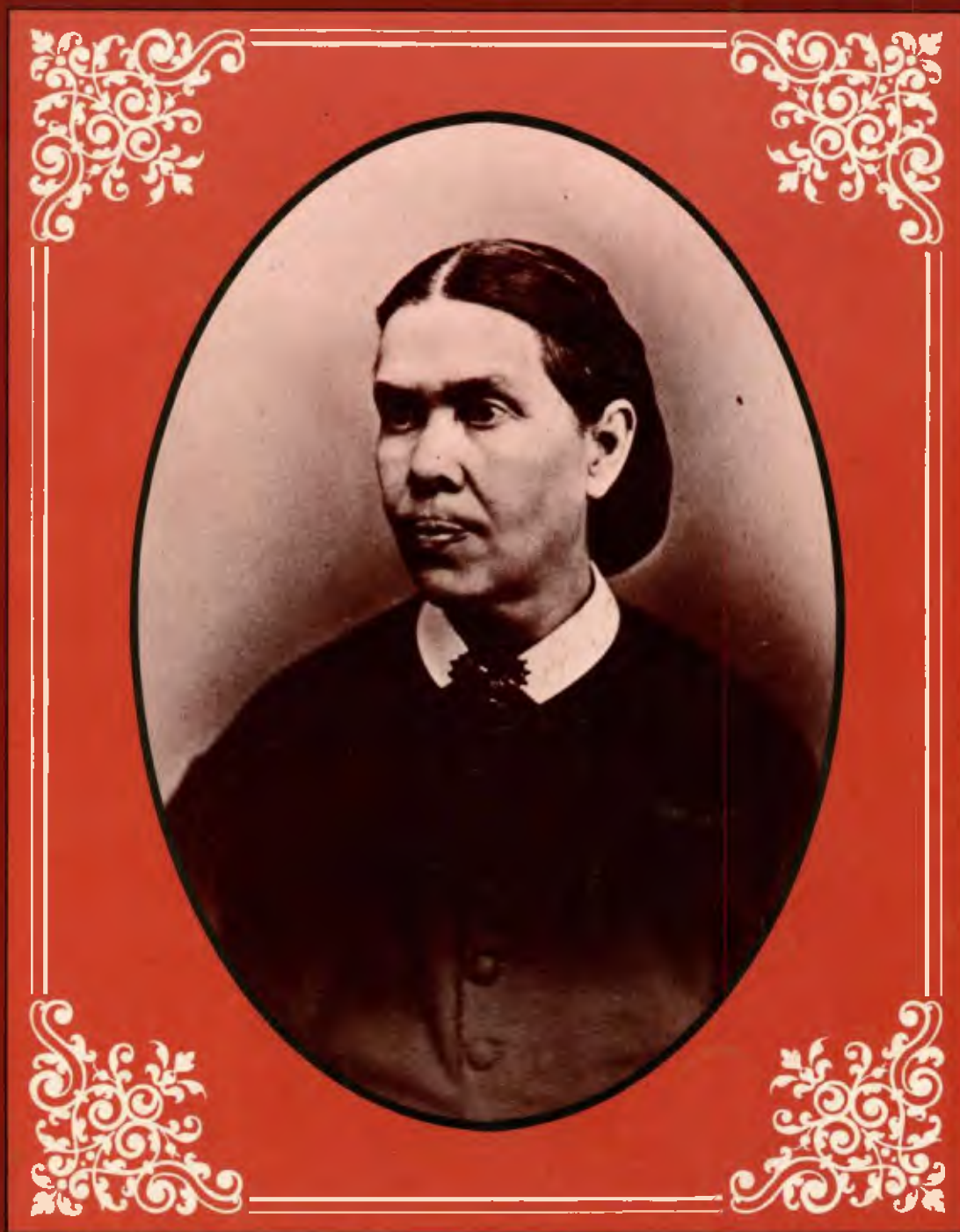


# Adventist Heritage

A JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST HISTORY



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ON THE COVER is a previously unpublished photograph of Ellen G. White contributed by the *Ellen G. White Estate*.



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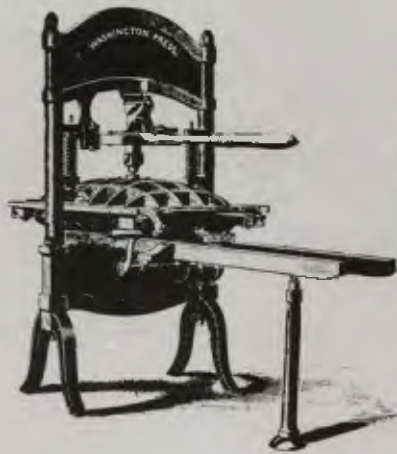
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# The

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# Editor's Stamp

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## Guest Editorial

With this issue, *Adventist Heritage* resumes its biannual publication in the Spring (April) and Fall (November) of every year. Several important changes, affecting the production of the journal, have occurred during the past eighteen months. The editorial and circulation offices have been moved to the La Sierra campus of Loma Linda University. *Adventist Heritage* is now published by the Department of History of the College of Arts and Sciences, in cooperation with the Division of Religion, the Graduate School and the library Department of Archives and Special Collections. More efficient use of computer technology should not only improve the production of the journal but, more importantly, should facilitate the circulation of our product to you, our valued readers.

Despite the changes, the fundamental aim of the journal remains the same: to nourish a continuing interest in Adventist history through the publication of materials combining high standards of historical scholarship with broad reader appeal.

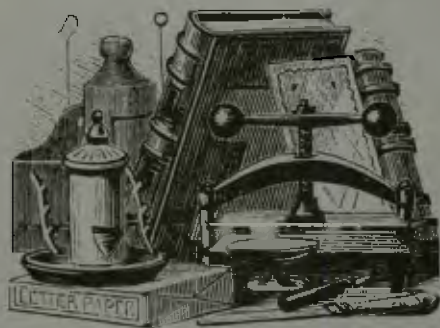
While the mood of our technocratic age is one of widespread indifference towards the past, society at large—including Adventism—provides ample validation for the familiar dictum, "those who ignore the past are bound to repeat it." Many of the crises

confronting us today could have been avoided had the lessons of history been heeded, for there is educative value and relevance to the historical enterprise.

Additionally, for the Christian, the irreducible historicity of his religion provides "a daily invitation to the study of history." For since Christianity flowed from something that God did *in history*, believers can scarcely escape the call to take serious account of the arena in which the drama of redemption has been acted out. Moreover, since men and women have been entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out God's redemptive purpose through history to its final consummation, Christians will want to acquaint themselves with those who have preceded them in the fulfillment of this responsibility. Recounting the past experiences of those Adventists around the world who have responded to the divine commission is the *raison d'être* for *Adventist Heritage*. Their reflections, convictions, decisions and actions inform us not only about what has already been accomplished, but also provide us with a sense of direction for what still remains to be done, as we look forward to "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

P. J. L.

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Courtesy Ellen G. White Estate



## JOURNAL OF A SOUL

### THE EARLY YEARS OF ELLEN G. HARMON

This article which was submitted to *ADVENTIST HERITAGE* by Ron D Graybill was first published in the *Youth's Instructor*, Volume I (December 1852), pages 20-22. It is probably Ellen White's earliest account of her childhood and youth. Written for the edification of the young, it is very spiritual in tone. It also contains details that were not reproduced in later accounts. Most striking is her attempt to hide her religious struggles from her parents, to the point of hiding her Bible when they surprised her while she was reading it. Eds.

**DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:**—When young I felt the need of the Saviour, and was about eleven years old when I first rejoiced in his love. Previous to that time I had conviction of sin. I can recollect when very young, of feeling the necessity of having my sins forgiven and washed away, lest I should be for ever miserable.

I had praying parents, who felt great anxiety for the welfare of their children. I remember of trying to appear perfectly indifferent before them, for fear they would think I was under conviction,

while I bore an aching heart, and night and day was troubled, fearing death might come upon me while in sin. When thunder-storms would arise, O, what dreadful suffering I passed through in my mind. Nights I would often awake and cry, not daring to close my eyes in sleep, for fear the judgment might come, or the lightning kill me, and I be lost forever.

Children, if any of you are without a hope in Christ, and you fear or tremble when any storm shall now arise, ask yourselves this question: If I fear now, how shall I stand in the great and dreadful day of God's wrath? None of the wicked can escape then. There will not be an hour, a moment lent you then to get prepared for that dreadful day.

You will then witness, not merely rain, lightning and thunder; but every island will flee away, and the mountains will not be found.

"And there fell upon men great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent."—Rev. xvi, 21. The storm of God's wrath is soon coming upon a guilty world, and can you endure the thought of coming up to such a scene without a hope in God, and feeling that his withering frown is upon you? If you want a shelter, you must seek it now, and then you will be hid when the fierce anger of the Lord shall come.

I remember of often hearing my mother pray for us; one night in particular after I had retired. I shall never forget that earnest prayer for her unconverted children. She appeared to be much distressed, as she wrestled with God for us. I never shall forget these words which kept in my mind day and night. "O! Will they wade through so many prayers, to destruction and misery." As I looked the matter over, thoughts would rush into my mind like this: The saints, and especially my parents, desire to save me from destruction, and yet I am so unthinking and cruel as to wade through their prayers, or drive off conviction that pressed upon me, and by my heedless course, plainly show that I choose death rather than life.

Dear children, if you have praying parents, prize their prayers, heed their instructions, and remember that you will have to give an account for the privileges you now enjoy. All heaven is interested in your salvation. God has given his only beloved Son to die for your transgressions, angels are watching over you, and are trying to turn your attention to God, to seek your soul's salvation. Christians are interested for you, and labor and pray for you. Your parents, who have watched over you all your life, if they are Christians, are deeply interested for you. They bear your case to the throne, and earnestly plead for God to spare you, to not cut you off in sin, and you be lost forever. Their aching hearts will find no rest until they see you followers of the meek and lowly Saviour. And will you

steel your hearts to all their prayers offered for you? Will you not be interested in your own soul's salvation? Will you think it brave (as I once thought) to appear unconcerned and thoughtless, as though you disregarded a mother's tears and prayers? O, will you "wade through so many prayers to destruction and misery?" When all are willing to help you, will you not help yourselves?

I now have a mother's feeling of strong attachment and love for my children, and have often wished that I had my youthful days to live over again. O, how careful I would be of my parents' feelings. I would love to obey them. I would open my whole soul to my anxious parents, and not do as I once did.

If I was reading my Bible, and my parents would be coming into the room, I would hide it for shame. Children, if there is any one entitled to your confidence, it is your dear parents who have spent so many anxious hours for you in your infancy, and all your life, have watched over you, and loved you as none but a parent can love.

In 1839, that faithful servant of the Lord, Wm. Miller, visited Portland Me., and gave a course of Lectures on the second coming of Christ. This had a great effect upon me. I knew that I must be lost if Christ should come, and I he found as I then was. At times I was greatly distressed as to my situation. But it was hard for me to give entirely up to the Lord. I knew that if I professed religion I must be a whole christian, and viewed it so great a thing to be a christian, that I feared I never should be one, if I professed religion. So I remained, suffering distress and anguish of spirit, some months.

My parents were Methodists. I generally attended meeting with them; and at a camp-meeting held in Buxton, Me., which all the family attended, I resolved to give myself unreservedly to the Lord. I commenced there to seek the Lord with all my heart, and could not be satisfied with anything short of pure religion. My mind was in great distress some weeks. At a prayer-meeting I found relief. O, how sweet was peace of mind. Every thing seemed changed.

I then felt no disposition to dress like the world, but wished to be plain in my dress, sober, and watchful, and put away all light and trifling conversation.

The minister spoke to me about being baptized. I told him that I could not be baptized then, that I wished to see if I could endure the trials a christian would have to endure, before moving forward in such a solemn ordinance.

When twelve years old, I wished to be immersed. The minister reluctantly consented to go into the water. He chose to sprinkle the candidates. It was a very windy day. The waves ran high, and dashed upon the shore; but I felt perfectly calm.

My peace was like a river; and when I arose out of the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of God rested upon me, and my soul was filled to overflowing with his love. Such a rich blessing I never experienced before. I felt dead to the world, and that my sins were all washed away.

The same day a sister and myself were taken into the church. I felt calm and happy, till I looked at the sister by my side, and saw gold rings on her fingers, and large gold ear-rings in her ears. Her bonnet was filled with artificial flowers, and was trimmed with costly ribbon, which was filled with haws upon her bonnet. My heart felt sad. I expected every moment that a reproof would come from the minister; but none came. He took us both into the church. My reflections were as follows: This is my sister, must I pattern after her? Must I dress like her? If it is right for her to dress so, it is right for me. I remembered what the Bible said about adorning the body. [1 Tim. ii, 9, 10.] For some time I was in deep trial, and finally concluded that if it was so sinful as I had thought it to be to dress like the world, those whom I looked up to as being devoted christians, and older in experience than myself, would feel it, and would deal plainly with those who thus went contrary to God's word. > But I knew that I must be plain in my dress. I believed it to be wicked to think so much of appearance, to decorate our poor mortal bodies with flowers and gold. It seemed to me that we had better be humbling ourselves in the dust; for our sins and transgressions were so great that God gave his only beloved Son to die for us.

I did not feel satisfied with what I enjoyed. I longed to be sanctified to God; but sanctification was preached in such a manner that I could not understand it, and thought that I never could attain to it, and settled down with my present enjoyment.

In 1841, Wm. Miller gave another course of Lectures in Portland. I attended them, and felt that I was not ready for Christ's coming; and when the invitation was given for those who desired prayers to come forward, I pressed through the crowd, and in taking up this cross found some relief.

I continued to plead with God for pure religion, and soon the cross of praying in a public meeting was presented before me. I was not humble enough to obey the Lord in this duty, fearing that if I attempted to pray, I could not, or my prayer would be very broken. Despair fastened upon me, and I was held in darkness three weeks. The suffering of my mind was great. O, how precious did the hope of a christian look to me then. And how wretched the case of the sinner, without a hope in Christ.

I found no relief until I made up my mind to obey the Lord, and take up the cross before me.—I attended a prayer-meeting, and, for the first time,



prayed vocally. My burdened spirit found relief at every word I spoke, until I was perfectly free and happy. Light from the Lord shone into my heart.

I was then free from pride. All that I desired to live for, was to glorify God, and him only did I wish to serve. All pride of dress was gone. The sacrifice that Christ had made to save me from sin, looked very great, and I could not dwell upon it without weeping.

My health had been feeble for years, and often suffered great distress of body. But I could now bear it all cheerfully. I felt that my will was wholly swallowed up in the will of God.

Often I could not sleep, I was so thankful that God had blessed me, and given me a good hope through Jesus Christ. I felt a longing of soul for the image of Christ to be reflected in me. Since that time I have had no desire to mingle with the world.

