

Pacific Press Versus Review and Herald: The Rise of Territorial Monopolies

by Donald McAdams

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is, among other things, an enormous business enterprise. The church operates institutions large and small throughout the world. The first institution, the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, was incorporated in Battle Creek, Mich., on May 3, 1861. Throughout the nineteenth century publishing activity dominated Adventist institutional life, setting precedents for the developing medical and educational institutions.

The principle that Adventist institutions should not compete with one another developed after the establishment of a second publishing house. When the church opened the Pacific Press in 1874, it set up a competitive relationship between two denominational institutions. The inevitable result of this competition was an agreement in 1888 to divide the field. The relationship between the Review and the Pacific Press, 1874-1888, the subject of this article, illuminates the origin of the principle of territorial limitation, a principle that gives all educational and publishing institutions a territory in which they alone can promote, recruit or sell.

The publishing system today is, of course,

far more complex than it was in 1888. Fifty publishing houses produced over \$80 million worth of tracts, pamphlets, periodicals and books during 1975.¹

With respect to the division of territory in the North American Division, the Review and Herald has the Atlantic, Columbia and Lake Unions; the Southern Publishing Association has the Southern and Southwestern Unions; and the Pacific Press has the Pacific, North Pacific, Central, Northern and Canadian Unions (as well as the entire Inter-American Division). If literature evangelists want to sell in their field a subscription book not produced by their publishing house, they must ask their publishing house to procure the book from the original publisher. Similarly, Adventist Book Centers get all their denominational books through the publishing house in their territory, which serves as a sort of wholesale distributor for the other houses, reaping a two or three percent handling charge as the book passes through. Accordingly, each publishing house pushes its own books in its own territory and hopes that some of its books will be so desirable that the other publishing houses will buy from it. When a particular book sold by colporteurs becomes really "hot," such as Arthur Maxwell's *The Bible Story*, every publishing house desires, and in time obtains, the right to produce the book itself.

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Only the Adventist periodical can freely seek its own market. Since each periodical is designed for a specific reader market and does not compete with other periodicals, the publishing house can promote it throughout the division. The one exception involves the North American Division's two "missionary journals," *Signs of the Times*, published at the Pacific Press, and *These Times*, published at the Southern Publishing Association.

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Though any Adventist may subscribe to either of these two periodicals, *Signs of the Times* cannot be promoted east of the Mississippi (or outside Canada), and *These Times* cannot be promoted west of the Mississippi.

Behind this complex territorial system is the simple principle that no Adventist publishing house should compete with a sister institution. The fear, apparently, is that open competition might eventually eliminate the weak in favor of the strong. The Adventist Church has invested too much time and money, too many hopes and prayers, in each publishing house to allow this.

Why, then, were three publishing houses built in North America? One might suppose that the Pacific Press and the Southern Publishing Association were established at a time when poor transportation made it difficult for the *Review and Herald* to serve the American language market. But in 1874, when the Pacific Press was established, the transcontinental railway had been in operation for five years; the *Review and Herald* could have marketed its books throughout North America. The western publishing house was established for other reasons: be-

cause of the periodical needs of the new California field, the independence of the California believers, and the strong support of James and Ellen White. And the establishment of the Pacific Press called forth the system of territorial distribution that still prevails today.

The 1870s were a fecund decade for Adventist publishing work. In these years, the church perfected a system for the distribution of tracts and periodicals and established a second publishing house.

Stephen N. Haskell, newly elected president of the New England Conference, organized the first conference tract and missionary society in November of 1870. Borrowing on the ideas of several ladies, who in 1868 had organized a missionary society in South Lancaster, Haskell organized church members to circulate aggressively tracts, pamphlets and books, and to obtain subscriptions for church periodicals. The New England Tract and Missionary Society injected fresh energy into the Adventist work in New England, and with James White's blessing, Haskell began showing the members of other conferences how to organize tract societies. This work became his formal responsibility in March of 1873. From then until his missionary journey to Australia in 1885, Stephen Haskell was a full-time driving force behind the tract and missionary society work.²

