

Did We Need to Lose Harris Pine?  
Chamberlains Pardoned

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# SPECTRUM

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Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums

Volume 17, Number 5

## EARLY ADVENTURES IN MAINE

We Lifted Our Voices in Portland  
Holy Kisses in Atkinson County  
Ellen Meets Her Black Forerunner

# SPECTRUM

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The Association of Adventist Forums is a non-subsidized, non-profit organization for which gifts are deductible in the report of income for purposes of taxation. The publishing of SPECTRUM depends on subscriptions, gifts from individuals and the voluntary efforts of the contributors and the staff.

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**Editorial Correspondence:** SPECTRUM is published by the Association of Adventist Forums. Direct all editorial correspondence to SPECTRUM, 7710 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double spaced and in matters of style and documentation, conform to a SPECTRUM style sheet which will be sent, upon request, to prospective authors. Submit the original and two copies, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Responses from readers may be shortened before publication.

**Subscription Information:** In order to receive SPECTRUM, send a membership fee (\$20 per 5 issues, except \$25 in Canada and in other foreign countries; \$2 less for students) to Association of Adventist Forums, Box 5330, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912. Phone: (301) 270-0423. Single copies may be purchased for \$4. Pay by check made out to the Association of Adventist Forums. For address changes, send old address label along with the new address.

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## About This Issue

Several years ago, Fred Hoyt, then chairman of the history department of Loma Linda University, shifted the focus of his scholarly research to Adventist history. He decided to read daily newspapers, court transcripts, and church records in Maine during the mid-1840s in order to recreate the social and cultural context of the Millerites and earliest Adventists. Much of the special section in this issue emerges out of his contributions to our increased self-understanding.

We reprint in full the most dramatic of Hoyt's discoveries, a report of the trial of Israel Dammon that mentions both Ellen Harmon and James White. A roundtable discussion of the account by historians of Adventism explores its significance

for Adventists today. Fred Hoyt himself recounts in detail the sights and sounds of the Millerites' public meetings in Portland Maine, both before and after October 22, 1844. Tim Poirier, an assistant at the Ellen G. White Estate, examines the parallels between the visions of William Foy, a light-skinned black Millerite who preached in Portland, and the later visions of Ellen Harmon, who grew up there, attending Millerite meetings.

Other reports investigate: The Royal Commission findings in the case of Michael and Lindy Chamberlain; the closing of Harris Pine Mill; Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews University approving ordination of women elders; and scientists from around the world reporting on their research into the effects of a vegetarian diet.

—The Editors

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# Chamberlains Cleared by Royal Commission

by Norman Young

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On the night of August 17, 1980, nine-and-half-week-old Azaria Chamberlain vanished from her parents' tent at Ayers Rock in Central Australia. Lindy Chamberlain testified that she saw a dingo (native dog) emerge from the tent and maintained that the dingo had taken her baby. The jury did not believe her, and on October 29, 1983, she was found guilty of murdering her baby daughter in the front seat of the family car by cutting the child's throat. She served three years in jail. Public agitation, the presentation of new evidence, and the discovery of a missing matinee jacket brought about her release on February 7, 1986. A Royal Commission of Inquiry into the convictions of Michael and Lindy began proceedings on May 8, 1986.

Justice Trevor Morling of the Federal Court, the Commissioner who conducted the 13-month inquiry into the Chamberlains' convictions, delivered his 379-page report to the Federal and Northern Territory authorities on May 23, 1987. The Northern Territory government set June 9 as the date for the tabling of the report. However, a leak to the press concerning the report's contents forced the Northern Territory authorities to present the document a week earlier. Prior to the tabling of the report to the parliament of the Northern Territory, journalists were given copies of it and locked in a room until the matter came up for discussion in parliament. They emerged two-and-half hours later from their imposed seclusion with conflicting stories to tell the world.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* ran the headline

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Norman Young is senior lecturer in New Testament in the School of Religion, Avondale College, Australia. A graduate of Pacific Union College, Young received an M. Litt. from the University of New England and his B.D. and Ph.D. from Manchester University, England. He recently appeared on Australian national television discussing the Royal Commission's findings in the Chamberlain case.

"For Lindy: A Full Pardon." *The Australian* carried the banner, "Chamberlains Pardoned, but Not Completely Cleared," which *The Daily Telegraph*, a tabloid, reduced to a blunt "Pardoned, Not Cleared." TV and radio coverage conveyed the same sense of confusion. The media's differing perception of the Commissioner's finding was due to a statement in the prepared 32-page speech of the Northern Territory's Attorney General Daryl Manzie, which he released to journalists prior to his address in parliament. The statement asserted that "the Commissioner does not exonerate the Chamberlains. . . his report is not a proclamation of their innocence." Manzie omitted these words in his actual presentation to parliament, but journalists had already seized on them. The problem with this statement from the press release is that it seems to contradict what the Commissioner says in his report.

In the report Justice Morling states that if the evidence that he had received had been given in the 1982 murder trial "the trial judge would have been obliged to direct the jury to acquit the Chamberlains on the ground that the evidence could not justify their convictions." Likewise,

Justice Morling "was confident that the [1984] appeal" to the High Court against the convictions, "would have succeeded if the evidence had been as it now appears." "There are," Morling argued, "serious doubts and questions as to the Chamberlains' guilt and as to the evidence in the trial leading to their conviction." "I do not think," Morling wrote, "any jury could properly convict them on the evidence as it now appears." The dramatic style of Michael and some imaginative embroidering by Lindy in her testimony came in for comment from the Commissioner, but having heard them in the witness box, he was not convinced that either of them was lying. Whereas, Morling said, "the obstacles to the acceptance of the Crown's case are both numerous and formi-

dable. Almost every facet of its case is beset by serious difficulties."

In the light of such clear findings, why not acquit the Chamberlains? A Royal Commission does not have the power to overturn a jury verdict. A full pardon is the method employed when an inquiry finds a reasonable doubt about a just verdict. This neutralizes the conviction, rather than expunging it. Compensation for the time in prison is then customarily granted, at least in the very few examples where an inquiry has questioned the validity of a jury decision.

However, a pardon has not satisfied the Chamberlains, their lawyers, or many influential persons in Australia. A pardon is a perfunctory response to the comprehensive rejection of the

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## Lindy Role Could Go to Meryl Streep

by Carolyn Ford

Production of a big-budget movie about the Azaria Chamberlain saga, directed by Fred Schepisi and possibly starring Meryl Streep as Lindy Chamberlain, is due to begin next year in Darwin.

The film, planned by British producer Verity Lambert, will be based on the bestselling book about the disappearance of Azaria Chamberlain, *Evil Angels*, by Australian author John Bryson.

Ms. Lambert, whose credits include *Minder*, *Rumpole of the Bailey*, *Edward and Mrs. Simpson* and the latest John Cleese comedy *Clockwise*, owns the film rights to *Evil Angels*.

### Credits

Said to be "passionate" about the Chamberlain story, Ms. Lambert has foreshadowed a major announcement regarding the movie in London at the end of the month.

Mr. Schepisi, one of Australia's internationally recognized directors, whose previous credits include *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith*, *The Devil's Playground* and *Plenty*, is working on the film script in Los Angeles with Australian script writer Robert Caswell, who wrote the ABC-TV mini-series, *The Scales of Justice*.

Mr. Schepisi's partner in Australia, Robert Le Tet, said yesterday Ms. Lambert had invited Mr. Schepisi to direct a movie on the Chamberlains more than a year ago.

While negotiations were well under way, the cast had not been determined.

Mr. Le Tet, who is managing director of and a partner with Mr. Schepisi in Entertainment Media Pty. Ltd., would not confirm or deny speculation that Ms. Streep, America's leading actress, will play Lindy, the plum role in the film version of Australia's most celebrated courtroom saga.

But it is understood she is interested in the role and has had discussions with Mr. Schepisi, who directed Ms. Streep in *Plenty*.

### 'Rapport'

"For Fred to be involved, it would necessitate the sort of talent that would attract his skills," Mr. Le Tet said. "Acting and directing have to complement each other.

"Fred and Meryl worked together on *Plenty* and they have a good rapport and regard for each other.

"But Fred is a great supporter of Australian artists and he has always been a great supporter of the Equity ruling that Australians should get the parts here."

Mr. Le Tet said he doubted there would be a problem with Actors Equity were Ms. Streep cast to play Lindy.

He said talks on the movie, between Ms. Lambert's production company, Cinema, Verity, Australian production company, Roadshow Coote and Carroll and Entertainment Media, were at an advanced stage and those involved would like to see filming begin early next year.

While some sets would be built, most of the filming would be done on location, including at Ayers Rock and around Darwin.

"Fred had a lot of regard for the book *Evil Angels*, and got very involved in the whole Chamberlain court case." Mr. Le Tet said. "He is passionate about the project."

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Reprinted from The Daily Telegraph, Friday, April 10, 1987, Sydney, Australia.

Crown's case by the Commissioner. The declaration of the Northern Territory attorney general that a pardon did not mean exoneration emphasized the inadequacy of this ruling in the light of the unequivocal clearing of the Chamberlains in the Morling report. The editor of *The Australian*, the country's only national daily newspaper and one that has not been sympathetic to the Cham-

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**By clearing Lindy of the crime, the Commissioner's report will no doubt enhance the Chamberlains' image with other elements of the public.**

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berlains, declared that the Northern "Territory must act." The editorial noted that the Commissioner's finding went "well beyond an acknowledgment that a verdict of not guilty was open to the jury. The royal commissioner insists that a verdict of not guilty, and only a verdict of not guilty, could have properly been brought down on the evidence of which he is now aware." Political and media pressure have forced the Northern Territory government in cooperation with the Opposition, to look at new legislation in an effort to quash the convictions. It is widely expected (as of June 8, 1987) that the convictions will be quashed.

This does not mean that the Chamberlains have come in for immediate public sympathy. For example, of 38,000 who phoned in to a recent Sydney TV poll, 75 percent voted against the payment of compensation to the Chamberlains. A random street poll conducted by *The Newcastle Herald* had similar results. There is wide public condemnation of the Chamberlains for negotiating a contract rumored to be worth \$132,000 to give exclusive interviews to representatives of the media giant John Fairfax. A large section of the public seems not to be impressed by the Chamberlains' enormous legal debt (estimated at well over \$700,000). The Chamberlains feel obliged to pay back monies advanced by the church to cover their legal costs.

Inspector Graeme Charlwood, the detective in

charge of the police investigation into Azaria's disappearance, publicly announced on June 3 that he had no sympathy for the Chamberlains. Paul Everingham, the chief minister and attorney general of the Northern Territory at the time of the Chamberlains' inquests and trial, has appeared on the media opposing compensation payments to the Chamberlains. Through a perverse logic, he blames them for the \$7 million that their convictions cost Northern Territory taxpayers.

The causes of the widespread public hostility toward the Chamberlains are complex. Sir Alan Walker, the director of World Evangelism, thinks that "the Chamberlains have been victims of religious prejudice and discrimination in Australia... because they were members of a small and little understood Christian church." Alan Peafe, an expert in communication, attributes the antipathy of the public toward Lindy to her "body language," specifically her stony-faced reaction to the TV cameras. Stuart Tipple, the Chamberlains' lawyer, blames their "crucifixion" by the press for the couple's social ostracism. Author John Bryson, who wrote the definitive study of the case up until the end of the trial, *Evil Angels* (see book reviews in this issue), believes that the incredible circumstances surrounding Azaria's disappearance aroused primitive superstitions against Lindy. Certainly the horror of the crime that she allegedly committed was the basic reason for the frequent emotional antagonism toward her, especially from women.

Many Australians have always thought that the Chamberlains were innocent. By clearing Lindy of the crime, the Commissioner's report will no doubt enhance the Chamberlains' image with other elements of the public. Already the media has generally turned around, and more and more journalists are accepting that the Commissioner's conclusions are unqualifiedly in favor of the Chamberlains. Prime Minister Robert Hawke has added the prestige of his office to the debate. The week the Commissioner's report was announced the Prime Minister said that it was imperative that the Chamberlains receive considerable financial consideration for their seven years of suffering. The opposition leader in the Northern Territory, Bob Collins, who for a short period

in his youth was an Adventist, has also spoken out on behalf of the Chamberlains, as has Senator Colin Mason, author John Bryson, and various national media personalities.

The Commissioner found no fault in the judicial process, nor with the defense counsel. However, he noted that the defense could have investigated some aspects of the case with more vigor, at least in hindsight. The police investigation, he concluded, in no way prejudiced the jury verdict. The Commissioner lays the blame for the wrongful conviction of the Chamberlains squarely on the forensic scientists.

Professor James Cameron, world-renowned pathologist with the London Hospital Medical College, comes in for very severe criticism. Cameron testified at the trial that there were blood-stained impressions of handprints on Azaria's bloodied jumpsuit and that the blood-stained patterns indicated that the child's throat had been severed to the point of decapitation. The Commissioner found that "Professor Cameron's evidence that there was an imprint of a hand in blood on the back of the jumpsuit has been weakened, if not totally destroyed, by new evidence that a great deal of what he thought was blood. . . was in fact red sand." On the basis of new evidence the Commissioner stated that Cameron's opinion "that the pattern of blood staining on the jumpsuit was consistent only with a cut throat [with a blade] cannot be safely adopted."

At the trial in 1982 the evidence of forensic biologist Jay Kuhl was especially damaging to the Chamberlains. She claimed that she found blood with a significant ratio of fetal hemoglobin and, therefore, from a very young baby, in samples taken from the Chamberlains' car and possessions. Kuhl obtained positive reactions to fetal hemoglobin with swabs taken from the following items: a plate under the car's dashboard, the passenger seat, under the floorwell of the car, on a pair of scissors, a ten-cent coin, a yellow towel, a chamois, and a camera bag zip.

During the course of the Royal Commission, a large number of independent expert witnesses vigorously contested Kuhl's findings. Justice Morling did not accept that she had found baby's blood on any of the above items. The stain of the

floorwell was probably from a caramel milkshake, and the spray under the dash was a bitumen compound. Morling concluded that "the new scientific evidence casts serious doubt on the reliability of all the findings of blood in the car . . . The finding most damaging to Mrs. Chamberlain was that of the alleged blood spray, such as might have come from a severed artery, on the metal plate under the dash. There is compelling evidence [established by Adventist scientist Les Smith] that the spray was made up of a sound deadening compound and contained no blood at all."

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a Federal Court appeal,  
a High Court appeal, and a  
Royal Commission, the  
evidence of dingo tracks  
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The belief that the Chamberlains had cut Azaria's jumpsuit with scissors in an attempt to simulate dingo damage relied heavily on the evidence of Professor Malcom Chaikin of the Department of Textile Technology in the University of New South Wales. Journalist Malcom Brown describes this witness as an armchair expert since his evidence was based on minimal experimentation which he had not even personally conducted. Careful experiments, which examined the types of damage that canids produce in nylon/cotton stretch fabric, were conducted by two Adventist scientists, Les Smith and Ken Chapman. Their work was the basis for the criticism of Chaikin's position on scissor cuts by other experts (including Professor Randall Bresee of Kansas State University).

The experiments demonstrated that the damage to Azaria's jumpsuit was consistent with severances caused by a dingo. Chaikin had claimed that only scissors or some such instrument could produce the sheared loop (called

"tufts") that he found along the edges of the cuts in the jumpsuit. Smith and Chapman's experiments proved that a dingo's teeth could cut jumpsuit fabric and produce tufts. Chaikin was constrained, after some hesitation, to admit to the Commissioner that the presence of tufts did not demonstrate that the jumpsuit had been cut with scissors. Parallel characteristics between Smith and Chapman's experimental samples and the actual jumpsuit supported the dingo account and cast grave doubt on the scissor hypothesis. The Commissioner saw no necessity for human

intervention to explain any aspect of the case.

After two inquests, a trial, a Federal Court appeal, a High Court appeal, and a Royal Commission, the evidence of dingo tracks around the Chamberlains' tent still indicates what probably happened. The Commissioner accepted that "the evidence affords considerable support for the view that a dingo may have taken (Azaria)." Thus, after millions of dollars in expense to the Northern Territory and incalculable pain and hurt to the Chamberlain family, we are back where the tragedy began—with a dingo.



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# The Harris Pine Bankruptcy: Too Much, Too Soon?

by Terrie Dopp Aamodt, Curt Dewees,  
Jay Jennings, and Dan Kaempff

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The General Conference shut down Harris Pine Mills, Inc., Friday, December 5, 1986, the same day Chapter 7 bankruptcy papers were filed in the federal district court in Portland, Oregon. That morning 300 employees at the home plant in Pendleton, Oregon—the city's largest employer—were stunned to receive their final paychecks. Branch plants, at SDA academies and colleges across the country, closed their doors as well.

Gone was the 74-year-old company that had once been the biggest manufacturer of unfinished furniture in America. Since its donation to the church in 1951, it had poured more than \$50 million into Adventist educational institutions and helped more than 15,000 students finance their education. Just two months before closing it had received Oregon Governor Victor Atiyeh's Award for Corporate Excellence in the Eastern Oregon region.

Now, it appears, according to the findings of the court-appointed trustee, the General Conference did not need to shut down Harris Pine Mills. The church did not need to throw hundreds of students and full-time employees out of work. The church counters, on the basis of an Ernst and Whinney audit released in summary in April 1987, that it had done "the prudent thing" by filing for Chapter 7.

John Mitchell, a Portland businessman ap-

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Terrie Dopp Aamodt, who received her Ph. D. in American Studies from Boston University, is a member of the English faculty at Walla Walla College. Curt Dewees, Jay Jennings, and Dan Kaempff are communications graduates of Walla Walla College.

pointed as the trustee, said that "It's obvious that their accounting records aren't very good. The information that (church officials) relied upon was not wholly accurate, and now we've found there were significant assets they didn't consider. It's very unusual to get a company in bankruptcy that has more assets than liabilities."

For example, the trustee considers the value of Harris Pine Mills' sawmill and timber land holdings to be worth 30 times more than the value the denomination placed on them in documents it submitted to the bankruptcy court. The church told the court the sawmill was worth \$200,000 (its original book value). The trustee sold it for \$3,450,000. The company's 11,000 acres of uncut timber in northeast Oregon were listed in the bankruptcy documents at their original purchase price of \$476,363. The trustee expects to sell those timber lands for \$15 million. Mitchell's revised balance sheet lists the company's assets at \$58 million and liabilities at \$46 million.

Harris Pine Mills' largest creditor, U.S. National Bank in Portland, was surprised by the bankruptcy filing. It had received no prior notice. Their spokesman, Dan Bowler, said the bank "was not worried. There weren't any problems. We made no demands on the company prior to their filing." Indeed, when the trustee contacted the bank it opened an additional \$9.1 million line of credit, on top of the \$24 million Harris Pine already owed.

Within a week of assessing the company, Mitchell, the trustee, persuaded the court to change the bankruptcy from Chapter 7, requiring immed-

iate sale of assets, even at firesale levels, to Chapter 11, a more flexible category that enables a company to reorganize under court protection from creditors.

"I made the decision," Mitchell commented, "because I think Harris is an operable company. They've lost money lately, but I don't think they've gone down the tubes by any means. I think we certainly need to make the operation more efficient and we need to take a good look at some of the things we're doing. But Chapter 7 is history. The company has value."

The denomination, while placing itself last in the creditors to be paid, opposed the shift to the less drastic Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceeding. The court then set aside the church as an involved partner, leaving the trustee in complete control of

Harris Pine. The board of Harris Pine has become a nonentity as far as management of the company is concerned.

By early January 1987, the court trustee had reopened 20 plants the church had closed, most on Adventist academy campuses. The plants were slowly turning the company's huge inventory of lumber and furniture parts into cash to pay creditors.<sup>1</sup> In addition, they had even begun some milling again—keeping the most profitable lines of furniture in stock after the existing inventory had been sold.<sup>2</sup>

Legally, once the trustee pays back all creditors, if there is any viable company remaining, the Adventist church could regain ownership. However, Harold Otis, the president of the Review and Herald Publishing Association, and now

## Mrs. Harris Shares Her Feelings

by Mary V. Harris

*Editor's Note: In the following article, Mary V. Harris, wife of the founder of Harris Pine Mills, gives some of the background of the plant's beginnings and her current feelings. It is reprinted from the North Pacific Union Gleaner.*

In about 1950 my late husband, Clyde Harris, and I began to seriously think of what the Lord expected of us as His stewards. He [Clyde] had started a small box factory in Milton, Oregon, in 1912. We were married in 1914, and the box factory grew rapidly.

In 1939 we started a move to Pendleton, Oregon, to be nearer timber supplies and a railroad. Soon we started to build ready-to-paint furniture. This came about because we had built a cottage on Blalock Mountain and I had some furniture built out of knotty pine lumber. It was so attractive I told Clyde we should manufacture this kind of furniture. He asked me if I thought it would sell and I said, "I'm sure it will."

We contacted Reg Device of Lincoln, Nebraska, a specialist in this kind of furniture; he came to Pendleton and set us up, and we started in the ready-to-paint furniture business. It grew rapidly and surely the Lord was leading us because we found ourselves by 1950 in Pendleton operating the largest ready-to-paint furniture factory in the nation, a box factory making seven million fruit boxes a year, and a sawmill that cut nearly 50 million board feet of lumber annually.

Then we contemplated the thousands of acres of timberlands into which we invested every available dollar, with

much sacrifice, during three decades, to insure the future of the company. These were hard but rewarding years. We were coming to the age of retirement and the doctors warned my husband that he must slow down. Thus we asked the Lord anew for guidance for the future. A will was considered, but the questions still continued to hold our attention. We prayed much, and discussed it often, and at length.

One day Clyde mentioned the fact that he had become acquainted with a young man who was the secretary-treasurer of the North Pacific Union Conference, and he felt impressed to talk to him. He was Charles Nagele, then 37 years old. After a Union Committee meeting, as a member, Clyde asked the Committee if they would agree to release Charlie for a month to come to Pendleton for counsel and tax help. He needed neither but it would give us a chance to get better acquainted with him. We did get well acquainted and Clyde and Charlie spent days together in the factories, woods and farms. I spent hours with him, sometimes just sitting on the grass in our backyard, talking, while I pretended to tend my flowers.

The Lord answered our prayers and gave us a clear answer. We would give the business, valued at more than \$10 million then, while we were living, to the General Conference—our life's work and most of our possessions. We would keep only a couple of the ranches to keep Clyde busy.

W. H. Branson, then the General Conference president, and other church leaders were called for a meeting in our home in Pendleton. The final decision was made, a very difficult one for both of us, but we felt that we were being led by God. The transfer was to be made with only one provision, and that was that Charlie be released from his duties at the Union Conference, and move to Pendleton to take over the management of the business. Clyde agreed to stay on for whatever time necessary to teach him the ropes.

We hired students from Walla Walla College at the

titular chairman of Harris Pine Mills, Inc., does not sound interested. Even after the bankruptcy was shifted to Chapter 11 proceedings, Otis stated in a General Conference press release that "Harris Pine, as you know it. . . is gone."

## *How Did We Get Where We Are?*

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Clyde Harris built up his company for more than 40 years before he and his wife, Mary, decided to give Harris Pine to the church in 1951. The Harrises donated their business to the church in the hopes that it would provide employment for Seventh-day Adventist students working their way through school.

Pendleton plant, and helping educate students and aid educational institutions was near to our hearts. We told the General Conference leaders of our burden and hopes that the Pine Mills could do more of this in the future. They agreed and instructed the new manager that any future growth must be in connection with educational institutions, using student labor in the furniture division.

The company continued to grow and to prosper. Furniture assembly plants sprang up all across the United States, and furniture was marketed from coast to coast.

Clyde passed away in 1968 and until his death was pleased with the onward progress of the company he loved so much. Many thousands of students were helped with their education, and the schools received much help. As reported in the *Adventist Review* of Jan. 1, "In the years since 1951 the company has channeled more than \$50 million into our educational institutions," and millions more into church-related endeavors here and overseas.

Clyde had chosen his successor well, but the years caught up with Charlie too. After nearly 30 years without an operating loss, and tremendous growth, he retired in 1980, at age 66. The company continued on under Charlie Fry and did not have its first loss until 1985, the first operating loss in 58 years.

Then, with cruel and sickening suddenness, without warning, on Friday, Dec. 5, like a bolt of lightning, came the word that our beloved Harris Pine Mills was gone. Charlie was on the East Coast and flew home to tell me what he couldn't believe himself. We were numb with disbelief and sat and cried together. I had been kept up-to-date in recent months and knew that something was terribly wrong. It is not believable that the Board did not know. They did know, but did not give management the direction they so much needed.

The most severe step possible was taken, the filing of Chapter 7. The question has to be asked, "How could so few

Through the years its managers risked the high overhead of manufacturing in many small branch plants around the country in order to aid numerous academies and colleges. These operating costs required a large volume of sales, which came easily when Americans were inclined to buy wooden outdoor furniture. Every year Harris Pine, Inc. made a profit for the church, as well as providing wages to hundreds of students the company employed at Adventist schools.

