous experience in marketing foods, and Rudge was neither a baker nor builder. Their main task appeared to be promotion of the enterprise, co-ordinating the work-force, and handling accounts. Further re-organisation occurred when the Sanitarium Health Food Agency legally absorbed the Sanitas Supply Company in October 1898.

During the latter half of 1898 sixty-five thousand bricks were made in the kiln on the Avondale School estate. These were used to build a two-storey addition to the old sawmill. John Higgins arrived at Cooranbong in late January 1899 to work as foreman for the building operations. William Wainman and other locals assisted him. The equipment from Melbourne was transported to Sydney. There it was consigned with more machinery purchased in Sydney and shipped by ketch to the banks of Dora Creek. William Booth arrived from Ballarat a little later as engineer for the factory.

A persistent lack of funds slowed progress on construction and the installation of machinery. Building supplies were purchased only as funds became available. The labourers were not paid their wages until six months after work started. Each man lived on credit from the local store. Painstakingly the building was completed to a stage where some production could commence in mid-1899. The manufacturing equipment included an eight-shelf reel oven, a dough

mixer and dough break, two nut-shellers, several grinders, a mill for pressing flakes, and a mill for grinding up Granola biscuits. In all, an extra \$800 was spent on additional machinery.

Interior lighting for the factory was provided with lamps and candles. Despite the available equipment much of the work had to be done by hand. Tins and packets were all made by hand. The water supply had to be pumped manually from the cistern. It often ran dry in drought times, forcing staff to work only two or three days a week. The washing of gluten flour was all done by hand too. John Pocock, one of the earliest workers in 1899, had his wife and children shell some of the peanuts in their tent-home.

In May 1899 Halsey transferred to Cooranbong. Production of Nut Butter began in late May. By the time the Australasian Union Conference Session convened there in July he had a number of lines available for the delegates to sample. He baked bread, ground Nut Butter, roasted Caramel Cereal, and cooked Granola and a variety of biscuits for them.

Once production began in earnest new foods were added to the list. Gluten Meal was packaged and some was made into Gluten Biscuits. Even charcoal tablets were manufactured by burning some of the hardwoods on the estate. Granose Flakes and Granose Biscuits appeared on the market at this time too. This popular product was made from wheat. The grains were steam-cooked in a small tank, spread out onto trays for drying in the oven, and then rolled flat in a mill. Frequent stirring by hand to ensure an even drying process was essential for best quality flakes.

Important changes in organisation took place early in 1900. Steps were taken to link the health food enterprise more closely with the church medical work. This was how Doctor John Kellogg originally operated the Battle Creek Sanitarium and the production of his foods. After all, the provision of health foods was considered to be preventive medicine. For this reason church administration voted to have the Summer Hill Sanitarium manage the Sanitarium Health

Food work as a separate department. All profits were to be used for medical missionary work. No longer was the enterprise simply to be an agency of its American parent but instead it was incorporated separately and known henceforth as the Sanitarium Health Food Company.

During the reorganisation the Australasian Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association was dissolved. Church members holding 'shares'¹ and therefore having voting rights agreed to transfer its work to the Australasian Union Conference. Therefore, because the Summer Hill Sanitarium had been the responsibility of the Association it then came under the umbrella of direct Conference control together with the Sanitarium Health Food Company.

Head office for the Sanitarium Health Food Company was located at the Summer Hill Sanitarium in Sydney. Morse continued to work from this base and Rudge, as the Cooranbong factory manager, lived at Cooranbong. Harry Camp, a colporteur, was appointed as the travelling salesman for the Company. A few others tried retailing the foods. One young New South Wales man, a Mr Daniel, who had been dismissed from his bakers cart business when he became a Seventh-day Adventist, tried selling door-to-door on foot. Then a horse and cart was arranged for him to use and he would sell a dollar's worth each day.

Despite reorganisation and sales initiatives the year 1900 proved to be a financial disaster. The colonials continued to prefer their sausages or bacon and eggs for breakfast. Stocks remained on the shelves and even William Colcord, President of the New South Wales Conference, complained bitterly about the "worms and cobwebs" or weevils in the Granola.

Drastic changes were made to rescue the Company from the brink of bankruptcy. Both Rudge and Camp were relieved of their responsibilities and they returned to canvassing. The factory virtually

¹ Not dividend producing shares but rather those shares which were given to people who donated money as interested benefactors. Voting privileges at annual meetings were given to those donors.

closed down at the end of the year (1900) and the small staff was dismissed. Only the Avondale Press continued to function in its small corner of the building. Halsey was asked to transfer and pioneer production of similar foods in New Zealand. There a brick oven was built in a shed behind the Christchurch Sanitarium and Sidney Amyes, the business manager, also superintended Halsey's work. Production began with Granola and Gluten Rolls. A reasonable clientele was generated.