The tract society began as a local church organization, which every church member was urged to join on the payment of \$1 dues. Members were required to keep a record of all visits, letters written, tracts given away or sold, or other missionary activities. These records went to the church librarian who passed them on to the district secretary at the quarterly district meeting. The district president, usually the minister for that division of the conference, was expected to visit the churches in his district once a month and promote the work, especially by recruiting canvassers to go from door to door selling subscriptions to the *Review*, *Health Reformer* or other church periodicals. The district societies pyramided into a state society led by a president, nearly always the conference

president, a vice president, a secretary and a treasurer.³

The tract societies dramatically increased the sale of denominational literature. The New England Tract and Missionary Society, for example, claimed in its report for 1874 that its members had obtained 1,659 subscriptions for denominational periodicals, given away 2,478 individual copies of denominational periodicals, visited 633 times the homes of non-Adventists and written 883 letters. It also placed 204 bound books in public libraries. In all, the 243 members had distributed 686,143 pages of Adventist literature.⁴

The church society ordered its literature from the district office and the district society ordered its literature from the state society. Only the state office could order directly from the *Review and Herald*. The tract societies, in short, were retail outlets for the *Review* and did much to increase the business of the house. By July of 1874, they had already raised \$5,000 for delinquent *Review* subscriptions and had obtained 15,000 new trial subscribers.⁵ By 1880, before the subscription book business had officially begun, tract societies were employing full-time canvassers to sell periodicals and books from door to door.⁶

Along with growth in the East came expansion into the West. The Adventist message first traveled to California in 1859 with Merritt Kellogg and his family in an oxen-drawn wagon. Kellogg's witness raised up a group of believers in San Francisco, and in 1868 two ministers, J. N. Loughborough and D. T. Bourdeau, came west at the invitation of these new believers to build up the work. Five years later, in February of 1873, 238 Californians in seven Adventist churches formed the California Conference and elected as their first president J. N. Loughborough.⁷ Present at this organizational meeting were James and Ellen White, who had arrived in California the previous autumn to attend the first California camp meeting, held at Windsor. Two months later, in March of 1873, they returned to the East. In their absence, at the second California

camp meeting, which met in October at Yountville, midway between St. Helena and Napa, plans were laid for establishing some type of publishing work in California.⁸

The Whites were undoubtedly pleased with this decision. In December, they returned to California with definite plans to publish a paper. James had already pulled together the original nucleus of the church in New England and New York with *Present Truth* and its successor, *The Review and Herald*. It must have seemed obvious to him that here in California the best way to unite the scattered believers and push forward the Adventist work was with a local periodical. A paper could announce new baptisms, report on offerings collected, and quickly and specifically answer the questions and meet the needs of the new believers. Moreover, James had recently recovered from the ill health which had forced him to give up his work as president of the General Conference in 1871 and his heavy editorial duties at the *Review* office in January of 1872. With no direct publishing or administrative responsibilities in the East, he could now repeat in his fifties the achievement of his twenties — build up a church with a periodical. Undoubtedly, James was encouraged in his desire to publish by the vision given to Ellen in Oakland on April 1, 1874. She had been shown, she wrote, that “a paper would be published on the Pacific Coast, and that not far in the future a publishing house must be established there.”⁹

By the summer of 1874, James and Ellen had settled in a house three miles from the center of Oakland, a city with easy access to rail and steam transport, and James had found a small printing plant willing to print his paper. The first number of the *Signs of the Times* soon appeared, bearing the date June 1874, and listing James White as editor and proprietor. As with *Present Truth* 25 years before, White offered the *Signs* free to all who could not pay, and asked those who could to support liberally the new paper. Over \$150 came in from 20 friends before the second number of the paper went to the press, and the third number acknowledged \$240 from nearly 100 names.

Given the personality of James White and

his position in the church, once the decision to publish a periodical had been made, the establishment of a fully developed publishing house was almost inevitable. Soon James was setting his own type and supervising the folding and mailing, hiring out only the presswork, and, of course, looking for a press to purchase.

