

The Australian Office Open at Last!

Read how God was in charge of circumstances which led up to the opening of our office in the land "down under" at a most significant time!

by Gerald Waterhouse

Room Number 7 in the "MCL" Building, North Sydney, December 24th, 1959:

GREETINGS, brethren of the Church of God throughout the world in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour and the HEAD of this Church, from the land "down under"—Australia!

This greeting is being typed in the wonderful new office God opened up for us here in Sydney. In fact, this is the first work I am privileged to do in my new office and this is being done on a most significant date—December 24th!

This date was specifically chosen by God as the day in which He would open up this office to us! Why? Yes, why did God choose the 24th instead of the 23rd or some other day in this month? And, why was it God's will that this work commence from this place in December, the twelfth month?

These questions are important, you need to know the answers! The answers help to prove just how powerful and active the HEAD of this Church, Jesus Christ, is! Here is further proof of how aware God is of His Work and those of us through whom He is now working.

Why Relate This Information?

Brethren, do you know that God wants us to come to know more about the Body of Jesus Christ, His Church, and the work He is doing through it so we can come to trust Him more? Yes, so we may know more for which we can praise our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ! This has always been true.

For this reason, Paul reported to the different churches those things which God had done through him. You can read how Paul rehearsed various deeds God had done through him for the churches in Acts 14:27 and Acts 15:4. In these accounts, Paul explained how God had done many things through him and had opened up a door to the Gentiles. As a result, the people came to understand more of the great God they were serving. And, since God the Father and Jesus Christ don't change, they want us to follow these examples. Consequently, you need to know the many times God has miraculously intervened to open this door in Australia and how these interventions have left a continual flow of SIGNS which placed His "stamp of

approval" on this very work of which YOU are a part.

What Kind of Signs Today?

God promised that signs would follow His true people today (Mark 16:18). But, since the conditions under which we serve are so different from the early New Testament Church, the signs aren't always the same. We are not going through wildernesses in which we are exposed to serpents as was true with Paul and others (Acts 28:3). Neither are we, at present, placed in circumstances where we would be exposed to poisonous drink, nor are we going about raising up the dead which would bring quick persecution on the church in this time when God is getting the Gospel out to the whole world as a WITNESS to all nations.

No! God isn't giving the signs to prove to the OUTSIDER that we are His servants. This was done more before the Scriptures were fully written and committed to the Church. Now, it is a matter of their believing what we proclaim is in the Bible BY CHECKING IT FOR THEMSELVES. The one thing God is going to require of everyone is to come to rely on His WORD INSTEAD of on physical circumstances. Today, the whole world is relying on every external thing imaginable instead of on God's Word. Therefore, the signs God is giving today are not for the outsider but for us who have already proved from His Word that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently serve Him.

God Controls Circumstances

In the past, I have heard Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong relate many of their experiences of how God made it possible for them to make a train, ship or plane at the very last minute or meet a deadline in spite of how hopeless and impossible it may have appeared. Little did I realize, when hearing these wonderful experiences related, that I, too, would have the privilege to experience things of a similar nature.

But, in setting up the Australian office, God had in mind ways of leading Mr. Ted Armstrong, Mr. Frank Longuskie and me through circumstances which would not only demonstrate His

might, power, wisdom and continual guidance but would also force us to learn to more fully rely on Him for our every need. God brings these seemingly impossible circumstances about to make us rely on Him and not on ourselves—to strengthen our faith! (II Cor. 1:8-10). At the very outset of our trip to Australia, God had a few such trials planned for us. Let me tell you about our first real big trial and how God delivered us through seemingly impossible circumstances and the great joy experienced by us once God had delivered us.

A Change in Flights Planned

Originally, we were scheduled to leave Los Angeles for Honolulu at 2:00 p.m., on November 9th. However, this would not have been significant numerically; therefore, God caused circumstances to arise which forced us to change our plans so that He could work out the wonderful numerical patterns as a sign to His Church that He is directly in control of things.

How did He bring this about? The answer is amazing! Here it is.

God saw that the Australian Consular Office in San Francisco did not issue us visas in time to make possible the scheduled flight out of Los Angeles. This happened in spite of all of our human efforts. Mr. Ted Armstrong made several long distance telephone calls to the Australian Consular Office in San Francisco, but to no avail. They would not issue us visas to enter Australia for business purposes until they received authorization from Canberra, the Capital of Australia, in response to a letter Mr. Ted Armstrong had sent them several weeks before. This authorization had not come in spite of the fact that Mr. Armstrong sent a cable which was followed by a long distance telephone conversation with an official in Canberra.