There is a lot of discussion and controversy about why Harris Pine failed, but some reasons are frequently mentioned: a general weakness in the economy, management problems, and indebtedness. Low productivity was also a problem. The company, traditionally subjected to the vagaries of a volatile timber industry, also faced seasonal

be permitted to affect the lives of so many?"

The U.S. District Court Judge, at the request of the trustee, changed the Chapter 7 to a Chapter 11. The trustee under the Court now replaces the management and has taken over. Charlie Nagele has been retained as a consultant to the trustee under the Court to help with an orderly sale of the assets and the payment of creditors.

Happily, the last official figures filed with the court which are now public record show assets of \$43,800,000, and in addition, timber of approximately \$15,000,000 for assets of \$58,800,000, and debts of \$46,537,000, which

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**To the many who will suffer hurt,  
so badly—workers, students, schools,  
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that God will sustain each one.**

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includes \$10,000,000 owed to the General Conference Corporation. This augurs well that every outside creditor, at the least, owed money, will come out well. Let us pray it can be so.

The timber referred to above, in the assets, is still the timber so faithfully held by the company, that Clyde and I sacrificed for so many years to buy. Clyde continued to say, until his death, "If you keep that timber, there will always be a Harris Pine Mills," but now it is lost.

I agree with one who has written about this tragic happening, "It did not need to happen." To the many who will suffer hurt, so badly—workers, students, schools, faculties and parents—I cry out to the Lord in my grief and heartache, that God will sustain each one and cover our schools with His everlasting wings.

fluctuations in furniture orders, meaning that it tended to make money in the spring and lose money in the fall.

Another factor was the changing American taste in outdoor furniture, from wooden to lightweight fiberglass patio sets. Also, the American market for bedroom furniture, a large part of Harris' product line, had softened over the past two to three years. Montgomery Ward, long the company's major customer, drastically curtailed its orders in response to shifting tastes, causing a 20 percent drop in sales volume.

The company apparently made a major miscalculation in responding to a changing market with

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**Two members of the survival team reported that the company was losing up to \$50,000 a day. These losses had apparently outdistanced the company's assets.**

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a proliferation of furniture lines. By 1985 the company offered more than 400 different furniture items. This vast array required large inventories in the plant's many assembly and distribution locations. Overhead expenses ballooned, and for the first time in its history, the company lost money.

The church took steps to find remedies. Neal Wilson, just reelected president of the General Conference, assumed the chairmanship of the Harris Pine board in 1985. The board obtained the services of the Alexander Proudfoot Company, an organization specializing in the installation of efficient working methods. The Proudfoot Company promised to install production changes that would save up to \$5 million annually. The company also cut manufacturing products to 170 items and pushed sales extremely hard in the spring and summer, hoping to generate the high volume of orders necessary for survival. But, in what became a fateful move, the company further built up its huge inventory in the summer and early fall of 1986 to meet an anticipated demand.

Harris Pine, having taken these steps, asked the

General Conference to provide a \$10 million capital grant (referred to as a loan by the General Conference) that would enable the company to test its remedies and, if they failed, to achieve an orderly method of voluntary liquidation.

But by now serious questions had arisen. By April 1986 church officials became increasingly uneasy about being involved in a large and volatile business enterprise. To some, capital funding did not seem to be a prudent way to spend money given to the church to accomplish its mission. Some also objected to bringing expensive outside specialists, such as the Proudfoot Company, into the workings of church-owned institutions. As discussions became more prolonged Harris' problems grew more acute.

Neal Wilson called a September 1986 meeting of corporate officers and some members of the Harris Pine board to appoint a "survival team" of Seventh-day Adventist businessmen and General Conference financial personnel.<sup>3</sup> By the time the meeting ended, Eldon Spady, then company president, thought "we had a direction. We hoped to keep going—there was no question about that."

Two members of the survival team examined Harris Pine firsthand. During the fall of 1986, Tom Winkels spent a few days in Pendleton. Later, team chairman Harold Otis spent one-and-a-half days there. Winkels returned for several more days. Both men became alarmed. They reported that the company was losing up to \$50,000 a day. These losses had apparently outdistanced the company's assets.

The company went through numerous belt-tightening measures. Maintenance and new purchases had virtually stopped for several months. At the board's year-end meeting in October, members decided to shrink the company back to a size that could be run profitably. They planned to close several branch plants.

During the last week of November 1986 the Harris Pine board, which had always met in the northwest, was summoned to meet within days, in Washington, D.C. When they arrived for the December 3 meeting in one of the General Conference committee rooms, they discovered that the board of trustees of the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists, some

members of the survival team, and others were also meeting with them—a total of some 40-50 people. The board was surprised to learn that they had two alternatives: voluntary dissolution of Harris Pine or bankruptcy. Sale of the company was not seriously entertained. The discussion continued for most of the day.

Finally, the Harris Pine board, comprised mainly of church officials in either the General Conference or unions in North America, voted narrowly in favor of filing immediately for bankruptcy under Chapter 7 of the federal bankruptcy code. The vote was seven in favor of bankruptcy, five opposed, and one abstention. Then the board of the General Conference Corporation ratified by a 10 to 3 vote the action of the board of Harris Pine to file for bankruptcy and accepted the resignation of the board. Those who had not submitted written letters of resignation were requested to do so. The new three-man board of Harris Pine was appointed. Harold Otis, president of the Review and Herald Publishing Association and chairman of the survival team that recommended filing for bankruptcy, was made chairman. The other two members appointed were Donald F. Gilbert, treasurer of the General Conference, and Karl H. Bahr, one of Gilbert's associate General conference treasurers.

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**Within two days of filing bankruptcy papers plants at Adventist schools had been shut down, and 20 days before Christmas employees (some of whom had worked for Harris Pine most of their lives) had received their last paychecks.**

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Within two days the bankruptcy papers had been filed, plants at Adventist schools across North America had been shut down, and 20 days before Christmas employees (some of whom had worked most of their lives for Harris Pine) had received their last paychecks. Dan Bowler, the spokesman for the U.S. National Bank in Portland, Harris Pine's largest creditor, says "it is not

uncommon to get word ahead of time (about a plan to file bankruptcy). When a company is about to file, it is a high likelihood that you would know about it because of the poor financial condition of the company. In this particular instance this was not the case."

## *The Human Factor: Pendleton*

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When termination checks were issued to employees of the largest Harris plant in Pendleton on Friday, December 5, confusion broke out. Area banks refused to honor the now-defunct company's payroll checks. The checks had been issued from Harris Pine's bank account, rather than in the form of cash-backed cashiers' checks. "You couldn't cash a Harris Pine check within 100 miles of here," said Harold Budd, manager of the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce.

Other companies faced a crisis since Harris Pine was Pendleton's largest employer; for every one of its 300 jobs about three service jobs were created. Harris Pine Mills was the economic backbone of a city of 15,000.

The city government of Pendleton took prompt action. Joe McLaughlin, the mayor, remembers "I immediately went to the news media and asked for a public hearing. We invited everyone with an interest in Harris Pine to attend."<sup>4</sup> He acted to ensure payment of employees. Communication between the city and the Oregon state government led to the governor's office assisting employees in filing wage claims and woodworkers' liens against the company. Eventually all employees of Harris Pine were paid whatever was owed them. In a letter to Mayor McLaughlin, Duane McKay, pastor of the Pendleton Seventh-day Adventist Church, expressed church members' appreciation for all that he had done "in relieving the understandable anxiety, particularly at this time of year."

Pendleton's support of Harris Pine during this time of financial crisis was due, in part, to the excellent relationship between Seventh-day Ad-

ventists and the city of Pendleton. "They were the model citizens of Pendleton," according to Budd. "We never suspected that they might have the financial trouble that would cause them to claim bankruptcy."

Budd said that Harris Pine was very involved in the community. Its employees participated in many civil improvement projects but maintained a low profile: "They never tried to blow their horn. They did a lot for the Pendleton area but they never demanded a lot in return."

### *Economic Impact on Seventh-day Adventist Schools*

Adventist academies suffered some of the most devastating effects of the Harris Pine Mills bankruptcy. Students were suddenly without essential income midway through a school year. According to Dr. F. E. J. Harder, retired secretary of the General Conference Board of Higher Education, the \$50 million Harris Pine paid to students over the years amounted to a major funding source for Adventist academies: "It was an educational endowment."

The branch plants on school campuses filled two functions: some were milling plants that actually cut pieces for furniture, and others were assembly plants that put together parts manufactured elsewhere. Since the trustees' policies were designed primarily to complete existing inventory, the assembly plants were initially the least affected because of the actions of the court trustee. Although most of the plants were again in operation just days after the closure, the most active ones were the assembly plants. A case study of two schools, Upper Columbia Academy in Spangle, Washington, and Auburn Academy in Auburn, Washington, illustrates the relative status of the two types of plants.

A tour of the Harris Pine Mills plant in Spangle, Washington, home of Upper Columbia Academy, in early 1987 would have indicated that nothing was out of the ordinary. Numerous stacks of prefabricated furniture parts lined the plant walls, awaiting assembly and staining. Workers, both student and full-time employees, were busily

building dressers, dining-room sets, and other pieces of furniture.

The work was plentiful, but temporary. When the last chair is glued together and the last chest of drawers stained and readied for shipping sometime in late summer 1987, the plant will close and wait for a new owner to buy the company and decide its fate.

When the Upper Columbia plant grinds to a halt, the school will lose \$80,000 to \$90,000 in student labor per year, according to Principal Winn. Winn said two aspects of the plant's closure require consideration. One is the immediate loss of cash flow. The second deals with the additions that must be made to the campus labor force. "When you lose that income (whatever is the difference between what the parent would have paid and what the student is earning) you have to add it to the campus budget," said Winn. He figures that in the 1987—1988 school year Upper Columbia Academy will have to add \$30,000 to \$36,000 to the labor budget.

Students earn about \$100 more per month at a Harris Pine job as compared to campus employ-

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**For some students the loss of Harris Pine employment means the loss of as much as \$800 per year. That could sway some not to come back.**

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ment, said Winn. Allowing for vacation time, he estimated it meant about an \$800 difference to a family over the course of a school year and added, "That could sway some not to come."

Because of a fund set up by the North Pacific Union Conference, no Upper Columbia Academy students have lost wages they were counting on for the 1986—1987 school year. The plant was closed for two weeks and the students were compensated. No students have been laid off, although a few did quit during the plant's down time. Trustee John Mitchell worked to ensure that some employment would be available at most academy plants through the 1986—1987 school year.

Principal Winn discovered Harris Pine faced possible closure in mid-November 1986, before the people in the Pendleton office heard about it. During a speech in mid-November to a convention of academy principals in Washington, D.C., Neal Wilson, General Conference president, stated that Harris Pine faced a critical situation and bankruptcy [Chapter 11] was a possibility. But Wilson said he still felt optimistic about recovery and asked the principals, in Winn's words, to "not noise it around," and to "make it a matter of prayer."

Just three weeks later, all Harris Pine plants received word to send the employees home and lock up the buildings. Even though he had prior knowledge something was afoot, Winn still was taken off guard.

"I'm surprised more of an effort wasn't being taken before bankruptcy, such as closing the plants that weren't profitable or cutting back on personnel or some drastic move you could really expect to see," stated Winn.

Winn isn't about to let his plant die. He and the local management are going to look into running the plant themselves if they have to. "We feel we could continue if we found a broker to service our accounts and a company to make our parts," says Winn. "Many other companies are having parts made in Japan, why not us? We're not going to go belly up and not try something."

If the Upper Columbia plant represents one form of coping, then the Auburn Academy plant in Auburn, Washington, represents the other end of the scale. Because it is a milling plant, not an assembly plant, it is virtually shut down. The parking lot is as devoid of cars as the plant is of employees, save for a secretary and the plant manager. Outside the plant, piles of sawdust and signs cautioning to watch for trucks remind the visitor this used to be a thriving business.

Currently this is a major problem for Wayne Wentland, principal of Auburn Adventist Academy. Besides the loss of employment for 60 of his students, Wentland is facing a property tax of \$2,000 to \$4,000 for the Harris Pine plant. He's not sure where the money is going to come from.

The labor force had been tapering off at Harris Pine prior to the closure, but that fact still did not

completely prepare Wentland for what happened: "From July to December 1985, we took in \$123,000 in student labor. July to December 1986, it was \$75,000. From December until [March] there has been nothing." Wentland has these figures ingrained in his memory from reciting them to the press so often. "That means [a loss of] from \$15,000 to \$20,000 a month in cash flow."

The closure ignited a massive job search to put unemployed students back to work. "We have literally beaten the pavement [to find jobs for the students] and I believe right now [March 1987] we have 45 out of those 60 working in Wendy's,

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**"We're a little more strung out not knowing who will buy out Harris Pine. What kind of standards are we going to have to deal with, such as smoking, drinking, swearing, problems with Sabbath observance? How are we going to handle this?"**

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McDonald's, Jack-in-the-Box, Dairy Queen, you name it," says Wentland. "We also have a couple of students working in a shoe shop or the YMCA. And a telemarketing company has just been relocated on our campus. It employs eight students."

Flipping Big Macs doesn't pay as much as running a planer did. To compensate for this the North Pacific Union Conference has promised to help out with some additional labor aid, to bring students' wages back up to their old Harris Pine level. As of early March this aid had not yet been received, and it doesn't appear it will apply to every student when it does arrive. Wentland says it will affect only students who have been severely hurt financially by the closure. But for all the school's efforts, an estimated four to six students left Auburn during the school year feeling unable to pay their tuition without their Harris Pine job.

Wentland seems optimistic that a new buyer may reopen the Auburn plant. But he has a few misgivings. "Harris Pine was a real blessing. We didn't have to transport students, they had the

same philosophies we do, they worked around our schedule," he recalls. "Now we're a little more strung out not knowing who will buy out Harris Pine. What kind of standards are we going to have to deal with, such as smoking, drinking, swearing, problems with Sabbath observance? How are we going to handle this?"

Wentland recalls the same meeting Winn does, where Wilson first alerted the principals to the fact that Harris Pine was hurting. But he remembers Wilson's words indicating that Harris was a Chapter 11 bankruptcy "on paper." "Twenty days later, it went straight down to Chapter 7," Wentland says.

### *What Will the Future Bring?*

A Portland attorney working for the creditors' committee, John Crawford, has said that he is confident that all of Harris Pine's creditors will get their money. Crawford noted that this is unusual in most bankruptcy cases, including those in which the business files under a Chapter 11 reorganization.

The closure of Harris Pine Mills will reduce income to students and therefore to academies. That will likely reduce enrollments at already

financially beleaguered Adventist academies and colleges.

However, the trustee has hopes that a company in some form may rise up from the ashes and make a successful comeback. While the sawmill has been sold and bids are being entertained for selling the timberlands, the manufacturing division is operating and many of Harris Pine's major customers have continued to buy Harris' furniture. In February, John Mitchell, the court-appointed trustee, said that "we are selling now at the same level as last year." He added that we "should be able to restructure and be profitable by the end of June, unless problems arise that are not evident today."

If the court-appointed trustee is successful in reorganizing Harris Pine into a profitable company again, will pressure from members influence the church to reclaim Harris Pine and restore a perpetual endowment to Adventist academies in North America?

Finally, what changes will be adopted by the General Conference to avoid boards alternatively neglecting to supervise church-owned enterprises and then prematurely shutting them down? The crisis with Harris Pine is minor compared to what some fear the church may face with its Adventist Health Systems/U.S.

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### NOTES AND REFERENCES

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1. On January 13, 1987, Harris Pine said that 20 plants (out of 25 listed) were operating. Functioning plants included those at Blue Mountain Academy, Lodi Academy, Campion Academy, Upper Columbia Academy, Columbia Adventist Academy, Oakwood College, Monterey Bay Academy, and Garden State Academy. The Auburn Adventist Academy plant was listed as "functional, but not operating." Plants at Walla Walla College and Shenandoah Valley Academy were closed permanently.

2. According to an editorial in the Pendleton *East Oregonian*, court-appointed trustee John Mitchell is "sharp and has applied himself intensely to the job of learning the Harris Pine situation and what should be done to dispose of the property." At a February 20, 1987, creditors' meeting in Portland, Mitchell clearly explained the Harris Pine situation to the creditors' committee, made up of representatives from the top 20 creditors of Harris Pine Mills. Among the creditors are Mary Harris, to whom Harris Pine owes \$200,000, and former company president Eldon Spady, who is owed \$93,780 by the company.

3. Wilson's *Review* article lists the survival team members: Harold F. Otis, Jr., president of the Review and Herald Publishing Association (chairman); Garwin McNeilus, cement truck manufacturer; Alfred H. Cowley, developer and financier; Leon Slikkers, owner of a yacht company; Don Folkenberg, financial officer in Cowley's firm; Tom Winkels, secretary and treasurer of the McNeilus company; Russ Wetherell, hospital financial officer; Frank Dupper, president of Adventist Health Systems/West; Karl Bahr, associate treasurer of the General Conference; and Don Gilbert, General Conference treasurer.

4. "The first phase of the study has been completed," said Alex Byler, chairman of Roundup City Development. "The first phase was to determine if Harris Pine was a company worth saving. The answer . . . turned out to be yes, so now they're studying ways to reopen Harris," he said. Roundup City Development Corporation, a nonprofit organization whose goal is to further the development of Pendleton, committed itself to raising \$30,000 to hire a private consulting firm to study the options facing Harris Pine.



# We Lifted Up Our Voices Like a Trumpet: Millerites in Portland, Maine

by Frederick Hoyt

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On December 1, 1843, the editor of the *American*, a newspaper in Portland, Maine, noted that the Millerites were meeting in Beethoven Hall, “and probably will continue to do so until March, 1844.” He was wrong. Millerites, no longer welcome in their own churches, rented Beethoven Hall for more than two years, both before and after the Great Disappointment of 1844.

Reentering those gatherings in Beethoven Hall, through vivid contemporary accounts, helps us to recapture the atmosphere of our beginnings as an Adventist community. We sense more fully the fervor in Portland that led some Millerites, even after the Great Disappointment, to gather in nearby counties of Maine—Millerites such as a teenager from Portland named Ellen Harmon, her friend in his twenties called James White, and an older acquaintance named Israel Dammon.\*

It is not known when Mr. Gilbert erected a brick building on Congress Street whose upper floor came to be known as Beethoven Hall. The Beethoven Society of Portland was organized in 1819, “the first musical society in America to bear the name of the great composer.” Perhaps it was then that the hall was named. Although the society gave its final concert in 1826, the hall retained its name.

“The large roof gave an arched ceiling of considerable height,” one Portland resident later re-

called, “and the acoustic properties of the hall were considered excellent.”<sup>1</sup> In April 1838, the Portland Sacred Music Society presented a varied concert for 50 cents that included selections from Mozart, Handel, and others, concluding with the “Grand Hallelujah Chorus” from the “Messiah.”<sup>2</sup> A few years later the hallelujahs from Handel’s glorious chorus were replaced by the hallelujahs, glories, and amens of assembled Millerites.

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## *Fun for the Boys*

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When William Miller came to Portland a schism developed in some churches. According to one later account, “quite a number of members leaving, who subsequently held meetings in Beethoven Hall, which was in the third story of a building on the eastern side of Congress street, near the head of Center street, on the corner of which was David Robin’s confectionary and ice cream establishment.” The anonymous author added, “I frequently attended for there was a good deal of fun for the boys.”

Although city marshall Sweat became a convert, “and was a constant attendant at the meeting . . . even his presence did not deter the scoffers from getting in considerable of their wicked words.” Notably, a “ferocious wolf” introduced among the sheep:

At that time Mr. Samuel Boothby kept a hat, cap and fur store in a two story wooden building on Middle street, just below the head of Cross street, and from a second

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story window projected a long board upon which Mr. Boothby had mounted a large stuffed wolf. One Sunday evening by some mysterious method or otherwise this wolf became transferred from Mr. Boothby's store to the narrow entry leading into Beethoven Hall and stood facing the inner door. There might possibly have been other wolves, though in sheep's clothing, on the other side of the door. Then some wicked wretch on those long narrow stairs cried "fire."

There was a rush in the hall for the door, and when opened, there stood the ferocious wolf. "Heaven save us! the last hour has come," were the ejaculations of the faithful. Even the city marshall felt a cold sweat running over him, but James Stevens, in whose composition fear was unknown, seized the beast by the ears and with a number of Cross street boys who were generally ubiquitous and whose valor never quailed before a dead cat or a stuffed wolf, cleared the passage, and Mr. Boothby's sign was relegated to a vacant corner in the entry, and the services in the hall were once again resumed.

Although "the perpetrators of this wolfish performance" were never discovered, and the question of "how Mr. Boothby's wolf came to attend the Millerite meeting" was never answered, "The next day the ferocious looking animal was restored to his former elevated and legitimate position."

The author's recollections included a mysterious and unfortunately unnamed stranger who attended these meetings in Beethoven Hall:

I remember a man who had appeared at the meetings, a stranger, who carried a large bundle of manuscript under his arm. He was a very fair talker and quite gifted in prayer, but his views were not in harmony with the Millerite prescription, so he was accused of disturbing the meeting and was arrested and imprisoned for a short time. The man was partially insane, but in that respect I think he could hold his own with some of the believers who participated in the exercises. As soon as released from jail he was again present at the meetings, exhorting and praying for the forgiveness of his persecutors. He was undoubtedly a Christian gentlemen, and even with his idiosyncrasy would have been a welcome attendant at many a prayer meeting.

But the speaker at Beethoven Hall who drew the attention of

we boys most was a large Negro preacher who arrived and who frequently related a vision he had [undoubtedly a reference to William Foy; he will be discussed later in this article]. He was clothed in a white robe which made his appearance most comical; after every few sentences, he would roll up his eyes (and such eyes and such a mouth) and exclaim, "I looked, and

behold, and lo, as it were."

It was a most wonderful dream and he received a great many "amens" from the brethren. That darky's eyes and mouth would have won him a fortune in any fashionable Negro minstrel troupe.<sup>3</sup>

## *"Heaven and Earth Seemed to Approach Each Other"*

One of the regulars at these meetings in Beethoven Hall was Ellen Harmon, a young Millerite convert who was then sixteen or thereabouts, the daughter of a Portland hatter and exhorter in the Methodist church until he and his family were disfellowshipped for certain irregularities of belief and practice related to their adherence to Millerism. Her recollections of these meetings were vivid and detailed, although in some respects they differed markedly from those of nonbelievers.

"Meetings of the Adventists were held at this time [1843] in Beethoven Hall," Ellen White wrote some years later in 1876. "My father, with his family, attended them regularly, for we greatly prized the privilege of hearing the doctrine of Christ's personal and soon appearing upon earth."<sup>4</sup>

Ellen recalled that "notwithstanding the opposition of ministers and churches Beethoven Hall, in the city of Portland, was nightly crowded, and especially was there a large congregation on Sundays." "All classes flocked to the meetings at Beethoven Hall," she added.

Rich and poor, high and low, ministers and laymen were all, from various causes, anxious to hear for themselves the doctrine of the second advent. The crowd was such that fears were expressed that the floor might give way beneath its heavy load; but the builder, upon being consulted, quieted such apprehensions and established confidence in regard to the strength of the building.

Many came who, finding no room to stand, went away disappointed. . .

Not Ellen. She always made sure she had a place.

I always sat right close to the stand. I know what I sat

there fore now. It hurt me to breathe, and with the breaths all around me. I knew I could breathe easier right by the stand, so I always took my station.<sup>5</sup>

She explained the usual order of the services:

The order of the meetings was simple; usually a short and pointed discourse was given, then liberty was granted for general exhortation. There was usually the most perfect stillness possible for so large a crowd. The Lord held the spirit of opposition in check, while his servants explained the reasons of their faith.

Sometimes the instrument was feeble but the Spirit of God gave weight and power to his truth. The presence of the holy angels was felt in the assembly, and numbers were daily being added to the little band of believers.

Quite naturally she vividly recalled particularly dramatic meetings as she observed events from her customary front-row seat:

On one occasion, while Elder Stockman was preaching, Elder Brown, a Christian Baptist minister. . . was sitting in the desk listening to the sermon with intense interest. He became deeply moved, suddenly his countenance grew pale as the dead, he reeled in his chair, and Elder Stockman caught him in his arms just as he was falling to the floor, and laid him on the sofa behind the desk, where he lay powerless until the discourse was finished.

He then arose, his face still pale, but shining with light from the Son of righteousness, and gave a very impressive testimony. He seemed to receive holy unction from above. He was usually slow of speech, with a solemn manner, entirely free from excitement. But on this occasion, his solemn, measured words carried with them a new power. . .

. . . After he finished speaking, those who desired the prayers of the people of God were invited to rise. Hundreds responded to the call. . .<sup>6</sup>

A later, sometimes disjointed narrative, contains other fascinating details concerning this particular meeting in Beethoven Hall.

We used to have some very powerful meetings. But it is not all out there, and I don't know as there is any need of putting it out.