Dear children, you can be wholly consecrated to God, and rejoice in a full and free salvation. You must first give yourselves unreservedly to him.—Do not think that your state is good enough, and make no effort to get nearer to God. Unless you overcome pride of dress, pride of heart, love of self all anger and every evil passion. God will not own you as his, and will not receive you to himself at his appearing. You can be overcomers. Go to God daily for strength, and every day overcome. When temptations arise, do not let them get the victory over you; but you must get the victory over them; and then you will feel the sweet assurance that God loves you. Be humble, be watchful and prayerful. Look to Jesus, he is your pattern. Strive to have your lives as much like his as possible. Do not rest satisfied until you know that you love God with all your heart, and that his will is your will.

Keep his commandments holy. Do not speak your own words on the holy Sabbath, but talk of heavenly things. Talk of Jesus, his loveliness and glory, and of his undying love for you, and let your heart flow out in love and gratitude to him, who died to save you. O, get ready to meet your Lord in peace. Those who are ready will soon receive an unfading crown of life, and will dwell forever in the kingdom of God, with Christ, with angels, and with those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

E. G. WHITE.



Courtesy Loma Linda University Heritage Room

# HEIRLOOM

## Leaves from Ellen White's FAMILY ALBUM

"I think continually of those who were truly great.  
... Whose lovely ambition  
Was that their lips, still touched  
with fire,  
Should tell of the spirit clothed from  
head to foot in song."

—STEPHEN SPENDER

RON D. GRAYBILL



*This ambrotype is the earliest known photograph of James and Ellen White, probably dating from 1857. It is one of the few photographs in which James White is pictured wearing a tie.*



*In 1872, when Mrs. White was 44 years of age, she visited her older sister, Caroline, in Ottawa, Kansas. During the visit she had this tintype made.*

All photographs in this article courtesy of the Ellen G. White Estate except where otherwise noted





*This stereoscopic view was taken at a camp meeting in New York in 1880 when Mrs. White was about 52 years of age. Mrs. White is seated in the center with her daughter-in-law Mary Kelsey White on her right. James White has his right hand on Ellen White's shoulder.*



Courtesy Loma Linda University Heritage Room

*Miller* PHOTO ARTIST,  
BATTLE CREEK, MICH.

*This was one of Ellen White's favorite portraits. She used it often when exchanging pictures with friends and relatives.*





Courtesy Montana Historical Society

*This typical teenager's room, in Boston, in the late 19th century, sheds light on the words of Mrs. White. "As I visited our schools and the homes of our people I see that all the available space on tables, whatnots, and mantelpieces is filled up with photographs. On the right hand and the left are seen the pictures of human faces. God desires this order of things changed" (Messages to Young People, p. 316).*



*A view of Ellen White's own bedroom at Elmshaven shows a more moderate use of photographs. A picture of S. N. Haskell rests on her dressing table and another small photograph on the dresser. While in Europe in the mid-1880's Mrs. White encountered some Adventists who went to the extreme of banning all photographs. "Some have made a raid against . . . daguerreotypes and pictures of every kind. Everything must be burned up they say, urging that the making of all pictures is prohibited by the Second Commandment. . . . Have those who have burned up all their pictures of friends and any kind of pictures they happen to have, come to a higher state of consecration for this act?" she asked rhetorically (Selected Messages, vol 3, pp. 330-331).*





*Mrs. White's nurse, Sara McEnterfer, shows how Mrs. White did her writing during the later years of her life. The only photographs visible in the picture are on her letter file where she had placed a picture of her son, James Edson, and his wife Emma, together with a picture of the General Conference building in Takoma Park (See enlargement on the left).*



*In the 1860's Mrs. White posed a number of times while seated at a writing table, pen in hand. This series show variations on that theme.*





*An 1864 family group shows Ellen, Willie, James, and Edson. James White, as head of the family, holds a book, the symbol of wisdom and authority.*



*This photograph, usually dated 1865, presents some interesting changes when compared with the previous one. Edson's face is more mature and Ellen, this time, holds a book of her own.*



*The V-shaped bodice of Ellen White's dress was a popular style in the 1840's. This photograph was taken in the 1860's. It was not uncommon for 19th century women to adopt a certain style soon after their marriage, and cling to it for many years. Although Mrs. White's clothing styles changed over the years, she was always somewhat behind the general trends.*



*The Whites often had young people in their home other than their own children. In this family picture, Adelia Patten, editor of the Youth's Instructor, is shown with the family. Although Mrs. White always wore solid colors for her dresses, she did not insist that younger women should follow her style.*



*Caroline Clough was Ellen White's older sister. On a visit to her home in Kansas, Mrs. White had this photograph made and wrote to her son, "You may be anxious to hear in regard to my sister, your aunt. You have never seen her. She is an understanding, intelligent woman, living, I think, up to the best light she has had. She is a powerful singer. This is as much her talent as speaking is mine" (Letter 10, 1872).*



*This photograph, shows Ellen White and her twin sister, Elizabeth Bangs. Elizabeth never became a Seventh-day Adventist, though she and Ellen kept a correspondence until Elizabeth's death in the early 1890's.*



*Robert Harmon, Ellen White's father, in his old age. There are no known photographs of her mother.*



*This 1899 portrait shows Ellen White just before she left Australia. She was in her early sixties.*





*The wasp waists of 19th century women, produced by tight lacing, were very detrimental to their health.*



Courtesy Loma Linda University Heritage Room

*Ellen White's answer to tight lacing was the Reform Dress, which is shown here as it appeared in the Health Reformer in 1868.*



Courtesy Loma Linda University Heritage Room



*This picture of the patients and workers at the Western Health Reform Institute is the only one in which Ellen White is shown wearing her Reform Dress.*





*Standing on the speaker's platform at the 1875 camp meeting in Eagle Lake, Minn., the diminutive Ellen White appears dwarfed by her husband and the other preachers.*

*At the Reno, Nevada, camp meeting in May 1888, Ellen White posed with the other campers. Sara McEnterfer wrote home, "Well, I guess you can imagine about how we look. But if you cannot, we will show you our picture we had taken this morning. The whole camp arrayed themselves [sic] before the large pavilion and had a picture taken. I guess we will all look blind, for we had to face a blazing sun."*







*The photographs taken of Ellen White in European groups present an interesting contrast to those taken in America. European photographers tried to make their group pictures appear more candid and did not place the more prominent individuals in the front and center of the group. In the photograph above, taken in Basel, Switzerland, in 1885, Mrs. White is well back in the group in the left center of the picture. Notice that people are looking off in various directions rather than at the photographer.*





*Mrs. White wore her bonnet for this unusual photograph taken at the first camp meeting in Northern Europe, held at Moss, Norway, in 1887. J. H. Waggoner is the elderly pioneer holding the stovepipe hat in the center of the picture. O. A. Olsen and his wife are seen on the left. With Mrs. White on the right are Jennie Ings (seated) and Willie White.*



*At the 1909 General Conference session in Takoma Park, Mrs. White joined a number of former Australian workers for a photograph.*

“What is precious is never to forget . . .  
The names of those who in their lives  
fought for life,  
Who wore at their hearts the  
fire’s centre.”

—STEPHEN SPENDER

*This group of portraits of Ellen White indicates that her childhood accident had little lasting effect on her appearance, aside from possibly a slight depression of the bridge of her nose. Note also that she often secured her collar with a pin or brooch.*

*During a visit to Hawaii, she tells of some gifts given to her by a sister Kerr. "She . . . gave me a silk scarf and a \$10 pin composed of white stones, very plain and serviceable. I thought I could not accept this, but she looked so sorry that I finally did take it and have worn it ever since for it is handy and becoming while it is not showy at all" (Letter 322, 1891).*



*Mrs. White's features often raise the question of whether she had any black or Indian ancestry. The limited genealogical research which has been done on both her father's and mother's side of the family has not shown any such ancestry. The ambiguousness of her features, however, have enabled people of all races and nations to identify with her as a person and as God's messenger.*





*The last close-up portrait of Ellen White was made during her visit to the picnic at the church school near her Elmshaven home in 1913. She had donated the land for the school and enjoyed visiting the children in the school yard and speaking to them on occasions, such as this picnic.*



*This picture of Mrs. White speaking at the dedication of the Loma Linda Sanitarium is one of only two pictures which show her in action, preaching, the other being the familiar photograph of her behind the pulpit at the Battle Creek Tabernacle, at the 1901 General Conference session.*



*The last photograph taken of Ellen White in life was this one showing her on the balcony of her Elmshaven home after the fall in which her hip was broken, shortly before her death.*



# “HOTBED OF IMMORALITY”



Courtesy Dover Publications

## Seventh-day Adventists and the Battle Creek Theater in the 1880's

DELMER I. DAVIS

**T**he Seventh-day Adventist Church historically has been antagonistic to the public theater, an attitude mirrored today in prohibitions against theater attendance in student handbooks for Seventh-day Adventist academies and colleges. Generally such prohibitions are buttressed by key quotations from the writings of Ellen G. White, denouncing the evils of the theater.

From her earliest published views in 1866, which censored theatricals at the health institute in Dansville to a short statement about vices in the *Signs of the Times* of 1905, Ellen White never wavered much in her condemnation of the theater. Throughout her nearly forty years of writing

occasionally about the theater, she condemned three principal aspects: amateur dramatics at health institutions, amateur dramatics at literary societies, and attendance at public theaters. Her concern with the public theater appears to have arisen directly as a result of experiences in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Probably her most significant general statement on the subject appeared as a part of *Testimony 30* in 1881, a statement that seems clearly to have been aimed at the Battle Creek College community of students and student supervisors. The pointed paragraph on the theater comes in the context of an article entitled "Proper Education" in which Ellen White advised adults to keep track of their children and students at the college. After several pages



which allude to the dangerous activities that tempt young people, she refers to one of the "other forbidden places of resort in the city," that is, the theater:

Among the most dangerous resorts for pleasure is the theater. Instead of being a school of morality and virtue, as is so often claimed, it is the very hotbed of immorality. Vicious habits and sinful propensities are strengthened and confirmed by these entertainments. Low songs, lewd gestures, expressions, and attitudes, deprave the imagination and debase the morals. Every youth who habitually attends such exhibitions will be corrupted in principle. There is no influence in our land more powerful to poison the imagination, to destroy religious impressions, and to blunt the relish for the tranquil pleasures and sober realities of life than theatrical amusements. The love for these scenes increases with every indulgence, as the desire for intoxicating drink strengthens with its use. The only safe course is to shun the theater, the circus, and every other questionable place of amusement.<sup>1</sup>

It should be remembered that Mrs. White was not providing any new criticism of the theater in her remarks. She was in excellent historical company. Plato condemned the theater for debasing morals and preventing the strengthening of the state in his *Republic* over 2,300 years before Ellen White. The established Christian Church barred the "pagan" theater from Western Europe for centuries, echoing the sentiments of Augustine who regretted his own early education in the classics. In barring the theater on the outside, however, the church overlooked encroachment from the inside; and the drama was reborn inside cathedrals by the tenth century, as a result of the inherent theatrical elements in the mass, quickly expanding into the rich Biblical and morality plays of medieval Western Europe. Critics were many, however, and inevitably the drama had to be taken out of the churches and performed outside, from which quarters secularization quickly occurred, culminating in the high point of English drama, in Elizabethan times. Thus, even a Shakespeare had to work much of his life to become "respectable," so common were the associations of immorality with actors and writers of the Renaissance. The predictable consequence was the closing of the theaters by the Puritans under Cromwell, showing clearly how English Protestantism regarded drama and the theater.

**I**t was this Puritan heritage that, when transported to New England, resulted in the banning of theatrical entertainments until after the War of Independence in the northernmost colonies, including Massachusetts. From 1620 until the 1780's, there is no record of public theatrical performances northeast of New York State. Only around the turn of the 19th century did the theater finally take hold in Boston, not much more than thirty years prior to the birth of Ellen Harmon, in Maine, for most authorities suggest 1794 as the year for the first successful Boston theater.<sup>2</sup>

Although many of the former Puritan prejudices

died with the rise of liberalism, much of the old restrictive fervor was transplanted into Evangelical churches, such as the Methodist church, Ellen White's childhood denomination. Certainly, she would have been raised in an atmosphere that would not have permitted theater-going. In *The Early Methodist People*, Leslie Church notes that John Wesley did criticize the contemporary 18th-century drama, but he did not generally condemn "plays nor the reading of them." In America, however, Wesley's "liberal" attitude was not an apparent possibility for Methodists of the 19th century. A very interesting and biased book entitled *Breakers! Methodism Adrift* by the Rev. L. W. Munhall charts the course of American Methodists in relationship to amusements. Says Munhall, "Mr. Wesley's Rule, which forbade 'Taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus,' and which became a disciplinary rule, was, by all good Methodists, believed to forbid dancing, card-playing and theater-going." But increasing membership, riches, and laxness resulted in inattention to this rule. Hence, in 1872, the Methodist General Conference "enacted a rule that specifically forbade these things . . ." According to Munhall, however, the rule came under continual attack, especially from the Bishops, and by 1908 and again in 1912 it was nearly rescinded.

This brief sketch of the historical religious background of Ellen White's remarks, while not explicitly seeking to assert that she was speaking against the theater because of her Puritan/Methodist heritage, does indicate nevertheless that this heritage was deeply ingrained.

Her distaste for the theater and things theatrical appears clearly in "Notes of Travel," an article published in 1883, in the *Review and Herald*, in which she notes her reaction to crossing the country on a train with an actress. She suggests that the actress was "evidently a woman of ability, and possessed of many good qualities, which, if devoted to the service of God, might win for her the Saviour's commendation, 'well done, thou good and faithful servant.'" However, the woman had in her view, channeled her energies in the wrong direction. Evidently those traveling with Mrs. White talked with attendants who waited on the actress, resulting in Mrs. White's knowledge of the schedule the actress kept. Her most negative comments are concerned with what such an unnatural schedule does to one's "health and morals." She summarizes in the following manner:

The divinely-appointed order of day and night is disregarded, health is sacrificed, for the amusement of those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The effect is demoralizing to all concerned. Two or three evenings a week spent in attending balls, or theatric or operatic entertainments, will enervate both mind and body, and prevent the development of that strength of character which is essential to usefulness in society. The only safe amusements are such as will not banish serious and religious thoughts; the only safe places of resort are those to which we can take Jesus with us.<sup>3</sup>



An 1869 photograph of the Hamblin Opera House block, in Battle Creek. On the street level were two general stores. The entrance to the theater was on the extreme left and the exit on the far right.

**T**he rules of Battle Creek College implicitly forbade attendance at the theater from the inception of the college in 1874 right through the 1880-1881 school year. The 1881 *Battle Creek College Annual Catalogue* prints the same rule all its predecessors had: "Students must not be idling upon the streets after dark, nor go down to the business part of the city except upon necessary business." By 1885-1886, the College was spelling out vices in the *College Catalogue*, adding that students should abstain "from visiting billiard rooms, saloons, skating-rinks, and gambling places." However, the theater was not explicitly mentioned until the 1890-1891 *Battle Creek College Calendar* with the addition of Rule 11: "Attending parties, the theater, or any entertainment of an objectionable character, interferes with a student's work, and exerts a wrong influence in the School. It is therefore forbidden."