Yet, despite liberal contributions and attempts to print the paper as cheaply as possible, the *Signs* was soon broke. The new paper needed help from the established church in the East in order to survive; so the Whites went east to visit camp meetings and raise money and then plead for support at the upcoming General Conference. Ellen, who preceded James, raised \$9,000 in Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota. At the General Conference session in Battle Creek in August of 1874, a resolution was passed calling upon the *Review* and *Herald* to establish a branch office on the Pacific Coast.¹⁰ Moreover, James proposed to the delegates that if eastern believers could raise \$6,000 to purchase printing equipment, western Adventists would raise \$10,000 for a building.

James' changing plans are a little hard to understand. In February 1874, six months before the General Conference session and four months before the first issue of the *Signs* appeared, he had argued against the construction of additional buildings for the *Review*, urging instead that the Battle Creek office produce stereotype plates of the *Review* and *Herald* and ship them to *branch offices* on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts where the periodicals could be printed along with the insertion of news and specialized articles relating to the local fields. Then, in the first number of the *Signs*, he stated that though he was starting the paper on his own, he would turn over all equipment to a *publishing association* if one could be formed by the Californians. It is clear that he had in mind a grand design, for in the second number he asked for 10,000 subscribers and 100 donors to give \$100 apiece for a steam press and accessories. By the fifth number, the goal had been doubled to \$20,000. Then two months later in Battle Creek, James supported making the Califor-

nia printing plant a branch office of the *Review*.

W. C. White, reflecting in 1938 on this decision, stated that some—we might guess the *Review* management—thought a new journal would hurt the *Review* and that if a new paper designed for nonbelievers were really needed it should be printed in Battle Creek. A few even pledged money to help the *Signs* only if the periodical were moved to Michigan. It seems quite possible that the

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decision to make the printing establishment on the west coast a branch of the *Review* was a compromise to please the opponents of any printing in California and to secure financial support from the East.

But the real decision, as it turned out, had not yet been made. California believers gathered at Yountville in October of 1874 for the third annual session of the California State Conference. There, again in the absence of James White, who had been elected president of the General Conference at the recent session and had not returned to California, the California Adventists determined to establish an independent publishing house in California, arguing that any tie to the *Review* would cause delay in conducting business. Following the decision of the conference to purchase the *Signs* and assume control “until such time as a legal organized association shall be formed and its officers elected,” the roughly 450 Adventists present gave or pledged almost \$20,000, much of it in gold coin and unminted bars. The show of financial strength impressed G. I. Butler, the representative of the General Conference; reporting on the event in the *Signs*, he wrote,

“We have financial strength in this state sufficient to do almost anything we wish to undertake. . . . There is a stability to this cause here; it is of no mushroom growth.”¹¹

From October 1874 till February 1875, the California Conference published the *Signs*, Elder Butler taking the chief responsibility, but when James and Ellen White returned in February, the conference transferred the office back to James while awaiting the formation of the association. Then, on April 8, the company organized as a nondividend stock company. The capital stock of the Pacific Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, soon to go by the name Pacific Press, was set at \$28,000 and the individual shares at \$10. James himself purchased 100 shares. There would be no turning back.

The establishment of an independent publishing house in California was clearly the act of the California believers, able and determined to be independent. But they must have had the blessing of James and Ellen White. Ellen, after all, had been shown in vision in April of 1874 that a “publishing house” should be established in California and when, in the year after the association was formed, it was suggested to James that the Review and the Pacific Press be put under one management, she told James to answer that the Lord did not approve of such a plan.¹²

Conflict between the two publishing houses began almost at once. The Pacific Press needed to increase the circulation of the *Signs*, raise money, and find a permanent home, but it faced immediate competition as a result of a decision made at the General Conference, apparently James’ idea, to start a “pioneer” paper at Battle Creek.¹³ The new weekly would compete directly with the *Signs* as an evangelistic paper directed to non-Adventists. Had James made further compromises in Battle Creek?

The December 1874 number of the *True Missionary* described the rationale for the new paper. The brethren felt that it made no sense to send tons of paper to California and then ship back the finished copies of the *Signs*, losing both time and money in the process.