Eld. Stockman was preaching, and he was dying with the consumption. He talked as though inspired by the Holy Spirit, feeble as he was. I always sat on the front seat next to the stand, and as I heard a noise like a groan, I saw that Eld. Brown was as white as human flesh could be, and he was falling out of his chair. I suppose my interested look to him called the attention of Stockman and he looked around, and he was ready to fall on the floor. He turned around, and said, "Excuse me," and took him in his arms, and laid him down on the lounge. He [apparently Brown] was one that did not believe in

these things [apparently holy prostration by the Spirit], and he had a taste of it right there. The power of the truth came upon him so. . . . We had a great deal of this [apparently holy prostration], but we never can tell it.<sup>7</sup>

Another recollection was also striking and particularly appropriate for a seaport such as Portland:

The sea-captain who had been recently converted, sprang to his feet with tears raining down his cheeks. He was unable to express his feelings in words, and stood for a moment the picture of mute thanksgiving; then he involuntarily raised his hat, and swung it above his head with the free movement of an old sailor, and in the abandonment of his joy, shouted, "Hurrah for God! I've enlisted in his crew, he is my captain! Hurrah for Jesus Christ!" He sat down overpowered by the intensity of his emotions, his face glowing with the radiance of love and peace.

His singular testimony, so characteristic of the bluff mariner, was not received with laughter, for the Spirit of God that animated the speaker lent his extraordinary words a strange solemnity that was felt through all that dense crowd.

Others gave their testimonies, including a Brother Abbot whose voice "rung through the hall in notes of warning to the world. . . in sacred

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**Obviously the meetings remained extremely vivid in Ellen White's memory more than 40 years after the event she was recollecting.**

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silence that vast crowd listened to his stirring words." Ellen Harmon felt that "The Holy Spirit rested upon the assembly. Heaven and earth seemed to approach each other."

"The meeting lasted until a late hour of the night," she recalled. "The power of the Lord was felt upon young, old, and middle aged. Some Methodists and Baptists who were present seemed to fully unite with the spirit of the meeting." "No one who attended these meetings," she was convinced, "can ever forget those scenes of deepest interest."<sup>8</sup>

Obviously the meetings remained extremely vivid in her memory more than 40 years after the event she was recollecting. "I remember in the

Beethoven Hall in Portland, Maine, those who were looking for Christ's coming met there to preach the second advent," Ellen White wrote on September 18, 1885, from Basel, Switzerland, in a letter to Elder George I. Butler, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. She recalled that on one occasion the hall was crowded, and that "No less than eight ministers were present, who were in opposition to the message given." Then when a certain Brother Edmunds rose to speak, the young Ellen Harmon was so impressed that more than 40 years later she could still remember his exact words, although his intent is unclear:

We have a message from the Lord to the people, but when we proclaim it, lifting up our voices like a trumpet, to show the people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins, the ministers are offended, and say "You are abusing me."

In an interview on August 13, 1906, Ellen G. White recalled hearing William Foy preach in

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**A pale, cadaverous, wild looking man then stood up in the desk and delivered the most terrefic exhortation that we ever listened to.**

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Beethoven Hall. In response to the question, "Then you attended the lectures that Mr. Foy gave?" she replied: "He came to give it right to the hall, in the great hall where we attended, Beethoven Hall." Later she went with her father in a sleigh "over to Cape Elizabeth to hear him lecture." At that time Foy's home was apparently "near the bridge" on the way to Cape Elizabeth, which is near Portland. She described Foy as "a very tall man, slightly colored. But it was remarkable testimonies that he bore."

The animated nature of Foy's public deliveries, which amused some of Portland's irreverent boys at Beethoven Hall, can be sensed from her vivid description of his conduct at a subsequent meeting when Ellen had been appointed to speak (the chronology is extremely difficult to determine in this important document):

I did not know at first that he was there. While I was talking I heard a shout, and He is a great tall man, and the roof was rather low, and he jumped right up and down, and O he praised the Lord, praised the Lord, it was just what he had seen, just what he had seen, [an obvious reference to the vision that she had just related that paralleled what Foy had been shown earlier and which he had repeatedly related at public meetings in Beethoven Hall].

She concludes sadly: "But they extolled him so I think it hurt him, and I do not know what became of him."<sup>10</sup>

### *"The Visible Presence of Sincerity Was There"*

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M. F. Whittier, the younger brother of the Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier and a resident of Portland, visited a Millerite meeting in Beethoven Hall during September 1844. The *Portland Transcript* published his detailed account of the experience.<sup>11</sup> Although his words reveal a bias against Father Miller and his disciples, the famous poet's brother possessed keen ears, sharp eyes, and a facile pen.

Whittier visited Beethoven Hall soon after the *Midnight Cry* began ("this fearful tocsin," as he described it) when, "From every hill and valley of New England the startling cry went forth—'BEHOLD THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH!!!"

Whittier climbed up the dark and dirty stairs and into crowded Beethoven Hall to observe the colorful scene:

Shortly after the seventh month alarm had been sounded, we attended a meeting of the believers at Bethoven Hall. With considerable difficulty, on account of the crowd, we ascended the two flights of dark and dirty stairs, and with still greater difficulty elbowed our way into the hall. A motley crowd of all sizes, shapes, conditions and collors filled the hall and its galleries. On a few of the numerous faces that surrounded us sat the sneer of the scoffer, but far the larger portion bore the impress of anxiety, and by their looks seemed to ask, "are these things so?" Clustered around a rude rostrum were the elect; most of them were in a kneeling posture, their hands clasped on their breasts and their eyes strained heavenward as though they already beheld a glimpse of the attendant glory of their coming Lord. A venerable gray haired man was engaged in vocal prayer when we

entered, but concluded soon after, his finishing "Amen" being repeated by the whole circle in all the various tones, from the silvery accent of the blushing maiden, and the shrill snarl of the ancient crone, to the deep gutteral of some hoarse male devotee.

Then our guide vividly describes the heart of the service, a Millerite "Exhortation," which may partly reveal why the *Midnight Cry* was so effective (and which contains a striking maritime figure of speech by Whittier):

A pale, cadaverous, wild looking man then stood up in the desk and delivered the most terrefic exhortation that we ever listened to. Unlike other lecturers, he did not wait to warm up with his subject gradually, but bounded at once into the full terror of his terrible discourse; strongly reminding us of a steamer (the ill-fated *Erie*) which we once saw leave the harbor of Ashtubula:—Having, while lying at the wharf, raised her steam to the highest endurable point, when cast off, like an arrow from the bow, she struck at one bound into her fearful speed. So it was with this speaker: His escape valves seemed to have been fastened down, and the steam suffered to generate during the whole time of the long prayer, and when it was concluded he let on the whole head.

What followed clearly would rank with the best hell-fire sermons ever preached since "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" by Jonathan Edwards. The text chosen by this "pale, cadaverous, wild looking man" was Malachi 4:1:

*"For behold the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."*

Shouting this truly awful text at the very top of a most sonorous voice, this wild herald of the "Advent near" proceeded to draw a most horrible picture of the consummation of time.

"In a few days," said he, "and suddenly as the lightning leapeth from the clouds, the Judge of all the earth will burst upon our vision. To you, my brothers and sisters, who are of the light, this will be the fruition of all your hopes.—You will be clothed with white robes—you will have crowns and harps of gold—you will be caught up and be forever with your Lord. But you, God-abandoned, Hell-deserving sinners, who now hold yourselves up stoutly against the Lord, where, Oh where! will you appear when the great white throne is set in the heavens and the books are opened? O! you may scoff and mock at God's people, but your time is short. God will avenge his people. In a few days we shall see you flying and calling on the mountains and rocks to fall on and hide you from the terrible presence of the Lamb. A few more rolling suns and we shall see you burning in

unquenchable fire! And your pain will be enhanced by seeing us, who believe, sitting with the saints in glory.—And you must not think we will aid you;—Oh no! we shall be witnesses against you. The day of grace is past—the door of mercy is even now closed forever—you cannot repent if you would—you must burn—burn forever!"

Not only was this impassioned preacher's text "truly awful," in Whittier's words, but if the words of his sermon are accurately reported, his theology was also truly hellish: since "the door of mercy [was] even now closed forever," those in the audience who had not already accepted Adventism and become "children of light" were hopelessly doomed to "burn—burn forever!" All Americans were familiar with hell-fire sermons but such routine exhortations had had a merciful purpose: to induce sinners to repent and thus avoid the eternal-burning fires of hell. This "vindictive 'Son of Thunder'" (as Whittier labeled him) declared justice and judgment without a tincture of mercy or hope. The door of God's

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**"As we looked upon the earnest countenances of the worshipers we could not for a moment doubt that they believed their doctrine true."**

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mercy was now forever shut to all who had rejected Millerism.

When "this wild herald of the 'Advent near'" had concluded (or perhaps exhausted himself) the mood softened, at least momentarily, as a young lady of about 16 (regretably not named) related her "sort of vision" (Whittier later noted that among Portland's "children of light," as they described themselves, "nothing was more common than visions"). But unfortunately she was soon exulting over her favored position and the coming horrors that awaited those who had rejected Father Miller's message:

No sooner had this vindictive "Son of Thunder" ceased, than he was succeeded by a pretty miss of "sweet sixteen," or thereabouts, who, commencing in a very low, soft voice, gradually rose to the most pericing treble, as she descanted upon a sort of vision she had had the night before, in which she had seen the awful scenes

of the judgment enacted. She was rather pretty and had a very benevolent and mild cast of countenance, which contrasted strangely with the fiendish exultation with which she described the coming agonies of her unbelieving friends and acquaintances.

As he looked about the crowded and dramatically decorated hall and allowed the sights and sounds to have their impact upon him, Whittier was "almost persuaded":

Around the hall hung pictures of strange uncouth animals, supposed to be the representation of those seen by Daniel and by St. John at Patmos. These horrible figures, the awful visions and denunciations of the speakers, did, we confess, produce an effect upon our mind—and we said to ourself, is this nothing but delusion? Is it possible that the long drama of time is about to close? As we looked upon the earnest countenances of the worshipers we could not for a moment doubt that they believed their doctrine true.

But it was the final hymn, it appears, that came close to cracking Whittier's hard shell of unbelief and skepticism:

And as we looked, the whole band commenced singing to a most dismal, dirge-like air, the "Judgment Hymn"—

"So He comes with clouds descending,  
Once for favored sinners slain;  
Twice ten thousand saints attending,  
swell the triumphs of his train."

The singers all stood with folded arms and raised eyes, and down the fair cheeks of beauty and deeply furrowed face of age, tears rolled freely. We could not—we did not doubt that, though the spirit of Truth might be absent, the visible presence of Sincerity was there!

The total impact had been profound; but after leaving Beethoven Hall a beneficent Nature, as he put it, soon worked her marvelous healing on Whittier:

We left the Hall, bearing with us, we acknowledge, something of the gloomy Terror which pervaded it. But when we reached the outside, and felt the cool bracing air, and saw the bright sunlight of a cloudless September day, we convalesced rapidly. The strong old ocean sent up its untiring waves to the rugged shores of Cape Elizabeth calmly and regularly, and its deep, solemn tones fell gratefully upon our ears, subduing and driving out the morbid fancies imbibed in the hall. To effect a perfect cure we walked round the Western Promenade, and the glorious prospect—glowing waters, variegated forest, frowning rocks, etc.—all bathed in the mellow light of an Autumnal sunset, cured us entirely. All Nature around us seemed so rejoicing and decked in such gala garb;—and the "White Hills," in the distance, lifted up their hoary heads so proudly, that we could not cherish for a moment the idea that in a few days the Creator would destroy the beautiful and sublime which

his own mind had conceived and his own hands made.

After such an overpowering transformation worked by the impressive vista of Portland's beautiful setting, Whittier was suddenly prepared to challenge the Millerites:

We felt so light and joyous and so confident in the Goodness of Providence, that we wished Father Miller and all his disciples had been there—that surrounded by such powerful aids, we might argue the matter with them. We felt sort of Apostolic, and had strong faith that if they would only "come on," single-handed, we could convert them from the error of their ways.

It is obvious that Whittier was moved by the threats of forever "burning in unquenchable fire" unless he joined the "children of light." Yet he, and everyone else in Beethoven Hall that autumnal day in 1844, escaped from those fires.

## "I Know In Whom I Have Believed"

A month later, on October 15, 1844, the editor of the *Eastern Argus* newspaper in Portland reported that,

"Sunday last [October 13, the "new day... for the end of the world"]... Beethoven Hall... was pretty full to hear and see what was going on. But the sun rose and set as usual—and the end was not yet. We learn that the 22nd, inst. is now fixed upon."

On the climactic October 22, 1844, the rival American newspaper announced that "we are informed that meetings will be held through the day at Beethoven Hall, where the believers will wait for the ascension." He labeled it "an amiable kind of delusion, although we fear its effects upon weak heads will prove disastrous." A warning was added: "Curiosity will induce many to visit the hall to-day, but we hope that the strictest silence and respect will be manifested by all."

A few days after the Great Disappointment, the *Eastern Argus* assured residents of Portland that "we understand our Miller Brethren, of this city, relinquished Beethoven Hall, a few days since, presuming they should have no further use for it.—So we think." As before, the newspapers were premature. Beethoven Hall was the locale

for not only the ecstasy of 1843 and 1844 but also the agony of 1845.

Seven months after the Great Disappointment, William Miller and Joshua V. Himes preached in Beethoven Hall on Sunday, June 1, 1845. Two days later the *Portland Advertiser* noted the sharp opposition of Miller and Himes to “fanaticism” which had spread among Maine Millerites:

PARSON MILLER and J. V. HIMES of the “Signs of the Times” newspaper, were here on Sunday, and preached to the Second Adventists at Beethoven Hall. They stated, we understand, that they were, and always had been, opposed to the principle of “doing no work in order to give more attention to the concerns of religion”—that the man that will not work should not be allowed to eat; and the Parson related several instances, wherein at his own table, he had enforced this latter principle, with his no-work visitors. He stated that he had been accused of many principles and practices of which he was not guilty—and that he was opposed to fanaticism in every shape.

We understand that a set of rowdies got round the door

of the Hall in the evening, and disturbed the meeting.

Himes returned to Portland a month later on Sunday, August 10, 1845, to speak “to an audience of his friends and the believers of the speedy coming of Christ.” The *Eastern Argus* for August 13, 1845, reported that “He is still firm in the faith that the ‘end is near.’ ” But they were now meeting in Clark’s Hall rather than in Beethoven Hall.

Beethoven Hall endured another 20 years until in 1866, along with most of Portland, it was destroyed by a conflagration caused by a careless fireworks celebration of the Glorious Fourth.<sup>12</sup>

When Ellen White died on July 16, 1915, more than 70 years later and across the continent in California, she very well may have been the last survivor of those who had met in Beethoven Hall during those fateful days of 1844. To the end she continued to believe that within “a few days” the “consummation of time” would occur. Her last words were “I know in whom I have believed.”<sup>13</sup>

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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\* [In an effort to preserve the historical authenticity of the extensive quotations taken from original manuscripts we have chosen to let all unique spelling and diction stand without the editorial intrusion of the use of “sic.”—The Editors]

1. Letter to the author, February 21, 1986, from Edith H. McCauley, Special Collections Librarian, Portland Public Library, citing George Thornton Edwards, *Music and Musicians of Maine* (Portland: Southworth Press, 1928); and letter to the author, February 18, 1986, from Stephen Trent Seames, Manuscripts Assistant, Maine Historical Society, Portland, Maine, enclosing a copy of an undated news clipping from the *Boston Post*.

2. Portland, Maine, *Advertiser*, April 10, 1838.

3. Undated clipping from the *Boston Post* in “Post Scrapbook,” vol. 4, page 106, Maine Historical Society.

4. “Mrs. Ellen G. White. Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors,” *Signs of the Times*, vol. 2, No. 14 (March 9, 1876); reprinted in *Ellen G. White Signs of the Times Articles* (1874-1885) (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., n.d.), vol. 1, p. 29. Ellen Gould Harmon had married Elder James White in Portland, Maine, on August 30, 1846.

5. “INTERVIEW WITH MRS. E. G. WHITE, RE EARLY EXPERIENCES,” August 13, 1906, Document File 733c, Ellen G. White Estate, Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.

6. “Mrs. Ellen G. White. Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors,” *Signs of the Times*, vol. 2, No. 16 (March 23, 1876); reprinted in *Ellen G. White Signs of the Times Articles*, (1874-1885) (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., n.d.), vol. 1, p. 30.

7. “INTERVIEW WITH MRS. E. G. WHITE, RE EARLY EXPERIENCES,” August 13, 1906, DF 733c, White Estate.

8. “Mrs. Ellen G. White. Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors,” *Signs of the Times*, vol. 2, No. 16 (March 23, 1876); reprinted in *Ellen G. White Signs of the Times Articles* (1874-1885) (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., n.d.), vol. 1, p. 30. Other briefer versions by Ellen White concerning these experiences can be found in *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1915), pp. 47, 55, 56; *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1922), pp. 38, 45-47; *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1945), vol. 1, pp. 38, 48-51.

9. Letter B-23-1885, p. 19, White Estate.

10. DF 733c, White Estate.

11. *Portland Transcript*, November 1, 1945, pp. 228, 229. M. F. Whittier was undoubtedly Matthew Franklin Whittier, the younger brother of John Greenleaf Whittier, the Quaker poet. “Like his brother, ‘Frank’ Whittier had a

literary flair. He lived for a number of years in Portland, Maine, and contributed to the *Portland Transcript*, under the pen name of 'Ethan Spike,' a series of letters which had something of the humor and point of view of J. R. Lowell." —John A. Pollard, *John Greenleaf Whittier: Friend of Man* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1949), p. 530. "Matthew Franklin, the younger brother born in 1812, spent his middle years in Portland, Maine, and then removed to Boston, where he held a customs house appointment until his death in 1883." —Whitman Bennett, *Whittier: Bard of Freedom* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), p. 8. He apparently moved from Portland to Boston about 1870. —Samuel T. Pickard, *Life and Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1894),

vol. 1, pp. 31, 32.

12. Records available in the Portland Room of the Portland Public Library and at the Maine Historical Society in Portland do not provide information concerning the fate of Mr. Gilbert's building, which housed Beethoven Hall, relative to the great fire of 1866. —McCauley and Seames letter to the author.

The absence of newspaper references to the building and the hall in the years following the fire indicates that it was either destroyed or so seriously damaged as to be unusable for public meetings thereafter.

13. Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White, The Later Elmhaven Years, 1905-1915* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1982), vol. 6, p. 431.



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# Black Forerunner to Ellen White: William E. Foy

by Tim Poirier

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Ellen Harmon, a timid 17-year-old girl, was relating one of her earliest visions to the Advent believers in Portland, Maine. The setting may well have been Beethoven Hall, early in 1845. Suddenly, as the assembly encouraged her with earnest “Amens” and an occasional “Glory to God!” a great tall man leaped to his feet. “That is just what I saw!” he shouted with joy, “Just what I saw!”<sup>1</sup>

The tall man was 27-year-old William Ellis Foy, a light-skinned black preacher who was already quite well known to the Adventists in Portland. For some time Foy had been traveling from place to place relating the two visions he had received in Boston three years earlier. When he reached Portland, sometime early in 1844, he was warmly welcomed by “Father” John Pearson and his sons, John Jr. and Charles H., who were leaders of the Advent band.<sup>2</sup> The experience of William Foy provides an important historical context for understanding Ellen White’s early visions.

Recent research demands a revision of the traditional Adventist view of William Foy. In the past, Foy has been linked with Hazen Foss as one whom the Lord called to be a prophet but who refused the gift, giving God no alternative but to turn to the “weakest of the weak,” Ellen Harmon.<sup>3</sup> But Foy’s career is badly distorted by the link to Foss. Unlike Foss, who refused to relate his visions, Foy, in sermons and tracts, shared what he had seen. Delbert Baker, editor of *Message Magazine*, has authored a soon-to-be published book

on Foy that views him as a John-the-Baptist figure who was given a limited assignment that he faithfully completed.<sup>4</sup>

Foy is important because of the significant parallels between his visions and the later ones of Ellen White. Foy’s acceptance by early Adventists as a recipient of genuine divine revelations makes it clear that visionary experiences were by no means unheard of among Millerites in Maine when Ellen Harmon announced her first vision.

Foy’s little pamphlet entitled, *The Christian Experience of William E. Foy Together With the Two Visions He Received in the Months of Jan. and Feb. 1842*, was published through the help of the Pearsons.<sup>5</sup> Thus, Adventists in Portland were well acquainted with both William Foy and Ellen Harmon, and many believed the visions of both to be genuine manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

Although records are scant, it appears that Foy was reared in Belgrade, Maine, not far from Augusta. Born about 1818, he was the oldest child of Joseph and Betsey Foy.<sup>6</sup> In 1835, under the preaching of Silas Curtis, Foy decided to become a Christian. Much of his early experience is reminiscent of that described by Ellen White, as both were deeply concerned about spiritual matters and keenly felt their need of a Saviour.

Nearly three years prior to Ellen Harmon’s first vision, William Foy, while meeting with “the people of God in Southark St., Boston,” on January 18, 1842, received his first vision. It lasted about two and a half hours. The physical effect of the vision on him was very similar to that experienced by Ellen Harmon a few years later. “My breath left me,” he states. A doctor who examined

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him "could not find any appearance of life, except around the heart."

Ellen White accepted Foy's visions as genuine, even though at some points Foy interpreted what he saw in the light of his belief in the immortality of the soul. To those who knew the two visionaries best, the similarities between their views were marks of authenticity. Since both had been given views of heaven, similarities in their descriptions would be also be likely. There are, however, marked differences as well.

## *The First Vision*

**I**n his first vision, Foy describes how he was led by one "arrayed in white raiment" along the bank of a river, in the midst of which "was a mount of pure water." He saw the living inhabitants of the earth as a great multitude walking on the water toward the mount, where the righteous were given glorious bodies, "pure and shining garments," and bright crowns. The wicked "cried for mercy, and sank beneath the mount."

Conspicuously absent from Foy's description is any reference to the Second Advent. Ellen White, writing after the Great Disappointment, saw the Advent people walking on a narrow path toward the New Jerusalem with the bright light of the "Midnight Cry" behind them. This reassured her fellow believers that their Millerite experience was not in vain. She reported the events of the time of trouble up to the appearance of Christ in the clouds.<sup>7</sup>

In Foy's vision, the saints were next led to a "boundless plain" that his guide identified as the "plain of Paradise." After being "divided into flocks," with each group headed by a guardian angel, the saints came upon a great gate before which stood a "tall and mighty angel clothed in raiment pure and white; his eyes were like flaming fire, and he wore a crown upon his head."

There follows one of the closest parallels between Foy's and Ellen Harmon's visions. Foy wrote: "The angel raised his right hand, and laid hold upon the gate, and opened it; and as it rolled upon its glittering hinges, he cried with a loud voice, to the heavenly host, "'You're all welcome!'" The saints passed within the gate and

## Questions and Answers About *The Unknown Prophet*, William Foy

by Delbert Baker

*After graduating from Oakwood College, Delbert W. Baker received his M.Div. from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Now the editor of Message Magazine, he is also the author of The Unknown Prophet, a biography of William Foy that will be released in the fall of 1987 by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, Maryland. The questions and answers below are taken from The Unknown Prophet.*

### **Was Foy a mulatto?**

No. The best records indicate he was a light-skinned Black man, not a mulatto in the academic sense of the term.

### **Did Foy die in 1845 or "shortly thereafter," as some histories state?**

No. He lived to be 75 years old. He died in 1893 in the Ellsworth, Maine, area. His gravestone can be seen there to this day.

### **Did Foy have any interaction with the Black Christians in Boston?**

Yes. He lived in the Black section of Boston and had his visions in at least one mixed congregation that included Black and White members. (See section in book on Blacks and the Millerite movement.)

### **Do we know if Foy has any living descendants?**

No. At the time of this writing, no descendants have been traced.

### **Did Foy reject his commission?**

No. He paused for a three-month period, but continued actively after that period, sharing what he had seen as long as there were interest and invitations. He never rejected his commission. His ministry continued to the time of his death.

### **Was there any difference in the manner in which William Foy and Ellen White had visions?**

The physical manifestations were alike in many respects, but not in every particular. They both were obviously under supernatural influence. They both had witnesses and a medical examination when in vision, and it was attested that the effect was out of the realm of natural or self-induced phenomena.

Ellen White's longest vision was approximately four

stood on what appeared to be pure glass.

Ellen White describes the welcoming scene in almost the same words: "Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, 'You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in.' We all marched in and felt that we had a perfect right in the city."<sup>8</sup>

Several different multitudes were then presented to Foy. "Countless millions of shining ones" came with cards which "shone above the brightness of the sun; and they placed them in our hands; but the names of them, I could not read." He then saw "an innumerable multitude, arrayed in white raiment, with cards upon their breasts," whom his guide identified as those who had passed through death.

One of Ellen White's later visions, which she titled "The Sealing," also mentioned cards, golden cards, which were presented by angels to the angel-guard at the gate of the heavenly city.<sup>9</sup>

Foy later beheld the Earth wrapped in "rolling mountains of flame," and in the fire he saw a countless multitude crying for mercy. His guide explained why they were in such distress: "The

gospel has been preached unto them, and the servants have warned them, but they would not believe; and when the great day of God's wrath comes, there will be no mercy for them."