The American missionaries turned to a fellow countryman for help in the Australian dilemma. They persuaded William Walston to transfer from South Africa and operate the Cooranbong factory. Walston had worked as a colporteur and evangelist. Then he and his wife, Julia, trained as nurses at the Battle Creek Sanitarium. It was there Walston became familiar with the production of health foods. He conducted the Haskell Home for Orphans in Battle Creek prior to taking charge of the Plumstead Orphanage in South Africa. He arrived in Australia on his rescue mission in January 1901. In October Edwin Palmer wrote to Willie White saying, "Since brother Walston has had charge of the food factory the quality of foods has been greatly improved". His bread baking was especially appreciated by Cooranbong church members.

Sales difficulties persisted. Pastor David Steed and a colporteur, John Nichol, worked as travelling salesmen for a short while but found the grocers did not order a second time because the public were not educated to use the foods. The Summer Hill Sanitarium Board estimated the food business was running at a loss of \$9 each week. The hundreds of dollars loaned for the enterprise appeared to be in jeopardy. The Summer Hill Sanitarium itself was in dire financial difficulties too. It was like a cripple trying to help a blind man run a race.

Other cures were suggested. Colcord thought one solution might be to have the factory in close proximity to the Sanitarium in Sydney. Doctor Merritt Kellogg blamed high wages being paid out of

borrowed money as the chief problem, inferring that the health food workers should agree to be more sacrificial.

In mid-1901 church administration voted on a number of correctives. A separate management board for the food business was established, thus breaking the links forged little more than twelve months earlier with the medical work. Financial liabilities of the fading Summer Hills Sanitarium would unavoidably be inherited by the infant Sydney Sanitarium at Wahroonga, but administration did not want the same liabilities to further erode the struggling Sanitarium Health Food Company. It was decided that no debts were to be incurred for operating expenses or salaries. Furthermore, they were to establish a distribution centre in Sydney with depots in other areas, endeavouring to sell direct to the consumer rather than through grocers. In effect, this called for retail outlets owned by the Sanitarium Health Food Company. Finally, they agreed to solicit donations from church members to liquidate their current debt.

Many of these changes were made on the recommendation of John Burden who had transferred from the management of St. Helena Sanitarium, California. Both he and his wife, Eleanor, were accomplished book-keepers and understood business principles. In their call for funds they led the way. They donated much of their personal savings, according to Doctor Merritt Kellogg in a letter to Ellen White, in order to rescue the Sanitarium Health Food Company from certain ruin.

The most important initiative taken at this time was the decision to venture into company- operated retail outlets. Amyes, in conjunction with the Christchurch Sanitarium, began sponsoring a retail shop in Christchurch. Earlier, about 1898, the Hughes family in Brisbane had opened a shop. Retta Bond, whose husband was a foreman in the Echo Publishing Company in Melbourne, had also begun about the same time. These stores were outlets for Halsey's wares as well as some imported health foods from America. But 1902 marked the opening of an era of company-owned vegetarian cafes.

A small retail shop was opened in the Royal Arcade, Sydney, early in 1902. Business proved satisfactory, but then Burden pioneered a new concept. Closing the shop in the Arcade, they moved in May to 283 Pitt Street and opened as the Sydney Vegetarian Cafe. (Later renamed the Pure Food Vegetarian Cafe). Mary Tuxford served as the initial matron until she transferred to America later the following year.

On the first day the cafe staff served twenty-five meals and three weeks later custom had risen to over eighty meals per day. The menu offered was not, of course, entirely produced by the Sanitarium Health Food Company. Nevertheless, the people who came to eat also saw the packets and tins of health foods on the shelves, were briefly instructed how to use them, and took some home to taste. Actual vegetarian cooking demonstrations for the public later became a regular feature at the cafe. These ways of advertising gradually educated people about the foods and created a growing demand for the Sanitarium products.

These were the days when austerity measures were the norm. On the cafe floor coconut-mat runners were used instead of linoleum. Management and novices worked together to push and pull the hand cart or "bun truck", carrying vegetables from the market in the early morning and delivering bread in the afternoon. On weekends some hands would sweep the chimney without pay rather than have outside labour do it. Two young women secretly secured a front door key to the cafe and, unbeknown to the manager, would start at 6.00a.m. to prepare food so that extra staff did not have to be employed.