Instead, the Review would print a missionary journal for the East, the *Voice of Truth*. All monies raised in the East for the *Signs* would be diverted to the *Voice of Truth*. The tract societies were urged to sign up 30,000 subscribers. In fact, the tract societies were able to find only 10,000 for the *Voice*,¹⁴ but the *Voice* hurt the *Signs* and brought the two publishing houses into direct competition. There was only one logical solution. At the end of 1875, the *Voice*, having seen its editor, James White, move to California in February, ceased publication in favor of the *Signs*; henceforth, the *Signs* had the entire field to itself as the denomination’s only pioneer journal. Once James White left Battle Creek for Oakland, any hope that the *Voice* would survive ended.

With the administrative and promotional ability of James White behind it and the wealth of the California Adventists to support it, the Pacific Press grew rapidly. A building was erected, machinery installed, and almost immediately additions to both required. Yet, though the California members were giving at three times the per capita of the denomination generally, and the circulation of the *Signs* was up to 8,000 in 1877, the Pacific Press carried a heavy debt, a burden its managers could not escape for many years.¹⁵

W. C. White gave outstanding leadership for a year, starting in April of 1876, but his older brother, Edson, was much less successful during the three years that followed. When he resigned, early in 1880—a decision C. H. Jones considered “about the wisest thing he ever did”—the press was in considerable financial difficulty and the directors looked longingly but unsuccessfully for W. C. to return and take charge of the institution.¹⁶

The Pacific Press did pick up two men of outstanding talent during the 1870s, J. H. Waggoner and C. H. Jones. Waggoner, a former editor and publisher of a political paper in Wisconsin and already one of the denomination’s most distinguished authors and preachers, became the resident editor of the *Signs* after his arrival in California in 1875. When James White died in 1881, Waggoner replaced him as editor, working for the

press with distinction until two years before his death in 1889.¹⁷ C. H. Jones joined the Pacific Press in 1879, at age 29, coming from Battle Creek where he had been superintendent of the factory. In 1882, he became general manager and in 1888 president of the board. In fact, following the departure of Edson White in early 1880, Jones had been the effective manager of the Pacific Press.¹⁸

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Jones and Waggoner oversaw phenomenal growth to the house during the 1880s. By the end of the decade, the press employed approximately 175 workers and utilized 12 cylinder presses and other modern equipment. It was one of the largest and most complete publishing plants west of the Rockies and, with an annual business nearing \$250,000, it rivaled the volume of the senior publishing house, the Review and Herald.¹⁹

From the beginning, the houses competed for the same Adventist market. After the Review’s *Voice of Truth* ceased to be published, aggressive promotion of the *Signs* as a missionary journal gradually cut into the subscriptions of the *Review* itself. The *Review* was enlarged in 1879 with the expectation that the tract societies and ministers would help double its subscription list; but though it cost more to publish, there was no increase in subscriptions.

“We appreciate your zeal for the *Signs*,” commented a resolution of the Review trustees, referring to the tract societies, “We also support the Pacific Press and at present carry \$10,000 of their debt. But as their debt goes

down, ours goes up, for the tract societies are pushing the *Signs* so hard that the circulation at the Review is falling off.” The resolution concluded by asking the publishing houses (obviously the Pacific Press) to stop selling books so cheaply because a low sales price robbed authors of their just recompense and, by making it unprofitable for agents and ministers to circulate them, cut sales. James White signed the resolution on behalf of the Review trustees.²⁰

During the 1880s, the rivalry between the two houses continued. In the 1881 edition of *Life Sketches of James and Ellen White*, the publisher added in an epilogue: “Elder White lived to see his judgment vindicated in establishing this office [the Pacific Press],” and “there can never be any rivalry between them [the Pacific Press and the Review], as the work will be large enough to require the full capacity of all that are likely to be built.”²¹ And at the General Conference session of 1884, a resolution was passed asking the chair to appoint a committee of four to act with the General Conference to consider a plan for promoting more perfect cooperation between the publishing houses in Battle Creek and Oakland.²² Obviously, all was not well.