In Ellen White's vision on "The Sealing," a similar scene serves a more specific purpose: "Then I was shown a company who were howling in agony. On their garments was written in large characters, 'Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting.' I asked who this company were. The angel said, 'These are they who have once kept the Sabbath and have given it up.'"<sup>10</sup>

At the conclusion of his first vision, Foy was brought back again to the "boundless place" where he saw a tree, "the body of which, was like unto transparent glass, and the limbs were like transparent gold, extending all over this boundless place. On every branch of the tree, were small angels standing." He saw the countless millions of the righteous standing on the sea of glass beneath the tree "arrayed in white raiment, with crowns on their heads, and cards on their breasts." Some he recognized as ones he knew while they were yet living on the Earth. They all were plucking fruit from the tree, fruit which he described as clusters

hours, while Foy's longest was more than 12 hours.

**What was Ellen White's exposure to Foy's visions and were there any similarities between their visions?**

Ellen White said that she had copies of Foy's visions and had heard him speak on a number of occasions, so she was acquainted with him and his material. They were both prophets, having received messages from God, and some of the scenes they saw were similar. There are certain terms and phrases that Ellen White uses that are similar to those Foy used. Their emphasis and style were different, though there were some similarities in scenes and terms.

**How would you describe the relation of William Foy and Ellen White in the providential framework?**

Their work had a mutually corroborating effect. In no way competing, they both recognized the genuineness and authenticity of each other's work.

**What was Foy's attitude toward the Sabbath?**

It is not clear. We do know he never specifically referred to the seventh-day Sabbath in his pamphlet. Some reasoning might suggest some possibilities that he might have kept the Sabbath as did some Freewill Baptists, but it can't be substantiated. However, it should be realized that the

Advent band themselves became fully exposed and receptive to the Sabbath truths only in 1844-1845, through the witness of Rachel Oakes Preston, the tract of T. M. Preble, and the ministry of others.

Like the Reformer Martin Luther, not all of God's messengers have fully proclaimed, or for that matter, kept all of God's truth when they are used by God. The important point is that they lived up to the light and truth that they had (Acts 17:30). The case of William Miller illustrates this also. We are assured that he will be saved in heaven (*Early Writings*, p. 258). As far as history records, he never accepted the Sabbath, sanctuary, or Spirit of Prophecy truths. In fact, he apparently opposed some of them. But again God in His omniscient providence accepts and judges us in our own individual contest and according to our individual circumstances (See Psalm 87:4-6).

**What is Foy's message for us today?**

Get ready, stay ready, for the judgment hour message is here. Jesus is soon to come, and only those who are prepared will be saved. His message reveals God's compassionate and personal interest in His children, and it shows God's multiracial approach to the spreading of this last-day gospel message. God dealings affirm the equality and usability of men, women, and minorities in His work.

of grapes in pitchers of pure gold. Foy continues: "With a lovely voice, the guide then spoke to me and said, 'Those who eat of the fruit of this tree, return to earth no more.' I raised my hand to partake of the heavenly fruit, that I might no more return to earth; but alas! I immediately found myself again in this lonely vale of tears."

Although Foy's description of the tree of life is quite different from Ellen White's (she saw two

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**Foy felt greatly distressed about having to relate the visions. . . and he mentions the prejudice against those of his color.**

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trunks uniting in one tree and makes no mention of small angels on the branches<sup>11</sup>), the statement of the angel guide in Foy's vision is repeated nearly verbatim in Ellen White's:

I asked Jesus to let me eat of the fruit. He said, "Not now. Those who eat of the fruit of this land go back to earth no more. But in a little while, if faithful, you shall both eat of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of the fountain." He said, "You must go back to earth again and relate to others what I have revealed to you." Then an angel bore me gently down to this dark world. Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer; all things of earth look so dreary. I feel very lonely here, for I have seen a better land.<sup>12</sup>

Foy felt compelled to relate what he had seen, but "to escape the cross of going and personally declaring it to the world," he decided to print "a very imperfect sketch." This particular printing is no longer extant. Within two weeks, on February 4, 1842, a large congregation gathered at May Street in Boston, for exhortation and prayer. Foy was present and gave his seat to a friend who had been standing through most of the meeting. He then describes the onset of his second vision: "While I was thus standing, I began to reflect on my disobedience; and while thus engaged, suddenly I heard a voice, as it were, in the spirit, speaking unto me. I immediately fell to the floor, and knew nothing about this body, until twelve hours and a half had passed away, as I was afterward informed."

## *The Second Vision*

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In this second vision, Foy describes many scenes that have no parallel in Ellen White's visions. There is, however, one striking and significant link: the mention of three steps.

Foy saw a "mighty angel" who stood with his right foot placed before him, as though walking. "His object appeared to be, to reach the earth. But three steps remained for him to take." A great and terrible voice was then heard, saying, "The sixth angel hath not yet done sounding."

The scenes here described by Foy have no parallel in the writings of Ellen White, but the three steps become, in Ellen White's growing understanding, extremely important. "I was shown three steps," she says, "the first, second, and third angels' messages."<sup>13</sup>

Foy, of course, does not interpret the three steps. Indeed, he could not have interpreted them as Ellen White later did, for the Adventist interpretation of the three angels' messages had not been developed in early 1845, when Foy published his visions. This passage itself may well have given rise to the unconfirmed story that Foy had a third or even a fourth vision he could not understand and thus did not relate—a vision of three platforms (steps?) representing the three angels' messages. But Foy did relate his first and second visions, even though he did not understand them as applying to the three angels' messages. Certainly Foy's mention of the "sixth angel" in his second vision implies that the end would not come until those three steps were taken.

Foy goes on in this vision to describe an "innumerable multitude, arrayed in white raiment, standing in a perfect square, having crowns of unfading glory upon their heads." Ellen White describes a similar scene, only she numbers the multitude at 144,000. "Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square. Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright."<sup>14</sup> Unlike Ellen White's vision, however, Foy describes the saints as being "the size of children 10 years of age."

At the conclusion of his second vision, Foy

was instructed by his guide to “reveal those things which thou has seen; and also warn thy fellow creatures, to flee from the wrath to come.” He was promised, “I will go with thee, and support and help thee, to declare these things to the world”—to which he responded, “I will go.” “My guide then spread his wings, and brought my spirit gently to the earth, and then soared away; and immediately I found myself in the body.”

Once again, Foy felt greatly distressed about having to relate the visions. He mentions the prejudice existing among the people “against those of my color”—the first indication that Foy was black. Finally, after three days of intense soul-searching, he responded to an invitation by the pastor of the Broomfield Street Church, in Boston, to relate his visions in an afternoon meeting. From that time, Foy traveled from place to place, delivering his message “to crowded houses, enjoying continual peace of mind.” His pamphlet closed with a statement by the church clerk that “Bro. Wm. E. Foy, is a regular member, of the first Freewill Baptist Church, in Augusta, [Maine] in good standing.”

Ellen White, in an interview in 1906, speaks of Foy receiving four visions, but whether her memory of this was clear or whether it simply reflected J. N. Loughborough’s account cannot be known.

Ellen White also recalled Foy’s first wife. She remembered attending one meeting where Mrs. Foy kept moving about in her seat, ducking behind the heads of curious listeners, so as not to meet the eye of her husband who was speaking. At the end of the meeting, young Ellen overheard the reason for Mrs. Foy’s behavior: “I did as you told me to,” she said to her husband. “I hid myself. You didn’t see me.” It seems that Mrs. Foy would become so excited during her husband’s lectures that she would repeat “his words right after him.” This so disturbed William that he had told her, “You must not get where you can look at me when I am speaking.”<sup>15</sup>

Mrs. Foy apparently died within the next few years, for, by 1850, William had returned to Massachusetts where he lived with his mother in New Bedford, serving as a Freewill Baptist clergyman. By 1855, however, Foy was back in his

home state, pastoring a Freewill congregation in Chelsea, Maine.<sup>16</sup>

Sometime after this, Foy bought some property in a small community called Plantation No. 7, now a part of East Sullivan, about 22 miles east of Ellsworth, Maine. There he lived with his new bride, Parcentia Wedin Rose, whom he married in 1873. Apparently he had a daughter who died at an early age, and a son named Orrin, whose posterity has not yet been traced. In the little Birch Tree Cemetery, near Sullivan, Maine, a headstone indicates that Foy died November 9, 1893, and bears the verse beginning, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”<sup>17</sup>

### *The Significance of Foy*

The very fact that other visionaries, male and female, were active at this time, and accepted as genuine by early Adventists in Maine, belies those explanations of Ellen White’s visions that suggest they resulted from some ailment or disability unique to her. This does not in itself force the conclusion that her visions were genuine, for indeed she herself rejected the visions of Dorinda Baker, whom many Adventists in Atkinson, Maine, believed was fully as inspired as Ellen White herself. Nevertheless, visionary experiences were already familiar to Millerites in Maine by the time of Ellen White’s first vision.

The fact that Foy was, for so many years, classed as a failed prophet by Adventist historians reminds us of how important it is to reexamine the stories told by pioneer Adventists who often wrote without the advantage of documents that might have corrected their memories.

Finally, William Foy provides us with another instance of forgotten black history. In a Seventh-day Adventist church that has become thoroughly multiethnic, the contributions of nonwhites provide inspirational symbols for continued cooperation in making real the heavenly kingdom glimpsed in vision by a young black man and a young white woman—a vision where the saints stand foursquare and perfectly united.

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 NOTES AND REFERENCES
 

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1. Ellen G. White, Manuscript 131, 1906, Interview of August 13, 1906.

2. "Father" Pearson, mentioned by Ellen White in her autobiographical accounts (Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches* [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915], pp. 70, 71; \_\_\_\_\_, *Testimonies for the Church* [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948], vol. 1, p. 64), lived at 10 Casco Street in Portland, Maine, about a mile from the Harmon home. He first took a stand against those who claimed to be prostrated by the power of the Spirit of God. His family voiced opposition to Ellen White's experiences prior to her first vision, until they themselves were overpowered by the Spirit (*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 44-48). It was he, who, during her third vision, saw what seemed to be a ball of fire hit Ellen over the heart, and expressed his confidence in her experience (*Life Sketches* [Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1880], p. 71).

It was the Pearsons who first introduced Ellen to James White, who had earlier labored with "Deacon" John's son, John Pearson, Jr., throughout the state of Maine for about a year prior to the Great Disappointment (*Life Sketches* [Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1880], pp. 82, 86). And it was Elder Pearson who first told Otis Nichols, of Dorchester, Massachusetts, about Ellen White in February 1845. Otis Nichols was later an eyewitness to the remarkable vision at Randolph, Massachusetts, during which Ellen White held a large Bible aloft, pointing to texts and quoting them correctly, without even seeing them (Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts* [Battle Creek, MI: James White, 1860], vol. 2, pp. 76-79).

That Foy arrived in Portland by early 1844 is substantiated by a cancellation notice. See Frederick Hoyt's "Trial of Elder I. Dammon," in this issue.

3. J. N. Loughborough, *Rise and Progress of the Sev-*

*enth-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1892), pp. 73, 91.

4. Delbert Baker, "I Have Fought A Good Fight! The Life and Times of William Ellis Foy" (unpublished manuscript in process at Review and Herald Pub. Assn.).

5. William Ellis Foy, *The Christian Experience of William E. Foy Together With the Two Visions He Received in the Months of Jan. and Feb. 1842* (Portland, ME: J. and C. H. Pearson, 1845). That this 24-page tract was issued in January is based on the date it was registered for copyright. All of the facts about Foy and quotations from his visions are found in this tract unless otherwise noted.

6. Details of Foy's life not found in his tract were established by Mormon genealogist Alice Soule, working at the request of the Ellen G. White Estate and Delbert Baker. See Alice Soule to Ron Graybill, May 14, 1982; and Alice Soule to Delbert Baker and Ron Graybill, Sept. 1, 1982.

7. Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1882, 1945), pp. 13-20.

8. *Early Writings*, p. 17.

9. *Early Writings*, p. 37.

10. *Early Writings*, p. 37.

11. *Early Writings*, p. 17.

12. *Early Writings*, pp. 19, 20.

13. *Early Writings*, p. 258.

14. *Early Writings*, p. 16.

15. Ellen G. White, Manuscript 131, 1906.

16. See federal census records for 1850 and the Maine State Register for 1855.

17. Most of the information in this paragraph is from Alice Soule's research and federal census records. The grave was located through property records and 19th-century maps in the Library of Congress.

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# Trial of Elder I. Dammon Reported for the *Piscataquis Farmer*

edited by Frederick Hoyt

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*Frederick Hoyt first discovered this newspaper report in the course of conducting his research on the early beginnings of Adventism in Maine. We reprint here a report of the trial, replete with quaint spelling, style, and diction. A commentary on the trial and its significance for early Adventism follows this report.*

—The Editors

In offering the public the following report I feel it due to them as well as myself, to make a few remarks. When I volunteered to do it, I had no doubt but that the examination would have been gone through within the course of a few hours. Judge then, what must be my surprise on finding the Court House filled to overflowing, and having it occupy such a length of time. To the witnesses I will say, I have abridged your testimony as much as possible, and have omitted much of the most unimportant part, in order to shorten the work, but have endeavored in no case to misrepresent you, and if you find an error, I beg you to impute it to my head, instead of heart.—To the reader I will remark, that much of the testimony was drawn out by questions, and I have omitted the questions in all

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cases where it could be dispensed with and shorten the work. To all, I offer it as an imperfect and impartial report. In consequence of my total inexperience, being but a laboring man, I should shrink from publishing it, but from the urgent solicitation of others. Thanking the Court for the favor of a seat, by them, and the Court and Counsel for the use of their minutes, I sign myself this once THE REPORTER.

N. B. I have preserved the language of the witnesses as much as possible.

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Monday, Feb. 17, 1845.

STATE OF MAINE  
vs.  
ISRAEL DAMMON.

Prisoner arraigned before Moses Swett, Esq. of Foxcroft, associated by Seth Lee, Esq. of Atkinson, on the following complaint, to wit.

To Charles P. Chandler, Esq. one of the Justices of the Peace within and for the County of Piscataquis.

“HARTFORD J. ROWE, of Dover, in the Co. of Piscataquis, Yeoman, upon his oath complains, that Israel Dammon, Commorant of Atkinson, in said County, Idler, is, and for several days last past, has been a vagabond and idle person, going about in the town of Atkinson, aforesaid, in the county aforesaid, from place to place, begging:—that he the said Israel

Dammon is a common railer or brawler, neglecting his calling, or employment, misspending his earnings, and does not provide for the support of himself family, & against the peace of the State of Maine, and contrary to form of Statute in such cases made and provided.

He therefore prays that the said I. Dammon, may be apprehended and held to answer to said complaint and dealt with relative to the same as law and justice may require.”

Plead Not Guilty.

Court adjourned to one o'clock, P.M.

Opened agreeably to adjourment .  
C. P. Chandler, H. G. O. Morison,  
for State. J. S. Holmes, for Respondent.

Opened by Chandler. Cited chap. 178, sec. 9, Revised Statutes. Adjourned to Court House.

Ebenezer Blethen sworn. Have been in the house three times, saw nothing out of the way in elder Dammon. Have seen others. Objected to by Holmes. Confine your remarks to prisoner, he can in no ways be accountable for the conduct of others, and I object to any testimony except what goes to show what respondent has said or done, as wholly irrelevant.

Question by Chandler. Who was the presiding elder at the meeting?

Ans. Elder Dammon presided and took the lead of the meetings that I attended.

Chandler and Morison. The meetings appear to be elder Dammon's meetings—he took the lead and guided them, and is accountable for any public misconduct, and ought to check it: we propose to show the character of his meetings, to show the character of the man.

By the Court. You may relate any thing that took place at the meetings, where the respondent was presiding elder.

Witness. The first meeting I attended was two weeks ago yesterday—saw people setting on the floor, and laying on the floor; Dammon setting on floor; they were leaning on each other. It did not have the appearance of a religious meeting.

Cross examination. Saw nothing like licentiousness—there was exhortation and prayer each evening. Was there last time after part of my family.

J. W. E. Harvey, sworn. Have attended their meetings two days and four evenings. First meeting lasted eight days—have known Dammon six weeks—Dammon, White and Hall were leaders. Dammon said the sinners were going to hell in two days. They were hugging and kissing each other—Dammon would lay on the floor, then jump up—they would frequently go into another room. Dammon has no means to support himself that I know of. The meeting appeared very irreligious—have seen him sit on the floor with a woman between his legs and his arms around her. Cross examined. The room they went into was a back room; dont know what was in it—I was in two rooms where there was a fire. In the back room they said the world's people must not go. Dammon said the meeting was to be a private meeting and they wanted no one to come unless they believed as he did in the Advent doctrine. I did go considerably—if the meetings were religious ones I thought I had a right to go to them—I went to satisfy myself what was done. I had no hostile feeling against them. I think they held the first meeting a fortnight. Dammon said he wanted no one to attend their

meetings unless they believed in the advent doctrine.

Wm. C. Crosby, Esq. sworn. I was at the meeting last Saturday night, from about 7 o'clock to 9. There was a woman on the floor who lay on her back with a pillow under her head; she would occasionally arouse up and tell a vision which she said was revealed to her. They would at times all be talking at once, halloing at the top of their voices; some of them said there was too much sin there. After the cessation of the noise, Dammon got up and was more coherent—he complained of those that came there who did not be-

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**There was a woman on the floor who lay on her back with a pillow under her head; she would occasionally arouse up and tell a vision which she said was revealed to her.**

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lieve in the advent doctrine. At one time Dammon said there was hogs there not belonging to the band, and pointed at me, and said, I mean you, Sir. Subsequently he addressed me again—said, you can't drive us out of town; he stared me in the face and said, I am an honest man, or I could not look you in the face, and you have hell's brass or you could not look me in the face. Dammon said if he was owner of the house he would compel all unbelievers to leave it—they were setting and laying on the floor promiscuously and were exceedingly noisy. Cross examined. Did he not say if there was any there who did not come for instruction he did not want them there. Ans. That is not what he said—he pointed to me and said he meant you—I never was more pointedly addressed in my life—we stood 5 or 6 feet apart, most of the men were on the floor—most of the women in chairs—Do not know how long Dammon has been in town.

Thomas Proctor sworn. Saw the prisoner last Saturday—was present

when he was taken; know nothing of the meetings myself.

Moses Gerrish, sworn. I have never attended any of their meetings, when the prisoner was present.

Loton Lambert, sworn. They were singing when I arrived—after singing they sat down on the floor—Dammon said a sister had a vision to relate—a woman on the floor then related her vision. Dammon said all other denominations were wicked—they were liars, whoremasters, murderers, etc.—he also run upon all such as were not believers with him. He ordered us off—we did not go. The woman that lay on the floor relating visions, was called by Elder Dammon and others, imitation of Christ. Dammon called us hogs and devils, and said if he was the owner of the house he would drive us off—the one that they called imitation of Christ, told Mrs. Woodbury and others, that they must forsake all their friends or go to hell. Imitation of Christ, as they called her, would lay on the floor a while, then rise up and call upon some one and say she had a vision to relate to them, which she would relate; there was one girl that they said must be baptised that night or she must go to hell; she wept bitterly and wanted to see her mother first; they told her she must leave her mother or go to hell—one voice said, let her go to hell. She finally concluded to be baptised. Imitation of Christ told her vision to a cousin of mine, that she must be baptised that night or go to hell—she objected, because she had once been baptised. Imitation of Christ was said to be a woman from Portland. A woman that they called Miss Baker, said the devil was here, and she wanted to see him—she selected me and said, you are the devil, and will go to hell. I told her she want my judge. Mr. Ayer then clinched me and tried to put me out door. I told him we had not come to disturb the meeting. The vision woman called Joel Doore, said he had doubted, and would not be baptised again—she said Br. Doore don't go to hell. Doore kneeled to her feet and prayed. Miss Baker and a man went



into the bed room—subsequently heard a voice in the room hallo Oh! the door was opened—I saw into the room—she was on the bed—he was hold of her; they came out of the bed room hugging each other, she jumping up and would throw her legs between his. Miss Baker went to Mr. Doore and said, you have refused me before, he said he had—they then kissed each other—she said “that feels good”—just before they went to the water to baptise, Miss Baker went into the bed room with a man they called elder White—saw him help her on to the bed—the light was brought out and door closed. I did not see either of them afterwards. Once I was in the other room talking with my cousin. Dammon and others came into the room and stopped our discourse, and called her sister and me the devil. Imitation of Christ lay on the floor during the time they went down to the water to baptise, and she continued on the floor until I left, which was between the hours of 12 and 1 o’clock at night.

Cross examined. Answer. The visionist lay down on the floor I should think about 7 o’clock—she lay there from that time until I left. Dammon and others called her Imitation of Christ. Part of the time Dammon was down on the floor on his back—can’t say certainly who first said she was Imitation of Christ, but can say Dammon repeatedly said so—Dammon said Christ revealed to her and she to others. I am not acquainted with elder White. They called him Eld. White. They said if the Almighty had any thing to say he revealed it to her, and she acted as mediator.

Wm. Ricker, sworn. Know elder Dammon—I went to attend their meeting once: they told me there would be none—I asked them where it would be on the next Sabbath? they told me they know not where; but they did not admit any but the advent band. I asked Dammon if that was Christ’s religion? he said it is ours.

Leonard Downes, sworn.—Went to meeting with Loten Lambert, and kept with him; heard him testify, and know what he has related to be true. He

omitted one thing. I saw Dammon kiss other people’s wives. Witness underwent a severe cross examination, in which his testimony was so near a repetition of Mr. Lambert’s, that it is by me, considered useless to copy it.

Wm. C. Crosby re-examined. I saw no kissing, but heard about it. I did not stay late, went about 7, left about 9 o’clock. After the visionist called them up she told them they doubted. Her object seemed to be to convince them they must not doubt.—Dammon called the churches whore-masters, liars, thieves, scoundrels, wolves in sheep’s clothing, murderers, etc. He said read the Star. By spells it was the most noisy assembly I ever attended—there was no order or regularity, nor any thing that resembled any other meeting I ever attended—Dammon seemed to have the lead and the most art. I don’t say Dammon shouted the loudest; I think some others stronger in the lungs than he.

Dea. James Rowe, sworn. I was at Ayer’s a short time last Saturday evening—Elder Dammon found fault with us for coming to his meeting—he spoke of other denominations as Esq. Crosby has just testified—said the church members were the worst people in the world. I have been young, and now am old, and of all the places I ever was in, I never saw such a confusion, not even in a drunken frolic. Dammon stood up on the floor and said, I am going to stand here—and while I stand here, they can’t hurt you, neither men nor devils can’t hurt you. Cross examined. He said all churches, made no distinction. I put no meaning to what he said, I only state what he did say. I have been acquainted with the prisoner 20 or 30 years; his character was good until recently.

Jeremiah B. Green, sworn. I attended an afternoon meeting a fortnight ago yesterday—they had an exhortation and prayer in the the evening—saw men wash men’s feet, and women wash women’s feet—they had dishes of water—elder Dammon was the presiding elder—I saw Dammon

kiss Mrs. Osborn.

Ebenezer Trundy, sworn. I was at meeting week before last,—I heard Dammon say “God’s a coming! God’s a coming!!” Mr. Boobar was telling of going into the woods to labor—Dammon said he ought not to go. Boobar said he had a family to support and was

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**Dammon and others called her Imitation of Christ. Dammon said Christ revealed to her and she to others.**

**They said if the Almighty had any thing to say he revealed it to her, and she acted as mediator.**

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poor. Dammon told him he must live on them that had property, and if God did not come then we must all go to work together.

Joseph Moulton, sworn. When I went to arrest prisoner, they shut the door against me. Finding I could not gain access to him without, I burst open the door. I went to the prisoner and took him by the hand and told him my business. A number of women jumped on to him—he clung to them, and they to him. So great was the resistance, that I with three assistants, could not get him out. I remained in the house and sent for more help; after they arrived we made a second attempt with the same result—I again sent for more help—after they arrived we overpowered them and got him out door in custody. We were resisted by both men and women. Can’t describe the place—it was one continued shout.

Wm. C. Crosby, Esq.—called again.

Prisoner has been reported to have been there about a fortnight with no visible means of support.

J. W. E. Harvey, re-examined.

Prisoner has been there considerable. I know of no means he has of support, other than to live on his fol-

lowers.

T. Proctor, re-examined—

Prisoner has been reported as a man who has no means of support—I do not know of his having any.

Jacob Martin sworn: It is the common report that the prisoner is

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**It is a part of our faith to kiss each other—brothers kiss sisters and sisters kiss brothers, I think we have bible authority for that.**

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living upon his followers. I have attended no meetings of their's. Have seen a number of sleighs there, and fifteen or twenty strangers.

Benjamin Smith, Esq., Selectman of Atkinson sworn: I have been called upon by the citizens of Atkinson to interfere and put a stop to these meetings—they gave as a reason, that the defendant and others were living upon certain citizens of said town—and that they were liable to become town charge. I started to-day to go there, but learned that the prisoner had been arrested and that the others had dispersed.

Here the government stopped. Court adjourned to half past six o'clock.

Evening—Respondent's witnesses.