The school years of 1880 to 1882, when Ellen White authored her pointed statements, were momentous for the College. President Sidney Brownsberger resigned in May 1881; for what reason, no one is sure. Clearly he had upset people, perhaps for such reasons as the lax discipline in the homes where students were boarded in west Battle Creek. Dr. Emmett K. Vande Vere in *The Wisdom Seekers* notes how one diary of the time records in May before the president's resignation, that "the boys at the College are having a terrible time. Several have

been expelled, and more have left. It is a shame."

It seems clear that one discipline problem in 1880-1881 was theater-going. Such a conclusion is certain not only from the Ellen White statement but also from other sources. A student diary provides the following evidence. In an entry, 12 March, 1881, the author notes that "there is a theater down town this evening to which Mr. Reed and Minnie [fellow students] have gone." Later, the writer himself admits to theater attendance on 21 March, 1881: "We have been to the show this evening. It was boss."<sup>4</sup>

A corroborating source for theater attendance by Battle Creek College students is the *Battle Creek Nightly Moon*, a newspaper that was running regular features on the college and the "West End" during 1881. The correspondent for news about the Adventist section of town, writing variously under such title as "The West End Pencil" or "Notes from the College," seems likely to have been a student, given his obvious sympathy with student desires for more freedom. On 11 November, 1881, a Friday night, *All the Rage*, an American comedy, was scheduled for performance. Under the title "Our West End Pencil" for the Saturday evening *Moon* of 12 November, the reporter notes the following: "The West End was well represented at the theatre last evening. Bad—bad." That Adventists were willing to attend the theater on the evening of the Sabbath gives one some idea of the possible love of the theater among the west-enders.



**A**lthough there was a theater in Battle Creek prior to 1869, it was the building of the Opera House that brought drama and opera in Battle Creek into its own. The Opera House had three floors and a basement. In the basement was a restaurant, a billiard hall, and a place for dancing. Stores occupied the first floor, with the upper two being given over to the main auditorium which had enough seats for 1,000-1,200 people. This all-purpose building was used for many kinds of public entertainments besides plays and operas. In the early years, for example, lectures, political rallies, charity balls, and concerts by local musical groups occurred frequently. By the later 1870's and early 1880's, however, theatrical events dominated, with occasional concerts and lectures.

One of the perennial arguments used by church leaders to discourage young people from attending the theater has been the suggestion that corrupting influences are present not only in the drama itself but in the behavior and morals of the audience, the group Mrs. White referred to as "the idle and pleasure-loving multitudes." Contemporary evidence from Battle Creek newspapers of the 1870's and early 1880's tends to support the general assumption that audiences were not always on their best behavior. For example, a Letter to the Editor of the *Daily Journal* for 9 March, 1873, expressed dismay at the poor demeanor of the audience, especially the jeering of young men at "certain young ladies" [evidently prostitutes] as they "enter the House." Says the writer, the "character of the ladies may not be above reproach; but, as long as they are permitted to attend public places of amusement and conduct themselves like ladies while there, they are far above those who make such noisy and insulting demonstrations . . . The audience also have the right to be protected from such low demonstrations." The *Nightly Moon* for 1881 and 1882 suggested that behavior continued to be a problem. On 9 May, 1881, the *Moon* included these comments:

At nearly every entertainment in our public halls it is the custom for a lot of boys to occupy the back seats and instead of listening to the entertainment themselves they keep those around them from hearing anything by making all kinds of noises. We hope to be able to report that the marshal has 'snaked' a few of them out of the hall and put them in the city refrigerator. It appears nothing else will cool them down.

From the same paper, nearly a year later, one reads under the title "Opera House Hits," on 2 March 1881, that "the number who were obliged to go out between acts to 'see a man,' was unusually large last night. Better cease it, boys, for they're all on to you." The writer also chided two young men who were so cheap that they and their dates shared a scanty two seats. One of the men, according to the writer, "couldn't resist, and sat with his arm around her the entire evening. Poor fellow; and she, poor thing, how could she resist!" Finally, the author noted the disgusting habit of tobacco-chewing in public. "If some of the

tobacco chewers had had a water wheel in each corner of their mouth, we have no doubt but what they possessed sufficient power to run them—they could do well at flooding mines." Clearly the typical carryings-on at the theater were not always pleasing even to worldly-wise reporters for the daily press.

**O**ne should have, of course, no illusions about the actual content of American drama prior to the 20th century. There was a good deal happening in the theater, with many plays being written and performed, most of them entirely forgettable and forgotten by our own time. One standard literary history summarizes American drama in the following manner:

The Civil War was neither the beginning nor the end of an epoch in American drama. The demand for popular theatrical entertainment which actually increased in the North during the war, produced only variations upon such established traditions as the comedy of eccentric character, domestic melodrama, and the sensational play. The stage continued to be

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dominated by a generation of great actors . . . who kept alive the literary masterpieces of the past, especially the plays of Shakespeare, by their inspired if sometimes grandiose performances. Most of the new plays, by contrast, were ephemeral, sensational, or sentimental legerdemain evoked by the huge popular demand for entertainment or escape.<sup>5</sup>

Battle Creek saw the best (or perhaps the worst) of typical American drama; that is, theater audiences loved what they saw, even if what they saw was escapist and sentimental.

It might be easy to think that a small city would have rather shoddy entertainment. The truth is, Battle Creek considered itself quite sophisticated in relationship to amusements. It was, after all, on the main train line between Detroit and Chicago, thus making it possible for the Opera House to get some of the best theatrical troupes available. What Battle Creek saw was established American and British fare of the popular theater, ranging from minstrel shows to dubious productions of Shakespeare. But most popular, judging from frequent reappearances, were the native American dramas. During the months from October 1880 through April 1882, there were ninety-five separate productions that might be classified as theatrical events in Battle Creek, most of these at the Opera House [see table 1]. If tastes can be judged by frequency of types of performances,

then comedy performances were most popular with Battle Creek audiences (including musical comedy, farcical comedy, social comedy, comedy of types, minstrel shows, and vaudeville) with serious drama (melodrama or sensational drama) running a close second. Established classics (three productions of Shakespeare) were the least important component of the calendar.

While many of these plays have been lost, and little can be determined about their nature except for clues in the advertisements and brief reviews of the *Nightly Moon*, a surprising number do remain, in printed form, in manuscript, or in summary in secondary sources. A review of some of these theatrical presentations helps to clarify the context of Ellen White's remarks.

*The selling of Zoe at the slave auction—a climactic scene in the melodramatic play The Octoroon, by Dion Boucicault (inset).*

Courtesy Dover Publications





The popular playwright Augustin Daly,  
author of such theatrical successes as  
Pique, Under the Gaslight, and  
Needles and Pins.

Comedy had always been popular in Battle Creek. Elizabeth Orlik notes, for example, that during the 1872-1873 season, *Our American Cousin* with Laura Keene played in the Opera House. This play was written by an English dramatist, Tom Taylor, in the early 1850's, but it had never been performed in England and had become a vehicle for Miss Keene. Carl Sandburg notes that the play is a "mediocre comedy." It "proceeds, not unpleasant, often stupid, sprinkled with silly puns, drab and aimless dialogue, forced humor, characters neither truly English nor truly American nor fetching as caricatures. The story centers around the Yankee lighting his cigar with an old will, burning the document to ashes and thereby throwing a fortune of \$400,000 away from himself into the hands of an English cousin."<sup>6</sup> According to one historian of the theater, it was as much as anything Miss Keene's and the play's connection to Lincoln that kept the production going for years, since Miss Keene evidently had gone to the Lincoln box and had held Lincoln's head in her lap right after the shooting.

What Sandburg notes about *Our American Cousin* might well be applied to most of the comedies playing in Battle Creek in 1880-1882. One of the best efforts, judging from its longevity, was *Needles and Pins*, first performed 16 September, 1881. This play was adapted by the very successful American play producer and writer, Augustin Daly, from a German

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New York Season for the Season of 1881-82.

The new Holiday Comedy Entitled,

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play by Nikolaus Duffek. The comedy centers on the marriage plans for two young rich children, plans opposed by their wealthy domineering mother who wished her children to secure even greater wealth in marriage. The father, Mr. Vandusen, is shown to be mild-mannered and ineffectual, while his wife's jealousy over one of his old romances leads to embarrassing confusions of identity, resolved in the last act with true love winning out in every case, including the reuniting of Mr. and Mrs. Vandusen.

In her comments to the Battle Creek College community during 1881, Mrs. White had noted that "instead of being a school of morality and virtue, as is so often claimed," the theater "is the very hotbed of immorality." Perhaps still trying to exonerate itself as virtuous, after decades and centuries of castigation by critics, the theater of the 19th century, particularly in America, was characterized by diligent moralizing, regardless of the immoralities and vulgarities acted out before the audience. Such is the case with *Needles and Pins*. Mr. Vandusen has admittedly been in love with another woman prior to his marriage to Mrs. Vandusen, but his growing love and admiration for his wife show that one can find happiness in being faithful. As neat as the moral is, however, it is easy to be distracted from the serious issues by the silly comic interactions on stage.

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(Spiritualistic Exposés, Magic Shows, Circuses, Tableaux, Operas, etc.)	

Total of 95 separate events



The "daring" costume of the chorus girls in the musical comedy *The Black Crook*, by Charles Barras.

Also appearing in Battle Creek were comedies written about American regional types, particularly the Yankee character stereotype familiar to the American stage as early as Royall Tyler's *The Contrast* and continued in the 19th century in such dramatizations as Joseph Jefferson's version of *Rip Van Winkle*. The variation on this Yankee type that appeared in Battle Creek from 1880-1882 was *Joshua Whitcomb* authored (and even in Battle Creek once played by) Denman Thompson; the play appeared three times during the two seasons. As a drama, the plot is practically non-existent, but the character of the rural farmer, Joshua Whitcomb, said to be based on a real character, was perennially popular because of his simplicity, common sense, and compassion. Where many of the comedies of this period succeeded because they portrayed silliness among the upper classes, the comedies of rural character types were successful because they supposedly presented reality among the farming classes, albeit a reality strongly spiced with sentimentality.

Although not specifically on the 1880-1882 calendar of theatrical events in Battle Creek (unless *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is so classified), American musical comedy had already been developed in the post-Civil War era. The most notorious of all post-Civil War plays, *The Black Crook*, opened in New York City in 1866. The script for the play had originally been authored by the obscure Charles Barras in 1863, evidently intended as pure melodrama, but when it reached the stage three years later, the melodrama had been supplemented by music and spectacle (mostly because a European ballet company had been stranded in America prior to its opening when the ballet house had burned down). According to Myron Matlow, the original production lasted about five hours, boasted 100 dancing girls in daring costumes (evidently flesh-colored tights), brilliant stage effects, including fairy grottos, unusual flora, underwater scenic effects, boats on stage, catchy music and singing. Admittedly escapist, it was financially the most successful show of its day, earning close to \$700,000 in a year. The reason for its success was apparently the girls and their scanty costumes, the plot itself having little merit with its improbable twists and turns and an unconvincing dialogue. "Nothing in any other Christian country, or in modern times, has approached the indecent and demoralizing exhibition," a leading daily commented editorially, and ministers thundered from the pulpit



so vividly, describing the sinful doings on stage that their parishioners eagerly went to examine these 'abominations' for themselves."<sup>7</sup>

*The Black Crook* played in Battle Creek in a tent show as early as 1867; it appeared in the Opera House in February of 1873 in a gigantic production that created much excitement. Orlik notes that the audience went expecting to be shocked and was somewhat disappointed. The play returned in 1875.

Finally, comedy and music showed itself in Battle Creek in many minstrel shows and in early versions of vaudeville. Every season generally saw at least one or more minstrel shows at the Opera House, and between 1880-1881, there were nine. In these shows, whites in black faces sang, danced, told jokes, and offered "darkey" wisdom. The shows took a traditional form, according to Garff Wilson:

There was a 'first part' with the performers in a semicircle, the interlocutor in the center, and the endmen holding bones and tambourine at the extreme ends. During the first part the performers sang their sentimental ballads, played their banjos and one-string fiddles, and danced their soft-shoe routines, giving way frequently to interruptions from the 'endmen' and interlocutor, who exchanged jokes and insults with each other. The 'second part' of the show featured an 'olio,' or miscellaneous collection, of variety acts, a farcical 'stump speech,' and a lively 'hoe-down' dance for the whole company at the end.<sup>8</sup>

Such shows were mostly nonsense, pandering to the American desire to erase racial and social problems by oversimplifying and stereotyping, making the black character threatless and charming, and completely unreal by keeping real blacks off the stage. By the 1880's, Wilson notes that such shows were merging with the vaudeville tradition and were including more and more vulgarities and sketches (early vaudeville had been off limits for ladies!). Minstrel shows included

numerous players and dancers; for example, on 9 November, 1880, J. H. Haverly's New Mastodon Minstrels appeared at the Opera House and boasted sixty artists in contrast to the more typical thirty of a few seasons before. In relationship to entertainment and spectacle, Americans were already convinced that *more was better*.



An advertising woodcut of the long-running musical extravaganza *The Black Crook*.

Courtesy Dover Publications





**S**erious theatrical productions were almost as popular as comic events in Battle Creek during the early 1880's. Of course, one cannot really equate serious live drama of the nineteenth century with twentieth-century drama. Today, most theatrical audiences would scoff and ridicule the popular serious plays of the last century so much have tastes changed. The popular serious theater in the nineteenth century meant melodrama; it was taken seriously by masses of playgoers for almost one hundred years, and its techniques pervaded most of the serious drama played in Battle Creek through the 1880's.

