

## **A Brief History of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in South Africa: 1869-1920**

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a worldwide church, which is found in all the continents of the world. Africa is not an exception. The continent of Africa could boast of 34 percent of the Seventh-day Adventist worldwide membership in 2007.<sup>1</sup> What appears to be a visible growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Africa in terms of membership has never been always like that. What is noticeable today did start with some missionaries who decided to come to Africa in order to share the Adventist message with people. For example, one of the country that can be mentioned among all other African countries, to have received the “three Angel’s messages” in Africa is South Africa. In 2010, the Church in South Africa<sup>2</sup> consists of 106 000 members.<sup>3</sup> How did it happen? How did the Adventist church grow over the years in South Africa? Du Preez pointed the importance of the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa when he wrote, “the scarcity of people with memories of the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa has created immense gaps in the history of the church. The few documented memories have therefore become even more important to the Seventh-day Adventist Church that has gone through a series of organizational changes.”<sup>4</sup>

Hence, the focus of this paper is to give a brief history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. In order to be more accurate the paper will focus on the period going from 1869 through 1920. The paper will briefly show how Christianity came to South Africa, and finally, it will address the rise and the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, from 1869 through 1920. The study will primarily be a historical documentary paper and use published and unpublished primary and secondary resources.

#### **The Arrival of Christianity in South Africa**

The Portuguese navigator Bartholomeu Dias arrived at the Cape in 1488 A.D. Though religious missionaries did not arrive in any significant numbers for more than a century, however, in 1652 the Dutch East India Company established a resupply station at the Cape. Christianity arrived in South Africa with settlers, starting with Jan van Riebeeck in 1652. Dutch Reformed Church missionaries reported in 1658 that Khoikhoi slaves in the area attended their mission services in numbers. Christianity took root among the slaves, the Griqua of the frontier, the Mfengu who fled their homes during the Mfecame. However in Natal and Zululand, Christians remained minimal.<sup>5</sup> The London Missionary Society (LMS) sent large numbers of missionaries to the Cape Colony in 1799, two Hollanders and two Englishmen. They were respectively Dr J.T. van der Kemp and the Rev J.J. Kicherer, who in subsequent years became a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, along with John Edmond and William Edwards. And soon after that, the Glasgow Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society arrived, along with missionaries from the United States, France, Germany, and Scandinavia. According to history, the first Protestant missionary to South Africa arrived at the request of the

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<sup>1</sup>Nikolaus Satelmajer, “Africa,” *Ministry*, October 2007, 4.

<sup>2</sup>Including Swaziland, Lesotho and Namibia.

<sup>3</sup>Gerald T. Du Preez, “A history of the Organizational Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church amongst the Coloured Community in South Africa 1887-1997” (Dissertation, University of the Western Cape, Western Cape, South Africa, 2010), 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, 99.

<sup>5</sup>Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: from Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 100.

Dutch church, on July 9, 1737.<sup>6</sup> His name was Georg Schmidt. He founded the first Protestant mission called the Moravian Brethren. Georg Schmidt is known to be the forerunner of other missionaries who came to South Africa. His Letter to Zinzendorf, where he described his journey and activities in Cape read, “As the Lord has hitherto helped me and protected me under the wings of his majesty, I take the freedom to write briefly to my Lords to express my deep gratitude for the gracious help I have received from my Lords. May the Lord crown your work with mercy. I arrived at the Cape on July 9 and waited until September 4, when I obtained an opportunity to go into the interior. I traveled to the Sonderend River. There, with God’s help, I built a hut, and began cultivating some vegetables for food. On October 27, I made a beginning with the Hottentots, to teach them to read. I am teaching 4 men, 2 women, and 4 children, who come daily, sometimes twice daily. On Sundays I teach them about the Saviour. So far has the Lord helped me. To him be praise and honour. Amen! May your favour remain with me, most noble and honourable Lords as I live in humble respect under the banner of the Crucified.”<sup>7</sup>

Ross states that by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century so many missionaries had come to the Cape that it could be stated that, at that time, it was “the most heavily missionised area in the world.”<sup>8</sup>