James Ayer, Jr., affirmed: The most of the meetings were at my house. I have generally attended them—sometimes I was out. I have heard the testimony on the part of the State. Some things stated I do not recollect. I was there last Saturday evening—saw no kissing. I agree with Crosby and Lambert substantially. I understood prisoner to say there were members of the churches who he referred to instead of the whole. Saw the woman with a pillow under her head—her name is Miss Ellen Harmon, of Portland. I heard nothing said by her or others about imitation of Christ. I saw

Miss Baker laying on the floor. I saw her fall. Saw Miss Baker and sister Osborn go into the bed-room—sister Osborn helped her on to the bed, came out and shut the door. There was no man in the bed-room that evening. I heard the noise in the bed-room—brother Wood of Orrington and I went in; asked her what was the matter, she made no reply, and I went out. Brother Wood assisted her off of the bed, and helped her out—she appeared in distress. She told brother Doore she was distressed on his account—was afraid he would loose his soul, and advised him to be baptised. Did not see them kiss each other. It is a part of our faith to kiss each other—brothers kiss sisters and sisters kiss brothers, I think we have bible authority for that. I understood the prisoner to say, there was an account in the Star of a Deacon who had killed seven men. The reason of our kneeling, I consider an object of humiliation.

Cross examined.—I know nothing about Miss Harmon's character. I did not say there was no kissing—I saw none. Did not hear her called imitation of Christ. Elder Dammon has had no other business, but to attend meetings. He and another man from Exeter, came with a young girl. Dammon said he had a spiritual wife and he was glad of it. I went to Mr. Lambert and said if he disturbed the meeting, he must go out door. We went to the water after eleven o'clock—brother Dammon baptized two. I know nothing about sister Baker's character—seen her at meeting in Orrington. I understood sister Harmon had a vision at Portland, and was travelling through the country relating it.

Job Moody affirmed: I was at meeting Saturday evening. Brother Dammon said in relation to other churches they were bad enough; said they were corrupt; he spoke of the Star—he did say they were thieves, etc. I am not certain, but think he said that evening there was exceptions. Sister Harmon would lay on the floor in a trance, and the Lord would reveal their cases to her, and she to them.

By the Court.

Answer. Mr. Dammon repeatedly urged upon us the necessity of quitting all labor. Kissing is a salutation of love; I greet them so—we have got positive scripture for it—I reside in Exeter.

Here the witness was told he might take his seat. He said I have some testimony in relation to brother Dammon's character, if I am not a going to be called again. He then stated that he had been acquainted with brother Dammon five or six years, and his character was good. He works part of the time, and preaches a part of the time. I have been serving the Lord and hammering against the devil of late.

Isley Osborn affirmed: I know nothing bad in brother Dammon's character. He believes there is good, bad, and indifferent in all churches—he thinks it best to come out from them, because there is so many that has fallen from their holy position.—Do not recollect hearing him use the expressions about churches they have sworn to, but have heard him use as strong language against them. Do not call sister Harmon imitation of Christ. They lose their strength and fall on the floor. The Lord communicates to them through a vision, so we call it the Lord. Brother White did not go into the bed-room, nor any other man.

Cross-examined: She told them their cases had been made known to her by the Lord, and if they were not baptized that evening, they would go to hell. We believed her, and brother Dammon and I advised them to be baptised. Brother Dammon thought it best to keep the meetings secret, so they would not crowd in. Hold to kissing—have scripture exhortation for that. Sister Baker has a good character—the wickedest man in Orrington says she has a good character, and that's enough to establish any character, when the worst man admits it. (roar of laughter) We wish to go through the ordnance of washing feet in secret. Did not see any kissing, but presume their was, as it is a part of our faith. Think Esq. Crosby's testimony

correct. By Court:—

Answer. Elder Dammon does advise us to quit all work.

Abraham Pease, affirmed. Reside in Exeter, prisoner's character is as good as any man in Exeter. He has a small farm, and small family. He is a reformation preacher—reformation has followed his preaching.

Gardner Farmer, affirmed: Reside in Exeter—prisoner provides well for his family. He has been to my house, and I to his—he always behaves well. I saw him in Atkinson a fortnight ago last Tuesday.

Court adjourned to Tuesday morning 9 o'clock.

Tuesday, 18.

Jacob Mason, affirmed: Reside in Garland. Brother Dammon said the churches were of that description—said they were lyers, rogues, &c. I did not understand him to include all, but individuals. Sister Baker's character is good. Do not recollect of brother Gallison using any compulsion, to make his daughter go forward in baptism. I saw elder White after sister Baker went into the bed-room, near sister Harmon in a trance—some of the time he held her head. She was in a vision, part of the time insensible. Saw nothing improper in brother Dammon that evening. I never knew him a begger, or wasting his time.

Cross-examined: Do not know who it was that went into the bed-room with sister Baker—he was a stranger to me; he soon came out. Can't say how soon he went in again. I have heard Crosby testify, and think him correct. I thought her visions were from God—she would describe out their cases correct. She described mine correct. I saw kissing out door, but not in the house. A part of the time we sat on the floor—both men and women promiscuously. I saw no man go into the bed-room. They wash feet in the evening. It is a practice in our order to kiss, on our meeting each other. Sister Harmon was not called imitation Christ to my knowledge. I think I should have heard it if she was. I believe in visions. Sister Harmon is 18 or 19 years of age;

she is from Portland.

Joel Doore, affirmed: Reside in Atkinson—elder Dammon said there was bad characters in the churches; I did not understand him to say all. He preaches louder than most people; no more noisy than common preachers of this faith. The vision woman would lay looking up when she came out of her trance—she would point to some one, and tell them their cases, which she said was from the Lord. She told a number of visions that evening. Brother Gallison's daughter wanted to see her mother before she was baptised, but finally concluded to be baptised without seeing her. Sister Baker got up off the floor, and went to Lambert to talk with him. I saw no more of her, until I heard a noise in the bed-room—they went and got her out, as the other witnesses have stated. After she came out, she said she had a message to me. She said I had thought hard of her, (I acknowledged I had) but I became satisfied of my error, and fellowshipped her. We kissed each other with the holy kiss—I think elder White was not in the bed-room that evening; but I don't know how many, nor who were there. The girls that was baptised were 17 years old, one of them had been baptised before. We have scripture enough for every thing that was done. There was not one tenth part of the noise Saturday evening, that there generally is at the meetings I attend. As far as I am acquainted with elder Dammon, I consider him a moral good man.

Cross examined. When she kissed me, she said there was light ahead. We believe her (Miss Baker's) visions genuine. We believe Miss Harmon's genuine—t'was our understanding that their visions were from God. Miss Hammond told five visions Saturday night. I did not tell any person yesterday that it was necessary to have any one in the room with her to bring out her trances I did engage counsel in this case to defend the prisoner.

John H. Doore, sworn. I was not at meeting Saturday evening. I belong to the society, and have seen

nothing out of character in any one. Do't consider elder Dammon a bad man—he a man I highly esteem. My daughter was baptised Saturday evening—she has been baptised before. I have both seen men and women crawl across the floor on their hands and knees.

George S. Woodbury, sworn. I am a believer in the Advent doctrine—I have attended every one of the meetings in Atkinson.

[This witness was very lengthy in his testimony, both on examination and cross examination. It amounts to the same as the preceding witnesses for the defence with the following additions.]

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**Sister Harmon said to my wife and the girls if they did not do as she said, they would go to hell. My wife and Dammon passed across the floor on their hands and knees.**

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He thinks elder White was not in the bed room, but others were in. We don't acknowledge any leaders, but speak according to the impulse. The elders baptise. I believe in Miss Harmon's visions, because she told my wife's feelings correctly. It is my impression that prisoner kissed my wife. I believe the world will come to an end within two months—prisoner preaches so. I believe this is the faith of the band. It was said, and I believe, that sisters Harmon and Baker's revelations as much as though they came from God. Sister Harmon said to my wife and the girls if they did not do as she said, they would go to hell. My wife and Dammon passed across the floor on their hands and knees. Some man did go into the bed room. Heard brother Dammon say the gift of healing the sick lay in the church.

By the Court.

Ans. Elder Dammon advises us not to work, because there is enough

to live on until the end of the world.

John Gallison, affirmed. [Chandler observed that he had thought of objecting to this witness on the ground of insanity, but upon reflection, he would let him proceed, as he believed it would sufficiently appear in the course of the examination.]

I have been acquainted with elder Dammon as a Freewill elder a number of years. He asked Dammon how long it was. D. answered 6 years. I have been at his house frequently—every thing was in order and in its proper place. I have attended every meeting. I have seen some laying on the floor, two or more at a time—have seen nothing bad in the meetings. [Witness here described the position Miss Harmon lay in on the floor, when she was in a trance, and offered to lay down and show the Court if they wished to see. Court waived it.]

Witness related the visions similar to the other witnesses, but more unintelligible.

Did not hear her called Imitation of Christ. I know she won't, for we don't worship idols.

Cross examined. I believe in visions, and perfectly understand that, but suppose we are not before an Ecclesiastical Council.—Elder Dammon does not believe as he used to. [Witness read from the Bible.] We do wash each other's feet—do creep on the floor very decently. I think he has baptised about eleven, but can't say certain how many—I have the privilege of knowing how they behave as well as any one else. I have no doubt sister Harmon's visions were from God—she told my daughter so. I expect the end of the world every day. I was in favor of my daughter being baptised—I could not see ahead to see the devil's rabble coming, but since they have come, I am certain we did just right.

Abel S. Boobar, affirmed. [Most of the testimony of this witness was a repetition of of what others have testified to, of which the reader I think must be weary]

I did not see White go into the bed

room with Miss Baker—heard the noise in the bed room. Others did go in. Elder D said the churches were in a fallen state, and he had rather risk himself in the hands of the Almighty as a non-professor, than to be in the place of some of the churches. I be-

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**I have said I wished they were broken up, and wished somebody would go and do it. I have said elder Hall ought to be tarred and feathered if he was such a character as I heard he was. I was at one meeting, but as to divine worship there was none.**

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lieve fully in the faith. [Witness affirmed the story of kissing, rolling on the floor, and washing of feet.]

Joshua Burnham, sworn. I have known Miss Dorinda Baker from five years of age—her character is good—she is now 23 or 24 yrs of age. She is a sickly girl, her father has expended \$1000 in doctoring her. I was at the meeting Saturday night—it was appointed for the lady to tell her visions.

Adjourned to half past one o'clock.

Levi M. Doore, sworn. I have attended more than half of the meetings—my brother's testimony is correct—agree also with Mr. Boobar.

Question by Respondent. Answer. Elder Dammon's mode of worship now is similar to what it used to be.

Cross examined by Morison. Did they use to sit on the floor? Ans. No. Did they use to lay or crawl on the floor? Ans. No. Did they use to kiss each other? Ans. No. Did they use to go into the bed room? Ans. No. Did they use to tell visions? Ans. No.

By Morison. Why do you say that his mode of worship is similar to what it used to be? Because he preaches similar. Did he use to preach that the

end of the world was at hand, and baptise in the dead hours of night? Ans. No. The reason we sit on the floor is to convene more people—sometimes we take some in our laps, but not male and female. Don't know of br. D. spending money uselessly. I am a believer. Sometimes we sit on the floor for formality. Our faith don't hold it to be essential. [Witness repeated the mode of kissing, visions, etc. similar to the others] I never heard br. Dammon say he wished to destroy the marriage covenant. [Respondent here re-examined a number of witnesses, all of whom testified that he used his wife well, and appeared to love her.]

Stephen Fish, Exeter, sworn. I attended the meetings at Atkinson, last summer—have attended most all of the Quarterly Meetings for seven years—have been to elder Dammon's house, and he to mine—he provides well in his house—he has always opposed the mode of paying the ministry by regular salary. [Here the defence closed.]

#### WITNESSES FOR STATE.

Ebenezer Lambert, Esq. sworn. Last Sunday evening Loton Lambert told me the story of the meeting the evening before—he related as he testified yesterday almost verbatim.

John Bartlett, of Garland, sworn. I have heard the respondent say that one of their band was as near to him as another—he considered them all alike. It is the general opinion in our town that the prisoner is a disturber of the peace, and ought to be taken care of. I have been acquainted with Elder Dammon seven years—his character was always good until within about 6 weeks.

Loton Lambert re-examined. He affirmed all his former testimony—does not know elder White, but Joel Doore told me it was White that was in the bed room with Miss Baker.

Cross examined. There was nothing to obstruct my views—the man had on a dark colored short jacket, and I think light pantaloons.

Leonard Downes re-examined.

Did see Miss Baker come out of the bed room with a man he had his arm around her—see her go in with a man and shut the door. He had on a short jacket, dark colored, and light colored pantaloons—saw her kiss Mr. Doore—she said “that feels good.”

Thomas Proctor re examined. Prisoner stated to me that Miss Baker had an exercise in the bed room; and he went in and helped her out. Cross examined. I have said I wished they were broken up, and wished somebody would go and do it. I have said elder Hall ought to be tarred and feathered if he was such a character as I heard he was. I was at one meeting, but as to divine worship there was none. They told us they allowed none there but believers.

A. S. Bartlett, Esq. sworn. Yesterday I saw Mr Joel Doore and Loton Lambert conversing together. I went to them—I heard Doore say to him, it was Elder White that was in the bed room with Miss Baker—Lambert said that was what I wanted to know. I so understood, and think I am not mistaken. I also heard Doore say there was a noise in the bed room.

Elder Flavel Bartlett, sworn. I think Prisoner does not belong to the Free Will Baptist Church. He is not in fellowship with them.

Joseph Knights of Garland, sworn. I attended one of Dammon's meetings in Garland, he behaved well until meeting was over. After meeting was over I saw him hugging and kissing a girl. It is the common report in Garland, that he is a disturber of the peace.

Plyn Clark, sworn. I attended their meeting a week ago last Wednesday or Thursday night. [This witness gave a general character of the meeting as described by others.]

I heard one hallo out “I feel better”—others said “good enough.” I think the whole character of the meeting was demoralizing.

J. W. E. Harvey, called. I have attended the meetings a number of times—I have seen prisoner on the floor with a woman between his legs—I have seen them in groups hugging

and kissing one another. I went there once on an errand—Dam. halloed out “Good God Almighty, drive the Devil away.” I once saw elder Hall with his boots off, and the women would go and kiss his feet. One girl made a smack, but did not hit his foot with her lips. Hall said “he that is ashamed of me before men, him will I be ashamed of before my father and the holy angels.” She then gave his feet a number of kisses.

Joel Doore, Jr. called for the defence. I have heard brother Dammon preach that the day of grace was over with sinners. Respondent said “that is my belief.”

Levi M. Doore, called. Br. Wood was dressed in light pants and dark jacket.

Joel Doore, Jr. called. Br. Wood had light pants and dark jacket.

Abel Ayer called. Brother Wood went to the baptism and was about all the evening.

James Boobar called. Sister Baker

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**Dammon argued that the day of grace had gone by, that the believers were reduced; but that there was too many yet, and that the end of the world would come within a week.**

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and br. Wood were about all the evening. Elder White had a frock coat and dark pants.

Prisoner opened his defence & cited Luke 7 chapter 36 verse—John 13 chapter—Last chapter in Romans—Philippians 4th chapter—1st Thessalonians 5th chapter. Holmes followed with the defence. Court adjourned one hour. [Holmes closed the defence with signal ability. Chandler commenced in behalf of the State. Cited 178 chapter 9th and 10th sections Revised Statutes; he dwelt upon the law; after which

Morison summoned up the testi-

mony and closed with a few brief and appropriate remarks.

Elder Dammon again rose for further defence. Court indulged him to speak. He read 126th Psalm, and the 50th Psalm. He argued that the day of grace had gone by, that the believers were reduced; but that there was too many yet, and that the end of the world would come within a week.

The Court after consultation sentenced the prisoner to the House of Correction for the space of Ten Days, From this judgment Respondent appealed.

Tuesday morning the prisoner having taking his seat, rose just as the Court came in, and shouted Glory to the strength of his lungs.

Tuesday afternoon, after the Court had came in and were waiting for the counsel, the prisoner and his witnesses asked permission, and sung as follows:

“COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE.”

See Rev. 18th Ch. 4th V.

By JOHN CRAIG.

While I was down in Egypt's land,

I heard my Saviour was at hand;  
The midnight cry was sounding,  
And I wanted to be free,  
So I left my former brethren  
To sound the jubilee.

They said that I had better stay  
And go with them in their old way;  
But they scoff at my Lord's coming—

With them I could not agree,  
And I left their painted syna-  
gogue

To sound the jubilee.

Then soon I joined the Advent  
Band,

Who just came out from Egypt's  
land;

They were on the road to Canaan,  
A blest praying company,  
And with them I am proclaiming  
That this year's the jubilee.

They call us now a noisy crew,  
And say they hope we'll soon

\* \* \* \*

fall thro';  
 But we now are growing  
 stronger,  
 Both in love and unity,  
 Since we left old mystic Babylon  
 To sound the jubilee.

We're now united in one band,  
 Believing Christ is just at hand  
 To reward his faithful children  
 Who are glad their Lord to see;  
 Bless the Lord our souls are  
 happy  
 While we sound the jubilee.

Though opposition waxes strong,  
 Yet still the battle won't be long;  
 Our blessed Lord is coming,  
 "His glory we shall see;"  
 Keep up good courage

brethren—  
 This year's the jubilee.

If Satan comes to tempt your  
 mind,  
 Then meet him with these blessed  
 lines,  
 Saying, "Get behind me, Satan,"  
 I have naught to do with thee;  
 I have got my soul converted,  
 And I'll sound the jubilee.

The battle is not to the strong,  
 The weak may sing the conquer-  
 or's song;  
 I've been through the fiery fur-  
 nace,  
 And no harm was done to me,  
 I came out with stronger evidence

This year's the jubilee.

A little longer here below,  
 And home to glory we will go;  
 I believe it! I believe it!  
 Hallelujah, I am free  
 From all sectarian  
 prejudice—  
 This year's the jubilee.

We'll soon remove to that blest  
 shore,  
 And shout and sing forever  
 more,  
 Where the wicked cannot enter  
 To disturb our harmony;  
 But we'll wear the crowns of  
 glory  
 With our God eternally."

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# Scandal or Rite of Passage? Historians on the Dammon Trial

Edited by Rennie Schoepflin

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Several of the historians who are most actively publishing and researching material on the history of Seventh-day Adventists recently spent several hours analyzing the significance of the account of Israel Dammon's trial published in this issue of *Spectrum*. Frederick Hoyt, professor of history and political science at Loma Linda University, had discovered the account four years ago, but was so unsettled by what he found that his colleagues in Adventist history only this year learned about the report. They had read it just weeks before they gathered for their conversation together. Rennie Schoepflin, assistant professor of history of Loma Linda University, edited the extensive transcripts of their taped conversation and received approval from all participants for publication of the roundtable discussion as it appears below.

JONATHAN BUTLER, visiting scholar at the University of California at Riverside, received an M.Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University, and his doctorate under Martin E. Marty at the University of Chicago before teaching American religious history at both Union College and Loma Linda University. He has published many articles on Adventist history in such journals as *Church History* and in Edwin Gaustad's widely noted volume, *The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974). He recently coedited *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the 19th Century* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), and is currently writing a monograph entitled *Ellen G. White and Victorian America: A Study of Prophecy, Culture, and Social Change*.

RONALD GRAYBILL, associate professor of history at Loma Linda University, earned an M. Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary and received his doctorate under Timothy Smith at Johns Hopkins University. For 13 years until 1984, Graybill worked at the Ellen G. White Estate in Washington, D.C. In addition to scores of articles, he has written *Mission to Black America: The True Story of James Edson White and the Riverboat Morning Star* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press

Publishing Association, 1971). Right now, he is writing an essay on the legal guardianship of Adventist no-work fanatics in the 1840s and 1850s and preparing a correspondence course on "The Gift of Prophecy."

FREDERICK HOYT, professor of history and political science at Loma Linda University, received his doctorate from Claremont Graduate School. He subsequently received a Fulbright Scholarship to pursue further the area of his dissertation, Philippine diplomatic history. For several years he has concentrated on the period and place where Ellen Harmon and Adventism emerged from Millerism—Northern New England in the mid-1840s. Drawing on the vast number of original sources he has examined—newspapers, court data, church records—Hoyt is preparing a study that he tentatively calls *Growing Up Down East*. It will recount how Adventists appeared in the eyes of their contemporaries.

RENNIE SCHOEPFLIN edits the book-review section of *Spectrum* in addition to teaching history at Loma Linda University. As one of the few historians of science in the Adventist educational system, Schoepflin focuses on American intellectual and social history. In addition to pursuing research on early Adventist medical missionaries, he is completing his doctoral dissertation, *The Theory and Practice of Christian Science Healing in Progressive America*, at the University of Wisconsin.

—The Editors

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## *At First I Couldn't Read It*

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**BUTLER:** How did you find this transcript of the Dammon trial, Fred?

**HOYT:** I was looking at all newspapers in Maine for the period 1827-1846 to see if I could find references to Ellen White's early life in the secular press. I had no particular purpose in looking at this one, the *Pisqataquis Farmer*. In

fact, I found no references to her by name until I read this document, and I was shocked by what I found.

**GRAYBILL:** When did you find this document, and why haven't we heard about it before?

**HOYT:** I've had the document about four years. Well, I think there are several reasons why I didn't share it. I think I didn't know how to handle it, for one thing. In fact, when I first saw it on the microfilm reader, I couldn't read it. First, it referred to a woman on the floor with a pillow under her head who claims she had a vision. Something told me, "You don't want to read any further." I just knew this was going to be my first notice of Ellen Harmon in a newspaper. And so I read on and it said she was from Portland, Maine, but didn't give her name. You know how it builds up. It's very dramatic. And then suddenly someone lets drop that her name is Ellen Harmon. So I shut off the microfilm reader and I called my wife. And I said, "I have something here I think maybe you better tell me not to read." And she thought that was silly. So I went back and tried to read again. I didn't get down to the name Ellen Harmon until, I think, the third try. And then I read it and said, "Well, let it go." You know, the peculiar feeling that you get, like I'm going to read about my father in jail or something? You know that feeling? But there it was.

**GRAYBILL:** But today, having studied more of the background of the times, you don't have the same kind of reaction, do you?

**HOYT:** No. When you told me you weren't shocked at all when you read it, I thought that I had been rather immature.

**GRAYBILL:** Did the story appear elsewhere? What kind of currency did it have at the time?

**HOYT:** Yes, it appeared in other newspapers then. I have it from a Boston newspaper or two, from a Portland newspaper, from a couple of other Maine newspapers, and New York state

as well. It's essentially the same account each time.

**GRAYBILL:** I might note here also that in a notice in *The Midnight Cry*, which was a paper published by Joshua Himes, there was a notice warning people about Israel Dammon, "whose trial has been published in all the newspapers." So it was widely known, and would have informed the perception of Ellen Harmon that many of the first-day Adventists and much of the public would have had at that time. Rather

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**Ellen Harmon is a rather small actor in this trial in the long run. It's the implications of sexual impropriety that would have been most scandalous in this story.**

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than the things we read in *Life Sketches*, this particular trial formed the public's image of what the Adventists in Maine were up to. They were seen as fanatics and Ellen Harmon was thought of as one of them.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** I'm not so sure about that. One may have told others the story of Elder Dammon, but Ellen Harmon is a rather small actor in this trial in the long run. It's the implications of sexual impropriety that would have been most scandalous in this story, and maybe the visions and behavior of Ellen Harmon didn't gain so wide a notice.

**GRAYBILL:** You may be right, but bear in mind also that this is published in March of 1845, and at the end of April 1845 the leaders of the Millerite movement, Himes and the others, called the conference in Albany at which they condemned Sabbathkeeping, footwashing, and visionaries. So if they were not aware of Ellen Harmon particularly, they were aware of people in Maine who were having visions, and they were uneasy with it and didn't want to be associated with it.



**SCHOEPFLIN:** Now Fred, you've found evidence of other visionaries in Maine besides Harmon and Dorinda Baker, haven't you?

**HOYT:** Yes, there are four women I know by name, plus William Foy. So there are five mentioned in the newspapers that I can name right off: Emily Clemons, Dorinda Baker, Phoebe Knapp, Ellen Harmon, and William Foy.

**GRAYBILL:** I've found one other as well, Mary Hamlin.

**HOYT:** Let me add one more point about the circulation of this story. The single most significant newspaper in Maine at this time was the Portland, Maine, *Eastern Argus*. It reported on the trial within one week. Although it did not report on the whole trial, it did mention Ellen Harmon from Portland, and stated that "A part of the evidence we have omitted, it being to [sic] gross for publication."

**SCHOEPFLIN:** We know that newspapers are notorious for the way in which they alter events. How can we be confident that what we've got here is a fairly accurate representation of what took place at the trial? Have you tracked down an official transcript of the trial?

**HOYT:** Transcripts of the trial—if there ever were any—do not exist any longer. The only surviving legal document of the trial is a legal recording of the trial and sentencing.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** What were the charges?

**HOYT:** Dammon had been charged with being "a vagabond and idle person, going about in the town of Atkinson . . . from place to place, begging." With being "a common railer or brawler, neglecting his calling or employment, misspending his earnings," and failing to "provide for the support of himself [or his] family, and against the peace of the State of Maine, and contrary to form of Statute in such cases made and provided."