Perhaps the best contemporary introduction to melodrama is contained in Michael Booth's *Hiss the Villain*. According to Booth, the very essence of melodrama is oversimplification of morality and escapism:

For its audience melodrama was both an escape from real life and a dramatization of it as it ought to be; uncomplicated, easy to understand, sufficiently exciting to sweep away petty cares. . . . Although melodrama is full of violence—stabbing, shooting,

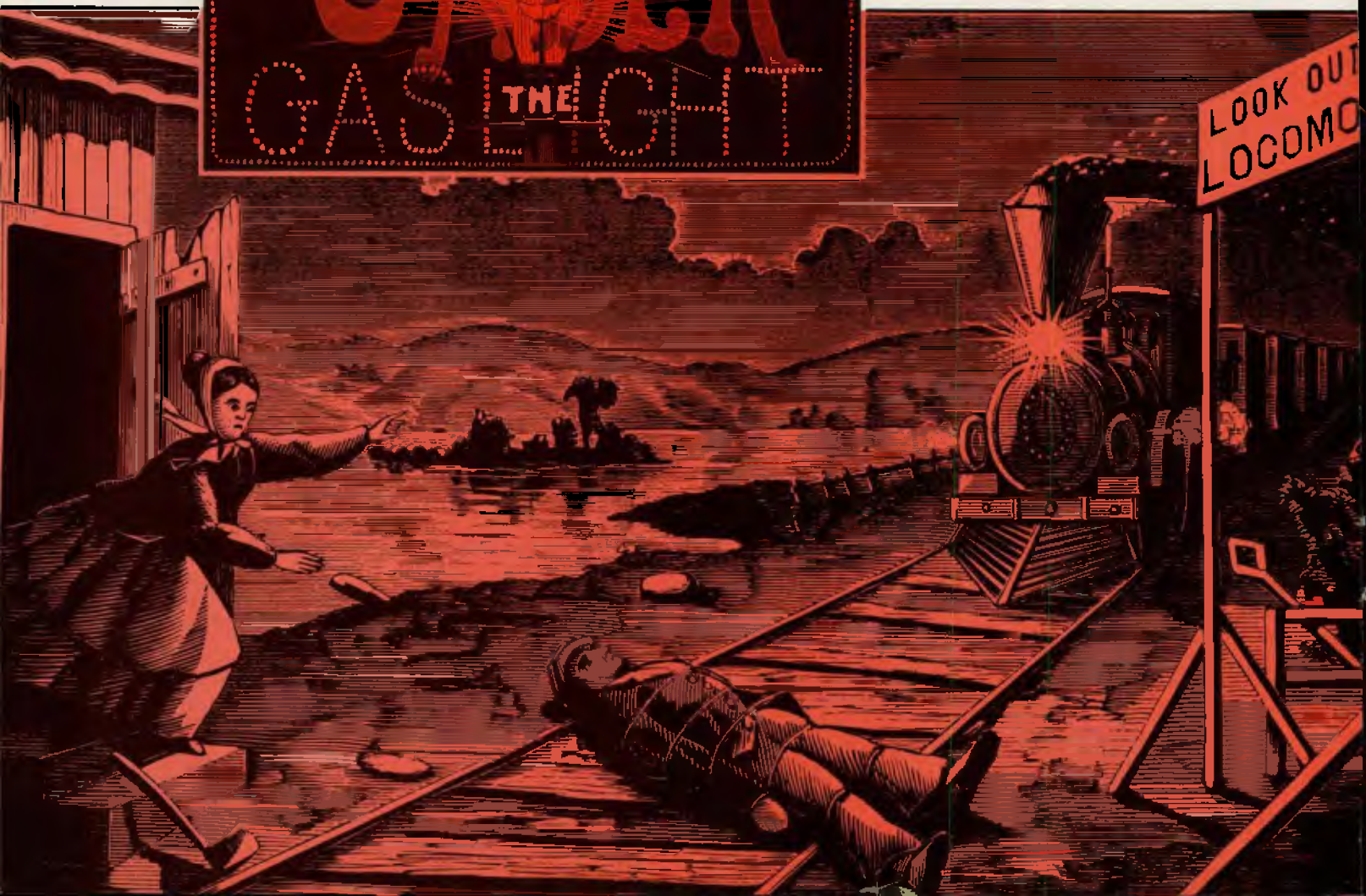
hanging, strangling, poisoning, suicide, fire, shipwreck, train wreck, villains of extreme savagery, revenge-seeking ghosts, heroes and heroines who experience a series of fearful physical catastrophes and domestic agonies—these are all signposts along the road to ultimate happiness, the triumph of virtue, and defeat of evil. . . . The audiences of melodrama both ate their cake and had it; crime and violence and the utmost exertions of villainy can only produce poetic justice and a re-assertion of a benevolent moral order, which, though in temporary upheaval, always rights itself.<sup>9</sup>

Essential to melodrama was a de-emphasis on character development with stereotyping as a result (hero, heroine, villain, comic characters) and a heavy reliance on a fast-moving, adventure-filled plot, often with accompanying music (the word melodrama comes from Greek sources through French and literally translates as music-drama or song-drama). In melodrama, actors used exaggerated speech intonations and gestures, while scenic effects were often spectacular and expensive, with underwater episodes, ship sinkings, train collisions, and pitched battles on stage.



Woodcut of the famous "Railroad scene" in Augustin Daly's *Under the Gaslight*. The heroine Laura barely succeeds in freeing the "good" Civil War veteran who had been tied to the tracks by the "ruthless" villain from a speeding, approaching train.

Courtesy Dover Publications





The audience for melodrama was essentially lower-class, made up of the masses who were being burdened and exploited by the industrial revolution, a group whose lives were often horrible in their day-to-day dinginess and poverty, a group who longed for escape and sentimentally wished for moral justice to repair their own sufferings. (Very often, indeed, rich people were the villains of melodrama!). The extreme popularity of melodrama together with poor pay for playwrights and lack of copyright laws led the more serious authors to turn to other forms of literary endeavor, resulting in a drama often written by literary hacks, inferior in structure to plays of earlier eras and pandering only to the sensational tastes of the lower-class audiences. The sophisticated classes of the time preferred opera and the legitimate theater (a term invented in England in the early nineteenth century to distinguish classical theaters from melodramatic theaters). The very popularity and success of melodrama, however, inevitably resulted in the melodramatic techniques being carried over to the legitimate stage and becoming everywhere pervasive.

Given the pervasiveness of melodrama in the nineteenth-century British and American theater, it is not surprising that Battle Creek audiences saw melodrama when they attended serious plays at Hamblin's Opera House. But even melodrama can vary from crude to sophisticated theater, and such is the case with those on the calendar in Battle Creek between 1880 and 1882.

**C**ertainly, the most popular play, judging from its regular reappearance not only in Battle Creek but also throughout the United States, was *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It was performed at the Opera House in nine separate productions between 1874 and 1881. In 1880-1882, it was staged by five different production companies. It is difficult to know, of course, what versions of the play were performed since there were many in existence, all based on the pre-Civil War novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Interestingly, Mrs. Stowe shared Ellen White's view of the theater, and she forbade the dramatization of her book, but copyright laws were lax, the result being the most-produced play in the history of drama.

The story was generally produced with an emphasis on villainy and suffering, an exaggeration placed upon the goodness of Uncle Tom as well as on the evil qualities of Simon Legree. Eventually, chorus music with sentimental and religious songs was included, along with bloodhounds on stage to chase Eliza and a spectacular final scene in which Tom ascended to heaven with angels welcoming him to eternity. The slavery issue was finished by the 1880's, but Americans would continue to revel in the oversimplified, sentimentalized, exaggerated staging of this play until World War I.

Other melodramatic plays performed in Battle Creek included *The Octoroon*, an exploitation of the race issue written in 1859, and Augustin Daly's *Under the Gaslight*. This latter play included the



*The actress Fanny Davenport in the role of Cleopatra.*

now-classic melodramatic scene in which the heroine, Laura, with an axe hacked her way out of a signal house near the railway track and, just before the train came on stage, freed the good Civil War veteran who had been tied to the tracks by the ruthless villain.

**S**ome of the serious plays that appeared in Battle Creek between 1880 and 1882 show a considerably higher level of sophistication and writing than these dramas, even though melodramatic techniques and oversimplified "moral immorality" are still present. Such a play is *Pique*, again by Augustin Daly, performed at Hamblin's on 2 March, 1881. The production that played in Battle Creek brought with it a recognized star, Fanny Davenport, who had created a sensation in the role of the heroine when the play first appeared in New York in 1875.

Hamblin's Opera House enlarged its usual one-column ad to three full columns and ran these for several days, billing Miss Davenport as "America's Greatest Comedienne," something she had once been, according to Garff Wilson; but she had long since become an actress of great emotional power, under Daly's tutelage, particularly suited to sensational drama. On 25 February, 1881, *The Nightly Moon* was advertising the play as "The Society Event of the Season." All Battle Creek seemed to be waiting anxiously for Fanny Davenport.

In *Pique*, Daly had provided Miss Davenport with a well-written melodrama and a marvelous acting role for a woman. The heroine, Mabel Renfrew, loses her young romantic lover to an older rival, and out of "pique" for being turned down, she recklessly marries a fine, upstanding, but boring, rich suitor, Captain Arthur Standish. Upon learning that Mabel does not truly love him, Arthur sets her free, leaving her to bear their child alone. In the third act Daly, with clever genius, inserted a kidnapping of Mabel's child, clearly based upon the much publicized contemporary case of Charley Ross. The last part of the play centers around the attempt to rescue the child and return it to its now-chastened mother. In the end, Mabel and Arthur are brought together, and the child's restoration results in a happy ending, for Mabel has learned to love Arthur.

The play's theatrical success apparently depended heavily on its appeal to women. In its original run in New York, "Daly noted that out of a [sic] one thou-

sand one hundred people attending, not fifty were males." The play's moral, which suggests that love can grow and life can be bearable in spite of youthful lost romance, seems to have been immensely evocative for women. Said the reviewer for the *Nightly Moon*, on 3 March, 1881.

'It was the best theatre I ever attended' was the exclamation of each one as they emerged from the opera house last night. The house was the largest of the season, being crowded from pit to ceiling, and the acting was beyond criticism, and as every one admitted, the finest show ever in the city. Miss Davenport is the only actress who successfully drew crowded houses in competition with Sarah Bernhardt when they both played in New Orleans at the same time.

A final type of serious play which combined melodramatic techniques with a peculiarly American interest was the frontier drama. Of the six different productions of frontier drama from 1880 to 1882, the most famous was Frank Mayo's interpretation of *Davy Crockett*, written by Frank Murdoch, and produced for the first time in 1872. From December, 1881, to 21 April, 1882, when this production was in Battle Creek, the play had become an established favorite, and Mayo continued to act the role until his death in 1896.

The full title of the play, *Davy Crockett: Or Be Sure You're Right, Then Go Ahead*, helps to reveal the rough and ready formula behind the plot. Davy, still

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New and Picturesque Scenery, all created by  
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young and long before his Alamo days, loves Eleanor, a childhood companion who is from a higher class and now seems out of reach when she returns to the frontier, rich and manipulated by the villain into a loveless betrothal. But her presence incites Davy to romantic purpose and in the end he wisks Eleanor away from her loveless wedding to his own cabin where a preacher—who just happens to be on the spot—marries them in time to foil the plans of the villain. Davy's dialogue is laced with colloquialisms and true-blue American sentiment, as this example from the last act reveals:

*Davy. Parson, If you're the man I take you for, you'll show it now. This girl belongs to me, I won her fair, square, and legal. I saved her life, when the wolves were howling around her. I took her from the arms of them that are coming to take her from me now, but if a foot dares to cross that threshold, and she's not my wife, you'll see bloodshed.*

*Dame and Par. Bloodshed?*

*Davy. Mother, give me my rifle!*

*Parson. Davy, Davy!*

*Davy. Will you marry us? [Horses' hoofs swell]*

*Par. I certainly will.*

Earlier, the most memorable scene of the play has Davy rescuing Eleanor in a driving blizzard, the two of them finding shelter in a cabin where Davy saves her life from ravenous wolves by using his strong right arm as a bolt for the door!

The Battle Creek audience loved this frontier battle between good and evil and Davy's common sense approach to romance. According to the *Nightly Moon* for 4 December, 1881, "The play is a most beautiful one, and as acted by this company it receives the fullest justice. The plot is effective and the various situations thrilling."

Thursday, Mar. 9.

PROF. E. FRANKLIN,

— IN —

SHAKESPEREAN

IMPERSONATIONS, ETC.

IN COSTUME,

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Distinguished Shakespearian,

John L. Burleigh,  
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of Whitney's Grand Opera  
House, Detroit.

In the Celebrated five-act Tragedy  
of

"Othello,"

"OTHELLO" the Moor of Venice  
"OTHELLO" the Moor of Venice

"Othello,"

And a first-class Dramatic Com-  
pany, under the Manage-  
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The appearance of JOHN L. BUR-  
LEIGH and a First-class Company in  
Shakespeare's Great Tragedy, is a  
noteworthy event of the Dramatic  
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Cards of Admission: Seventy-  
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No extra charge for Reserved  
Seats, now on sale at O'Quinn's.

Secure Seats at once.

Battle Creek was not without its serious pretensions to art. As early as 1872-1873, a production of *Romeo and Juliet* played in the Opera House. For most Americans of the 19th century, the classics on stage meant Shakespeare more than any other dramatist, but Shakespeare usually had to share the billing with the actor or actress playing the lead. This was, after all, the so-called "great age of American acting." Audiences often went to the theater to see a favorite "star" in something, usually a role repeated all over the country year after year, often with the leading actor or actress so dominating the role and the play that the materials were shaped or reshaped especially for the production. In America, even Shakespeare was not sacred. The texts of the original plays were cut and modeled to fit the occasion and the troupe. In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain only exaggerates slightly when he has the King and Duke prepare for their frontier performance of Shakespeare as they mix up three famous tragic speeches from three separate plays. Shakespeare in Battle Creek, then, probably meant something quite different from Shakespeare in 20th-century America, both in acting style, staging, and fidelity to the original text.

Three different productions of Shakespeare appeared between 1880 and 1882, and a fourth was scheduled, but never appeared. Of the three productions which did appear, two were at the Opera House, and one, a recital of Shakespeare roles on 9 March, 1882, included the following: "Prof. E. Franklin in Shakespearian Impersonations" with "Macbeth, Richard III, Hamlet, and Hiawatha"—no doubt a compliment to Longfellow if not to Shakespeare! The two Opera House performances were the comedy *As You Like It* on 27 November, 1880, and the tragedy, *Othello*, on 17 September, 1881.

Comedy classics were evidently far more popular than tragedies in Battle Creek, for with the exception of *Romeo and Juliet*, no great tragedies appeared prior to 1881. Battle Creek audiences seemed to have been somewhat uncomfortable with Shakespearian tragedy. John L. Burleigh, a former state senator turned actor, received heavy publicity in the *Nightly Moon* for over a week prior to his appearance on 17 September, 1881, in *Othello*. But although the reviewer in the newspaper was not negative, his choice of words is revealing of how Battle Creek regarded the classics. Speaking of Burleigh, the writer noted "his acting evinced a studied carefulness which is sure to make him some day a star in the theatrical firmament." But, the author proceeded, "He was supported by a well-selected troupe, and for a Shakespearian play it could scarcely [sic] be excelled." The inclusion of "for a Shakespearian play," perhaps an unconscious condescension, reveals much about what popular tastes really preferred. In truth, plays of any lasting artistic pretensions were but minor footnotes in the history of the Battle Creek stage up through the 1882 season.





*The English actress Mrs. Scott-Sidon, "the best Shakespearean actress that Battle Creek saw in the 1880's."*

tastes. In truth, Seventh-day Adventist leaders, perhaps unconsciously, may have made the correct choice in applying Ellen White's counsel to the film entertainment industry rather early in this century. Michael Booth, the historian of melodrama, makes this link clear.

Yet melodrama is still with us, and in one form or another probably always will be, as long as there is human interest in thrilling stories and tender emotions, and as long as people want to lose themselves in a world which is not their own. What happened was that popular melodrama and its audiences were taken over by the cinema (and, later, television); it was the cinema that dealt the real death blow to stage melodrama. We have already seen how necessary speed is to melodrama: a rapid series of short scenes and quick scene changes. This the cinema was far better equipped to do than the stage, and the ponderously elaborate realism of the sensation drama of the 1880's and 1890's cried out for cinematic rather than theatrical techniques.<sup>11</sup>

What Booth says about the cinema can perhaps be doubled for commercial television. There is no need today to ride a horse or take public transportation or walk the many blocks from the West End to downtown Battle Creek! The true descendents of the Battle Creek stage are no further away from most of us than across the living room.