The first arrival of the Methodist pioneers on South African soil was recorded to have been in 1816 and within ten years from that date flourishing missions had been planted in Namaqua the Xhosa, and the Barolong in the following years. Later, the Methodists pitched their tents all over South Africa and beyond its borders in South West Africa, Zululand and Maputoland, Portuguese East Africa, Basutoland and Swaziland.<sup>9</sup>

### **An Early Seventh-day Adventist Missionaries work in Africa**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church had adopted its name 27 years earlier and had been formally structured 24 years before taking root on African soil.<sup>10</sup> However, the first official missionary had been sent from America to Europe in 1874, by the name John Nevis Andrews.<sup>11</sup> Missionary work commenced in Australia a year later. In 1879, the Seventh-day Adventist Church had established a school in Egypt under the direction of Dr H. P. Ripton, which will be closed down due to riots in the city.

In West Africa, precisely in Liberia, Hannah Moore is mentioned to have started a missionary work. In fact, between 1862 and 1863, she was working in Liberia in the Protestant Episcopal Hospital. She heard and the Adventist message in United States. She returned to Liberia before accepting the Adventist message –she would accept the message later, but she is mentioned to have shared the Advent message while in Liberia. Even though the first official missionary to have been sent in Liberia, was sent in 1926, the Adventist message was being preached there long before.<sup>12</sup> In the 1870s the Adventist Church saw also its first convert in Egypt. Among the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church missionary in Africa, the name of William Harrison Anderson can be mentioned. He came to Africa in the early 1890s.<sup>13</sup> When the Seventh-day Adventist Church opened its first mission station (Solusi) among non-Christian people near Bulawayo in what is now Zimbabwe in 1894. Anderson and his bride, Nora Haysmer, were asked to be part of the missionaries from America who went there.<sup>14</sup> It also reported that the Seventh-day Adventist message came to Ghana, by Dolfhijn Francis, who received it in early 1888 after reading an Adventist pamphlet he got from a ship captain who stopped over with

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<sup>6</sup> See, Davies Horton, *Great South African Christians Cape Town* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1951); Meyer, F. B. A., *Winter in South Africa* (London: National Council of Evangelical Free Churches, 1914); Neill, Stephen. *A History of Christian Missions: The Pelican History of the Church #6* (Hammondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican Books, 1964).

<sup>7</sup> See, “History of Christian Missions in South Africa up to 1900, *Footprints into Africa*, <http://www.footprintsintoafrica.com/index.php/missions/80-missions/69-story-of-christian-missions-up-to-1900-ad>, accessed 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Ross cited in Gerald T. Du Preez, “A history of the organizational development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church amongst the coloured community in South Africa 1887-1997” (Dissertation, University of the Western Cape, Western Cape, South Africa, 2010), 46.

<sup>9</sup> See, “History of Christian Missions in South Africa up to 1900, *Footprints into Africa*, <http://www.footprintsintoafrica.com/index.php/missions/80-missions/69-story-of-christian-missions-up-to-1900-ad>, accessed 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Georges R. Knight, *Lest We Forget* (Hagerstown, MI: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 2008), 197.

<sup>11</sup> See, “A Message to share” in <http://www.adventist.org/en/service/missionaries/>, accessed on June 2017.

<sup>12</sup> The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Africa, (Seventh-day Adventist Church), 35.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Russell L. Staples, “William Harrison Anderson 1870 to 1950: Seventh-day Adventist South Africa,” *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*, accessed 19 June 2017, [http://www.dacb.org/stories/southafrica/anderson\\_wh2.html](http://www.dacb.org/stories/southafrica/anderson_wh2.html).

his vessel at his coastal home of Apam.<sup>15</sup> He corresponded with the leadership of the Church in America for four years, but it was not until 1892 that the first Adventist minister visited that country. Two years later the first resident Adventist missionaries settled in Ghana. Around the same period missionaries endeavors began in Zimbabwe, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia were recorded to have been the areas where Adventist missionaries concentrated their efforts in Africa in the early years of the twentieth century. In Lagos, Nigeria the first missionaries came in 1914, while in 1920 Zaire – the actual Democratic Republic of Congo – was added to the list where Adventist missions were active.