**BUTLER:** Disturbing the peace?

**HOYT:** It does not use the term "disturbing the peace." That's what Ellen White used later on in commenting on the trial. But that would probably be the contemporary term.

**GRAYBILL:** Who were these folk: the judge, the attorneys?

**HOYT:** The judges and lawyers for the state were justices of the peace, who would have been amateur jurists. The only professional attorney that I've been able to find is the one who defended Dammon, James S. Holmes. He was a professional attorney who advertised in the newspaper.

**GRAYBILL:** What about the man who arrested Dammon?

**HOYT:** He was a deputy sheriff.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** What kind of people were called as witnesses?

**HOYT:** They were local citizens, all adult males. I have found 23 of the 36 witnesses in the census of 1840 and about a dozen of them in the newspapers of this period. One was a manufacturer and the others were all farmers, but that wasn't uncommon.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** What was the decision of the court?

**HOYT:** Guilty. Sentenced to 10 days in jail in Bangor, the nearest place apparently that had a jail. But he never went there. He appealed, and it was held over on appeal until the next district court session, which would have been in May; but before the court ever met, the case was quashed. Holmes had taken this case not because he was a Millerite or sympathetic to the Millerites, but because he thought it was a clear invasion of religious liberty. He was respected as a man of strong principles, and he took it on that ground only.

**GRAYBILL:** So on that point, at least, Ellen White's account of the trial in *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 2, is fairly accurate. She simply says "the cost of court was, I think, thrown upon him, and he was released." He was never incarcerated as a result of this conviction.

**HOYT:** Yes, he was freed. He never served any time.

## *The Account Has Credibility*

**BUTLER:** All of this is absorbingly interesting, but for us the key players are not Dammon or the witnesses or the attorney, but the Seventh-day Adventist founders, James and Ellen White, who appear in this transcript.

**HOYT:** But were not on trial, were not there, and were not brought to the witness stand. I think that needs to be made clear.

**BUTLER:** Dammon seems to be there because he was the leader; he was the elder who was overseeing the meetings, so he was considered responsible.

**HOYT:** I think it is important to note that Ellen Harmon and James White were not on trial; there was no reason for the witnesses to attack them at all. They were simply talking about them incidentally, so I think their testimony about James and Ellen has to be taken more seriously because of that. It seems to me, when you read through it, that the witnesses were rather neutral and quite fair to Ellen and James. They didn't use colored words or loaded adjectives at all; they just described.

**BUTLER:** The transcript had credibility for me also. There were conflicting stories; but the fact that there were differences of opinion about detail and they kind of got worked out lends credibility to it. I thought there was a sort of a consensus as to what was going on there.

**GRAYBILL:** It seems to me that the defense

witnesses corroborate virtually all that the prosecution witnesses charge, with the exception of the charge that Ellen Harmon was referred to as the "Imitation of Christ."

**HOYT:** That's right, that enigmatic expression is the only exception. So, we accept Elder Dammon's testimony at the trial as essentially accurate.

**GRAYBILL:** And so we have to assume that there was some kissing going on, that there was some crawling going on, that there was some halloing and shouting. However, it seems that witnesses for the prosecution tended to allege more physical contact between men and women, such as sitting between the legs of people, or on the laps of people, and the allegation about going into the back room. The defense didn't accept that.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** I think that all witnesses agreed that there was touching going on, and that people sat next to one another. The difference is in what that meant. To the defense witnesses, the touching was incidental to the fact that it was crowded, and that there was a lot going on. To the witnesses for the prosecution, it was more than that, it had sexual overtones.

**GRAYBILL:** I think that the prosecution wit-

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**The crawling, believe it or not, had a Biblical basis. If you are going to go to heaven, you have to humble yourself as a little child, and that was the text they used.**

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nesses saw the visions themselves as a species of fanaticism.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** I think so too.

**GRAYBILL:** But there was a theological basis for the crawling and the kissing. They made the

point themselves that the Bible says “greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.” Apparently they greeted the sisters also with the holy kiss. The crawling, believe it or not, had a Biblical basis. If you are going to go to heaven, you have to humble yourself as a little child, and that was the text they used. Children crawl, and so some used that to show that they were ready for Jesus’ coming, and others, who believed that Christ had already come spiritually, to show that they were already in heaven.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** You have people who were so obsessed with a kind of Biblical literalism that they went to absurd ends.

**BUTLER:** I don’t know. I’m not convinced that I would root this kind of behavior in Biblical literalism or a restoration of Biblical themes. There are of course 19 centuries of Biblical literalists, and these kind of episodes erupt periodically, but it isn’t a Biblicism that creates the barking, swooning, and other kinds of ecstasies that went on in frontier America.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** I agree with you, Jon, but we have to remember that they defended it in Biblical terms.

**BUTLER:** I think they were overcome with a kind of ecstasy. The Spirit was in them. They didn’t need proof texts. They were experiencing. That was their Bible. Not that they weren’t Bible believers; they wanted to be linked to tongues of fire in the past too. But do we want to say that the difference between their exercises and the exercises of Shakers or Kentucky Methodists is that these people were more literally Biblical about what they did? I see them more as part of the same kind of radical enthusiasm.

**GRAYBILL:** I do want to insist that their Biblicism is part of the picture. I think the Bible and their familiarity with the Bible formed an important part of their expectation of how people should behave under the influence of the Spirit. And that is particularly relevant to Ellen

White’s visions. People steeped in the prophecies of Daniel, having read that Daniel’s breath left him, resonate to Ellen White’s similar experiences.

**BUTLER:** I’m not disagreeing with you. I’m just sort of supplementing you. I think spiritual wifery would be an illustration here. Adventists taking other women because they had already entered the kingdom, would be, under the ordinary social etiquette, promiscuous. There’s a Biblical literalism about that, but it presupposes that the end has already happened and they’re in the new world now. You know how the Biblical literalism operates. The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida perfectionists all three justified their very different views of sexuality and marriage with the same text: “They neither marry nor are given in marriage, but as are the angels of God in heaven.” One said celibacy, another said polygamy, and the third said complex marriage. The Biblical

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**I think they were overcome with a kind of ecstasy. The Spirit was in them. They didn’t need proof texts. They were experiencing. That was their Bible.**

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literalism is there. But there’s a sense in which enthusiasm kills the letter of the Word and replaces it with the Spirit, doesn’t it?

**GRAYBILL:** Well, certainly in the trial of Israel Dammon it seems to have done so. And it may be the key to Ellen White’s emergence from this crowd that she started to turn away from that.

**HOYT:** Maybe you don’t want to deal with the term *fanaticism*, but it seems that we need a definition. Ellen White claims she was not a fanatic, that she was fighting fanaticism. What did she mean by this?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Fanaticism is bizarre and extreme

behavior.

**GRAYBILL:** Could we try to position Ellen White in terms of any or all of the behaviors that any of these people might have considered fanatical?

**HOYT:** Sure, you can list them.

**GROUP:** Trances, shouting, rebaptism, crawling, rolling on the floor, kissing of feet, spiritual kissing (the holy kiss), condemnation, healing, feet washing, shut door, and no-work.

**GRAYBILL:** I think you can identify Ellen White with shouting, rebaptism, kissing (the holy kiss), trances, shut door, and feet washing. Not mixed feet washing, however. Women washing men's feet, not men washing women's feet. It's a very curious thing. In her published books she talks about there being Biblical precedent for women washing men's feet. You can see that she's drawing a strict line. She's going as far as she can. And of course, not kissing feet. And as far as calling the visitors these bad names, we

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**Place yourself in Victorian America. You've got a young girl lying on the floor on a pillow for six to seven hours at night, with this hoopla going on around her. She goes into trance occasionally and then comes out of it. . . . There's a lot going on here and Ellen is a part of it.**

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don't have Ellen White involved in that. We do have her endorsing the shut door, though, whatever that may mean.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** She did tell individuals that her vision told her to tell them that they were going to hell.

**GRAYBILL:** That is a question that I have. Ellen

White, in her autobiography, talks about a childhood conversation with her mother, I don't know when, in which she expressed her fear of hell and her mother expressed her doubts about whether a good God would allow people to burn eternally, and she was shocked but relieved that her mother would have these questions about hell. So what was Ellen White saying there in Atkinson? That they would go to hell, or were these people who believed in hell interpreting her strong statement that you would be lost?

**HOYT:** You certainly can't answer that from the transcript, can you?

**BUTLER:** There isn't really a discrepancy, is there, in her thinking? She could use the term "go to hell" without meaning "eternally burning fire," couldn't she?

**GRAYBILL:** She could. And she could also say that these people would be lost in one way or another, and they could supply the "go to hell." We just can't know.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** And we don't know what's going on theologically in her mind at this time, whether she made that transition to disbelieving in an eternally burning hell or not, or was even troubled by it.

**GRAYBILL:** But we do know from independent evidence that James and Ellen White advocated and practiced rebaptism of immersed Christians clear down until at least 1850. It was considered a religious duty of those who had accepted the Advent message—the Sabbath, the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus—that they be rebaptized. And James himself rebaptized Ellen. Now, I don't have any evidence that Ellen ever advocated these multiple rebaptisms. And this is the only place we find her advocating baptism in the dead of night, in the dead of winter. How cold was it, Fred?

**HOYT:** Well, I can't find any temperatures in the paper there in Dover, but the average tempera-

ture was kept in Portland. In February it was 18 degrees averaged over a 10-year period. And that's in the daytime. And you notice that they arrived in sleighs. There's snow on the ground. This isn't an unusual early spring.

**BUTLER:** Charles Fitch had died one week before the Great Disappointment [October 22, 1844] of pneumonia because he had been baptizing people in Northeastern streams.

## *They Had to Move Out of There*

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**BUTLER:** I want to touch on this fanaticism matter. The reason for our list of fanatical behaviors is to raise the question of how implicated were James and Ellen in these so-called fanatical activities. And what is one's impression when one reads the transcript and hears about this woman? Place yourself in Victorian America. You've got a young girl lying on the floor on a pillow for six to seven hours at night, with this hoopla going on around her. There is allegedly rolling around, crawling. She goes into trance occasionally and then comes out of it and orders someone down to the stream to get baptized, and then she's off again, while a man cradles her head. There's kissing of feet around her. People sitting around on the floor, lying on the floor "promiscuously," exceedingly noisy, another visionary going into a bedroom with men, although it's disputed as to with whom and why. There's a lot going on here and Ellen is a part of it.

**GRAYBILL:** The question has to be raised: Do we know that Ellen White didn't condemn any of these activities?

**BUTLER:** You cannot tell from this document that she had distanced herself from fanaticism.

**GRAYBILL:** That's right. It's just that she does say later on that she always condemned some of these practices. You can't tell that from here;

this transcript certainly places her psychologically closer to the fanaticism than we had imagined. Part of it is just our feeling about the difference between a woman lying down on the floor, and a woman walking around having a vision.

**BUTLER:** It is a striking difference. Here you have a young girl in repose, on her back on a pillow, and all around her, is this tremendous frenzy and turmoil. A few years later, you have a woman standing in trance, and the room is hushed; there is this solemn audience gathered and looking at her in rapt attention. You have this community of ecstasy in the first case, and she's part of the ecstatic community; later she is the only ecstatic, which is the kind of thing Graybill's work has established.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** If one believes that the content of those trance experiences was to a great extent a reflection of what was happening around her, then, as the people around her became more even handed and more in control, one might expect the content of her visions to become more even handed and controlled.

**GRAYBILL:** I like to say that the Lord meets the needs of the people where they are.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** She played the role she needed to play. She fulfilled the needs of the community.

**HOYT:** To be accepted by them?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Well, I think that the community needed people to literally get scared out of hell because the world was going to end, as Dammion said. So you're not going to tell people to give up pork because they'll live a healthier and longer life.

**BUTLER:** Of course you're touching on the fact that this was a radically millenarian community; looking at the end, the door was shut.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Ronald and Janet Numbers have reminded us that in recalling the events just

after the disappointment Ellen White wrote that “after the passing of the time in 1844, fanaticism in various forms arose. . . . I went into their meetings. There was much excitement, with noise and confusion. . . . Some appeared to be in vision, and fell to the floor. . . . As the result of fanatical movements such as I have described, persons in no way responsible for them have in some cases lost their reason. They could not harmonize the scenes of excitement

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**[Ellen White’s] mind wandered for two weeks, and she feared that she would also become insane. . . . What we’ve got here is a person who was experiencing serious doubts about herself, her movement, and her role within it.**

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and tumult with their own past precious experience; they were pressed beyond measure to receive the message of error; it was represented to them that unless they did this they would be lost; and as the result their mind was unbalanced, and some became insane.” [*Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 34, 35.] In *Spiritual Gifts* [pp. 51, 69] she described the same period as one of “extreme sickness,” when her mind wandered for two weeks, and she feared that she would also become insane. It is probable that this extended passage from *Selected Messages* was quasi-autobiographical, at least subconsciously. What we’ve got here is a person who was experiencing serious doubts about herself her movement, and her role within it.

**GRAYBILL:** That 1845 February evening with Dammon was almost Ellen White’s first venture abroad.

**HOYT:** That’s right. It repeatedly says she had left Portland to relate the vision that she had had. That’s why she had this meeting in Atkinson, so she could relate her vision.

**GRAYBILL:** I don’t know how much of this fanatic behavior went on in Portland. But in a sense she had her own first exposure to it in Atkinson. After she went through this experience, she rode calmly to the next town with James and Sister Foss in the carriage. James may have said, “Boy, I hope we never get into one of *those* again.”

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Or she may have said, “Boy, didn’t I make a fool of myself last night? What did I say anyway, James?” She might have been embarrassed.

**HOYT:** If you go back and look at all of her autobiographical writings, she makes reference to this incident in Atkinson only once. The other times she leaves it out and refers to other meetings where there was fanaticism. For example, she deals heavily with Exeter, a visit that preceded this meeting. She talks about denouncing fanaticism. But I can’t find any reference where she cites Atkinson and claims that she denounced fanaticism there. Now maybe that’s accidental, but I doubt it very much.

**GRAYBILL:** This incident to which you refer is reported by Ellen White in *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 2, which was published in 1860, and not in any subsequent rendition of her life story, which would include the 1880, 1888, and 1915 editions of *Life Sketches*.

**HOYT:** You may notice that the town and the names of Dammon and Dorinda Baker disappear from those subsequent versions. I think she wanted to forget Atkinson and Dammon. That was an aberration she regretted. Look at the way she treated Dammon later on. He was a hero to her at first. Then she wanted to distance herself from him.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** So she revised the past in order to solidify her later status as a more mature and responsible prophetess.

**BUTLER:** Adventists began to remember the past

with a selective memory, in a sense wanting to forget all of that fanatical behavior. It had been sort of the fuel of the movement that had made it go, but later, it was viewed negatively; to remember it was to retard the progress of the movement. So we have a whole shift in orientation that we need to account for.

**GRAYBILL:** The Shouting Methodists went through this same transition at about the same time. As Adventists moved into the Gilded Age and became more prosperous and more organized, they tended to leave behind many early practices. Ellen and James White believed that they were uncontrollable, and so gradually, they were disciplined out.

**BUTLER:** And you can't have competing trance mediums. So while in 1845 you have Dorinda Baker, Ellen Harmon, and a number of other female visionaries, and they are all approved of, that can't last and still have a single, integrated religious movement. You must distinguish the "true" from the "false."

**GRAYBILL:** Just view it sociologically if you will. Why did Ellen White succeed and Dorinda Baker, Emily Clemons, or William Foy, didn't?

**BUTLER:** The answer is implied in the document. Her head was in James White's hands. I think the relationship between Ellen and James is a critical one. You look all over the world at countless millenarian movements that pop up like mayflies and then disappear. I think the difference between Seventh-day Adventism and other such movements that die out is that Ellen White accommodated to the modern world. She wrote things down. They built a publishing house. She had a health vision, sure, but they built a Western Health Reform Institute. In other words, there's this institutionalization, and in a modern setting you have the resources to do this. In Central Africa, how can you publish a vision if you can't even write?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** But Ron's question is about the other visionaries who were all in that same

modern setting.

**BUTLER:** Okay. But in order to "modernize," you need the skills of a James White.

**GRAYBILL:** But who would James White have been without Ellen White?

**BUTLER:** True. It's a symbiotic relationship; without charisma there is emptiness, and charisma without order is going to disappear.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Would anyone here say that there was something unique in the content of the visionary experiences of Ellen Harmon that contributed to the success of the institutions that Adventists established?

**GRAYBILL:** On the basis of the documents you have in front of you, you can't say that. But I

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**A tentative conclusion is that they failed in Maine and New England. They were in serious trouble and it took time to forget this. They had to move out of there—to the west.**

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could make that argument to some extent by comparing William Foy's visions with Ellen White's. There's a whole combination of factors that account for Ellen and James White's success. But it doesn't look too hopeful at Atkinson on that Saturday night.

**HOYT:** But you start someplace, don't you?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Fred, you've tracked the Whites to Michigan, haven't you? Were they successful after Atkinson?

**HOYT:** Well, my very tentative conclusion is that they were a failure in Maine and New England. She herself wrote to Loughborough in 1874, that that fanaticism up there in Maine caused "a fearful stain to be brought upon the

cause of God which would cleave to the name of Adventism like leprosy.” They were in serious trouble. So it took distance and time for people to forget this, and they had to move out of there—to move west to Michigan and California.

**BUTLER:** The Millerite leaders in Albany were saying, quite rightly, that this Seventh Month Movement had developed into a bizarre, strange crowd of people. And Ellen White owed her inception as a visionary to these oddballs.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** She survived because she moved away from them.

**BUTLER:** Absolutely. There is an irony here. A visionary starts out because there exists this strange chaos and crazy behavior. That is the context that produces these people. But, if they are to survive and have a historic impact, they have to quickly transcend this world. And she did that. So her comments that she was against fanaticism ring true to me. In a sense she owed her existence to fanaticism, and yet she would die an untimely death as a visionary if she allowed it to continue.

**GRAYBILL:** Lest people think we are making too much of the connection between Ellen White and the fanatics in this early era on the basis of this one document, let me remind you of the no-work fanatics in Paris, Maine. J. N. Andrews exclaimed in 1849 when Ellen White visited there, “I would exchange a thousand errors for one truth,” which was probably about the rate of exchange in Paris at that time. His father was a no-work fanatic. His future father-in-law was a crawler!

### *The Grandson Remembers What the Son Forgets*

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**GRAYBILL:** There’s one thing that we haven’t discussed at all that I think will be in the minds of many readers, and it ought to be brought up

before we decide the conclusion of the whole matter. In Ellen White’s own 1860 account of this, she says that the sheriff was unable to arrest Israel Dammon because the power of the Spirit was so great that although he made no resistance, men could not endure the power of God, and they would have to rush out of the house for relief.

**BUTLER:** And the Dammon document says there were women hanging on him and wouldn’t let him go.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Ellen White may have been in trance and, therefore, not conscious or in complete control of her senses when the arrest took place.

**GRAYBILL:** And the Lord knows there was all kinds of emotion.

**BUTLER:** Who cares? What’s the point?

**GRAYBILL:** Well, the point is, was Ellen White a reliable source? Or was she lying to us to make the story look good?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** She may not have known what was going on, but I don’t believe she lied. With all that noise going on, was it possible for a young invalid, who was lapsing in and out of visionary trances, to distinguish the hullabaloo that surrounded the ecstatic experiences from “the continued shout” that surrounded the effort to arrest Dammon?

**GRAYBILL:** Ellen White wrote that “*While I was speaking*, two men looked into the window. We were satisfied of their object. They entered and rushed past me to Eld. Damman [sic]. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, and his strength was taken away, and he fell to the floor helpless. The officer cried out, ‘In the name of the State of Maine, lay hold of this man.’ Two seized his arms, and two his feet, and attempted to drag him from the room. They would move him a few inches only, and then rush out of the house. The power of God was in that room, and



the servants of God, with their countenances lighted up with his glory, made no resistance.” [*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 40. Italics supplied.]

**BUTLER:** I don't know how fruitful this is. It's the sort of explanation that no Seventh-day

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**This was a brief, ephemeral moment in the movement; it was necessary, but they had to outgrow it.**

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Adventist in North America has ever experienced or believes. They might believe it happened in 1845, but the idea of people coming into a room that is electrified by some supernatural power that forces them outside is just fiction to people; it's the movies. I don't think that is the issue. Her recollection of fanaticism and how she related to it was completely distorted. If you only had Ellen White and not this transcript, you would never imagine Ellen White in a scene like this. You would imagine her arriving at a room full of this activity, and immediately blasting everyone involved in it, and clearing the place out before the cops ever got there. Her memory of it was quite different. It was a selective memory. But the context we've tried to develop for explaining that is that this was a brief, ephemeral moment in the movement; it was necessary, but they had to outgrow it, and part of the way they outgrow it was in the way they remembered it, as well as the way they established order and discipline. I dispute the idea that “Now we've found out that Ellen White was a liar, or a bad historian.” I don't think that was true, and I don't think that's the issue. It was just ordinary development in the adolescence of this movement, a rite of passage; and for people on this side of it, people who wouldn't exist and wouldn't have their institutions without their having gone through it to say, “Oh, we discovered this skeleton and are embarrassed.” I think that's the wrong tack to take.

**HOYT:** You're not surprised that we found this?

**BUTLER:** No. I would be surprised if we did not find documents like this, when one compares Adventists with other religious movements. They all are conceived in this kind of ferment.

**HOYT:** If we're mature and have this sort of perspective, we should expect this and not be shocked by it?

**BUTLER:** Yes. The grandson remembers what the son forgets.

**GRAYBILL:** There is still a sense of violation, however. I don't think it's sexual, necessarily, but there's a sense of violation, of sacrilege in the image of her lying on the floor all evening with these people tramping and shouting all about.

**HOYT:** It's not “proper.”

### *Can Order Spring Out of Chaos?*

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**GRAYBILL:** I still haven't heard from any of you what the real significance of this is. Is this just a curiosity from the past, or does it really change our view of Ellen White and our past? How ought we to relate to it today? With embarrassment or affirmation, or what?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** I think that a lot of Adventists are going to be scandalized by this. Some will be so scandalized that they might even believe that, if it wasn't fabricated, at least the witnesses wanted to distort what they had seen. After that denial stage, there will be a period of depression and anxiety, and then a continued, growing distrust of the early roots of Adventism and the messages that were believed to be from God through Ellen White.

Finally, many will pick up their religious lives and start anew, but no longer with the kind of naive and overly optimistic view of their past. And that will be it.

**BUTLER:** I think part of the problem is that Seventh-day Adventists have been so narrow and so provincial, with so little understanding of what happens to other religious movements.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** But you say that as if it were something that could be done away with and still have Adventism. I'm not so sure. It seems to be part of the essence of Adventism to distinguish itself that way.

**GRAYBILL:** There's a way of looking at this that is still very unique and faith-confirming. To say to yourself, "Isn't it amazing! Starting there, we got to where we are?" The Lord said he'd take the weakest of the weak. We didn't quite

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**Ellen White was instrumental in saying; "We've got to quit time setting; we've got to get beyond this radical millenarianism."**

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understand all the weaknesses that were inherent in that. And apparently it took him a little while longer than we thought to get this thing really going on the most successful track.

**BUTLER:** What you've got here is a movement that for a brief period of time was radically millenarian. They thought that the end of the world was coming in a matter of weeks or months. And Seventh-day Adventists do not believe that today. There is still a component within the Seventh-day Adventist belief system of looking for the end of the world, but unless you go out onto the frontiers of the third world you find few who are radically millenarian, and then they are often involved in a lot of these other things—healings, trances, et cetera. What's interesting about this document is the pulling apart of the curtain on this radically millenarian phase of Seventh-day Adventism. It was extremely brief, emotional, ecstatic, and frenzied, but remarkable, not that it existed but that it existed for so short a time—only about

seven years. And Ellen White was instrumental in elongating the time table by saying; "We've got to quit time setting; we've got to get beyond this radical millenarianism."

**GRAYBILL:** It also sort of upsets our American view of progress. We all think of early Adventism as the golden age, when everyone was so dedicated, so committed, and so good. And when you go back to the very earliest experiences and find that, oh wow, we'd better put the golden age along about 1857.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Adventists have a conflict in their minds about the golden age—some look to the future and others idealize the pristine faith of an older church.

**HOYT:** I think what would disturb the average Adventist more than anything else would be to discover that the White Estate knew about this all the time, and had kept it secret. That there had been a cover-up of this.

**GRAYBILL:** Frankly, I am a little embarrassed myself. When I read, just today, that notice in the *The Midnight Cry* about Israel Dammon, whose trial had been reported in all the papers, I knew that I had read that before and I should have immediately gone and found all the papers.

**HOYT:** But who cares about Israel Dammon? It didn't say Ellen Harmon. We would have all been out there 140 years ago if it had.

**GRAYBILL:** I know. But she mentions the trial. I should have caught on. Anyway, I am as certain as I can be that the White Estate never knew anything about it.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** There are also reductionist models that can explain this behavior in ways that would distance a believer from it as well.