**E**llen White's comments of the early 1880's about theater attendance were made in the context of the then-popular stage, a stage (at least as far as Battle Creek records show) crowded with farcical and sentimental comedy, with racially-slurred variety shows, and with escapist, morally-oversimplified, sensational melodrama. Any historian of the American drama can easily show that fundamental changes took place in the development of the theater about the turn of the twentieth century. A variety of influences contributed to this shift: new tastes for realism in the portrayal of characters, modern psychological concerns with the complexities of the inner person, philosophical uncertainty about moral absolutes, copyright protection for dramatists, staging innovations, influences from Western Europe, Russia, and the Far East.

As much as anything else, however, the shift from live theater to other media for popular entertainment has resulted in a new seriousness, an almost artistic snobbery, in theatrical circles of the twentieth century. No longer needing to pander to the tastes of the masses, serious artists such as Eugene O'Neill, Maxwell Anderson, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller and Edward Albee have added American drama to the scope of world literature.

It is the other mass media popular entertainments, public cinema and television, that seem most directly the inheritors of nineteenth-century theatrical

1. Reproduced in E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4 (Mountain View, Ca., 1848), pp. 652-653. This testimony was probably written between September 1880 and August 1881.
2. See Arthur H. Quinn, *A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War* (New York, 1943), p. 115.
3. E. G. White, "Notes of Travel," *Review and Herald*, 60 (6 November, 1883), p. 689.
4. A slang word equivalent to the modern day "great," or "groovy."
5. Robert Spiller, et. al., *A Literary History of the United States* (New York, 1963), p. 1000.
6. Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, vol. 4 (New York, 1945), pp. 276-277.
7. Myron Matlaw (ed.), *The Black Crook and Other Nineteenth-Century American Plays* (New York, 1967), p. 319.
8. Garff B. Wilson, *Three Hundred Years of American Drama and Theater* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1973), pp. 185-186.
9. Michael Booth, *Hiss the Villain* (New York, 1964), pp. 9-10.
10. Barrett H. Clark, *America's Lost Plays*, vol. 20 (Bloomington, Ind., 1965), p. 145.
11. Booth, *Hiss the Villain*, pp. 39-40.

# THE AVONDALE SCHOOL

## A HOLY EXPERIMENT

MILTON R. HOOK

Australia is "a new world, a second America," wrote Seventh-day Adventist missionary Ellen White in 1899. Her enthusiasm for the land of eucalyptus trees and kangaroos was not spontaneous on arrival, but it was nurtured under frontier conditions in her pioneering soul. Her words of love for Australia and apparent optimism for its future were written soon after Australia's draft constitution was adopted by referendum. The constitution guaranteed religious freedom, giving cause for rejoicing by minority groups such as Seventh-day Adventists.

The political horizon had not always looked so bright. In fact, earlier events in 1894 heralded reverses for religious freedom. For example, on two occasions in Sydney, Seventh-day Adventists were arrested, tried, and fined for working on Sundays. It did indeed seem foolhardy for this persecuted group to try and establish itself in such an unpromising environment.

From late 1885 an official concerted mission effort among whites was conducted in the Australasian colonies by American Seventh-day Adventists. By 1892 they claimed modest success with approximately 750 believers, but by then progress had reached a plateau. The missionaries had established a religious printing house in Melbourne and widespread public evangelism was conducted. However, with record droughts and financial depression existent in the early 1890's there was a decreasing willingness by breadwinners to give up their jobs involving Saturday work and thus

jeopardize the support of their families. A breakthrough was desperately needed. Two leaders in the mission enterprise, J. O. Corliss and S. N. Haskell, requested at the 1891 General Conference session that a Bible training school be established in Australia. This school was envisaged as one to train converts to be missionaries as well as to be independent of adverse political and economic conditions of the times. Church leadership voted in favor of the enterprise and in August 1892, the mixed boarding school was opened at St. Kilda, Melbourne.

When Corliss and Haskell made their request to the General Conference, they had also repeated an earlier request that Ellen White and her son, W. C. White, go to Australia as missionaries. This was eventually agreed to and the Whites arrived in Australia in December 1891.

W. C. White had briefly influenced the establishment of Healdsburg Academy, California, during its initial months. Haskell had worked with Goodloe Bell at South Lancaster Academy, Massachusetts, during its first years. Ellen White was one of the principal exponents of the denomination's educational concepts. Prior to 1892 she wrote a great deal on education but denominational leadership was slow to implement her ideas. This was a great disappointment to her. However, the significant 1891 teachers' convention at Harbor Springs, Michigan, at which she and others reemphasized her educational guidelines, was a milestone in the development of the denomination's schools in America. Many of the educators in attendance





determined thereafter to implement her ideas. Ellen White's subsequent presence in Australia, together with W. C. White, Haskell, and others in basic agreement with her education guidelines ensured her an unprecedented opportunity to put the ideas into practice.

**F**rom the beginning, the school in rented quarters at St. Kilda, Melbourne, was regarded as a temporary institution. The very fact it was located in a city was considered to be unsatisfactory. Experience with Battle Creek College in Michigan had already underscored the imperative for a rural locale. The Melbourne location of the school further highlighted inadequacies. The amusements and frequent sporting events in the city were thought to be demoralizing diversions. It was lamented that the young men could engage only in light housework for exercise at the boarding school. These factors, it was observed, encouraged frivolity in the school, poor discipline, and lack of industry.

Long academic courses of a classical nature were also regarded with disfavor. Australia was a country with much agricultural potential, yet the Melbourne school did virtually nothing to train the students in this area. The school trained them to be religious booksellers and gospel preachers. That was of slight value, however, when the colonial population during the depression had little money to buy books and church members naturally had limited tithe to support the ministry. Therefore, the

*The Avondale faculty group, in August 1899. Left to right, front row: C. B. Hughes, principal, preceptor and professor of history, Mrs. E. Hughes, Mrs. Palmer, E. R. Palmer. Middle row: Miss Whittenberg, Miss Harlow, Mrs. Reekie, Miss Ellis, Miss Tuxon, Mrs. L. Lacey. Back row: E. H. Gates, F. W. Reekie, O. A. Morse, H. C. Lacey.*

school did not train youth to be relatively independent of national economic problems. Furthermore, the object of the school, as expressed by the Australian Conference Committee—to “train every faculty, physical, mental, and moral”—fell short especially in the physical aspect.

After the school had operated for the 1892 quarter and throughout 1893, Ellen White wrote in February 1894:

Never can the proper education be given to the youth in this country [Australia] or any other country, unless they are separated a wide distance from the cities . . .

Schools should be established for the purpose of obtaining not only knowledge from books, but knowledge of practical industry.

. . . There must be education in the sciences, and education in plans and methods of working the soil.

This country needs educated farmers.

Manual occupation for the youth is essential. The mind is not to be constantly taxed. . . .

The school to be established in Australia should bring the question of industry to the front, and reveal the fact that physical labor has its place in God's plan for every man.<sup>1</sup>



The basic rationale for a school was evident in these comments. The site was to be away from the cities, suitable for agriculture, and for providing practical work in conjunction with formal school studies.

The search for the right site was a protracted process throughout 1893 and 1894. Rural properties were inspected which lay close to the railway line between Melbourne (Victoria) and Newcastle (New South Wales). Preferences narrowed to some near Sydney.

In April 1894, the Brettville Estate of 1500 acres at Cooranbong, just south of Newcastle, was inspected by church members Wesley Hare and P. A. Reekie. W. C. White and a self-supporting American missionary, L. N. Lawrence, also examined the estate soon after.

White weighed the estate's advantages against the disadvantages. He lamented the great distance from Sydney but reasoned it was offset by its proximity to Newcastle for supplies and missionary work. He observed that the soil was poor, but the timber for building purposes was comparatively cheap and accessible. Roads were primitive. The estate was three miles from the railway. The creek, however, was navigable from the estate to a lake near Newcastle. Moreover, the lake had the bonus of a fish supply if needed in times of depression. But White did have some misgivings about the honesty of the scattered local inhabitants. All things considered he concluded that if the price was right he would buy it.

On May 8, White learned with great satisfaction that the price was only \$3 an acre (prices for other estates they had inspected varied from \$15 to \$75 an acre). The following day his mother wrote, "The decision we have so long contemplated has been

made in regard to the land we hope to purchase for the school. The tract comprises 1,500 acres, which we can obtain for about \$4,500"<sup>2</sup>

Almost immediately tents and supplies were transported to the estate and preliminary work began. A government fruit expert also inspected the land and later presented a written report advising against its purchase. In the meantime, Ellen White herself inspected the property for the first time on May 23 and 24. Fruit trees growing on an adjacent property and the presence of large eucalyptus trees in the woods helped to convince her that the soil was favorable for agriculture. A supernatural sign was also requested to indicate the proper choice of a site. At this time petitions were made for the healing of one of their group, S. McCullagh, who was suffering from inflammation of the throat and lungs. He experienced a miraculous and immediate recovery, which was accepted at the time as divine approval of the Brettville estate.

W. C. White wrote to church headquarters in America informing them of the decision to buy Brettville. He inserted a copy of the unfavorable report of the government fruit expert and added some of his own misgivings received in the wake of this report. His letter prompted a reply from America in August advising the suspension of plans. This effected a polarization of opinions in Australia and work on the estate slowed to a virtual standstill. W. C. White considered reselling and his mother became so discouraged she wished to pull out from the enterprise. Soon after, word was received from America that headquarters had reconsidered and acquiesced, leaving the choice entirely with the Australian leadership.

*Dora Creek and the  
Avondale College  
landing.*

Courtesy R. Brandstater





At the campmeeting in Sydney, around October-November 1894, the topic of a suitable site became a major item of discussion. With the exception of A. G. Daniells, L. J. Rousseau, and one other, there appeared to be agreement that plans for establishing the school at Brettville should go ahead. Ellen White kept a low profile advising the selection committee to pray, investigate, and use their own judgment. On November 20, the committee voted to proceed with the plans for Brettville. However, lingering indecision was evident in the fact that the Whites and Rousseaus were still investigating properties near Sydney in early December. Weary of the prolonged search, it only needed the arrival of the Melbourne school furniture in Sydney on December 14, together with the imperative to store it somewhere, and all other alternatives were abandoned. Everyone lent their energies to establish the school at Cooranbong. The 1895 new year was therefore a harbinger of real progress.

**F**rom the beginning the whole project was viewed as an experiment. The first phase involved clearing the woods and planting an orchard and gardens. Young men were encouraged to enroll for the school year beginning in May 1895. That year about twenty-six youths took part in the program. They chopped, sawed, dug trees and stumps for six hours each day. It was the driest winter of the drought and their borrowed plough broke in the first attempted furrow. The dry winter was followed by a spat of local forest fires. The blue-green hills and red sky merged in a pall of acrid gray heralding the onset of a fierce summer. Ninety of the one thousand newly planted

fruit trees withered and died but the experiment continued relentlessly.

When the young men were not working in what was called the Industrial Department, they were being tutored in the evenings by Rousseau and his wife. Temporary quarters were hired at the abandoned Healey's Hotel, Cooranbong. This served for sleeping, eating and tutorial purposes. The entire enterprise was called Avondale College—a euphemism because academic work was not of college level and did not lead to a diploma or degree. It did, however, possess all the elements needed to justify calling it a school.

At the end of the academic year a canvasser's training school was conducted for two young ladies as well as the young men already in the program. Those who began work as colporteurs at the end of 1895 may be regarded as the first graduates from Avondale.

For the young men the Industrial Department built muscle, and the evening classes no doubt improved their formal training. The program's deficiencies, however, served to emphasize the need for a more comprehensive academic program while retaining a better balance with manual labor. The pressing need to clear the woods apparently forced priorities weighted in favor of manual labor. Avondale College in 1895 was characterized by imbalance. Nevertheless, the two components, physical and mental labor, were recognized as imperative. Ellen White concluded at the end of the first experimental term, "we are convinced since making this experiment at Avondale, that the Lord will indeed work with those who combine physical and manual labor with their studies."



*General view of the Avondale campus as it had developed by 1910.*

Courtesy Signs Publishing Company



*Herman Hall, the men's residence, completed in 1898. The three story building could accommodate about 80 students.*

**T**he coming of W. W. Prescott at this stage of the enterprise should not be underestimated. As educational secretary for the General Conference he visited the Australasian field and was elected to the Avondale School Board. From that time the Board made recommendations for change. The ostentaciously titled, "Avondale College," was dropped in favor of "The Avondale School for Christian Workers." It was recommended that the six-hour work day in the Industrial Department be discontinued and replaced with an academic program balanced with some manual labor. W. C. White wrote to American headquarters saying, "Prescott is reshaping our school work and plans. Just now we are in a chaotic state. As soon as plans are reformed, and our work takes shape, I will write you about them."<sup>3</sup>

Prescott went to Avondale in January 1896 "to assist in organizing the school work, and setting it on a proper basis." While there he and Ellen White conversed a great deal on school matters. He prompted her to express ideas and encouraged her to publish them. This led her to search among her earlier manuscripts. As a result some 1874 writings

were apparently revised and published the following year as *Special Testimonies on Education*.

Prescott himself, assisted by Daniells, Rousseau, G. B. Starr, and Ellen White, conducted the Cooranbong Institute from March 26 to April 23, 1896. Over forty teachers and ministers attended. It was reported that,

He [Prescott] believes that everything should be studied from the standpoint of the *word* of God first, the *works* of God second, and the *providences* of God third, and that human authority should be subordinate to these. . . .<sup>4</sup>

The Institute was the highlight of Prescott's stay in Australia. In retrospect the following year Daniells wrote in appreciation of Prescott's contribution,

. . . he studied our situation and needs, and gave most excellent instruction on the course of study, and the best methods of teaching. . . . It is approved, and will be adopted by those who will conduct the school.<sup>5</sup>

Prescott left Australia in May 1896. Soon after, Ellen White wrote, "time would develop plans and methods." This the school pioneers continued to do. Metcalf Hare operated a sawmill on the property, stockpiling timber for permanent buildings. W. T. Woodhams made approximately 40,000 bricks from local clay. A thirty-five acre swamp was drained.

The Rousseaus returned to America in July. Newlyweds Herbert and Lillian Lacey, who were trained in America, filled the vacuum. From July 20 to October 1 the Laceys operated a school for between





*The structures erected in 1897: on the left, the multipurpose building, later named Preston Hall. On the right is Bethel Hall, the first of the permanent building on the Avondale campus, which became the women's residence.*

twenty and thirty local students. Afternoon and evening classes were conducted in the saw-mill loft, also used for storing school furniture and as a church school meeting place. Subjects taught were Bible, physics, grammar, arithmetic, reading, writing, spelling, and music.