### **The Beginning of Adventism in South Africa: 1869-1900**

In 1869, William Hunt—a gold prospector in California—attended evangelistic meetings run by J. N. Loughborough in Healdsburg. Hunt accepted Adventist teachings and promised Loughborough to continue to share the message he accepted. Later, He will leave America, travel to the gold-diggings in Australia and then to the Diamond fields of the Kimberley in South Africa. While in South Africa, William Hunt will become the first Adventist in South Africa. As a transplanted Nevada miner who arrived in the late 1870s to work on the diamond diggings in Griqualand West, he made his most celebrated convert in 1885, a Beaconsfield businessman, G. J. Van Druten. In 1886, Van Druten and another convert named Peter Wessels appealed to the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for a Dutch minister to further instruct and baptize them.<sup>16</sup> “This was the 1886 ‘Macedonian Call’ from South Africa. When this letter was read at the 1886 General Conference session in the Battle Creek Tabernacle, its message electrified the assembled delegates, who rose and sang the doxology.”<sup>17</sup> Wessel and van Druten had not been idle while they waited for assistance from the General Conference and Wessels records that there was “a company of ten or twelve Sabbath-keepers” in the Kimberley.<sup>18</sup> However it is recorded that Pieter Wessels was naturally disappointed when he learnt from the General Conference in Battle Creek that the missionaries that were coming to South Africa were not Dutch-speaking.<sup>19</sup> It also recorded by the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* that, J. H. C. Wilson, who was formerly a local preacher of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Kimberley stated that he and five other people, including his wife, had decided to accept Seventh-day Adventist beliefs as a result of literature they had received from William Hunt.<sup>20</sup> Among other Adventist pioneers in South Africa “a daughter of William Farnsworth married A. T. Robinson; he and his brother Dores A. Robinson were pioneers in South Africa and India.”<sup>21</sup> As matter fact, it has been recorded that the Seventh-day Adventist Mission in South Africa started under the leadership of American missionaries, C.L. Boyd and D.A. Robinson, who arrived in Kimberley in July 1887.<sup>22</sup> Missionaries were sent to South Africa in 1887. C. L. Boyd conducted the first Adventist baptismal service in Kimberley. And during the same year, a church was organized and South Africa and South Africa became the first country in the continent of Africa to register a formal church organization under the auspices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,<sup>23</sup> with 21 members. By 1892, a local conference of 130 members had been organized, and a Cape Town Conference with a meeting hall on the second floor was acquired, and a school building was erected as well.<sup>24</sup> Three years later in May 1890, after many more Bible studies, with literature distribution and further evangelistic meetings conducted by C.L. Boyd in a tent which the local Adventist believers from Kimberley had

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<sup>15</sup> Kofi Owusu-Mensa, “Dolphijn, Francis: late 19th and early 20th century,” *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*, accessed 19 June 2017, [http://www.dacb.org/stories/ghana/dolphijn\\_francis.html](http://www.dacb.org/stories/ghana/dolphijn_francis.html).

<sup>16</sup> An amount of 50 pounds was added to the request that a Dutch speaking Gospel minister be sent to further instruct the Adventist believers in South Africa.

<sup>17</sup> Neufeld Don, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1976), 1210.

<sup>18</sup> Jeff Crocombe, PowerPoint presentation for REH417: SDA Church History, Helderberg College, South Africa, September 2016, slides 10.

<sup>19</sup> Personal letter “Early Experiences of Mr. P.J.D. Wessels,” Helderberg College Archives. Document file number DF 506.

<sup>20</sup> The June 6, 1878 issue of the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* published a letter by J. H. C. Wilson.

<sup>21</sup> Arthur Whitefield Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1961), 1: 221.

<sup>22</sup> Neufeld Don, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Hagerstown, MI: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1996), 631.