The main source of friction in 1884 was not the circulation of journals, but the distribution of subscription books. By the late 1870s, the tract societies were supervising full-time canvassers selling periodicals and small books, and in March of 1880 the General Conference resolved that henceforth the state conferences should issue licenses to these colporteurs and, if they performed well, give them reasonable remuneration.²³

In Testimony Twenty-nine the previous year, 1879, Ellen White called for canvassers to obtain subscribers for the church’s periodicals and to introduce books and pamphlets into the homes. She specifically asked that men in responsible positions work up plans whereby books could be circulated. “Other publishers have regular systems of introducing into the market books of no vital interest. The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”²⁴ Adventists have interpreted this testimony as God’s instruction to the denomination to sell books by subscription—that is, first visiting the

homes and taking orders, and later returning to deliver the book. But I have seen no evidence that contemporaries understood it this way. On the contrary, at the General Conference session of March 1880, the Committee on Tract and Missionary Institutes, referring to this Testimony, called on each conference to hold a Tract and Missionary Institute and urged all church members to get behind the work of the tract societies.²⁵

The man who introduced into the denomination the idea of selling books by subscription was that ubiquitous genius, John Harvey Kellogg. Subscription book selling was quite common in post-Civil War America. Mark Twain's books had been sold successfully that way and it is not surprising that Kellogg, an author with a book to sell, would push to have his book sold by subscription.

Dr. Kellogg's *The Home Hand Book of Domestic Hygiene and Rational Medicine*, over 1,600 pages long, came off the presses of the Review in July 1880. While it was being printed, Dr. Kellogg personally instructed a group of canvassers in the art of selling by subscription. Among his salesmen were three young men who went to Indiana, including George A. King.²⁶ King, who had begun selling pamphlets and periodicals five months before, became convinced after a successful three months in Indiana with *Home Hand Book*, that doctrinal books could also be sold by subscription.

At the General Conference of 1880, King urged the brethren to bind as one book Uriah Smith's two small volumes, *Thoughts on Daniel* and *Thoughts on Revelation*. In response, the Review printed a limited special issue of *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*, a combination of the sheets already printed with a new index added. George King evidently sold copies of this book with fair success.

Sometime during the year 1881, the Review began work on a completely new edition of *Daniel and Revelation* designed specifically for the subscription work. At the December meeting of the General Tract and Missionary Society, the prospectus was

shown to the delegates and the consensus was that large numbers of Adventist books could be sold by subscription if they were "prepared in a more acceptable form."²⁷ The volume, *Thoughts on Daniel and Thoughts on Revelation*, a handsome volume filled with pictures of beasts and battles and bound in blue and green linen for \$1.50, sheepskin for \$2.50, morocco for \$4, and with marbled or gilt edges for \$5, came off the press on April 3, 1882, and went on to become one of the all-time, best-selling Adventist subscription books.²⁸

At first, canvassers acted on their own, buying books from the Review at a 50 percent discount and delivering them at full price. It was a risky procedure since not everybody who ordered a book accepted delivery. Soon canvassers working in Wisconsin, Ohio and states farther afield began to order their subscription books from the state tract society offices, rather than directly from the Review. The first step to formalize this procedure occurred in Michigan. On November 13, 1883, the directors of the Michigan Tract and Missionary Society, voted that their society take the "State Agency" for all subscription books and periodicals, and appointed William C. Sisley the director of their state district. As state agent, Sisley became, in effect, the denomination's first conference publishing director. His job was to recruit and train canvassers and coordinate their work in the field.²⁹ Soon hundreds of canvassers flooded into the field, and other conferences followed the Michigan precedent.³⁰

The production of Adventist presses nearly tripled during the 1880s. The publishing houses did everything they could to increase the sales of subscription books. They provided books in bindings that they thought would sell, printed prospectuses, and prepared the canvass for the agent to memorize. The press at Oakland even hired a man to visit camp meetings, recruit canvassers and hold canvassing classes at the press.³¹ The houses supported canvassing wholeheartedly, not just to make profits—in fact, they lost on some books—but because they believed in the message contained in the books. C. H. Jones, for example, was un-

happy in 1884 that so many agents were pushing unimportant matters like *Sunshine at Home*. “If we made money on it,” he wrote to W. C. White, “it would be a little better, but if we are going to lose, we may as well lose with books that put the truth before the people.”³²