As the school term finished, foundations were laid in October for Bethel Hall, the first of the planned permanent school buildings. At the end of 1896, Ellen White once again pronounced the experiment a resounding success—not in terms of academic accomplishments, but for its orchard and vegetable gardens. Once the agricultural and industrial components were established as life-support systems for the institution, the pioneers moved on in 1897 to a broader and more balanced program.

Two permanent double-storied buildings, Bethel Hall and one other alongside, were officially opened in April 1897. One of the highest priorities for that year was to foster an atmosphere conducive for the conversion of students who would then be employed as church workers. The board planned to operate the school term for six months followed by a six month interim to enable teachers and students to engage in public evangelism, canvassing and school promotion.

Stephen and Hetty Haskell conducted a Bible institute for the first month, teaching the books of Daniel and Revelation. When Cassius and Ella Hughes arrived from America late in May, a regular program began with Cassius as principal, history

teacher and industrial department manager. Subjects taught by others were English, Bible, physiology, music, arithmetic, geography, and cooking for both men and women. Compared with 1895, the manual labor was cut to half-time—three hours each day—except Sabbaths of course. This was further trimmed in 1898 to two and a half hours. Unlike the Melbourne school, an exclusively vegetarian menu was served. Eighty-two students enrolled that year, including two from the Pacific Islands. Ages ranged from seven to seventy-three.

The enrollment included twenty-five in the elementary school, a project which the Board had tried to postpone. At the time the senior school opened, Ellen White was insisting an elementary school should also be started, even if there were only six available children in the area. She wrote at the time, "the first seven to ten years of a child's life is the time when lasting impressions for good or for evil are made." The Board reversed its decision and a school was started. With trained teachers already on campus it was no problem to staff it. Lillian Lacey taught first and later Ella Hughes took over with the assistance of two girls as trainees.

**T**he curriculum priorities which emerged in the early years at Avondale were neither government impositions nor random choices. Many priorities had already been stated theoretically when Ellen White was in America. Prevailing need and the Australian milieu did little to alter these theoretical priorities, but the Avondale experiment enabled the protagonists to implement them.

The Bible was spoken of as the "chief book of study," "the very foundation of all education," and "the most important line of study." Lacey had returned from Battle Creek College in 1896, admitting that as a student there he was not required to study Bible subjects. In sharp contrast to this situation, Ellen White wrote increasingly for the next two years about the priority of Bible study. Both Haskell and Prescott had supported this emphasis and it rested largely with Haskell to implement the

theory. In a very simple way he drew moral lessons from the woods and farm and tried to integrate the Bible with other curricula. Ellen White was gratified with his work. She recommended that every student and teacher attend a general Bible lecture that Haskell gave early each day in addition to his regular Bible classes. By 1899, after Haskell left, the Bible and Ellen White's books were being used as models in the English literature classes. Back in America, Sutherland went as far as using the Bible in all subjects to the exclusion of other books. When Miss R. Ellis arrived at Avondale from America in August 1898, she brought the same extreme with her and caused Ellen White to condemn it.<sup>6</sup>

The promotion of a rural locale by Ellen White, Prescott, and Haskell finally resulted in the Avondale School Board voting "that the teachers give attention to nature study that they may be able to teach some lines in the coming [1898] term."

*The ladies' parlor in Preston Hall at the turn of the century. It also served as a worship room.*



Courtesy Signs Publishing Company



*A student's room in the women's residence, Bethel Hall.*

Courtesy T. Bradley



Teachers then provided frequent class excursions into the woods and mid-way through 1898 Ellen White commented that students were "learning from nature's book the lessons essential for them in their religious life."

While Dr. Merritt Kellogg was giving health lectures at the Melbourne school, Ellen White also addressed the importance of this subject in the college curriculum. At Avondale, in 1897, as Lacey taught physiology, she wrote, "the youth should be taught to look upon physiology as one of the essential studies."

History was taught at Avondale in order to enhance the understanding of how God operates in the affairs of this world. Ellen White's utilitarian outlook was evident in her condemnation of the purchase of large volumes of ancient histories that usually remained unread. Hughes used A. T. Jones' *The Empires of the Bible* as his textbook to integrate the subject with the prophecies of Daniel. The subject was taught to prospective ministers and church school teachers and took a Bible integrated emphasis.

Before arrival in Australia, Ellen White stressed the importance of bookkeeping as a curriculum priority. Local circumstances at Avondale also sharply focused its necessity. During Avondale's

earliest years the accounts were ill-kept and Prescott was disappointed to see little visible evidence of progress even though expenditures were excessive. The pioneers showed a penchant for borrowing money from hither and yon to pay off previous loans or the most pressing exigencies. Some monies were handled directly on a cash basis and others went through American accounts or the Echo Publishing Company, Melbourne. One of the most confusing elements in the primary sources is money matters. One member of the management committee even alleged that financial records were burned about 1896 to destroy embarrassing evidence. However, this may simply have been an office cleaning procedure. The General Conference president wrote to W. C. White stressing the need of bookkeeping skills for foreign missionaries and treasury headquarters sent some pointed complaints. W. C. White replied:

I much regret that I am not sufficiently posted on accounts and bookkeeping, so that I could be a teacher, and I am determined to make an earnest plea to the managers of our school, that much attention shall be given to instruction in this line.<sup>7</sup>

Courtesy T. Bradley



Faithful "Prince" was hitched to "The Gospel Chariot" on Sabbath afternoons, taking students to the nearby villages of Morisset, Dora Creek, and Toronto, where they distributed religious literature and conducted Bible studies.

Art classes held in College Hall taught students how to prepare evangelistic posters and handbills and how to illustrate gospel leaflets and pamphlets.

Courtesy T. Bradley







*College Hall, completed in April 1899. Patterned after the Chapel building at South Lancaster Academy, in Massachusetts, it contained classrooms on the first floor and the chapel on the second floor.*

After the school had struggled financially for two years, a bookkeeper at the Echo Publishing Company discovered two amounts totaling \$5,500 which had been mistakenly left out of Avondale's credit. In the same year a young bookkeeper from Adelaide, Edward Goodhart, came as a student to Avondale after losing his job because his employers refused to grant him Saturdays off. This highlighted the need for bookkeepers to be independent of national conditions.

Together, these aforementioned circumstances must have influenced to some extent the inclusion of bookkeeping as a subject at the school in February 1898. Ellen White wrote in mid-1898, that Christ had spoken to her in vision impressing her with the need for bookkeeping in the curriculum. Lillian Lacey reported success in the new commercial department that year. Soon after, Ellen White endorsed the school's action by saying bookkeeping "has been strangely dropped out of our school work, but it should be considered an essential branch."

**T**here is no question that Ellen White was the chief protagonist for the Avondale school. Haskell, Prescott, Hughes and many others played strong supportive roles but Ellen White had the strongest influence. This degree of influence was, on occasions, something that had to be fought for.

For example, when Lacey returned from his study at Healdsburg and Battle Creek Colleges, Ellen White, who had paid much of his expenses, was dismayed with the product. For two years she struggled to correct and mold him into her ideal of a Christian teacher. She reprimanded him for clownish behavior among the students, overeating coupled with a lack of physical exercise, skepticism, and a penchant for acting on important matters without first consulting her or Haskell. These undesirable characteristics she attributed largely to bad habits learned at Battle Creek College. However, by mid-1898, in the midst of revival meetings at Avondale, she reported Lacey was genuinely converted and exercising a constructive influence as a Christian teacher.

Furthermore, Ellen White struggled successfully against the influence of Lawrence on campus late in 1896, when he demanded higher wages. In addition, she had to meet opposition from Hare when he opposed the choice of a site for the campus church in 1897. And throughout 1898, she backed Haskell as friction surfaced between him and other faculty members. The real cause of the friction can only be guessed, but it finally led to Ellen White's relenting.



Haskell left Australia in mid-1899 despite the fact she had a dream of him in which it was indicated he must not go.

A more prominent issue in which Ellen White had to struggle for control was that of ball games at Avondale. These were first introduced in July 1897, but mainly due to Haskell a repetition that year was stymied. Later in 1897 Ellen White wrote that the amusements which had earlier been introduced into Battle Creek College were instigated by Satan. Nine months after Haskell left Australia, ball games were introduced again at Avondale. Someone on the faculty had collected donations and bought tennis and cricket sets in 1900. On the occasion of the first anniversary of the opening of College Hall, the morning was spent in a religious service at which Ellen White, W. C. White and A. T. Robinson spoke to the school family. The speakers returned to their homes nearby and the afternoon was spent by the teachers and students playing tennis and cricket. Two nights later Ellen White dreamed she was "in the performance that was carried on, watching the actions of the human minds in the development of the spirit that, in these amusements, was defacing the impression of the moral image of God." The following morning she spoke to the assembled school denouncing games as recreation. Nevertheless, in her absence, the games were played again just two days later on Sunday afternoon. This occasioned intense opposition from her. For two months she wrote and spoke outlining her rationale—money for playing equipment could be better used elsewhere; denominational workers were not to be trained to have a division of interests; manual labor was more productive and taught industrious work habits; time could be better spent helping the needy in the community; they were a means to forget God and therefore a form of idolatry; in the example of Christ and the schools of the prophets no precedent for games could be found. As a result of her direct opposition games were cancelled and the entire crisis demonstrated again that Ellen White's influence was paramount in the establishment of Avondale.

In discussing an experimental enterprise such as Avondale the question naturally arises, why were some ideas jettisoned or other ideas incorporated? They originally planned to build in brick but then opted for wood. Ellen White admitted a mistake was made by making the erection of boarding and class rooms a greater priority than the building of a church on campus. One of the most significant changes in the experiment was, however, the rejection of the plan for a community settlement close to the school.

When the estate was being purchased in 1894 surveyors were employed to subdivide it into smaller lots. Then, at the Ashfield campmeeting late that year, W. C. White spoke in favor of a settlement modeled on the denominational schools at Walla Walla and Lincoln. However, he met with considerable opposition from some delegates and the Union Conference voted to abandon the idea. Despite this move it is clear some lots were sold. The title deeds must have been on a promissory basis only, because the main title deed for the whole estate did not come into the school's hands until about August 1897. Lawrence was one who purchased an allotment close to the school buildings. When his attitudes soured toward the school administrators, Ellen White wrote to W. C. White saying, "I am thinking, you are crowding families too near the school," for "from the light given me there will be—as there is now—those who settle on the land who will be thorns in our sides."<sup>8</sup> A repetition of strife, but with different personalities, occurred late in 1897. In September 1898, the School Board voted to buy back the first of these building lots. The following day, Ellen White wrote she had dreamed on September 9 that all the land close to the school should be reserved solely for the school and its subsidiaries. Two years later Hare became the last one to be relocated away from the school buildings. The community settlement close to the school became a relic of the past and a feature meant to be excluded in future denominational schools.



*The Cooranbong home of W. C. White, during the years 1897-1900.*

Courtesy of the author

**B**y 1899, despite frequent student discipline problems that year, the school experiment was showing success. A dairy, apiary, orchard and vegetable gardens continued to produce abundantly. Finances were beginning to look stronger. Enrollment reached 150, including some representation from the Pacific Islands and local non-Adventists. Evangelistic activities were organized in the community and the basic school buildings were completed. From the opening of College Hall in April 1899, at which many pioneers spoke at length of the goals and achievements of the school, there was a growing confidence seen in the elucidation of objectives.

One comparatively late development in the Avondale enterprise was the building of a small sanitarium. Ellen White actively promoted the building of it opposite the campus church. She wrote, "The students at the Avondale School should have the advantages of those chapters of experience to be gained in this little sanitarium. In no case should this part of their education be dropped out or neglected."<sup>9</sup> This work provided medical assistance that was desperately needed in the local district. The sanitarium was part of Ellen White's plan for Avondale to be a philanthropic center where, in their own homes, the Adventist community would adopt orphans and care for the aged. In microcosm her own home, "Sunnyside," had acted as such once she settled at Avondale.

When the Avondale pioneers began their enterprise, they wanted it to serve as a showpiece to the locals, then to Australians in general, and in due course to the entire denomination. Ellen White referred to the school site as "holy ground" and, from its inception, as an "experiment." The school was to be a holy experiment indeed. This did not mean the pioneers acted capriciously, dealing with daily situations as best they could. On the contrary, they had some broad long range goals and a working methodology. Their goals were to convert young people and train them to be effective missionaries both in or out of denominational employ. To achieve these goals their methodology included Bible teaching and a Bible integrated curriculum, a vegetarian diet, a ban on sports and courting, a balance of mental and physical labor, fully converted teachers, and a philanthropic and evangelistic outreach into the community.

The chief proponent of the goals and methods was Ellen White. She brought to the venture a conception of Christian Education which was to some extent already fashioned in her thinking but was not adequately tested within the denomination. As a mother she had learned something about pedagogy by sheer personal experience. Apparently Oberlin College featured as a model for she had close contact earlier with G. H. Bell and G. W. Amadon, who had both attended Oberlin. She must have been familiar enough with the educational reformer, Horace Mann, to request one of his books to be brought to her



Courtesy of the author



in Australia should her son, Edson, join her. By the time Avondale began there was also the advantage of having learned from the mistakes made especially at Battle Creek College and the Melbourne school. Most important, of course, was the fact that Ellen White was well versed in the educational principles found in Scriptures and in the school of the prophets model.

As the pioneers planted the first fruit trees on the estate in 1895, Ellen White was delighted that some of the local non-Adventists caught the enthusiasm and requested some trees for themselves to plant. She wrote, "Whatever land we occupy is to have the very best kind of care and [is] to serve as an object lesson to the Colonials of what the land will do, if properly worked." The next year she repeated, "This [Avondale] must be a sample settlement." In 1898, she again said, "Our school must be a model school for others who shall establish schools in Australia." By 1899 she categorically set the school apart as a unique institution saying, "Our school is not to pattern after any school that has been established in America, or . . . in this country [Australia]."

With success evident at Avondale after five years of experimentation she could write in 1900, "The school in Avondale is to be a pattern for other schools which shall be established among our people." "God has said that the school in New South Wales should be an object lesson to our people in all other parts of the world."<sup>10</sup>

"Sunnyside," the home of Ellen G. White between the years 1895 and 1900.

Up to their elbows in "health food." Student workers hand-package wheat biscuits (Weet-Bix . . . today's Ruskets).



An early picture of the Avondale campus industries, taken from the eastern bank of Dora creek. The industries included a sawmill, a wood-shop, a printing press and bindery, and a food factory.

Courtesy of the author

Earlier, Ellen White shared her convictions on educational matters when the denominational schools were being established in America. Acceptance of these ideas was short-lived or not general throughout the ranks of leadership. However, in Australia Ellen White, together with strong supporters, seized the opportunity to nurture a school uncluttered with contrary opinions. Haskell wrote at the time, it was her "last battle on the educational question." It was certainly her holy experiment and one of her most significant legacies.