<sup>23</sup> Gerald T. Du Preez, “A history of the organizational development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church amongst the coloured community in South Africa 1887-1997” (Dissertation, University of the Western Cape, Western Cape, South Africa, 2010), 46.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Hanson, “News Feature: The Beginnings of the Adventist Mission in Africa,” *Adventist Today*, accessed 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017, <http://atoday.org/news-feature-beginnings-adventist-mission-southern-africa>.

purchased, a church building made of wood and iron was erected in Kimberley at a cost of 500 pounds.<sup>25</sup> According to the Adventist Encyclopedia, This church which became known as the Beaconsfield Church becoming the first Seventh-day Adventist church building to be erected on the African continent.<sup>26</sup> The early work of the SDA Church in Southern Africa was solely amongst Whites. W. Schwartz points out that, C. L. Boyd became interested in presenting the message of salvation to the African tribal peoples in the area, but his “individualistic temperament” kept him from gaining support among his fellow workers. Before he could develop a program for native Africans he was recalled in 1890 to America.<sup>27</sup>

### **Educational Endeavors**

With the increasing growth of the church in South Africa, members decided to see how they could put in place an Adventist school for their children, As a result of it, the first church school which opened in Beaconsfield in 1893, with elementary schools soon sprang up in various locations in the country.<sup>28</sup> Robinson noted that these schools were opened to not only to Seventh-day Adventists students but to children of all races and religious background.<sup>29</sup> Claremont Union College was the first Seventh-day Adventist Tertiary Institution in South Africa. The school building named Claremont Union College, was completed at the beginning of 1893 at a cost of 7300 pounds.<sup>30</sup> It started with two teachers and the principal, Eli. B Miller, who had taught at the Battle Creek College<sup>31</sup>, and begun with an enrolment of 65 students, classes commenced on February 1, 1893.<sup>32</sup>

### **Publication Endeavors**

The Printing and Publishing endeavors will start in 1890.<sup>33</sup> In April 1889, the South African Branch of the International Tract and Missionary Society was formed, to conduct literature sales and to care for the business transactions of the church.<sup>34</sup> A request was made by D.A. Robinson to the offices of The Review and Herald offices in America, a small hand-printing press arrived in 1890. A printing press then, was established and called the South African Publishing Company. According to Van Zyl the printing press was located in the basement of the Roeland Street Church in Cape Town for about four years before moving in 1896 to occupy a more permanent place in three rooms at Claremont Union College.<sup>35</sup> Later, in 1892, at the cost of three thousand pounds, the church will become the Roeland Street Seventh-day Adventist Church, and it will be established in Cape Town.<sup>36</sup> From 1887 through 1900 the Adventist Church will undergo a tremendous development. South Africa had become the springboard for missions in the interior of the African Continent by 1900.<sup>37</sup> From the very beginnings in Kimberley, the Seventh-day Adventist Church began to blowout from Kimberley to Cape Town and later even beyond the South African geographical boundaries of that time.

### **Medical Endeavors**

When O.A. Olsen the General Conference President visited South Africa, in 1893, a desire of opening up a medical institution in South Africa similar to the one in Battle Creek in America was expressed. That same year a committee was appointed by the South African Conference to look and plan for a land in order to build a

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<sup>25</sup> Van Zyl, Lecture Notes on Church History Part 5. 1990:81.

<sup>26</sup> Neufeld Don, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1976), 1364.

<sup>27</sup> Schwarz R. W., *Light Bearers to the Remnant* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1979), 224.

<sup>28</sup> Neufeld Don, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1996), 635.

<sup>29</sup> Robinson D.E., *The Story of Our Health Message* (Nashville Tennessee: Southern Pub. Assn., 1965), 90.

<sup>30</sup> Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia (1976):1365.

<sup>31</sup> See Robinson D.E., *The Story of Our Health Message* (Nashville Tennessee: Southern Pub. Assn., 1965), 73; and S.D.A. Encyclopedia, 1996:71.

<sup>32</sup> See S.D.A. Encyclopedia, 1976:1367; and Swanepoel Francois. *The Origin and Early History of the Seventh day Adventist church in South Africa, 1886-1920* (M.A. thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, 1972), 29.