Indeed, the Pacific Press did lose money on the first printings of Volume 4 of Ellen White’s *Spirit of Prophecy* (usually called by its subtitle *The Great Controversy*) though in time the book sold 50,000 copies. Jones described some of the problems involved in producing subscription books in a letter written Ellen White on March 2, 1885, shortly after the book was first published.³³ Responding to her complaint that she was not receiving just returns from the book, Jones wrote, “You have been hasty in condemning the management of *The Great Controversy*, and people that tell you you should get \$10,000 from this book do not understand publishing.” W. C. White, who was handling the sale of the book, had employed canvassers in order to give it a wide distribution,

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but “the canvassers were most of them poor, and unless they could make enough to get a living, they would not handle the book.” “Using canvassers,” said Jones, “had enabled the press to sell twice as many copies of Volume 4 as of any of the previous three volumes.”

In response to this letter, Ellen pointed out her need for money to meet her own personal investment in the book’s preparation and declared:

Matters are so arranged that those who write books cannot receive proper compensation, because the books go through so many hands that the profits are consumed in this way. Whether canvassers, or tract and missionary societies, or whatever it may be that brings about this result, I protest against such an arrangement. If we should revive the old plan of our ministers disposing of the books, and receiving part of the profits themselves, I believe there would be a better state of things than exists today. Under present arrangements, it seems as if almost everything is absorbed by the tract and missionary societies, leaving very little profit for the author. I shall have something more to say on these things.³⁴

She did. In 1892 she wrote to General Conference leaders about organization, and in this connection spoke of complications in book distribution.

“In some parts of the work it is true,” she wrote, “the machinery has been made too complicated; especially has this been the case in the tract and missionary work; the multiplication of rules and regulations made it needlessly burdensome. An effort should be made to simplify the work, so as to avoid all needless labor and perplexity.”³⁵

Apparently, Ellen White did not understand all the intricacies of the distribution system. For the problem was not too much organization. The addition of state canvassing agents in 1886 had increased sales greatly, and in 1892, when Ellen wrote the above, the canvassing work was booming as it had never done before. In fact, the dismantling of the distribution apparatus in 1893, an over-reaction to the financial panic of that year, almost ruined the subscription book work. The real solution was not to cut back the distribution apparatus, but to raise the prices of the books. This was eventually done with great success, but not until after the turn of the century.

It is easy to see why tension developed between the two publishing houses. When losses mount, competition inevitably sharpens. Also, the publication of *The Great Controversy* brought the publishing houses into direct conflict over the handling of subscrip-

tion books. Many years later, in the midst of another controversy with the Review, Jones recalled to W. C. White how it all began:

You will remember the position the Review and Herald took in regard to your mother's works for fear that there was no money in them; and how we took hold of that work years ago. I remember very well your argument which Elder Haskell presented,—that even though we did not receive any immediate return for our investment, the time would come when your mother's works would have a large sale, and then the Pacific Press would reap the benefits; but we argued at that time that whether this was so or not, the books ought to be published, and therefore we took hold of the work. What effect this action had in stimulating the Review and Herald in bringing out more and better books, we will leave you to judge: but I do believe this, that a little healthy competition is beneficial sometimes.³⁶

Indeed, the Review did bring out books to compete with *The Great Controversy* and, consequently, *The Great Controversy* did not sell well in the East. At the time, Jones was not quite so happy with the competition. Once in a letter to W. C. White he referred to the Review publications *Daniel and Revelation* and *The United States in Prophecy* as “their two great hobbies just now.”³⁷ On November 17, 1885, he reported to W. C. that the Review would not circulate anything that did not emanate from their office.

As long as the two publishing houses tried to sell in the same market, they would be competitors. The Review favored letting each publishing house deal with all the state tract societies by which the books were distributed. They outlined this position in a letter to Jones in 1885: “We shall not find cause for complaint if you invade or even absorb our entire territory. We shall rejoice to see you do this, for certainly while this is being done, we will have the consolation in knowing that the truth is being scattered broadcast among the people. Of course, there should be a harmony between the two offices

in the establishment of prices, paying of freight”³⁹

But, the Pacific Press did not approve this proposal, for in the end it would pit book against book, publishing house against publishing house. The Review would want the same privileges in the West that they were granting the Pacific Press in the East, and Jones knew that in competition with the Review the smaller Pacific Press would suffer.

