

Him Big  
God Day

**Other books by Stanley M. Maxwell**

*The Man Who Couldn't Be Killed*

*The Man Who Lived Twice*

*Prisoner for Christ*

# Him Big God Day

And Other  
Remarkable  
Sabbath Stories



**Stanley M. Maxwell**



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# Dedication

To my wife, Phemie,  
to my mother,  
and to Roxy and Nigel



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# Behind the Stories



**T**he road that leads *Him Big God Day, and Other Remarkable Sabbath Stories* to your door has indeed been long and winding. The road begins with a five-year-old boy with a desire to write stories for children. He wrote quite a few, but it would be six years before one of them saw the printed page in *Junior Guide*.\*

Collecting stories initially began at the dining table. Mr. Stan's father, Dr. C. Mervyn Maxwell, author and chairman of the Church History Department at Andrews University, loved to invite guests over for Sabbath lunch. Much of the time he'd tell stories at the table about Adventist, early church, or Reformation history. When he'd finished telling church history stories, he'd ask his guests if they'd had experiences during which they'd had difficulty keeping the Sabbath and God had come to their rescue. The guests shared their stories, and Mr. Stan listened.

Mr. Stan's big break came when David Gemmell asked Mr. Stan to join with him on his new radio program *Family Picnic* on WAUS. He wanted a five-minute children's story for the family to listen to as they

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\* Stanley Maxwell, "The Man Who Rode to California on a Potato," *Junior Guide*, October 14, 1970, 15, 18.

wiggled their toes in the grass and ate their picnic lunch. With the radio program, Mr. Stan the storyteller was born.

Thinking an adventurous life would make his stories more interesting, Mr. Stan took jobs in Thailand, China, Hong Kong, Kyrgyzstan, Macau, Jordan, and Austria, where he collected stories. He collected more stories in his travels to Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, the Americas, the Caribbean, and the Galápagos Islands.

Book writing began as Mr. Stan tried to share his stories with a world-wide audience and resulted in *The Man Who Couldn't Be Killed*, *The Man Who Lived Twice*, and *Prisoner for Christ*. After reading *Prisoner for Christ*, a Chinese story Mr. Stan collected while working in Hong Kong, Miss Brenda of the Micheff sisters arranged for Mr. Stan to tell holiday stories in the 3ABN studios. He also taught the storytelling honor for master guides in the Uncle Arthur's grandson's storytelling booth during the Oshkosh Pathfinder camporee. He is a regular storyteller at Michigan camp meeting.

The stories in *Him Big God Day, and Other Remarkable Sabbath Stories* come in four categories: (1) stories about people who had difficulties keeping the Sabbath and God honored their faith—even in recent times; (2) stories in which something remarkable occurred on the Sabbath; (3) stories in which people's lives were altered after they witnessed the Sabbath being honored; and (4) stories designed to help readers see how some people keep the Sabbath. Often the names and occasionally the places have been changed to protect the innocent. These stories are oral stories based on memory. Mr. Stan tells them the way they were related to him.

These powerful stories about the Sabbath and about God will bless you spiritually.

Stanley M. Maxwell

May 25, 2011

PS: If you have any stories you'd like to share with Mr. Stan, please send them to him through Pacific Press®. He is always collecting good stories.

# Him Big God Day



**A**n Australian supervisor watched a little woodcutter come from the jungles of Papua New Guinea and enter his colonial lumberyard. He asked the woodcutter his name and what he wanted.

“You callin’ me Umie. Me wantin’ him big boss man givin’ me good workin’ here,” the woodcutter said.

The supervisor led the dark-skinned woodcutter into his office and explained, “We’ll pay you. You cut trees, mate, and stack ’em over there.” He pointed to the lumberyard outside the office window. “First, put your thumbprint here on this page.” The supervisor opened an ink pad and placed it on the desk.

Umie could neither read nor write, but trusting the white man, he pressed his thumb onto the ink pad, then rolled his thumb across the bottom of the paper. He didn’t know the contract required him to work six days a week from Monday to Saturday for three consecutive months, and that if he missed a single day of work, he’d be thrown into jail. But even if he could’ve read the contract, the word *jail* would’ve meant nothing to such a child of the forest.

When Umie smudged the page, the supervisor smiled. “There, now you work for us, mate.” He led Umie to his barracks. “Rest t’day, work tomorrow. G’day, mate!”

The next morning, Umie trekked into the forest with the other workers. He enjoyed cutting trees and stacking logs.

All went well until he awoke one morning and knew it was the seventh day of the week. On that day he would think about God and not work. While the workers dressed, Umie lay in bed thinking about God.

The supervisor burst into the room and rushed to Umie's bedside. "Aye, mate, rise 'n' shine! There's work to be done."

Umie looked up at the supervisor. "Me no workin' this day."

"What's wrong?" The Australian looked concerned. "Are you ill?"

"This day Him Big God Day," Umie explained. "Me restin' from me workin', and me thinkin' 'bout me Big God."

The supervisor laughed, thinking the woodcutter, who had never seen a calendar, had made a mistake. "You're all mixed up. Tomorrow's the Lord's Day. T'day you work—Sunday you rest. Now, off to work, mate!"