<sup>33</sup> Artorio Pantalone, “An Appraisal of the Development of Seventh-day Adventist Mission in South Africa: A Missiological Evaluation (Magister Theologiae, University of Durban Westville, Durban, South Africa, 1996), 59.

<sup>34</sup> Swanepoel Francois. *The Origin and Early History of the Seventh day Adventist church in South Africa, 1886-1920* (M.A. thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, 1972), 17.

<sup>35</sup> Van Zyl, Lecture Notes on Church History Part 5. 1990, 113-114.

<sup>36</sup> Robinson D.E., *The Story of Our Health Message* (Nashville Tennessee: Southern Pub. Assn., 1965), 14.

<sup>37</sup> Arthur Whitefield Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1961), 3: 93.

medical institution. In January 1897, the building was completed and had 51 rooms. In the next two years, besides the more than 800 patients that had been admitted to the sanitarium, the medical superintendent reported that he had also made 1798 professional medical visits in the city of Cape Town itself.<sup>38</sup>

### **Adventist rise from 1900 to 1920**

Schmidt, Vanderkemp, Moffatt, Livingstone, and their successors had, after long and painful sowing, begun to see the fruits of their labor. “Fifteen Christian denominations were operating, two hundred thousand natives being full converts or adherents under instruction.”<sup>39</sup> This was also a reality in the Adventist Church after 1900. The South African Conference, which had been in operation for almost ten years, had administered all Seventh-day Adventist Church work in South Africa and in the mission fields to the north.<sup>40</sup> It was elevated to the status of South African Union Conference. In January, 1908, the South African Union Conference was formed. W. S. Hyatt was elected president, followed in 1908 by R. C. Porter, with about 700 members. In 1908 a little more than 800 members were recorded.<sup>41</sup> From 1913 to 1920 W. B. White was president, followed by B. E. Beddoe. The reorganization saw the creation of two new Conferences, South African conferences, the Cape Conference and the Natal-Transvaal Conference. It is important to note that “The work in South Africa naturally divided itself into two concerns: first, with the white people—and that in two languages, English and Afrikaans; the second, with the native people who had yet to be Christianized.”<sup>42</sup> This led the church to face a critical point as far as racism is concerned. For instance, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 1893, Philip Wessels wrote to Ellen White: “I do not want my children to associate with the lower classes of coloured people. I will labor for them and teach my children to do so. But I do not want my children to mix with them for such is detrimental to their moral welfare. Nor do I want my children to think there is no difference in society that they should finally associate and marry into coloured blood.”<sup>43</sup>

Wessels continued: “So there is the colour line drawn which is very distinctly drawn here in society. For my part I do not care. I can shake hands with the coloured people and so forth. But our association with them is going to spoil our influence with others who are accustomed to these things...to have any influence with the higher class of people, we must respect these differences.”<sup>44</sup>

The racist attitudes of these early Seventh-day Adventist members and the impact that such attitudes have had on the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa—which is still in one area structurally divided along racial lines—must also be noted.<sup>45</sup> This problem was rightly pointed out by Du Preez, when he wrote, “In its history the Church in South Africa, on a national level, has moved from a unitary organizational unit, formed in 1902 as the South African Conference, to a fully segregated structure consisting, firstly, of a Group I and Group II under a South African Union Conference – Group I for Whites and Group II for all other races. This evolved at a later stage to the formation of the South African Union Conference – White, Coloured and Indian – and the Southern Union Mission Conference – Black. In 1991 the two latter Unions merged to form the Southern Africa Union Conference – reverting to a unified organizational entity.”<sup>46</sup>

It is important to note that there is on record that the first black South African to be ordained by the Presbyterian Church was Tiyo Soga on 12 August 1871. For the Adventist case, precisely in 1893, Richard Moko was introduced to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and, in 1915, Moko, the first black Seventh-day Adventist pastor in South Africa, was ordained.<sup>47</sup> “For a number of years he supported himself by selling books and pamphlets in the African townships that surrounded the principal cities in the Cape Province. While so

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<sup>38</sup> *Adventist Medical Missionary Year Book 1896* “Medical Work in South Africa,” 47.