By Monday morning, November 9th, it was too late for the San Francisco office to notify the British Consular Office in Los Angeles to issue our visas in time to make our flight. We made a quick change in our plans. We boarded the first plane to San Francisco, to contact the Australian Consular Officials in person. If visas could be issued Mon-

day afternoon in time to catch a Jet flight out of San Francisco that evening, we still could connect with the same flight we were scheduled to pick up in Honolulu. This flight to San Francisco was made on faith. Mr. Ted Armstrong first called the Consular Office in San Francisco by telephone. They advised us not to come. They had not received authorization at that time.

However, we were determined. We were trusting God to work out circumstances. We knew that if this flight were missed it might be weeks before reservations for three could again be made for Australia.

In God's Plan, certain numbers have great significance. It seems incredible, but notice the amazing recurrence of God's significant numbers.

The flight to San Francisco left the airport in Los Angeles at 12:00 noon and the flight was United 624 which adds to 12. Why is the number twelve important?

The number 12 is used throughout the Bible by God in reference to *entering into* a growing work or project. There were the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve disciples. Each of these groups of twelve was a group which God used in *commencing* a great work—the nation Israel and the Church. In this era of the Church, God caused Mr. Armstrong to purchase the Pasadena campus in the *twelfth year* of the broadcasting work, *to commence an expansion of this work* which is encircling the earth today! So, the number twelve signifies a *beginning*!

Very evidently, God wanted to show us that this initial flight from Los Angeles was to be the very *beginning* of a sizable work here in Australia. A great deal to follow will clearly demonstrate this. Right now, however, let us go on with what happened after we left Los Angeles at this vital hour of *twelve* and on a flight which added up to *twelve*.

When we entered the office of the clerk in San Francisco, about 2:45 p.m., she informed us that authorization from Canberra had arrived! Immediately, we thought our problem had been solved. However, the clerk informed us that it would be impossible for them to issue us visas that afternoon. We were told that Mr. Longuskie and I would have to have medical examinations by a recognized physician and have X-rays made of our chests by a specialist. Not only were we to obtain reports on these two examinations but we were also to produce the X-ray film. In addition, all of this had to be accomplished in time for us to be back in her office by 4:30 p.m. the same afternoon!

This appeared impossible. By the

time we had completed filling in several required forms, it was about 3:30 p.m. That left us only one hour to locate a physician, receive medical examinations, and find an X-ray Specialist who could take X-rays, produce a report and the films. The lady clerk said it would be utterly impossible. Believing this, she committed herself by saying she would process the applications if all of the requirements could be met and we were back in her office by 4:30 p.m. We were determined, trusting God to intervene.

We left the Australian Consular Office about 3:30 p.m. with the telephone number of a physician given to us by this clerk. Whether or not she deliberately planned this we don't know, but she gave us a wrong prefix to the number of the physician. But God intervened by enabling Mr. Armstrong to contact an operator who immediately gave him the right number!

God must have given us favor in this physician's eyes because he not only agreed to rush these medical examinations through but also informed Mr. Armstrong that he would contact a friend of his—who was in the same Medical Arts Building—who was an X-ray Specialist. If he could take us for X-rays immediately, we could go by there, get the X-rays, then come on up to his office for our medicals while the X-ray film were being dried and the reports made out. (It just so happened that this X-ray Specialist had just installed new machines three months earlier which dries X-ray film *in five minutes*; with the old machines, it took hours. This had to be the type specialist God would lead us to or we could not have had this requirement fulfilled within the one hour limit—providential?)

When these things were done, we had *only about ten minutes* to get out of the Medical Arts Building, through several blocks of pedestrians at such a busy time of the afternoon, and up to the fourth floor of the building in which the Consulate is located, in order to meet the deadline! Mr. Longuskie did some of his dressing—putting on his tie and coat—while on the run! We literally ran at every opportunity.

There is a good object lesson for all of us in this. We must strive to enter the Kingdom of God. That means there is a lot we must do ourselves and not just expect God to do it all for us—God does for us what we are unable to do for ourselves. We must have the zeal of the Eternal motivating us at all times. We must get this Gospel out to this entire world within just a few more years.