1. Ellen G. White, MS 8, 1894.
2. Letter of Ellen G. White to C. H. Jones, May 9, 1894.
3. Letter of W. C. White to O. A. Olsen, November 15, 1895.
4. "The Cooranbong Institute," *Gleaner*, April 1896, p. 1.
5. A. G. Daniells, "Our School," *Gleaner*, January 1897, p. 1.
6. Letter of Ellen G. White to J. E. White, August 14, 1898.
7. Letter of W. C. White to J. I. Gibson, November 24, 1896.
8. Letter of Ellen G. White to W. C. White, January 14, 1897.
9. Letter of Ellen G. White to the Brethren and Sisters at Avondale, January 17, 1907.
10. Ellen G. White, MSS 186, 101, 92, 18 (1898-1901).



Courtesy Signs Publishing Company



VIGNETTES  
FROM THE

# GOLDEN DAYS

OF ADVENTIST  
EVANGELISM

MIRIAM WOOD



## “THE LORD’S DAY VINDICATED”

*What is It? When is It?  
Is It Friday? Saturday? or Sunday?*

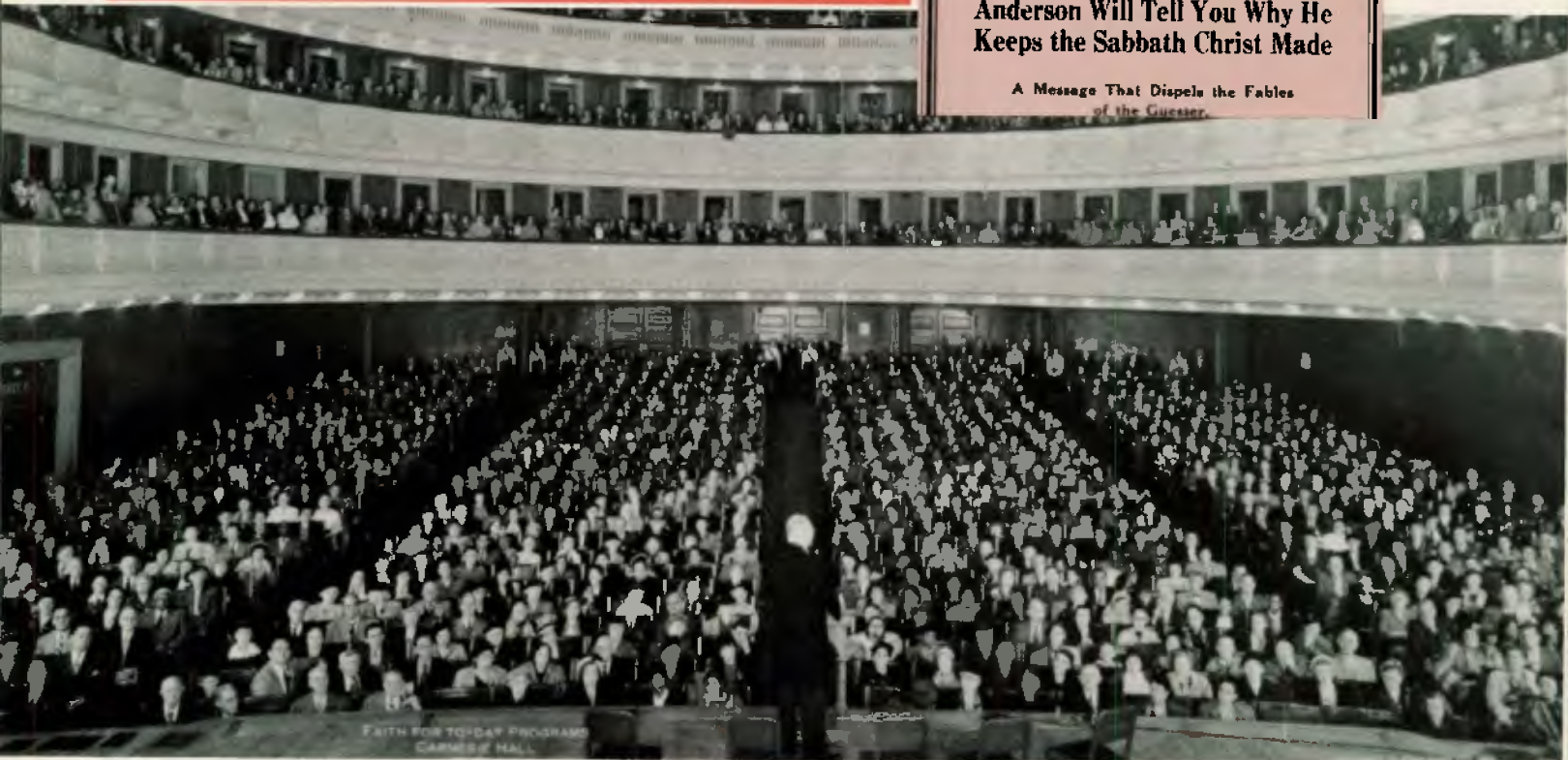
Riverside Auditorium

*Sunday Night, January 23rd*

Preaching Commences 7:30

**Anderson Will Tell You Why He  
Keeps the Sabbath Christ Made**

*A Message That Dispels the Fables  
of the Guesst.*



*The powerful and timely preaching of Elder Roy Allan Anderson drew capacity crowds, such as this large audience in New York City’s Carnegie Hall, in 1951.*

Courtesy R. A. Anderson



# WORCESTER BIBLE FORUM

WHEN WILL

## The Dead Live

AGAIN?

- ◆ Can a man be dead and alive at the same time?
- ◆ Can God restore a body shattered by a bomb?
- ◆ Does one receive "Immortality" at birth or death?
- ◆ Will immortal parents and children recognize each other?

HEAR EVANGELIST THEODORE CARCICH  
 Sunday, APRIL 9, 7:30 P.M.

Little Theatre

(Memorial Auditorium)

Harvard and Highland Streets

SEATS FREE

(Question and Answer Service  
 at 7:00 P. M.)



**T**he "golden age of evangelism," the nineteen twenties, thirties, and forties, was an age characterized by large circus tents, great emotion and anticipation, dramatic charts with vivid pictures of beasts, apocalyptic images, and depictions of Christ's second coming.

The evangelists themselves were amazing men who, for the most part, were surprisingly young. With a tent and a few hundred dollars, and the challenge to "prove" their "calling" ringing in their ears, they went out and, through their dedication, their ability to endure hardship, and their tireless attention to details, literally compelled the people to come in.

There were many outgrowths of this in the history of Adventism—radio and television programs, Bible correspondence schools, health and cooking classes, field schools of evangelism, and the one-day or three-day seminar. All these things had their beginnings with the evangelistic thrust of the church during the years between, roughly, World War I and 1950.

In considering this period of Adventist history, one must realize that the most shattering evaluation a minister could receive was the simple sentence: "He's not an evangelist." To be an evangelist was *everything*. Many of the General Conference departments at that time were in very early stages of development. The proliferation of structured

programs had not yet come about; evangelism *was* the order of the day.

When an evangelist was assigned to hold a series of meetings, his first concern was to find a place for his tent or a hall to rent; his next concern was to see that his presence was made known to every citizen of the area. Then, he must use every possible method to keep the interest of the crowd he drew. Advertising thus came to assume enormous importance—but it was also a major problem, for the limited budgets of most of the smaller campaigns often permitted only the first night of the series to be advertised. After this was accomplished, the evangelist breathed fervent and heartfelt prayers that the minuscule offerings received would be sufficient to permit him to print small, modest handbills.

Usually an advertisement, rather sensational in format, was placed in one of the local newspapers—provided the editor did not have an aversion to the idea of carrying religious advertising. Since in those days the meetings were not advertised as being under the sponsorship of the Seventh-day Adventist church but were claimed to be "non-denominational," editors were usually willing to accept the ads. It was the accepted rule that, if he could afford the space, the evangelist should publish a picture of himself in his newspaper advertisement. One is rather amused to scrutinize some of these old ads featuring the desperately solemn, tense face of the

H  
WE

*Crowds Flocking to Hear*

# ANDERSON



# 3

*Unusual  
Messages*

**Sunday**

OCTOBER 10th

**Wednesday**

OCTOBER 13th

**Friday**

OCTOBER 15th

SUNDAY NIGHT

**"Europe <sup>IN</sup> THE Spider's Web---  
The Tangle of the Isms!"**

—WONDERFUL STAGE SCENERY—

HUGE BEASTS . . . LIFE-LIKE CARTOONS

It's Thrilling! Gripping! You've Never Seen the Like!

**FREE TALKIE** "DANGERS of  
the ARCTIC" 7:10  
**AUDITORIUM**

MASS MIDWEEK MEETING

Wednesday, October 13

**"Roosevelt and World Peace"**

CAN AMERICA HOLD BACK THE WINDS OF WAR?  
EVERY PATRIOTIC AMERICAN SHOULD KNOW THE ANSWER

—SOUND MOVIE—

**"DENIZENS OF THE DESERT"**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15th

**"THE MAN WHO NEVER HAD A MOTHER AND  
NEVER HAD A BIBLE . . . YET**

PREACHED A SERMON THAT SAVED THOUSANDS"

rather-young-trying-to-look-very-mature.

His first, and sometimes only, newspaper ad safely arranged for, the evangelist turned his attention to the handbill, which would list the subjects for each week, and which, hopefully, would be distributed to every house and every business establishment in town. This feat was accomplished by organizing the local church into districts. Almost without exception, each member was more than eager to assume this responsibility, faithfully plodding from door to door in his territory, week after week, month after month. When one of "his" or "her" people showed up at the meeting, the handbill person was ecstatic at having a tangible part in this soul-winning endeavor.

In towns where no Seventh-day Adventist church existed, it was up to the evangelist and his wife and whatever other help he might secure to get the handbills distributed. With entertainment in short supply then, and lacking the proliferation of "junk" mail that now floods porches and mailboxes, many citizens viewed the handbills with great interest, particularly if the evangelist had come up with provocative titles and sometimes bizarre illustrations.

**I**n those days many towns, especially in rural areas, had small radio stations that barely eked out an existence and were often in need of programs to fill time. Incredible as it may seem today, evangelists often were able to put on a weekly (and sometimes daily) program totally free of charge. Though this free time often took the form of 6:30 in the morning or 11:30 at night, still the evangelist had the gratification of feeling that at least someone was listening to him. He might make a provocative offer, such as "The first fifty people who write to this station will receive . . ." having no idea that even fifty were listening. But it was a way of securing "an interest." These men were not hesitant not only to preach on the air but to sing solos or duets with wives or to press church members into service for quartets. In light of the sophistication of today's media, one may wince to recall those times, but it must be remembered that secular radio programming was not that much better. Most of it was done "live" with mistakes going out over the air for all to hear. For the young evangelist what was important was that his message be spread in any way that could be found.

F. W. Wernick, in considering the advertising and general manner of conducting evangelism at that time, has said, "When I entered the ministry in 1942, World War II was uppermost in the minds of the general population. Seventh-day Adventist evangelism of that period must be understood against that backdrop."

Courtesy of R. A. Anderson





WM. W. RING  
Evangelist Tenor

# RUSSIA

- ◆ WILL RUSSIA RULE THE WORLD?
- ◆ YOUR BIBLE HOLDS THE ANSWER.
- ◆ AMAZING - CLEAR - REVEALING.
- ◆ INFIDELS - SKEPTICS INVITED.
- ◆ GOOD MUSIC - GOSPEL SINGING.
- ◆ Sound Picture--"AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL."



MRS. WM. W. RING  
Pianist-Soprano

COME ONE - COME ALL

OPENING PROPHETIC LECTURE OF

"KNOW YOUR BIBLE" CRUSADE

**SKYLINE SCHOOL**

1/2 Mile East of Cornelius Pass Intersection on Skyline Boulevard



We Uphold the Cross



We Salute the Flag

SUNDAY, OCT. 24 - 7:30 P.M.

HEAVEN

- ◆ Is it Mythical or Real?
- ◆ Where is it Located?
- ◆ Will We Know Our Loved Ones?
- ◆ Your Bible Gives the Answers.
- ◆ Lecture Illustrated on Screen. Don't Miss This!

Wednesday, October 27, 7:30 P. M.

FREE! FREE! FREE!

- ◆ Admission to All Meetings.
- ◆ Book "Christ Object Lessons" on Continued Attendance
- ◆ ? QUESTION BOX ?
- ◆ Put in Bible Questions You Want Answered.
- ◆ Requests for Congregational Songs or Special Numbers
- ◆ Requests for Visits and Prayer.

It is easy to understand that war would create a favorable climate for the Adventists, who sincerely felt and who advertised that they had the answers to the horror gripping the world. But there were negative factors that had to be faced also. It was simply not a foregone conclusion that any preacher who came to town with a Bible and a tent would reap a great harvest of souls. In the Midwest, ten years of drought and depression had reduced the farmers to hopeless apathy. For them, war meant jobs and income for both men and women. In many ways, lives were disrupted by the war. At the same time, though, the money it provided brought a new sense of hope and security. Understandably, many people no longer looked for religious answers but accepted their new material security as the answer to their problems.

According to Wernick, Seventh-day Adventist evangelists tended to use shock techniques in their advertising, reminding people that the war was on, that the peace of the world was in jeopardy, and that Armageddon was coming. Through these warnings, they hoped to overcome the spiritual apathy they often faced.

Another important way of advertising was by signs on the outside of the tent or hall. The evangelists vied with themselves and with one another to produce the most eye-catching exteriors. This was easier with a tent, for there were often restrictions on the advertising at the halls. As the years progressed, it became the accepted modus operandi to build a large wooden facade that extended completely across the front of the tent, and to decorate this with the name of the tent and the name of the speaker, and usually an arrangement whereby the nightly subject could be displayed. Evangelists with mechanical and electrical skills often created well-lighted signs to draw attention to their effort and sometimes had the entire area as bright as day.

F. C. (Ted) Webster remembers an effort in which he was the song leader for Horace Shaw, when the outside advertisement brought a bit of discomfort. He and Shaw had constructed a large sign that said, "Hear Shaw Tonight." A group of boys going by the tent misread it as "Horse Show Tonight" and showed up at the specified time, fully expecting to spend their evening enjoying the horses!

With the advent of portable sound systems that could be placed in cars, the Adventist evangelists found new and creative ways to advertise themselves. One of these involved cruising the city and admonishing all within reach of the sound to attend the meeting each night. B. E. Leach recalls this type of approach in Cleveland, Ohio, when he drove up one street and down the next, calling people to "Come to the Little Theater tonight and hear the truth about the terrible beast of Revelation" or whatever phrase suited his fancy. Obviously, this type of "self-advertisement" gave free play to whatever originality the advertiser might wish to use.

Actually, as the years progressed the advertising gimmicks that were used seemed endless. In cities that had streetcars, it was possible to rent the space at the outside back and front of the streetcar and insert posters. Kenneth Wood found this very effective in Cleveland and from time to time he drove to streetcar stops and watched the faces of the passengers as they studied the vivid posters on the front of the approaching vehicles. While it was impossible to get any tangible report as to the efficacy of the method, he felt, with others, that certainly many people were being made aware of the meetings who may otherwise have been totally uninformed.