"This day me no workin'," Umie replied. "Preacher man, 'e teachin' me from him Big Black Book. 'E tellin' me day seven is rest day of Him Big God. This day me no workin'."

The supervisor grabbed Umie angrily, dragged him out of bed, set him on his feet, and slapped his left shoulder. "You get ready for work!" he shouted.

Scared that the supervisor would strike him again, Umie covered his face with his elbow. Misunderstanding the motion and thinking Umie meant to fight back, the supervisor whipped out his knife and slashed Umie's arm. The cut bled so badly that the woodcutter couldn't have worked that day if he'd wanted to. So the supervisor let him lie in bed and think about God.

The injury healed quickly. By Monday, Umie was again cutting timber and stacking lumber. On Friday, the supervisor said, "I'll make ya a deal, mate. The colonial inspector of agriculture, Dr. Spencer, arrives on the morrow. I don't want any trouble. If you'll work tomorrow, I promise you'll never have to work on Saturdays again."

Umie said nothing, but when he awoke the next morning, he lay in bed, thinking about God. The supervisor stomped into the room as he had the previous week and marched over to Umie. "Get up, mate. The inspector's here, and we made a deal!"

"Sorry, me no workin' this day." Umie remained in bed.

“You tell ’im, man!” the other workers chorused in, eager to see another fight between the supervisor and the woodcutter. The supervisor lifted Umie out of bed just as Dr. Spencer, the inspector, walked in, and asked, “What’s the problem?”

“This woodcutter,” the supervisor pointed at Umie, “refuses to work. His rebellion is causing insurrection among the workers.”

“I’ll handle this,” Dr. Spencer said. “Why won’t you work?”

“Me no workin’. This day Him Big God Day,” the woodcutter explained. “Me restin’ and me thinkin’ about Him Big God.”

“You must work t’day. Tomorrow’s yer day off.” When Umie still refused, Dr. Spencer pounded his fist into the woodcutter’s left shoulder. To protect himself, Umie immediately flung his right elbow over his face, surprising the inspector. Fearing an attack, Dr. Spencer beat the little woodcutter until he slumped to the floor and appeared dead. Then he kicked Umie in the ribs repeatedly until his temper subsided.

Umie couldn’t work that day either. Again he lay in bed, thinking about God.

By Monday, Umie’s bruises had healed enough for him to work. But Dr. Spencer summoned a local police officer, who handcuffed Umie, loaded him with all of the inspector’s supplies, and ordered him to walk several miles to the nearest jail. The police officer escorted Umie, toting a rifle to prevent him from escaping. Dr. Spencer, who had completed his inspection, walked with them.

Going to jail was not easy. It meant trekking through the jungle from the lumberyard into town. All went well, however, until the three men came to a fallen log that spanned a rushing river. Umie and the police officer, both being children of the forest and accustomed to traveling in the jungle, glided over it easily, despite the loads on their backs.

Then it was Dr. Spencer’s turn. He hazarded a couple of cautious steps onto the mossy log, slipped slightly, but regained his balance.

Fearful that Dr. Spencer’s next step might prove disastrous, the police officer set his rifle down and ran across the log to aid the white man.

“What are you doing?” Dr. Spencer yelled. “Guard the prisoner! He may escape or grab your gun and shoot us!” Obediently, the police officer dashed back and resumed guard duty.

Dr. Spencer reached the middle of the log safely, but when he glanced

below and saw crocodile snouts in the river, he panicked and leaped the rest of the way. He landed on the bank, but one foot fell into an animal hole, twisting it, and fracturing his leg. The pain grew intense.

“You wantin’ me runnin’ to him big city and fetchin’ two fellas come helpin’ you?” the police officer volunteered after examining the inspector’s leg.

“What? Leave me with this criminal? He might escape or kill me.” Dr. Spencer clenched his teeth and favored his broken leg.

“You wantin’ him Umie fetchin’ two fellas come helpin’ you?” the police officer asked.

“What? Send a criminal into the woods to find help? He’ll escape!”

Just then, the little woodcutter bent down and, despite his handcuffs, picked some leaves, knelt beside Dr. Spencer, and rubbed the leaves against his broken leg.

“’E usin’ ’em leaves for soothin’ your heapin’ big pain,” the local police officer explained. Dr. Spencer noticed that indeed the pain subsided somewhat. “Remove his handcuffs!” he ordered. The police officer obeyed.

With free hands, Umie harvested more leaves and massaged the white man’s legs until he felt relief. Then, even though he was heavily loaded down, Umie lifted the inspector onto his shoulder and carried him for two hours all the way to the city, where medical assistance was arranged.

\* \* \* \* \*

Years later, swaying in a hammock, Dr. Spencer related this story to a Dutch colleague. “At the time, I wasn’t a Christian,” Dr. Spencer concluded, “though I’d been raised one. I thought that woodcutter who wouldn’t work on God’s Day and who massaged my leg two days after I had beaten him senseless, was a true Christian, if I’d ever seen one. God threw that little woodcutter in my path for a reason. His example shouted louder than a slew of sermons. Now I cherish his brand of Christianity for myself!”