<sup>39</sup> Arthur Whitefield Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1961), 4:8.

<sup>40</sup> Branson William, *Missionary Adventures in Africa* (Washington: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1925), 15.

<sup>41</sup> Arthur Whitefield Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1961), 4:9.

<sup>42</sup> Arthur Whitefield Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1961), 4:9.

<sup>43</sup> Phillip Wessels to Ellen G. White, January 14, 1893.

<sup>44</sup> Phillip Wessels to Ellen G. White, January 14, 1893.

<sup>45</sup> See, Antonio Pantalone, “A Missiological Evaluation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie (1968-1974) and its significance for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa” (Dissertation, University of Durban-Westville, 1998), 177-187.

<sup>46</sup> Gerald T. Du Preez, “A history of the organizational development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church amongst the coloured community in South Africa 1887-1997” (Dissertation, University of the Western Cape, Western Cape, South Africa, 2010), 1.

<sup>47</sup> Mxolisi Michael Sokupa, “Documented Memories of Richard Moko’s Life and Contribution: A Seventh-day Adventist Heritage Reflection,” *Studia Historiae Ecclesiae* 4/3 (2015), 172. 171-183

engaged, he was offered the pastorate of one of the largest and most influential non-SDA churches in Port Elizabeth, paying a good salary, but he declined to accept it.”<sup>48</sup>

As the fledgling church developed, Wessels assisted in: the erection of Union College, the Orphanage, the Sanitarium, and other projects through funds his family received from the sale of their property to the De Beers Diamond mines. His family also, acquired the property for the building of Solusi University in Zimbabwe. They had the library at Helderberg College, Somerset West, in South Africa.<sup>49</sup> And also, they contributed to the building of the Claremont Medical Sanitarium.<sup>50</sup> The Orange Free State achieved conference status in 1913 and became known as the Orange River Conference.<sup>51</sup> In 1920 an important step was done in the development of the Adventist Church in South Africa. Schwarz mentioned it, the implementation or creation of added organizational structures which would group the existing union conferences and missions in a given geographical area into a Division, under the jurisdiction of the General Conference.<sup>52</sup> The organizational changes implemented by the church in America and Europe resulted in the formation of the first African Division. This division had the responsibility to oversee and manage the entire church work in the territory of South Africa, North and South Rhodesia, Southwest Africa, Angola, Portuguese East Africa, Nyasaland, Belgian Congo, French Congo, French Cameroons, and the French Sudan,<sup>53</sup> with its headquarter in Cape Town, in South Africa.<sup>54</sup>

For the case of South Africa, Branson give the distribution of the various conferences in South Africa by that time, The Cape Conference with its headquarters in Port Elizabeth; The Orange River Conference with headquarters in Bloemfontein; The Natal-Transvaal with its headquarters in Pietermaritzburg; and the Bechuanaland Mission Field with its headquarters located in Mafeking.<sup>55</sup> Hence, by 1920, not only South Africa was having four Conferences, but it was also the headquarters of the first Union Conference and of the first African Division in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## II. CONCLUSION

The Adventist church arrived in the continent of Africa through the country called South Africa. The first Adventist missionary to be sent in South Africa came from America. However, the Adventist message was brought in this country via a man named William Hunt, who was a gold prospector in California, in 1869. Via his efforts and the work of many others people, the Adventist Church will expand from 1869 throughout 1920. In 1920, South Africa formed the first African Division. This was a visible evidence of the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South- Africa during the colonial period.

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<sup>49</sup> See the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Youth Department Church Heritage Manual.

<sup>50</sup> Schwarz R. W., *Light Bearers to the Remnant* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1979), 225.

<sup>51</sup> Neufeld Don, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1976), 1366.

<sup>52</sup> Schwarz R. W., *Light Bearers to the Remnant* (Mountain View. California: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1979), 374.

<sup>53</sup> Branson William, *Missionary Adventures in Africa* (Washington: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1925), 15.

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