In mid-1903 James Hindson replaced Burden as manager of the cafe. His was only a brief term. He was replaced by George Fisher of the Echo Publishing Company at the beginning of 1904. It was at this time that a decision was made to relocate to a more central position for they were still not making a profit. The cafe reopened in the Royal Chambers on the corner of Hunter and Castlereagh Streets. These rented premises were larger, more visible, and

located among the heart of the business and professional work force. By June 1905 the cafe was serving two hundred meals per day and the sale of health foods multiplied. Fisher even had success with a mail order method for country customers. Those in rural New South Wales who wanted to provide a vegetarian meal for a special function could order soups, entrees, grills, sandwiches, cooked vegetables and puddings, and all would be despatched by rail for the occasion.

Fisher's management was the first to ever show a profit. At the end of June 1905 he reported an annual gain of \$114. The following financial year showed a profit of \$622 and some of their accumulated debt was paid off. Of course, the trial and error of the previous eight years, characterised by capital expenditure, mounting debt, and a string of men who tried but failed, provided lessons for Fisher and church administration which were not lost. Fisher had the advantage of accumulated wisdom.

Fisher expanded the Sydney cafe by taking over a Roman Catholic bookshop when it became available next door. The separating wall was knocked down and capacity was increased in this way to 124. On Sunday afternoon, August 19, 1906, eighty Adventist guests were invited to a dinner and dedication of these increased facilities. During the celebration Fisher handed to Pastor Edward Gates, Superintendent of Adventist Missions in the Pacific, a miniature boat with pearl-shell sails decorated with the words "The Isles shall wait for Thy law". The hull cradled twenty-five gold sovereigns to be used for mission work. It was the first donation which the Sanitarium Health Food Company made and this practice was later repeated many times. Medical work was designed to be self-supporting but some profits from the health foods would flow into mission expansion. Pastors Benjamin Cady and Calvin Parker, at that time missionaries to Tahiti and Fiji respectively, were present to witness this historic occasion when the first donation was given.

Fisher's success in Sydney was taken to other cities. Church administration asked him to set up a similar cafe in Melbourne. Only

weeks after his presentation of the sovereigns he was returning to Melbourne where the health food industry had endured its delicate infancy. Before Christmas 1906 a cafe was opened at 289 Collins Street, next door to the Royal Bank. Eva Hare, a 1904 graduate of the Sydney Sanitarium who was working in the Sydney cafe, transferred to take charge of the Melbourne cafe. After three months she reported they were serving nearly eight hundred meals per week.

New Zealand Adventists took their cue from Fisher's success. Beginning in November 1906 George Hansford managed a cafe in Auckland. Another was started in Wellington in March 1907 and a third in Christchurch twelve months later. Not until 1909 did they begin to make profits.

In Hobart a health food store had functioned since 1903, but in 1907 an attempt was made to expand into a cafe. However, it showed an increasing loss and the business closed. A retail outlet for the health foods was opened instead in Liverpool Street but in 1910 the company reverted to distributing their goods through Hobart and Launceston grocers.

Better success was achieved in Adelaide. Charles Davey renovated premises in Waymouth Street near the General Post Office. Alice Rigby, another 1904 Sydney Sanitarium graduate who had also gained experience in the Sydney cafe, transferred to take charge of the Adelaide cafe early in 1908. She was assisted by William Rudge, a 1906 Sydney Sanitarium graduate and son of Philip Rudge. When Rigby married Ernest Ward later in 1908 then Rudge took charge. In 1909 this cafe began to inch ahead of its losses.

The general success experienced by these cafes saved the Sanitarium Health Food Company from total failure. The public were made aware of the factory products and slowly a demand was created. The Cooranbong factory revived and operated under the management of the Avondale School Board. At first the American principal, Charles Irwin, supervised production. Then, from 1905 to

1907, Metcalfe Hare was given the responsibility. In 1908 the Physiology teacher, Vere Bell, doubled as manager of the factory. At that time four permanent staff were employed and twelve students worked part-time on the production line.

The factory was, essentially, a school industry. The Avondale Press printed cartons, wrappers, and labels. The blacksmith's, carpenter's, and plumber's shops were engaged in work for both the school and factory. The school launch was used to transport raw materials and the finished products. The sewing room at the school made cloth bags for Granola and Caramel Cereal. The school farm hands hauled wood for the factory furnaces. This was brought in from 250 hectares purchased north of Maitland Road by the Company from the School.