There is no time to just wait until everything is nice and convenient and

then "walk through the door."

By the time we reached the Consular Office we were breathing very rapidly!

BUT, with God's help, we made it or time!

It was exactly 4:30 p.m. What would normally take several hours or days—to get appointments with two leading professional men, get X-rays with film and reports, get written medical examinations, etc., in a strange city where most people have to wait for hours, quite often, just to see a physician—God made possible in just one hour! Brethren, do you see God's hand in this? That clerk thought it would be impossible!

She had a look of astonishment on her face when she saw us return and heard the words "we have everything completed and here with us" come from us! Since she had already committed herself, she had to process our applications or "lose face."

You can imagine, I am sure, the great joy and happiness we shared afterward and how we could praise God for what He had done.

On Our Way at Last

At about 1:30 a.m., November 10th, we were finally aboard a Qantas Airlines Boeing 707 Jet, heading for Honolulu, Canton, Fiji and SYDNEY! The long-awaited time had arrived, it was now apparent that God's time had come to open up an office in Australia. When we left Los Angeles, we were not absolutely sure that God was going to make a way possible for this trip to materialize. We were just going *on faith* and if God showed us through circumstances that the trip was to be deferred for awhile, a trip back to Pasadena would be made where we would wait until God opened up the way by seeing that visas were issued.

However, God knew from the outset that He was going to open up the way for us to acquire visas and be on our way by the morning of the 10th. We know this *now* as we look back on the events as they transpired and see that God set the *pattern of twelves* through our flight from Los Angeles to San Francisco (by making it possible for us to leave at exactly 12:00 noon and on flight 624—a number which totals twelve—) instead of on the flight from San Francisco to Sydney.

Because of our limited understanding of what God's will was, we thought the flight from San Francisco was the initial flight. Actually, it was not until we arrived in Sydney and looked back on our trip that we discerned the flight out of Los Angeles was the real *beginning* of the trip.

God Delays Flight

God *governs* this universe and its inhabitants! He inspired Solomon to write, "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will" (Prov. 21:1 RSV). As we look back on the various delays our plane had, we can see that God was causing men to do just what He had purposed. The plane was delayed about two hours in London due to fog before we boarded it in San Francisco. After we were aboard, there were several more delays. When we landed in Honolulu and had regained our scheduled time, we expected to board the plane again and continue our flight.

But, time kept passing until there was an announcement made that the plane would be delayed. Repairs were necessary on the radio antennae. Finally, they managed to complete the repairs and we were on our way—after about a four or five hour delay.

Our next stop was on Canton Island. We had a brief stop on this coral reef in the Pacific. Here, we went out on a pontoon pier and became so absorbed in the various fish we could spot in the beautifully clear water that we remained a little longer than we realized. Because of this, *we* were almost the cause of *another* delay! We made it to the plane just as an announcement was being made for the missing passengers to come aboard!

From Canton Island, our next stop was at the Nandi Airport on the Island of Fiji. This was a very interesting place and we were taken on a short sight-seeing tour in the vicinity of the airport. This seemed to be a special trip which isn't ordinary practice of the airlines. And, after the short tour, we were given additional refreshments—they were *needed*, as Fiji is *very* warm and humid.

Later, when the passengers had drunk their refreshments and were becoming very restless by not hearing a call to return to the plane, there was an announcement made to the effect that the plane would be delayed approximately *fourteen hours* due to difficulty with some of the landing-gear apparatus! In order to repair the landing gear properly, Qantas Airlines was sending a mechanic from Sydney to do the job. Because of the time it would take for him to reach Fiji and perform the work, we would not be able to leave before 7 a.m. the following day. As a result of this delay, Qantas was very busy providing us with an afternoon meal and finding hotel rooms for all of the passengers in the nearby towns.

After a few frustrating circumstances,

we were sent by taxi to the Lautoka Hotel in Lautoka, a city about forty miles from Nandi.

In this city, we spent a very interesting evening and night before returning to the plane the following morning at 7 a.m. It was at this hotel in Lautoka that a very amusing incident occurred which some of the brethren in California heard related by Mr. Ted Armstrong after his return from Sydney. When we were finished with the main course of our dinner and were looking over the menu for a dessert, Mr. Ted Armstrong noticed that one item listed was called "angels on horseback." Just to see what sort of dish they would serve under such a name way out in the Pacific, he decided to order these "angels on horseback." When he was served, we were so amused at what we saw that we had to laugh! For on his plate, we beheld this fantastic concoction—"angels on horseback"! What were they?