**GRAYBILL:** In what sense?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** For example, one might use a

psychological model to explain the origin and nature of the trances and the other kinds of fanaticism that accompanied them. It won't be easy for an Adventist to accept that the rather sedate and trustworthy tenets of Adventism sprang forth from experiences that were so frenetic and confused. How can order spring out of confusion? All of the explanations we have discussed about the need for charisma and order to be married in some kind of way is fine. But what you're finally left with is order and truth springing out of confusion and chaos.

**GRAYBILL:** That's the thing, Rennie. We have always viewed our doctrines and beliefs really not as coming out of Ellen White's visions, but out of those Sabbath conferences. Now, if you can put this fanaticism into the Sabbath conferences, then you would have a psychological problem. But since Adventism has never considered that the doctrines grew out of her visions . . . .

**SCHOEPFLIN:** I don't think the typical Adventist believes that. But even if one grants that Ellen White's visions only confirmed the doctrines, then the believer is still left with a dilemma: Truth was confirmed out of this kind of chaos? No matter how one portrays the trances, they were still trances. You can use all the public relations you want to spruce up the context of the visions, but the mental state of Ellen Harmon was what?

**BUTLER:** They're trances but it's not a community of trance mediums, ecstasies, rollers, and spitters. It's become a group of Bible scholars now, with this one woman. The others have been discarded.

**GRAYBILL:** I've looked at the positive side of this affair, but I have to look at the negative side too. Lay aside the formation of doctrine, lay aside her growing out of this, lay aside everything. You still have her lying on the floor in this context, having an experience that she and later Adventists identified as a God-given communication. It strains one's credulity to

accept that God had anything to do with what was going on in that kind of chaos.

**BUTLER:** There is no Seventh-day Adventist alive, or that I have ever met, who would believe in that kind of phenomena.

**HOYT:** Is this what would bother most Adventists? That she doesn't look like Harry Anderson's picture of her in vision? Instead of being up, she's horizontal. Is that the main problem?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** If visions only make sense in contexts like the Dammon meetings, then once such contexts disappear, the visions are gone.

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**BUTLER:** What we're saying is that the context has changed; but now we have another context that is far more ordered, and Ellen is a role player in that.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** But you can't call them visions in the new context. You call them trances or conversion reactions. As the context changes, so does the definition of the phenomenon.

**BUTLER:** Bryan Wilson's point on charisma is that it is a premodern phenomenon. And the only place it occurs in the modern world is in these "gaps" in modern life, where you can have a subcommunity that still believes in healings that are supernatural interventions. That isn't the way people function normally in the modern world. Even Seventh-day Adventism is modernized in many ways. Look at its medicine, its use of higher education, its explanations for everything it does. Look at its bureaucracy in Washington, D.C. These men function in modern categories of thinking, they

read the *Wall Street Journal*, they invest in the stock market, they are modern men. Obviously, you could knock them over with a visionary now. But that doesn't mean that it isn't a reality for them in the sense that it is very important to them that their past remain intact. They can't explain the past away by saying, "Well, they were premoderns and we're moderns." They can't put it together like that.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** They don't do it *that* way, but they *do* explain their past away by redefining it.

**BUTLER:** Not completely. She had visions then. Nobody can have them now, right?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** No, I don't believe that most Adventists say that.

**BUTLER:** If Neal Wilson ran into a visionary now, he would explain that visionary in naturalistic terms. Wouldn't he?

**SCHOEPFLIN:** No. I think that many Adventists believe that visions occur or can occur today. And part of the reason why they believe that is that they believe the context in which visions occurred in the 1840s is very analogous to the

context in which they live today. To make it clear to them how different the context for visions really was, is to erode their confidence that they can ever occur today. I don't think that most Adventists today are persuaded that the activities of God aren't direct in people's lives. Most Adventists believe that prayers are answered, that angels visit us, and that occasionally God sends messages in dreams.

**BUTLER:** But these people buy medical insurance and go to doctors. These people aren't going to healers.

**SCHOEPFLIN:** Right. So once you've convinced them that really the context in which that kind of visitation of God works was disappearing in the late 19th century and is now gone forever, you have removed their ability to believe that those phenomena still occur today. You have secularized them.

**BUTLER:** No, no, *you* don't secularize them. They were secularized, and they began getting secularized by their prophet in 1847. They developed the technology, they stopped healing, and they founded a medical school. That isn't something historians did for them.

## Pioneer Memorial Church Votes On Women Elders

by Stella Ramirez Greig

The members of Pioneer Memorial Church, on the campus of Andrews University, have approved, by a 62.5 percent majority, the election and ordination of women elders to serve their congregation. The mailed ballots were tabulated on May 21 and announced to the congregation on May 23, 1987. This decision follows a lengthy study process (see *Spectrum* 17.2 for a report of the beginning of the process), and two balloting procedures a year apart (see chart).

The procedure for the second balloting was planned by a committee appointed by the church board, which felt there had been some flaws in the first balloting. The committee decided on a mailed ballot, rather than one handed out during church services. The voting was to be done in two stages: first, a poll of students who attended Pioneer Memorial, but were not members, that would not count toward the decision, but would be reported to the general membership; and secondly, the balloting of Pioneer Memorial members living within a 100-mile radius of the church (about 2200). It was also decided that no further public education on the subject would be undertaken.

During the year some members studied the issue on their own. Samuele Bacchiocchi, member of both the Pioneer Memorial Church and the Andrews University Department of Religion, published his book, *Women in the Church*, in February 1987. His main thesis is that Scripture allows women to participate in various church ministries but does not allow their ordination to any "headship" offices such as elder, priest, or pastor.

A small group of members (joined by a few not from Pioneer Memorial Church) formed a concerned conservative group, with plans to study various topics facing the church-at-large, and to periodically publish a paper entitled *Affirm*. They planned their first issue, against women's ordination, to come out before the church vote.

While the new balloting procedure did not call for additional public education of the church, the pastoral staff decided in March to include position papers on both sides of the issue together with the ballots. Pastor Skip MacCarty, a new associate pastor who had worked with women elders in his previous district, asked if he could help coordinate a committee to write the pro paper, and the 'Affirm' group was asked to write the opposing paper. Pastor MacCarty kept in contact with the 'Affirm' group in order to build understanding and healing into the process. Eventually, each group produced a 12-page document.

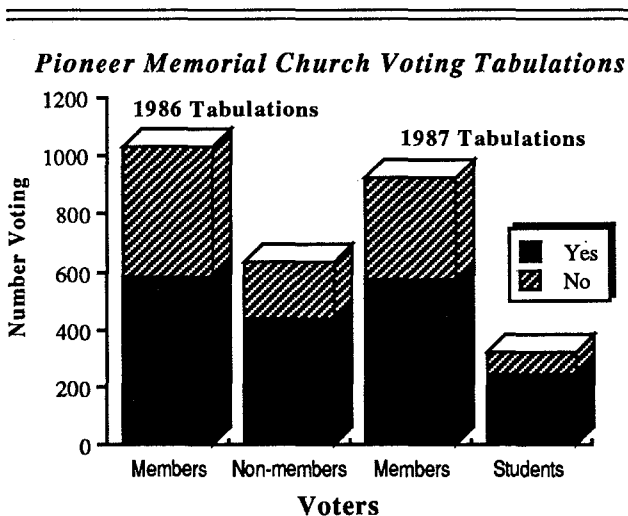
On April 4, 1987, Pastor Dwight Nelson, senior pastor of PMC, presented a powerful sermon on the role of women in the church.<sup>1</sup> He vividly described his own spiritual journey and study of the issue over the previous year. He declared that "the gifts of the Spirit are given without regard to race, social class, or gender" and that the church should use these gifts. Although he personally affirmed the ordination of women, Pastor Nelson asked the members to study prayerfully for themselves before making a personal decision.

That afternoon copies of *Affirm* were distributed in the married student housing units, and a few days later were mailed to Pioneer Memorial Church members. The April 9 issue of the *Student Movement* was devoted to the topic of women elders, with space given to advocates of both sides to discuss their views.

Between the mailing of the student ballots on April 16 and the mailing of the PMC member ballots on April 30, Dr. Bacchiocchi sent letters of concern, and promotional flyers for his book on women, to four local groups: the seminary students, the Pioneer Memorial Church board, the Andrews University faculty, and the membership

of Pioneer Memorial Church.

Although student votes did not count toward the official decision, the results of their balloting (76.5 percent in favor)<sup>2</sup> were reported to Pioneer Memorial Church members in a covering letter from the senior pastor included in their ballot packets. The packet also contained ballots, the two position papers, and a signed letter from the two groups that prepared the papers, attesting to their mutual respect and commitment to the work and witness of Pioneer Memorial Church.



A few days before the member ballots were counted, the two groups met for an evening of fellowship and prayer. Some mentioned their desire for additional meetings to discuss the issue. Individuals openly shared their feelings and expressed continuing love and respect for one another as fellow church members and colleagues, despite differences on this issue. The meeting concluded with the singing of "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

Now that the decision has been made, the nominating committee will carry out the congregation's wishes in its fall report.

1. A packet containing a tape of Pastor Nelson's sermon and a copy of each of two position papers is available for \$5.50 postpaid from: Pioneer Memorial Church, 400 University Blvd., Berrien Springs, MI 49103. Individuals wishing copies should write to *Affirm*, P.O. Box 36, Berrien Springs, MI 49103.

2. Some individuals have commented on the small size of the student sample (320 ballots were returned out of about

2200). Several factors may have been at work: (a) students knew their vote would not count on the final decision; (b) some students thought they had to read both papers before casting their votes and did not have time to do so; (c) some students were undecided and when faced with a yes or no ballot refrained from voting; and (d) student apathy.

Stella Ramirez Greig has been an active member of Pioneer Memorial Church for almost 20 years. She currently serves as cochair of the Flower Committee and is an assistant leader in the Prekindergarten Sabbath School.

## Vegetarianism At the Scientific Frontier

by Beryll Longway

From Australia to Norway, and many points between, Seventh-day Adventists are objects of intense interest to nutritionists and other researchers. Four hundred research scientists, dieticians, physicians, and nurses gathered March 16, 1987, in Washington, D.C., for the First International Congress on Vegetarianism. More than 70 reports and presentations made frequent reference to Adventists. Among the 50 or more universities, research centers, and governmental institutes represented by the speakers were such familiar names as Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and Cambridge, and some less recognizable ones, including Wageningen (Holland) and Tromso (Norway). The conference, cosponsored by several Adventist organizations, was covered by reporters from not only nutrition journals but such general circulation papers as the *Washington Post*.<sup>1</sup>

Widespread interest in vegetarianism by serious scientists is a comparatively recent phenomenon. "There has been an explosion of research, more in the past 10 years than in all of previous history," said keynote speaker Johanna Dwyer, of Tufts University in Boston. Special interest in Adventists as subjects for nutritional research has coincided with that time span. The catalyst was a seminal study, begun in 1960, of 25,000 Seventh-day Adventists. Each participant filled out questionnaires about diet and lifestyle. In the interven-

ing 27 years research papers around the world have included references, data tables and graphs derived from what is officially known as the "Adventist Mortality Study." The goal of the research is to determine the average age at which Adventists die and the causes of death.

At the congress no one disputed that Seventh-day Adventists have longer life expectancies than the general population. In fact, the longevity of Adventists was treated as a research baseline for comparison to other populations. The thrust of most of the research was to determine which factors were responsible for those increased years of life. While many researchers identified vegetarianism as the reason, others suggested that in addition the Adventist lifestyle might account for the longer life expectancies.

Vegetarianism as a cause of longevity was supported by a study conducted by L. J. Beilins of the University of Western Australia. Beilins compared Seventh-day Adventist vegetarians with a control group of Mormon omnivores. Because both groups avoid alcohol, nicotine, and caffeine, but differ in diet, he compared Adventists and Mormons to determine more specifically the influence of diet apart from lifestyle. His results showed significantly lower blood pressure and less hypertension in the vegetarians.

Alice Marsh, from Andrews University, reported on a project involving mostly Seventh-day Adventist women in Michigan who had been vegetarians for at least 20 years. Marsh concluded that a vegetarian lifestyle decreases the likelihood of osteoporosis (weakening of bone structure due to calcium loss).

Often referred to was the "healthy volunteer factor"—the reasonable notion that volunteers are more likely than nonvolunteers to be healthy and follow a healthful living style. If this is a valid concept, then resulting research analysis would be inaccurately skewed in favor of Seventh-day Adventists. To investigate this phenomenon a study was conducted in California using males from a single Seventh-day Adventist congregation instead of random volunteers (90 percent participated). These men were compared to a control group from the same neighborhood, com-

prised of non-Adventists with similar age, income, and educational levels. The Adventist group showed a lower risk factor, despite the rather low percentage of practicing vegetarians (20 percent). When the vegetarian and nonvegetarian Adventists were then compared, the non-vegetarians had risk factors very similar to the general public. Thus, the study concluded that decreased risks shown by the entire Adventist congregation were mostly due to the small percentage of vegetarians. Some at the congress suggested that when an Adventist decides to be a nonvegetarian he may also be less likely to abstain from caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol—again stressing the effects of a healthy lifestyle, not just vegetarianism.

A researcher in Norway went to considerable lengths to circumvent the healthy volunteer factor from possibly skewing research results based on Adventists. Vinjar Fonnebo, from Tromso, travelled widely, visiting Adventist churches, gathering Seventh-day Adventist membership lists, and even compiling a computer file of "every Seventh-day Adventist that had ever lived in Norway." Unbeknownst to members, Fonnebo relied on national identification numbers to develop a list of all Adventists involved in governmental health studies. He refined his research further by comparing the health records of "active" against "inactive" church members, defining an inactive member as one attending church less than twice a year. Fonnebo's research showed lower risk in Seventh-day Adventists as a whole, but the "religiously inactive Seventh-day Adventists had risk factor patterns similar to the general population of Tromso."

Fonnebo also felt that religious devotion might influence health. He set out to test this theory by comparing Adventists with Baptists, "who are considered to experience the same religious devotion and social network as Seventh-day Adventists," but have the same diet as the general population of Tromso. Fonnebo found significantly lower blood pressure, hypertension, and serum cholesterol among the Adventist vegetarians. He concluded that dietary practice, not religion, was responsible for increased longevity of life.

No conference on vegetarianism would have

been complete without an update on the "Adventist Mortality Study," the original research that sparked all the interest. David Snowdon, from the University of Minnesota, reported on comparisons based on the meat-consumption habits of 25,153 California Seventh-day Adventists, assessed by a questionnaire in 1960, to the reported deaths of study participants due to coronary heart disease up to 1980. The statistics show "the positive association between meat consumption and fatal ischemic (coronary) heart disease. The connection was stronger in men than in women, overall, strongest in young men. For 45 to 64 year-old men, there was approximately a three-fold greater risk for men who ate meat daily than for those who did not eat meat."

Snowdon alluded to another study that will be of interest to Adventists. This is a newer, larger, much more comprehensive research project. In 1970, 50,000 more extensive questionnaires than those used in 1960 were filled out by volunteers. Instead of the 1960 title, "Adventist Mortality Study," this 1970 survey is more optimistically called "the Adventist Health Study." While the statistical analysis from the data is only beginning to be compiled, we should soon be hearing a great deal about the research.

Some felt that from a scientific viewpoint James Anderson's discussion of a nonvegetarian diet was the most important address of the congress. For 24 years, Anderson, a professor at the University of Kentucky, has specialized in trying to lower the blood sugar of diabetics by giving them an omnivorous lowfat, high fiber, high carbohydrate diet. An unexpected side effect has been a dramatic lowering of serum cholesterol. Further research on humans, diabetic and nondiabetic, and on rats, isolated oat products as a causative agent for lowering cholesterol. According to Anderson, the reduction of fat and cholesterol products in a diet accounts for only about 10 percent of serum cholesterol reduction. With the addition to their diet of one bowl of cooked oat bran each day, along with two eggless oat bran muffins, Anderson is reducing by 25-30 percent the serum cholesterol in his subjects. Such a reduction, he said, translates over time into a 40 percent reduction in

heart disease. While dangerous side effects are always possible with drugs, a natural food product that gains the same results, can provide major health benefits.

On the March 31, 1987, NBC *Today* show, Dr. Art Ulene reported on the research, stressing the strong connection between the inclusion of oat bran products in the diet and reduction of blood cholesterol levels. In April, Anderson began a two-year study, financed by a \$1 million grant from the National Institutes of Health. The research will compare the cholesterol lowering effects of his "Lexington high fiber diet" using oat bran products with the recommended diet from the American Heart Association.

By the end of the meetings all present had been exposed to a blizzard of percentage tables, bar graphs, and analytical conclusions, some clear, and some more nebulous. Carole Sugarman of the *Washington Post* summed it all up by asking, "Is it what vegetarians eat that gives them health benefits or is it how they live. . . and is it what vegetarians eat or what they don't eat that lowers their risks?"

The goal of the convention organizers was to share with other professionals scientific and research support for the Seventh-day Adventist health principles—something they accomplished very satisfactorily. Questions raised at the congress will lead to further research and additional conferences. In all of them studies on Seventh-day Adventists will provide essential data that will, we hope, lead to changes in diet and improvements in health, not only for this country but for other nations as well, from Australia to Norway and many points in between.

1. Cosponsors included: Loma Linda University Medical Center, Adventist Health System/United States, Seventh-day Adventist Hospital Associations, San Joaquin Community Health Center, Loma Linda University, Andrews University, Departments of Health of the North American and South Pacific Divisions of Seventh-day Adventists, Seventh-day Adventist Dietetic Association. Corporate donors included: S.E. Rykoff/Sexton, Worthington Foods, Inc., Loma Linda Foods, Sanitarium Foods.

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Berryl Longway received a B. Sc. in Nursing from Loma Linda University. She currently serves as an elder of Sligo Church, Takoma Park, and as president of the local Washington, D.C. AAF chapter.



## The Chamberlain Case: A Tragedy For Justice

John Bryson. *Evil Angels* (New York: Summit Books, 1985), 560 pp., \$18.95 (cloth).

Phil Ward. *Azaria! What the Jury Were Not Told* (Netley, Australia: Griffin Press Limited, n. d.), 192 pp. Available from the author at 5 Carlingford Road, Epping, NSW, 2121, Australia.

Reviewed by Kent A. Hansen

The death of baby Azaria Chamberlain would be a sensational story at any time, in any land. It has all the elements of great detective literature: an alleged murder in an exotic frontier setting without a body, weapon, or motive; wild animals; aboriginal tribesmen; a beautiful female suspect; grizzled police veterans; feuding forensic scientists; flamboyant criminal attorneys; and religious persecution.

Although the story was daily tabloid entertainment for millions of Australians through much of the 1980s, it is a profound tragedy for the Chamberlain family, the Adventist church in Australia, and for the Australian people, whose system of justice proved to be more system than justice.

John Bryson's book *Evil Angels* brings the disparate elements together in a compelling account of criminal investigation and trial. As a trained barrister, he brings a lawyer's eye for facts and motivations to his reporting of the case.

By now the story is well known to many Adventists. Michael Chamberlain, an Adventist pastor, and his wife, Lindy, took their three children on an outing to Australia's Ayers Rock in 1980. On a Sunday evening the children had been put to bed in a tent. As the parents talked to other campers around a campfire, Lindy Chamberlain saw a dingo, a wild dog somewhat akin to the

coyote of the American west, emerge from the tent with something in its jaws. When she checked the tent she found a pool of blood and her ten-week-old baby Azaria gone. Hastily assembled search parties did not find the baby, and the bumbling initial search obscured rather than uncovered the clues.

The claim that a wild dog had eaten the child brought quick and intense press coverage, which the Chamberlains faced with unsettling composure. Without benefit of counsel they responded to requests for interviews, telling cynical reporters that the "loss of our baby is the will of God."

Bryson details the reactions to the story that brought out a strain of anti-Adventist bigotry in Australia. There were untrue but widely spread charges that "Azaria" was Hebrew for "sacrifice in the wilderness" and that Adventists believed in human sacrifice.

Some Adventists themselves revealed their insensitivity by writing letters to the Chamberlains claiming that the death of their baby was the just result of their driving to Ayers Rock on the Sabbath.

Bryson does not draw any conclusions about guilt or innocence. He simply presents the facts in detail for the reader's own verdict. Yet he leaves no doubt that the "evil angels" in this case were the police, press, and Australian society that would rather believe that a beautiful, young, Seventh-day Adventist woman would kill her child than accept compelling evidence that the child was consumed by a dingo.

The first inquest cleared Lindy Chamberlain. The police pressed on with the case with the aid of what Bryson reveals to be highly dubious and probably manufactured scientific testimony. After a second inquest and a jury trial, Lindy was convicted of murder and Michael was convicted of being an accessory to the crime.

*Evil Angels* is a cautionary tale for Adventists. The unworldly naiveté and simple faith of Michael and Lindy Chamberlain, which was nur-

tured in the shelter of church schools, including Avondale College, ill-prepared them for dealing with the scrutiny of the press and justice system. That naiveté proved their undoing when the police and public refused to believe that bereaved parents could face the world with such equanimity. The church organization, which quietly supported the Chamberlains through their ordeal with money, prayer, and legal assistance, must be concerned that Adventist beliefs and practices could be so misunderstood by the Australian public, despite a century of diligent evangelism and education.

*Evil Angels* is not without flaws. Character development and insights into motivations of major figures sink beneath the welter of facts and scientific evidence. Characters enter and exit the story only to be forgotten, leaving many loose ends. The book is a lawyer's description of a great criminal trial rather than the individual stories of Lindy Chamberlain or her prosecutors. Readers interested in the personal effect of the ordeal on the Chamberlains will need to look elsewhere.

Where *Evil Angels* is objective, *Azaria! What the Jury Were Not Told* is partisan. Its author, Phil Ward, a newsletter publisher and Adventist layman, spent 18 months and \$125,000 investigating the Chamberlain case. He concludes that the dingo that killed Azaria was the pet of some Ayers Rock park personnel. These persons, Ward says, covered up the crime to protect themselves from liability for keeping an animal with a known propensity for attacking children. Ward writes with the verve of a born muckraker, and he is not afraid to name names, with the exception of a powerful officer in the Northern Territory, whom, he says, pursued a vendetta against the Chamberlains and rigged evidence so that they would be convicted.

Ward has been sued for libel for *Azaria!* but the book makes interesting reading in conjunction with *Evil Angels*. *Azaria!* focuses solely on the "dingo" defense for the Chamberlains while *Evil Angels* provides the perspective of the entire case from the disappearance through the trial.

It is too bad that neither book deals with the aftermath of the conviction, including the sensational discovery of evidence supporting the dingo

defense, Lindy Chamberlain's pardon and release from imprisonment, and the findings of the Royal Commission of Inquiry convened to investigate concerns about injustice in the prosecution of the case. Bryson should consider a sequel to *Evil Angels*.

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Kent Hansen is an attorney in Corona, California.

## The Book That Helped Free Lindy Chamberlain

John Bryson. *Evil Angels* (New York: Summit Books, 1985), 560 pp., \$18.95 (cloth).

Reviewed by Bonnie Dwyer

**E***vil Angels* has been called the definitive book on the Lindy Chamberlain case and has been compared to *In Cold Blood*. But Adventists familiar with the Chamberlain story and curious about the role religion played in Lindy's murder conviction should not expect the book to be the definitive examination of the Adventist subculture on trial or a psychological portrait of the Chamberlains.

Bryson, a lawyer and a writer, has penned a vivid portrait of the legal proceedings in the case, and the subcultures that he shows best are the police, scientists, lawyers, and reporters who become the main characters in the drama at the Alice Springs courtroom. Granted, before he takes readers to the Australian outback to recount the events at Ayers Rock the night baby Azaria died, he uses a few pages to describe some people and scenes out of early Adventist history to set up the evil angels metaphor. He ends a short sketch of the Great Disappointment with a description of Adventists then as "... in the eyes of the world, a people jilted by their Redeemer." Of Ellen White he says, "The crisis of credibility caused by her visions will split the church in 1905, beginning

another cycle of public derision. But her stern path was to carry the message of Adventism through, as she described it in 1868, 'the exulting, sneering triumph of evil angels.' "

Then Bryson shifts to the Chamberlains, who also seem to be on a path through sneering evil angels; the scenario he recounts is one in which everything goes wrong. The police bungle the initial investigation of the missing child, the press picks insignificant details or rumors and exploits them mercilessly, experts called in to test evidence prove incompetent, and the prosecution pieces together an explanation for its murder charge that even a television movie crew can't make convincing. And still Lindy, the Adventist minister's wife, is convicted of slitting her infant daughter's throat with scissors.

The story in the end turned out to be much different than Mr. Bryson expected when he started the book project at the outset of the case. It looked then, he said in a recent interview with *Spectrum*, to be a moderately interesting story. The Chamberlains, an ordinary family on a weekend camping holiday, had their infant daughter stolen from their tent by a dingo. The body was never found, and the parents, rather than receiving sympathy over their loss, were subjected to an inquest and accused of murdering baby Azaria.