During 1908 Pastor W.A. Hennig divided his time between working as Religious Liberty Secretary for the Australasian Union Conference and developing nut foods at the Cooranbong factory. He was assisted at the factory by his wife, Helen, a trained nurse from the Battle Creek Sanitarium and lecturer in dietetics. As a result of their work new products were introduced onto the market. Nut Cheese, Nutmeat, and Nut Crisps were retailed, as well as Melsitos and Malted Granose Flakes. Bell reported overseas orders from South-East Asia, Fiji, and New Zealand were being filled. Brisk business enabled the factory to begin paying off some of its accumulated debt. Indeed, the volume of trade became unmanageable for the Avondale School staff so control of the factory was transferred to Fisher with his head office at 45 Hunter Street, Sydney. Ephraim Giblett, a worker in the factory, was appointed as its superintendent.

In 1912 more new products were tested in the market place. Toasted Rice Flakes, Nuttolene, and Grainut made their debut at that time, the latter being similar to Granola, but malted and therefore slightly sweetened. Two years later another coffee substitute was launched. It was a black essence made from fruit and cereals marketed under the name Frucerea.

The Sanitarium Health Food Company obtained the agency for Marmite in 1919 from the makers in England. Fisher made a hasty trip to England after he heard the agency contract in Australasia was to be renewed. There he found other Australian firms vying for the business but he was finally successful against all competitors. Fisher's cafes had been using Marmite as a food flavouring for a decade except that during wartime the English supply was cut off. Throughout the war years he had used, instead, a liquid Melbourne-made equivalent called Cubex (which stood for Carlton United Brewing Extract). The product was later improved and called Vegemite, Marmite's great rival. Initially, Marmite was promoted as a substitute for the meat extracts used for making broth. Its use as a sandwich spread became common later.

In the 1920's the Cerix Puffed Wheat Company in Concord, Sydney, was purchased with the idea of marketing grain like popcorn. The cannon used to produce the puffed wheat was a sixteen-pounder muzzle-loaded monster using super-heated steam. Years later the procedure was modified by breach loading and soon after a double-barrel revolving gun was invented. The explosions at eight-second intervals could be heard two kilometres away.

In 1929 the Sydney-based company, Grain Products Limited, was bought from Arthur Shannon, a Seventh-day Adventist businessman. This enabled one of their brand names, Weetbix, to be used by the Sanitarium Health Food Company. Up to that date the Sanitarium Health Food Company had only marketed Malted Wheat Flakes. From that point onwards they manufactured the same recipe in a biscuit form and Weetbix became one of the most popular breakfast foods in Australasia.

During the period 1930 to 1935 annual profits rose from \$59,000 to \$136,000. Apart from foreign mission assistance, often these profits were used in the home fields. \$39,400 was used to help the Signs Publishing Company break free of debt. Another \$68,000 enabled the Sydney Sanitarium to pay off its building expansion loans. The Warburton Sanitarium received \$14,000 on one occasion. In a 1936

report given by George Chapman, General Manager, he revealed that over the past thirty years a total of \$659,624 had been donated by the Company to the church programme.

Chapman went on to explain that 75 per cent of all wages paid to the church school teachers, as well as the entire cost of school supplies, came from Sanitarium Health Food funds. Half the cost of all church school buildings came from the same source. One quarter of the cost of church buildings and other monies for college equipment was also met from the Company's profits. The Foreign Mission Fund was receiving \$6,000 annually and financial assistance was given to youth who were training as medical doctors and who agreed to work for the church later.

From its first decade of experimentation and financial losses the Sanitarium Health Food Company survived to become a real success saga. The army of workers it employed over the years indirectly carried the Adventist message throughout Australasia, the Pacific Islands, and beyond. They usually worked on below-average incomes, voluntarily committing themselves to this manner of sacrifice so that the cause of the church could prosper. Not only did the public receive value in health foods but the financial health of the Adventist cause in Australasia and the Pacific Islands could be largely credited to the profits of the Sanitarium Health Food Company.

Major sources for this booklet are the "Bible Echo and Signs of the Times", the "Gleaner", the "Australasian Record", the "Sanco News", the 1897 and 1898 diaries of Edward Halsey, 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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- 19 **Te Maramarama** - Early Adventism in French Polynesia
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- 21 **Talafekau Mo'oni** - Early Adventism in Tonga and Niue
- 22 **Lotu Aso Fitu** - Early Adventism in Samoa
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- 29 **Vina Juapa Rane** - Early-Adventism in the Solomon Islands
- 30 **Pioneering in Paradise** - Early Adventism in New Caledonia
- 31 **War Zone Scramble** - Stories of Escape During World War
- 32 **A Late Expansion** - Early Adventism in Kiribati and Tuvalu