They were little clam or muscle-type sea animals, similar to an oyster but darker, wrapped in bacon! The looks of this hideous concoction and the expression on the face of Mr. Armstrong when he received this instead of what he thought might be some sort of an ice cream and fruit dish was more than can be described on paper. Suffice it to say that it was all so comical to us that we had to take these "things" up to our room so Mr. Longuskie, the "official" photographer, could take *pictures* of them to show some of the brethren back home! And, in the process of this picture taking (which we were really enjoying), a native maid came in to take down the mosquito netting. She almost didn't stay to perform her job when she beheld Mr. Longuskie stretched out on the bed with his camera *on top of the trash can* which was turned *upside down* on the bed—to steady the camera for a long exposure shot—*taking a picture* of these "angels on horseback." They were on a small table under a lamp beside the bed. Had we been able to take a picture of the expression of this maid when she entered (In Fiji the doors to the rooms were covered with drapes and the employees were very informal about coming into the rooms—this lady just came in without knocking—it might have proved just as interesting as the "angels on horseback.")

Australia at Last

On the morning of the *12th* of November, we left Nandi at about 7:30 a.m. for Sydney, arriving here at about 9:30 a.m.—the flight took four hours, but there is a time change of two hours between Fiji and Sydney.

Yes, on the *12th* of November, a date *worked out by God* so that this amazing *pattern of twelves* could continue. Little did we realize when these delays were occurring that they were being brought about by Almighty God. However, as we took a retrospective look, we could see that these delays must have been *God's doing* or the perfect *pattern* would not have been worked out.

God does see fit to work out many incidents *according to a numerical pattern* to give us more assurance He is with us in what is being done—especially, when it is a work in a new area. We don't go around looking for numerical patterns, but when they are noticed it is surely comforting to know God is with us in what is being done.

Before explaining the events as they have occurred in Australia, I want to say right here that things were done quicker and in a far greater manner than I had even imagined, much less expected. But, you will see as these events are related that God goes far beyond what we expect. That is why He inspired Paul to write, "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

The day after we arrived, we had an interview with Mr. R. K. Harris, the Superintendent of Country Broadcasting Services for Amalgamated Wireless Australasia (AWA)—the company through which we acquire radio time. From Mr. Harris we learned many vital things to help us better understand the situation here in Australia, as well as about reputable concerns which we could contact. God seems to always make it possible for His servants to meet *just the right people* to make possible the furtherance of *His Work!* Too, by the time we arrived, God had opened exactly 4^2 radio stations to six nights a week broadcasting—another pattern to better demonstrate God's wisdom, power and guidance over His Work as He carries it out through us on this earth.

Following this first full day of activity in Sydney, we were privileged to keep our first Sabbath in Australia, the first one kept in Australia by any of God's people from His Headquarters!

The two following weeks were filled with activity. We were blessed with a new automobile, a Holden Station Sedan, which is absolutely necessary to carry out our work here, and a car that couldn't have been purchased so easily had we not had Mr. Harris of "AWA" as a business reference. During the second week, God moved swiftly in

bringing us to just the right building in which He had chosen that His office be established—"The Mutual Life and Citizens' Assurance Company Limited," referred to as the "MLC" Building.

I was almost staggered when we first came to this building as I saw the many, many advantages it offered that I didn't know even existed in Sydney. Advantages which I saw were vital to effectively carry out God's Work over here and ones which were not so conveniently situated for us when in London. Right here, I saw that many hours could be saved by being located in such a nice building, situated close to a post office and a bank—both *just across the street* from the "MLC" Building! Not only did we have a post office and bank ideally situated but we also had a garage in the basement of the building which would solve our problems of coping with the critical parking problem existing here.

Another great blessing in being given this building is that it is out of the very heavily congested business district of Sydney, just across the harbor; yet, we can easily reach the center of Sydney by train in about ten minutes. Our office space was opened to us in the *12th* month and on the *24th* day of that month (2x12)!