By the eleventh annual session of the International Tract and Missionary Society, which met in Battle Creek on November 21, 1886, it was clear that the subscription book business had to be organized in a more systematic way. The delegates first approved a resolution that the subscription book departments of the Review and the Pacific Press be recognized as the heads of the subscription book work in all territory controlled by them, “and that all engaged in the subscription book business work in harmony with the house in whose territory they work.” A second resolution called upon the tract societies in the states to act as “the sole agents of the said offices of publication for all of their subscription books provided that an efficient man is kept in the territory occupied by them who shall superintend the work of qualifying, appointing and working local subagents in accordance with principles of order and thoroughness.” A third resolution asked the conference committees, in conjunction with the presidents and secretaries of their state tract and missionary societies, to employ state canvassing agents. Other resolutions requested that state tract societies do only cash business with canvassing agents, that agents sell books at only one price, and that they solicit orders for only one book at a time.

With these resolutions and the understanding that each agent would have sole claim to assigned territory, the delegates completed their reorganization of the subscription book work.⁴⁰ What they had done in essence was to give the publishing houses primacy in their territory, the state societies a monopoly in their territory, and the individual canvasser a monopoly in his temporarily assigned

territory. No longer would canvassers be able to play off one tract society against another, and no longer would canvassers knock on a door and discover that another agent had already been there. System had been put into the business.

Furthermore, a full-time state canvassing agent would now push the work in each conference, recruiting and training canvassers, assigning territory, keeping up courage, and generally coordinating the work. Only one more refinement needed to be made in the system. Just as each canvasser had a monopoly in a certain town or county, and each state tract society was the sole distributor for the publishing houses in its territory, so each publishing house needed to have a monopoly in its territory.

Under the leadership of C. H. Jones, the Pacific Press pressed for such a settlement. After two years of discussion, the publishing houses finally came to an agreement. In a memorandum of October 9, 1888, signed in Battle Creek by Jones, representing the Pacific Press, and H. W. Kellogg, for the Review, the Pacific Press was given the exclusive right to sell all subscription books published by either house west of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico; the Review agreed to furnish bookplates for any of its books that the Pacific Press wanted to print in return for the cost of manufacturing the plates and five percent of the wholesale price of every book sold. The Review received the same privileges in its territory of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Canada. The eastern and southern and Great Plains states were left open to both houses.⁴¹ Shortly after signing the memorandum of October 9, the two houses redivided the North American field according to the General Conference Districts. The Pacific Press took Districts 1, the East; 5, the Great Plains and Southwest; and 6, the West. The Review received Districts 2, the South; 3, the Midwest; and 4, the Northern Great Plains.⁴²

In the 1890s, an effort at consolidation which would have threatened the independence of the Pacific Press was attempted. The story of this threat and the successful defense

made by the Pacific Press, using the testimonies of Ellen White, has been told elsewhere and need not be repeated.⁴³ It is also not necessary to consider the establishment of the Southern Publishing Association in 1901, or the other English language publishing houses overseas. The precedent had by now been established that when a pioneer missionary entered a new field he needed a locally published pioneer periodical. (In the South, the periodical was James Edson White's *Gospel Herald*, later *The Southern Watchman*, and now *These Times*.) The pioneer missionary would soon print it himself, buying the type and then the press. For a while, the small publishing house would print only periodicals and be a depository for books published by the larger publishing houses. But gradually the new publishing house would come to handle even the largest subscription books and, in time, receive a territory. In most parts of the world where language barriers delineated the market, competition between publishing houses did not develop. For the English language territories of South Africa, Australia and England, territorial settlements were made just as they had been made previously between the Review and the Pacific Press.

Today, nationalism makes it obvious that each country is a publishing market and needs its own publishing house. But in North America, and only in North America, the church has three publishing houses serving one publishing market. These three publishing houses continue to follow a policy developed in the 1880s to insure that competition will be kept to a minimum. The system of publishing territories remains, a legacy of the evolution of the Adventist publishing system.