As the inquest began, Bryson wanted to set straight the Australian picture of Adventists who were receiving terrible press at that point. Growing up in Melbourne, Bryson had been friends with an Adventist family, he told *Spectrum*, and it seemed to him that the world was getting these people dreadfully wrong. With the unfolding of the inquest, Bryson's story began to change. Magistrate Denis Barritt exonerated the Chamberlains at the conclusion of the inquest and extended his sympathy:

You have not only suffered the loss of your beloved child in the most tragic circumstances, but you have all been subjected to months of innuendoes, suspicion, and probably the most malicious gossip ever witnessed in this country.

He also severely castigated the police forensic unit that investigated the incident, and his comments were carried live on national television,

thus mortifying the police. Consequently, they pursued their investigation after the inquest until they came up with more evidence and were able to successfully get a regular trial on murder charges.

During the trial the prosecution called scientist after scientist to discuss the forensic evidence. Much more time seemed to be given to this aspect of the case than to eyewitnesses or character witnesses. So by the end of the trial, the importance of religion had changed. At that point, the Chamberlains could have been Roman Catholics, Bryson said. It did not matter a bit. The book that Bryson had set out to write had also changed by the time the trial was over. He then wanted to show the headiness of the hunt that took over rational people, the problems with placing too much reliance on "scientific" evidence, and the reaction of a nation. He knew it would be difficult to sell this kind of information because the press in Australia had been so full of material on the case that recapturing the interest of society would be difficult. When the book achieved bestseller status he knew he had succeeded in getting Australia's attention. The book jacket also gives the volume some credit for helping to get Lindy released from prison (in 1986).

Now Summit Books has brought the story to America, and the timing could not be better. True crime tales seem to be on every publisher's list this year and they are selling briskly. Why are these books so successful?

Linda Wolfe, reviewing *Evil Angels* for the *New York Times*, suggested that such books tend to be "not simply about murder or manslaughter, investigations or trials, but about morality, about virtue and vice, good and evil."

For Adventists, in the case of *Evil Angels*, the book also seems to be about family members, so we immediately sympathize with the Chamberlains. What would our response have been if they were members of the Church of Scientology?

Wolfe calls it a powerful story, and concludes by asking, Could it happen here in America? What would be the reaction to such a situation? Would we continue to fight for justice?

That is the question being asked of the Cham-

berlains now that Lindy is out of prison. *Sixty Minutes* (the Australian version) asked her "Why don't you just let the whole thing drop, now that you are out of jail?" Her answer was that she had to fight to clear her name. She could not let a lie stand.

Lindy's story is powerful. Reading Bryson's account one just hopes that there will be more on the case—a book that shows us the personal side of the story, and the courage of the woman who has kept her family together through evil circumstances.

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Bonnie Dwyer is news editor for *Spectrum*.

## Adventists As Transformers of Culture

Roger L. Dudley. *The World—Love It or Leave It?* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1986), 77 pp., \$5.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Gary Chartier

**T**he world" has always been for Seventh-day Adventists almost a synonym for the kingdom of Satan. "Love not the world" has traditionally been their watchword. Thus it is refreshing that Roger Dudley, professor of christian ministry at Andrews University and author of such previous works as *Why Teenagers Reject Religion*, and *Passing the Torch*, has undertaken to sketch the issues for modern Adventists in an open-ended fashion that does not presume a pat answer to the question, How should Christians relate to the world?

After an initial description of the problem—Christians live in the world, and yet are called to be "not of the world"—Dudley outlines three possible approaches, based on the classic treatment provided by H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*: the "Culture-Rejecting Christian," the "Culture-Affirming Christian," and the "Culture-Transforming Christian." He describes the lifestyle of a typical Seventh-day Adventist propo-

nent of each view and critiques each on both practical and theological grounds.

Dudley refuses to endorse any of these three stances. His final chapter is an apology for the diversity of belief and practice evident among Adventists today. He declares, "The church, of course, should not attempt to prescribe in detail the path to be followed by the individual Christian." Rather, he believes, it "should identify the timeless principles involved in messages originally presented in another social context." At the same time, he remembers fondly the achievements of "culture-transforming" Christians (pp. 59, 60). His description of "culture-affirming" Christians, while professing to highlight "the more pronounced and extreme characteristics" (p. 48) of their position, avoids extremes that might make them appear irresponsible or untrue to their Christian commitment. By contrast, stereotypical "culture-rejecting" Christians are described as "the most reactionary Adventists we can conceive" (p. 29), and are regularly referred to as "radical." He raises more criticisms of this position than of either alternative.

The picture Dudley presents of the "culture-transforming" Christian is perhaps deficient. This model of the Christian's relation to culture, usually associated with John Calvin and his intellectual descendants, involves not merely the transformation of culture for redemptive, evangelistic purposes, but also the creative development of the natural and social environment in fulfillment

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**Dudley is to be commended for questioning Adventism's anticultural shibboleths and making it more conscious of the legitimacy of social, cultural, and political activity.**

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of humanity's "cultural mandate"—God's Edenic command to "subdue the earth."

Dudley is to be commended for his refusal to dictate lifestyle choices, for his questioning of Adventism's popular anticultural shibboleths, and for making Adventists more conscious of the

legitimacy of social, cultural, and political activity. Those who, like myself, are convinced that Christians have a “cultural mandate” to reform culture, and who recognize much that is valuable in human structures and institutions, will naturally be uncomfortable that he has not wholeheartedly endorsed our position. But we will also benefit, I believe, from taking to heart the dangers to which, he reminds us, such views are prone. *The World – Love It Or Leave It?* cannot be, does not

pretend to be, the decisive study of Christianity and culture from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective. It can, however, help to focus our individual and collective attention on the problem. As others work to find more definitive solutions, they can look appreciatively to Dudley for initiating dialogue on this vital topic.

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Gary Chartier is a graduate student in contemporary theology at Claremont Graduate School.

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*Responses*


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## More on Ordination of Women

To the Editors: I too could write for pages about the ordination of women (who couldn't), but I'll just put in two or three cents, worth. First I would like to point out that Genesis 3:16 doesn't present the rule of husband over wife as a curse, but rather a prediction of the inevitable. Such is sin that large nations run smaller and weaker nations; chickens have pecking orders; and men, being usually larger and stronger than women, tend to rule over them. The rule of the stronger over the weaker may be manifested in benevolence, in harshness, and in indulgence. Only in the kingdom of God and among the redeemed is there some chance that these rules of power will not prevail. . . maybe. I can dream, can't I? Of course it may be true that we should allow for sin and discriminate on the basis of gender for ordination to the ministries in the church. Minister means servant, not master, which means that women would be by far the best choice for the job. Of course it is possible that some men are as capable of serving as a woman, and maybe we should allow a few men to be ordained too.

Secondly, I would like to point out that church order is not handed down from heaven, and our church order bears only the vaguest resemblance to the models in Acts and the Epistles. For instance, there is every indication that back then they did not segregate their deacons into male and female as we do. The term *deacon* is neuter and deacons came in both genders (i.e., Rom. 16:1). One question that may be raised is why we can't have elderesses and pastorettes as well. Of course, this is absurd terminology, but so is the term "deaconess." What is more absurd is that we ordain deacons if they are male, but not if they are female. Is the male deacon more holy than the female deacon? Is he less holy and needs an extra shot of the Holy Spirit? Don't the female workers for the church, whatever their position, need the commission of the church as much as the male? And why aren't our Sabbath School teachers and Bible workers sent to their task with an outpouring of the Spirit through the laying on of hands? Could it be because so many of our Sabbath school teachers and Bible workers are female? Marjorie Warkentin points out very well in her book *Ordination* (Eerdmans, 1982) that all Christians are, or should be, ordained at their baptism, though further ordinations may occur later. All Christians have gifts to share with the church. Where do we get the idea that only men can be ordained to anything?

Two more points need to be made. First, if the deacon and elder are supposed to be the husband of one wife (1 Tim. 3:2,12) should we disordain all our unmarried deacons and elders? This is no less rigorous a reading as insisting that these offices be held by males only (note again Rom. 16:1). Many wish to apply this to pastors as well, and unmarried seminarians are encouraged to bring home a Mrs. first and an M.Div. second, or so it seems.

Finally, let us suppose that the Holy Spirit really has called some women to the ministry (as I believe). We should take great care in ascribing this work to the Great Deceiver, for this is precisely the problem which brought on Jesus' words in Mark 3:18-30. That may not scare some, but it alarms me. After all, we do not serve a tame God. He can call whomever he pleases.

Oh yes, a note to Bryan Ball: a sense of humor, even about spiritual things, does not necessarily indicate a lack of spirituality. Often it is a coping mechanism used by the oppressed.

Yours in His service (even if I'm not Jewish or married),

James E. Miller  
Madison, Wisconsin

## *Jesus on Ordination*

To the Editors: I would like to comment on the criteria that Christ used to choose the twelve apostles. Number one, the apostles knew Jesus: they had walked, talked and lived with Jesus for one to three years. That same opportunity to live with Jesus avails itself to all men and women of our time through the communication of the Holy Spirit.

Number two, Jesus called the apostles to preach the Good News of the gospel. The physiological and spiritual requirements to preach are not sexual. Preaching requires a mind, a mouth, and a heart in tune with Jesus.

Number three, it is Jesus who chooses and ordains, not the General Conference president, union president, lay activities director, local preacher, or elders. I contend and pray that there are many more ordained men and women in the body of Christ than just the men formally ordained in the Seventh-day Adventist church. If not, the gospel stands a dim chance of going throughout the world.

Ronald E. Reece, M.D.  
Redding, California

## Responding to Bacchiocchi and Ball

To the Editors: In John Brunt's article, "Adventists Against Ordination: A Critical Review," I find a delineation of theological reasons and positions that are strongly akin to mine. Yet, as an Adventist theologian, Dr. Brunt is noticeably diplomatic (from this nontheologian's perspective) in refuting his colleagues' antiordination stance on women. I do not suffer from the same inhibitions.

Bacchiocchi puzzles me. Here is a man that I still respect. I have a deep appreciation for his scholarly work on theological issues, including the Sabbath. But I suppose that even men of high integrity are subject to a deep well of latent bias that effectively vitiates an objective perspective. Or, do some theologians believe in such a pure form of spirituality (which comes from their self-perpetuating involvement in only church-related issues) that their narrow focus missed the importance of how social and geopolitical forces move upon the very substance of religious beliefs? Such an attitude is evidenced in the article "The Ordination of Women: A Plea for Caution" by Bryan Ball.

Here we have an article full of feeble-minded illustrations used to buttress a poorly drafted position. An instance is where Ball, in just two of many examples throughout his declamation, lists (1) weak points to illustrate how "many writers in support of women's ordination have departed from the basic theological character of this question. . ." (p. 40), and (2) uses extreme examples (Miss Suzanne Brogger and the Bishop of New York ordaining a lesbian) to sensationalize his opposition to what really is a theologically correct movement within our church (p. 50). He is trying to use (very ineffectively) the old prosecutor's trick of "guilt by association." If, by conjuring up these isolated instances that have nothing to do with our female pastors, he can misrepresent the true godly character of this movement and make others believe his illusion, then he has won a battle.

We, as a church, are dealing with a mentality that is firmly anchored in social inertia. In fact, we could be viewed as being too established in the trenches of social apathy. As a church, we used to be on the vanguard of asserting social justice (abolitionism) and temperance (Prohibition—right reason, wrong method). We were an example for the world to watch then. Are we still, in this day and age?

If one were to use the reasoning of those who oppose women's ordination, we could very well lapse back to the times when religion was the oppressor of humanity. Such reasoning would allow men to subjugate women in the 20th century, allow whites to subjugate blacks in the 19th century, allow aristocrats to subjugate the lower classes in the 18th century, allow "religion" to oppress the scientist of

the Enlightenment in the 17th and 16th centuries and the artists of the Renaissance in the 15th century, as well as allow "religious" persecutions to take place against those of different beliefs. All this time, it was religion using its crafty theological arguments to substantiate its unwillingness to move forward, dragging its feet to meet Christ's example of social justice, setting a poor track record.

If Christ asks me why my church, in its chauvinism, blocked women from the right to express themselves fully through the sanctity of ordination, I will defer to Bacchiocchi and Ball.

I want to see ordained women pastors at my church someday soon. If this is not appropriate for one region, let their people debate it. But if it's right for the North American Division, I don't want some college president from "down under" telling me it isn't.

Michael Angelo Saucedo  
Davis, California

## A Plea From Europe

To the Editors: The issue of *Spectrum* on ordaining women [vol. 17, no. 2] brings a more vivid picture of the sad reality of the whole question. Dealing with the question of God's calling in women's lives to which male theologians are total strangers, is to omit an important purpose of Creation: the good deeds, the "call," the very significance and purpose for which women and men have been created.

The issue of ordination should be viewed in its prophetic dimension and placed in human history, directly related to our readiness as a church to proclaim the soon return of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The dramatic situation of women's ordination is two-fold: (1) The woman who is called by God cannot hope yet to be "set apart," thus making her service much more ambiguous and difficult, sometimes impossible; (2) The church deprives itself of various and complementary ministries, from unveiling Bible truths, and from service of dedicated women at the close of time. There is grief in Laodicea; grief for human injustice toward women; grief for darkness in some areas where light bearers by God are being provided for, yet not acknowledged; grief because the situation, instead of bringing forth the church "glorious" reveals its lukewarmness, its self-approval over such an issue which should call forth the need for eyesalve and repentance. We might have forgotten, in our rational minds, that this issue has also its counterpart in the cosmic war described in Ephesians 6, and we should not ignore that Satan will use it to mar the church.

I would like to make a plea for women of the United States, but also for women of other parts of the world. For some of us, the issue on women and ordination of women is

still untouched. At this time there is not even a remote possibility for open dialogue, participation, and study of worldwide theological articles, to create awareness. We, as women of other parts of the world, are making a plea, for some of us are bearing the cost of unacknowledged ministries in our very lives, being even led to despair as we are so deprived of joyful service.

Joelle Gouel  
Geneva, Switzerland

## On Psychiatry

To the Editors: A Christian psychiatrist should not urge his (her) patients to become Christians, or even discuss his religious beliefs with patients. This obligation toward restraint does not dissolve with familiarity or time, but actually becomes more important in the therapeutic endeavor. The discussion of a therapist's or analyst's religious beliefs assumes a passive recommendation to the patient because of the implied advisory and explicit therapeutic nature of the relationship. I most liken this to be the emotional equivalent to sexually seducing a patient. It is exploitative of illness and pathology.

Revelation, pardon the pun, of the therapist's religious beliefs destroys the patient's fantasy life regarding the physician, alters the patient's defenses, and has the potential to confuse accurate diagnosis. Religious beliefs by their nature deal with the unseen and experiential. The vocabulary, and even the syntax, of religion is inherently symbolic and henceforth very volatile, especially in the deeply conflicted. The therapist's role is to clarify issues, decode symbolic behavior and thinking, and hopefully provide insight, or at least accurately diagnose the patient's illness. Describing your own beliefs introduces an unpredictable variable in an already very subjective diagnostic process.

John B. Carson, M.D.  
Yuma, Arizona

## In Defense of Scott Peck

To the Editors: I read with great interest Roy Benton's philosophical analysis of Scott Peck's *People of the Lie*.

Benton compares degrees of evil between the three-time rapist and Charlene, the loner who played out pathetic control games. In my reading of the book, it was evident to me that what Peck was talking about is in the long run the

degree of probability at intervention. The convicted rapist-criminal may be more therapeutically ready for help than Charlene who totally denies any responsibility for her actions.

Benton also cites Peck's feelings of revulsion toward evil patients and questions which comes first: the labeling or the feeling. It was quite clear to me that Peck was using his feelings in an objective way. Questioning subjective feelings of Peck's revulsion revealed, in my opinion, a misunderstanding of the tools essential within the mental health discipline.

Ursula L. Hess, M.S.W.  
Boston, MA

## Let's Start Work on the Next Church Hymnal

To the Editors: Will Stuiivenga's article about the new church hymnal was very fair, I believe, both in praise and criticism. As a member of the committee that prepared the hymnal, I can testify to the great joy and sense of accomplishment we all felt at being part of such a badly overdue endeavor. I can also testify to the frustration that I know I felt, and I am sure we all felt, abandoning the effort before it was properly completed.

The problem of sexist language was only one of the matters that needed much more work before we concluded. I think that for all of us (at least for me) the sensitivity to this problem grew as the work progressed. Many things were accepted before we started looking really carefully at the words from a desire to be more inclusive. Even after such an aim was at the front of our attention, we accepted words that needed further rewriting, assuming that we would go back and solve some of the problems after the makeup of the book was determined.

At our last meeting, I was stunned by the realization that we were never going to solve those problems. As I open the hymnal in Sabbath worship these days, I look with real pleasure at the many fine hymns that we have for our use, and at the way in which the hymnal shapes a worship service. But I blush with embarrassment at the many unfortunate words and expressions that should never have been retained. And I believe Mr. Stuiivenga is absolutely correct—they might have been very easily corrected if we had only taken a little more time.

The goal of having the hymnal ready for the General Conference was, of course, the reason for most of the haste. But there was also, I believe, an attitude that is probably more pervasive in the Adventist church than I would want



to think—that women should properly be silent, and that if the church hymnody excludes them, most persons, male or female, would think it altogether appropriate.

Not that such an attitude was ever expressed in the committee. But neither was there a sense of urgency about such matters, to parallel the very strong concern about every aspect of the music.

Still, I left the final meeting of the committee with a great respect for the other members, whose tastes differed widely, but whose ability to work together to improve the quality of worship in the church kept us all working together without rancor. I just wish that we could do some more editorial work on the kinds of problems Mr. Stuiwenga identified.

I believe his suggestion is a wise one—let's start now at the next revision, whether it be radical or merely editorial, so that we will not work under such time pressures again.

Ottillie Stafford, Chair  
Department of English  
Atlantic Union College  
South Lancaster, Massachusetts

## A Task Force for the Colleges?

**T**o the Editors: The recent decision to relocate the La Sierra campus to Loma Linda has brought several questions and suggestions to mind.

How can we consider moving one of our campuses before we study the problem of losing some 500 students a year from our North American Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities? When will some of our colleges have to close due to the loss of students? With the declining campus population shouldn't we have a plan that shows which campus will need to close and when it should happen?

More and more families and students are finding it impossible to finance Christian education. Tuition at one of our colleges today is \$6,300 a year. Tuition at a local university is \$700 a year. That difference of \$5,600 is a tremendous incentive for public education. In some cases the only difference between a Christian and public education is a Bible class at a cost of \$5,600 a year. In addition, if we are required to discontinue discrimination in hiring on our campuses, Christian education will lose its meaningfulness.

Because of this, it seems to me that it is imperative that we look at all the alternatives and develop a plan that provides the best of both worlds, notwithstanding the fact that we would like to see all of our students on a Christian campus.

If our campus dormitories are not full, why not make

rooms available to SDA students attending adjacent public campuses? Why not take advantage of our students on public campuses and provide small SDA centers complete with dormitories, food service, campus chaplains, and campus churches? We could even provide 25 SDA centers across the country to house up to 5,000 students, employ fewer than 250 people total and let the public campuses provide all of the instruction. What an evangelistic tool these centers could provide. To put the above student/staff ration into perspective, one SDA campus employs about 230 faculty and staff and has a student population of about 1,000.

Perhaps it is time to consider the practicality of only three or four SDA campuses with each specializing in narrower fields such as science/engineering/technology at Walla Walla College, all health-related specialties at Loma Linda University and Kettering, theology/education/music and related fields at Andrews University and maybe even an SDA "Julliard School of Music" on one campus.

It seems to me that before we spend millions relocating the La Sierra campus, we should evaluate the above situations and develop a long-range plan for Christian education. It would be a travesty to build a 1,500 student expansion at Loma Linda and discover in a few years that we need a facility for 500 students or less.

I propose a task force be established with input from the Board of Higher Education and composed of a mix of SDA administrators and professors from public colleges and universities, interested professionals not church-employed, and church-employed experts to develop workable alternatives to complement the quality educational program that we now have. A clearing-house could be set up to field all ideas and suggestions.

We could well afford to spend a million dollars (equivalent to 0.7 percent of our world budget or 6 percent of money received from wills and trusts annually) to study our whole educational system and develop workable alternatives. To put this million dollars into perspective, I would estimate that upwards of a million dollars is spent annually on Annual Council (Rio de Janeiro in 1986, U.S.A. 1987, Kenya 1988) and no one ever questions the expenditure or the benefits. Whereas the benefits of a workable alternative educational program, at the cost of a million dollars, would show immediate and long-term benefits to the entire church family that would far outweigh any program that we have undertaken to date.

My recommendation is that a taskforce be appointed as soon as practicable, that adequate funds be appropriated, and that the task force be given the charge to develop workable alternatives to accommodate SDA students on public campuses and to complement the declining student population of our present outstanding educational system.

Carl E. Crawford  
Chico, California

## Tithing—Unmasking Authoritarian Myths

To the Editors: The last several issues of *Spectrum* have included letters on tithing, but the topic deserves further, and more detailed, attention.

It is about time that "the brethren" deal with the "myths" surrounding the tithing! It is unfortunate they have not been able to come to a more positive resolution of the problems or inconsistencies in denominational policies regarding the use of the tithing.

"The brethren" now tell us the local conference is the "storehouse" to which the tithing must be brought. Yet they are unable to produce direct biblical support for such a designation. Lacking such support, any policies which may be developed for the use of the tithing are no more than the "traditions of men" which may be changed as time and circumstances indicate. Since "the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian" ("Baptismal Vows," *Church Manual*, p. 44, 1986 edition), Biblical silence on where the tithing is to be brought allows the individual believer considerable freedom—to bring the tithing to the local church (the Lord's house—Malachi 3:10), to the conference/mission treasury or to one's own "store" (I Cor. 16:2) from which the believer distributes funds in ministry. Members are also free to determine whether the tithing is a specific "fund" to which we must give or a percentage to be given. However, since a portion (about 25 percent) of income to the tithing fund is used to pay the salary of the pastor who ministers to the church member, it seems reasonable to expect that the members who benefit from that ministry should provide remuneration to the minister who serves them. Since the conference manages the pastoral payroll, funds to pay the pastor's salary would need to be channeled through the conference tithing fund.

A second myth regarding the use of the tithing is that we need the conference to be the storehouse so "tithing from large churches is distributed to benefit smaller churches or establish new congregations." If we were to examine the tithing income of our churches, as I did four years ago in my conference, we would discover that most of our churches are joined in districts which provide sufficient tithing to support the district pastor at the denominational wage scale. The exception seems to be new congregations among recent immigrants. The truth is that the tithing must be brought to the conference treasury in order to support the conference/world structure and mission, not local churches or congregations.

A third myth regarding the use of the tithing is that "the tithing is for the ministry." The members of our churches interpret this to mean that the tithing is to be used solely for the support of pastors or other ordained and licensed ministers. "The brethren" interpret this term "ministry" so broadly

that it includes custodians, truck drivers, secretaries or any other support personnel employed by the conference. The total salaries for these people are paid from tithing funds. Inexplicably, we are told that only 30 percent of the salary of church school teachers may be paid from tithing because only 30 percent of their time is used for religious purposes—to teach Bible or conduct worship. Even more indefensible is the fact that literature evangelists receive no portion of their salary from tithing. Then there are the absolute contradictions. "The brethren" are adamant that the tithing may not be used to pay support personnel (secretaries, treasurers, custodians, etc.) in the local church even though their equivalents at the conference office are paid from the tithing. It seems reasonable that there should be a uniform policy on the use of the tithing—either support personnel at all levels of church organization should be paid from tithing or support personnel should not be from tithing at any level. We need to be consistent in the use of tithing for support personnel if we hope to retain the confidence of our members.

I see developments in the policy regarding use of the tithing which seem to indicate a growing centralization of power in the General Conference staff which is almost "papal." Raymond Cottrell has demonstrated (*Spectrum*, vol. 14, no. 4) that our form of church government already resembles the Roman system more closely (an "image to the beast"?) than any other denomination. This trend toward concentration of power at the General Conference level is illustrated by recent changes in policy regarding appropriations from tithing funds above the amount allocated for the costs of administering unions, divisions, and the General Conference. Whereas local conferences used to pay an agreed percentage for world mission work, they are now required to remit an additional percentage "as determined by the General Conference" (*Church Manual*, p. 135, 1986 edition) in order to pay for the church's programs. Collegiality has apparently been replaced by the oligarchy.

This sense of power among "the brethren" has developed to the point where the 1985 Annual Council voted that "the sending of tithing by laypeople to Adventist self-supporting institutions be prohibited." I wonder how they intend to enforce such a policy. Are "the brethren" expecting the self-supporting institutions to provide a list of donors which may be checked against church remittance forms? Since remittance of tithing is not held as a test of fellowship, how are we to discipline members who may not send their tithing through the authorized channels?

Apparently, someone needs to remind "the brethren" that we have a "representative" form of church government. "Executive" responsibility means that boards and officers are to "execute" the policies voted by the membership, or their representatives, in session. For "executors" to impose policy upon the membership is a usurpation of that power which belongs solely to those they are to serve—the whole people of God.

Wayne Willey, Pastor  
Amesbury, Massachusetts

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