Mr. Ted Armstrong arrived with us on November *12th* and he left us on November *24th* (2x12)—he was in Australia exactly *12* days! And, to show his work in coming to Australia was completed or had been brought to perfection, God worked it out so that he arrived back in Pasadena from Hawaii on December 28th (4x7)—a pattern of 7's! Could these amazing patterns be just coincidental?

We went to the post office in North Sydney, requesting box number 111. We learned, however, that this number was taken by a business which would probably not want to give it up. Too, we learned that they don't pronounce it "one, one, one" over here as we do in the United States but, rather, "one, double one." Because of this factor along with knowing box 111 was taken, we were trying to decide *which number* would be most suitable when, all of a sudden, a clerk called us over in a most enthusiastic manner, explaining that he had a box number we would probably want and one which would be very easy for people to remember—box 345! Several things must have flashed through Mr. Ted Armstrong's mind, for he readily accepted the box—such things as, this is an easy number to remember and it *adds up to 12*. After we left the post office, we continued our discussion of what we thought the

size of the work over here might be, when, all of a sudden, it seemed to come to all of us that God had given us this box number—a number which adds up to 12—as an indication we are entering into a sizable work here in Australia! Let us *all* pray that this is exactly what God *was* showing us!

It was just a few minutes after this on the 24th of November, and just a short while before Mr. Ted Armstrong was scheduled to leave for Honolulu that we started discussing numerics while eating our last meal together. During our discussion, some of these very things about which I am now writing *started* to come to us one right after the other. It wasn't that we were thinking along this line and trying to figure something out during the twelve days Mr. Armstrong was with us. It just seemed that God kept our minds off these things until the *very last moment* and then let us see their significance.

Brethren, can your minds fathom the greatness of the Head of this Church, Jesus Christ? Can you see how *active* He has been in establishing this Australian work? These numerical patterns have been but a small demonstration of God's concern for His work *and for us* as we strive to let Him use us. Yes, Christ is concerned about fulfilling His Father's commission of getting the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to this whole world, as a *witness* to all nations, THROUGH US, before the end of this age comes! Through ALL OF US! I say *all* of us because *you* are a vital part of this Body through which Almighty God is working! *Your* prayers, tithes, offerings and good examples are vital

to this work! You must recognize *your part* and be busy performing it! Prayer is a vital *work* each one of us must be busily performing *day and night* until we are finally in God's holy Kingdom!

My last Sabbath in Pasadena, California was one in which I was privileged to give the sermon. My sermon was on "PRAYER" because I was very conscious of how much the prayers of the entire Church meant to the success of this work God was sending us to open up in Australia! In this sermon, I read where Aaron was required to take "his hands full of sweet incense beaten small" when he entered the Holy of Holies to appear before God (Lev. 16:12). This was a type of the heavenly things (Heb. 8:4-5). This "sweet incense" which Aaron took before God pictured the prayers of the saints as they are offered up through Jesus to our Heavenly Father (Rev. 5:8 and Rev. 8:3). This shows us that as saints of God we must be praying people! But what kind of prayers are they to be? They must be "sweet" or offered up with thanksgiving and joy (Phil. 1:4 and 4:6). And, in addition to being offered up with thanksgiving and joy, they must be "beaten small"—that is, in detail, covering all the needs of the Work of God, and thanking God in a joyful manner for those things He has done for His Work and for all of us. Are you doing your part in fulfilling this responsibility God has committed to you as a member of the Body of Jesus Christ?

A few days after we were here and had witnessed how God had led us to just the right people—how we were given favor in the eyes of those with whom we dealt—how an office and home were opening up, Mr. Ted Armstrong turned to me in our hotel room one evening and said, "The people back home are really taking heed to your sermon. They are really offering up prayers which are beaten fine."—He went on to say, "They are really praying for all of our needs over here, the results prove it!" Yes, we three can truly see what it means to have a praying church behind us when we go to distant areas of this world to carry out the work of God! It is very reassuring to have this confidence of mind when one is in a place where he is constantly in need of the interventions of Almighty and All-powerful God.

PLEASE! Don't YOU ever be one who *fails* to shoulder *his part* of this great load we have been called to carry! Let us forever keep in mind what God has done for us. *Let's remember how mighty are His WONDERS* (Dan. 4:3).



Garner Ted Armstrong and Gerald Waterhouse on pier in lagoon on Canton Isle on their way to Australia.