The history of the Adventist publishing work is in many ways a microcosm of the institutional history of the church. The church has established many, some members believe too many, publishing houses, schools and hospitals. But it has chosen not to place all medical institutions under one consolidated management, all colleges under the control of one educational system or make all publishing houses branches of one central publishing association; instead, it has made

each institution independent and guaranteed it freedom from competition. The epoch-making decision was made in the 1870s when

James and Ellen White and the California believers established an independent Pacific Press.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Publishing statistics and working policies are found in the *Publishing Department Digest*, published monthly by the Publishing Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and *Publishing Department Policies*, a booklet last revised by the Department in January 1972. Policies are modified yearly at the Annual Council. I am indebted to Bruce Wickwire, director of the Publishing Department of the General Conference, for checking the accuracy of the description of current practice given below.

2. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1966), p. 500.

3. *True Missionary*, the official organ of the tract societies was published monthly during 1874. It published detailed reports from the conference tract societies.

4. *True Missionary*, December 1874.

5. *True Missionary*, July 1874.

6. *Review and Herald*, March 18, 1880.

7. *SDA Encyclopedia*, pp. 187-188.

8. For the founding of the Pacific Press, see Richard B. Lewis, *Streams of Light: The Story of the Pacific Press* (Mountain View: California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1958) and W. C. White, "Publishing the *Signs of the Times*," and "Another Publishing House," *Review and Herald*, January 27, February 3, 1938.

9. Ellen G. White Manuscript 1, 1874, published in the *Review and Herald*, January 27, 1938.

10. *Review and Herald*, August 25, 1874.

11. *Signs of the Times* October 22, 1874.

12. Ellen White to O. A. Olsen, May 31, 1896, quoted in "Confederation and Consolidation, Seventh-day Adventist History and the Counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy," p. 16. This paper has been prepared by the White Estate and is filed in Document file 24.

13. *True Missionary*, November 1874.

14. S. N. Haskell, "Our Past and Present Work," *Review and Herald*, March 18, 1880.

15. For James White's efforts to raise money, see the *Signs of the Times* for 1875-1877.

16. C. H. Jones to W. C. White, January 21, 1880, White Estate.

17. *SDA Encyclopedia*, pp. 1385-1386.

18. Donald R. McAdams, "Publisher of the Gospel:

C. H. Jones and the Pacific Press," *Adventist Heritage*, Summer 1976, pp. 22-32.

19. Lewis, p. 114ff.

20. James White, "Address and Appeal to the Officers of the Tract and Missionary Societies," November 29, 1880, White Estate Document File 138a.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 377.

22. *Review and Herald*, November 18, 1884.

23. *Review and Herald*, March 18, 1880.

24. *Testimonies for the Church*, IV, pp. 388-389.

25. *Review and Herald*, March 18, 1880.

26. Statement by C. F. Wilcox, *Review and Herald*, December 7, 1944.

27. *Report of the 1881 General Conference*, pp. 33-38.

28. There is disagreement among Adventist historians on the date when George King lobbied at the General Conference for the publication of a combined *Daniel and Revelation* for subscription selling (*SDA Encyclopedia*, pp. 660-661). The evidence that it happened twice is too complex to be presented here but will be supplied to those who request it of the author.

29. *Review and Herald*, November 20, 1883.

30. *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1883.

31. C. H. Jones to W. C. White, June 20, July 26 and October 2, 1885, White Estate; *SDA Yearbook for 1886*, p. 76.

32. Jones to W. C. White, June 20, 1886, White Estate.

33. White Estate.

34. Letter 15, 1885 to Waggoner and Jones, White Estate, Document file 137, W-15-1885.

35. Ellen G. White letter 32, 1892 published in the *General Conference Bulletin*, 1873, Vol. 5, No.2, p. 24.

36. Jones to W. C. White, July 23, 1895, White Estate.

37. Jones to W. C. White, September 23, 1885, White Estate.

38. White Estate.

39. Jones to White, July 31, 1885, White Estate.

40. *SDA Yearbook 1887*, pp. 49-63.

41. White Estate Document File 137.

42. Jones to W. C. White, April 26, 1893, White Estate.

43. McAdams, "C. H. Jones," *Adventist Heritage*, Summer 1976, pp. 22-32.