Some of the methods discussed above—particularly the sound machines on automobiles—were forbidden by some city ordinances, on the grounds that they were a public disturbance. Horace Shaw ran into this problem when he had planned to do a great deal of advertising for a Sunday night meeting during one of his efforts. On Saturday night he was informed of the restrictive law, and he was caught without having done any publicity. But Shaw, not a man to give up easily, promptly went to the little

airport and arranged to have a small plane fly over the city the next day, trailing a sign that read, "Hear Shaw Tonight." The attendance that Sunday night was exceptional.

**G**immickry was not limited to advertising, however. It is easy to understand that when meetings were held for months at a time, speakers were hard pressed to come up with ideas that would hold the attention of the audience. Whatever could be manipulated, from background scenery to speaking style, was manipulated. For instance, the clothes that the evangelistic company wore were considered a part of the general scheme and atmosphere. At first, most of the evangelists contented themselves with dark suits for the men and black dresses for the women, but as time progressed it became fashionable to branch out. For the women, short satin-lined capes were popular and identified them as members of the team. Sometimes the evangelist wore a white suit, though it was unusual for other members of the team to dress in white. Evangelists with a taste for the unusual were at times known to appear in quite spectacular clothing.

In Bowling Green, Ohio, when F. C. (Ted) Webster was assisting an older evangelist with a series scheduled to be held in the town armory, he found to his dismay that he was expected to wear a frock coat, striped pants, and wing collar. His meager salary could not possibly be stretched to include such finery, so before the meetings began, the evangelist took young Webster downtown and outfitted him. "I hope this wasn't misuse of evangelistic funds," Webster says, "but it certainly was stretching the equipment idea." Webster never felt comfortable in the outfit, but one did as one was told.



*Meeting places, while given a name suitable for the series, rarely identified the sponsoring church and denomination.*

Courtesy of the author



# SPIRITISM



K. H. WOOD, Evangelist

## Hoax or Genuine-- Which?

*Can the Dead Return to Us?*

THIS LECTURE WILL SURPRISE YOU—HEAR IT

### SUNDAY, NOV. 23 7:30 P. M.

PLEASE NOTICE

MR. WOOD IS NOT A SPIRITIST. HE WILL, HOWEVER, PRESENT THE BIBLE TRUTH REGARDING THEIR CLAIMS AND SEANCES

## LINDSAY BIBLE TABERNACLE

MIRAGE AT SAMOA

(over)

LINDSAY, CALIFORNIA

SOMETHING NEW IN AUCKLAND — SOMETHING YOU'LL NEVER FORGET!



Golden Death Mask of Tutankhamen.

## DEAD MEN DO TELL TALES



Sphinx and Pyramids of Giza.

### SCREEN PICTURES OF AMAZING DISCOVERIES IN BIBLE LANDS

Digging Up The Remains Of A Glorious Past — Do The Bible And Spade Agree?

THE PYRAMID OF SAKHARA — It was near this pyramid that the sacred 3,000-year-old URN was discovered. See it on display at the meeting.



The Lecturer, JOHN E. COLTHEART, has recently visited all the Bible Lands of the Middle East, where he associated with a number of archaeological expeditions. His colour pictures of recent wonderful discoveries will thrill you.

4 GREAT SESSIONS TO ACCOMMODATE THE CROWDS

THIS SUNDAY, 19th APRIL  
REGENT THEATRE — QUEEN STREET  
4 p.m. 6.30 p.m. 8.0 p.m.

GAIETY THEATRE — OTAHUHU  
2 p.m. (Special South Auckland Session)

RESERVE TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT  
For Free Reserves Phone 14-361 or 64-176  
ALL SEATS FREE — EXPENSE COLLECTION

See Pictures of Fabulous Treasures, Strange People, Lost Scrolls, Giant Statues, Haunted Mosques & Deserted Palaces





*The awesome beasts of the "prophetic menagerie" often made as profound an impression upon the audience as the message of the evangelist.*

# Free Stereopticon Lecture



MRS. B. J. CADY

BY  
**B. J. CADY**



B. J. CADY

Assisted by Mrs. Cady

SUBJECT:

## "From Cannibalism to Christianity"

Over 100 slides show actual Island life from royalty to the humblest home. Among them are views showing warriors with their weapons, cannibals ornamented with human scalps, tree climbers, snake eaters, black trackers, men walking in bare feet on red-hot stones, aboriginals throwing boomerangs, tattooed natives, Island dancing, etc.



Other views show islanders after becoming Christians, with their schools & churches. Island songs will be sung.

The Lecture is educational as well as interesting, and is almost equal to a trip to the many islands of the Pacific, including Australia and New Zealand

*This old evangelistic poster capitalized on the current interest in foreign missions.*

Mr. and Mrs. Cady were Missionaries for Twenty Years in the South Sea Islands, and their Thrilling Stories will interest you.

EVERY ONE CORDIALLY INVITED An Offering for Missions taken at the close



**S**ome of the visual devices originated by the enterprising evangelists were remarkable. John Rhodes remembers an older man with whom he worked who certainly must rank at the top of the scale when it came to gimmickry in presentation. This evangelist had constructed a true-to-life replica of the sanctuary and enacted the role of priest with a good amount of realism. He took a live lamb onto the platform with him and built up to a breath-holding climax, tying the poor little creature's legs together, poisoning the knife, and acting in every way as though he planned to plunge it into the quivering body. With the audience in the grip of dread, he veered the knife away at the last moment, substituting a red liquid (carefully concealed in a vial in his hand) for the blood.

G. E. Hutches had an experience with an ingenious evangelist to whom he was assigned as song leader. The meetings were being held in a very small town and the tent was pitched right in the middle of the "metropolis," only a block from the main intersection. With such a strategic location, the evangelist decided to capitalize on it for his advertising. After a talk with the town fathers, he obtained permission to advertise his meetings by writing in chalk on the surrounding sidewalks. This he did for the five nights a week, plus a Sunday afternoon service. His sidewalk "art" became the main attraction in the sleepy little burg, and nearly every citizen attended the meetings. Without saying anything, near the end of the campaign he quietly changed his chalk writing to paint and inserted a Sabbath text for each of his presentations, creating an enduring reminder of his work in that town.

One amusing advertising incident that W. P. Bradley remembers took place in Louisville, Kentucky. When the evangelist, whose meetings were being held in the church, came to the prophecies of Revelation, it suddenly occurred to him that he had an excellent opportunity to capitalize on the famous city and state. He waited eagerly for the subject of the four horsemen of Revelation 6 and with ill-concealed triumph stretched a banner across the front of the church emblazoned with the words: "The Gospel Derby"—on the day before the running of the Kentucky Derby!

George Vandeman was always uncomfortable with most interest-catching devices, though he concedes that some evangelists used them with effectiveness. One episode that stands out in his mind is the making of the first doctrinal filmstrips. He was one of four men selected for the project. Responsible for illustrating the prophecy of Daniel 2, he cast about in his mind for an original setting. Driving along one of the large boulevards on the outskirts of Los Angeles, he noticed a famous tire company whose building actually looked like an ancient Babylonian fort. In an instant he knew what he wanted. He went to the office of the "Babylonian fort" and requested that he be allowed to use this as the background for the filmstrip. This request must have been a bit of a shock, but the manager agreed

and arrangements were made. The project proved to be successful.

Another of the four evangelists had somewhat less success when he decided to use live animals for some of the beasts of Daniel and Revelation. At that time there was a famous "lion farm" that boasted a number of rather tame lions that frequently appeared in Hollywood movies. The evangelist arranged to have one of these beasts transported to the ocean, where he coaxed it to roar loudly with the waves in the background. Not being content with this success, he decided to find a leopard as well and to try to attach wings to both lion and leopard. The animals would not cooperate and the whole project turned into one tangled fiasco! Overall, it seems that no challenge was too complex for these evangelists. The possibility of ridicule did not bother them at all. They were called to preach the Word; they must have a crowd to preach to. As outlandish as some of their tricks may seem, they were surprisingly effective. They won converts, and those who have remained faithful can testify to both the sincerity and effectiveness of the advertising and the "gimmicks."

**T**hough the twenties, thirties, and forties were successful years in Adventist evangelism, they were also years of fierce prejudice against Adventism in general, and the evangelists, unfortunately, did little to ease the opposition. This was a time when Seventh-day Adventists were considered a cult, and leaders of the established, old-line churches sternly warned their members lest they be "taken in." Undoubtedly, the ministers who did the warning were, for the most part, sincere in their belief that the Adventists were only a cut above the "snake handlers." Another spark that fed the flame of prejudice was the seemingly unbreakable rule that an evangelist coming to town for a series of meetings would never identify himself as an Adventist. All sorts of euphemisms were adopted, such as "Bible Tabernacle," "Truth For This Time," "The Bible Way," and many others. None of the advertising ever hinted at the sponsoring denomination.

Some of the evangelists were troubled by what seemed to them a deception, but the consensus was that, when asked who sponsored the meetings, they should reply, "These meetings are nondenominational. They are for *all* denominations." If one may be permitted a rather inelegant expression, this was a "dog eat dog" era in evangelism. Every minister of every church was out to convert as many as possible and then to keep his converts. The Adventist evangelists were branded as "sheep stealers" with the non-Adventist ministers claiming that any man who came to town with a series of meetings and did not identify his church affiliation until three or four months had gone by was up to no good.

This charade—for certainly it was often just that—was difficult for the evangelist. Before the opening night of a series of meetings where a Seventh-day Adventist church was established, it was necessary

to warn the members not to appear to be acquainted with the evangelistic company, as this was bound to plant suspicion in the minds of non-Adventists. If the stance of "nondenominationalism" was to be maintained, all should assume that the evangelistic company had simply come to town and "set up shop" with no local involvements.

It should be pointed out that the Adventist evangelists believed with every fiber of their beings that they *did* have the saving message for all people. When one considers that the church was still a very small organization, and that its work was carried on to a great degree by faith, with few large, impressive buildings and institutions as a backdrop, it is not surprising that Adventists felt a bit inferior. Entering a town or city, the evangelist would be confronted by the most imposing Catholic and Protestant churches in the best locations. They fairly reeked of established prestige and "old" money. The "best" people in town belonged to these churches. Under these circumstances, and faced with the self-satisfaction of many nominal Christians, it is understandable that the evangelists felt that they must somehow gain a foothold, even if the tactics were somewhat questionable. Perhaps some may have even thought that the end *did* justify the means, since the end was the salvation of souls.

**I**nevitably, Adventist evangelists did not, for the most part, enjoy good relations with ministers of other denominations. Given today's ecumenical climate, it may seem strange that this should once have been so. The principle of religious freedom was given some strange twists at the hands of those who interpreted it as "freedom to *coerce*" as many people as possible into their churches and congregations. This attitude had first surfaced, in the United States, during the middle 1880's, when a great number of religious organizations had been formed, all of them eager for members and all of them convinced of their own rightness and uniqueness. The notion that a coercive approach was justified and effective lingered on among Adventists well into the first half of the twentieth century.

To make matters worse, the young Adventist evangelists often lacked proper academic credentials to commend them to the local ministerial fraternity. Traditionally, ministers of the old, established denominations were graduates of theological seminaries; they were usually well-versed in their own doctrines and understood the writings of their church savants. Evangelical preachers and evangelists, on the other hand, often had little formal schooling but tended to make up for that lack in determination and fiery presentations. Certainly the majority of Adventist evangelists fell into this category. Convinced that the world was soon to end, invigorated by the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, and armed with their charts depicting the great "beasts" of these books, the evangelists did not see their role to include that of peacemaker. They often quoted the text "I came not to send peace, but a

sword," and they tended to use their Biblical swords with gusto.

This approach did not endear them to the ministers of other churches, who regarded the Adventists as "cultist upstarts." Neither did it endear them to other evangelists, who saw them as rivals. Traditional pastors and evangelists alike seemed to regard the Adventist ministers as heretics because, supposedly, they did not believe "in the atoning blood of Christ." Though they did certainly believe in the "atoning blood," the strongly legalistic approach followed by the majority of Seventh-day Adventist evangelists certainly gave some credence to the accusation. However, the prevailing view among the Adventist preachers of the time was that they were speaking to Christians, men and women who had already accepted Christ. Their task, then, was to lead these people to a fuller understanding of what that acceptance meant. Their work was to point out the "full" truth.

**W**hen R. R. Bietz, in his first effort, held in the small city of Linton, North Dakota, was associated with an older evangelist, the prevailing philosophy of the team was that "if we can preach the Adventist doctrines strongly enough to create a lot of opposition, it will stir the people up, and we'll get converts." "My senior evangelist and mentor was certainly a dynamic preacher," Bietz remembers. "I've met only one other man in the denomination who could quote as many scriptures and quote them as correctly as he could. Woe to any Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, or any other minister who would challenge him to a debate. He would embarrass them almost to tears in just a few minutes."

On one occasion this evangelist met a Baptist minister on the street, and soon they were caught up in argument about Revelation 12. Bietz, the young intern, listened intently, but was somewhat taken aback to hear his evangelist mentor end the argument by telling the Baptist minister that the latter knew as much about prophecy as the cow knows about the moon. "I was pretty shocked at hearing him say that, but I figured I was young and didn't know much and maybe that was the way to do it," says Bietz.

Smarting from this encounter, the Baptist minister on the following Sunday warned his congregation sternly about the Adventists and their ways of "sheep stealing," and admonished them to be on their guard. But the meetings prospered, despite the opposition, the rash evangelist and the green apprentice.

Still, the deep antagonism between the Adventist preachers and the Linton Baptists did not end quite so easily. Because the evangelistic tent was pitched on public school property some of the prominent Baptist church members went to the school authorities and complained so bitterly that the officials finally told the Adventists they would simply have to move. Fortunately, resourcefulness was a



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quality frequently found among evangelists. This particular one informed his audience about the crisis and one family, who would later join the Adventist church, invited the company to pitch the tent in their own very large back yard. Thus, one night after the service, volunteers worked together to move the tent to its new location. In the morning the townspeople, who had known very little of the bitter tug of war going on between the Baptists and the

Adventists, were understandably surprised to awaken and find that the tent had been moved.

All went well until Saturday night. As the evangelist was preaching, a shower of stones came flying onto the top of the tent and through an opening in one wall. Fortunately none of the stones hit anyone in the audience. The small company prayed earnestly that this would not happen again, but the incident was repeated the next night. Bietz

rushed out to apprehend the culprits but found no one. All was quiet until the next Saturday night.

After giving great consideration to the matter, Bietz decided to hide himself in some bushes about halfway up the slope behind the tent. He had not waited long before six boys between the ages of 12 and 14 came into view and began hurling rocks at the tent. Bietz quickly grabbed one of the boys, carried him down the hill and right into the tent, to the very front seat.

"In those days I was strong," he chuckles. "I'd grown up on a farm and had the muscles to prove it. I could have cornered several of those boys." The miscreant bit and kicked, but he really did not have much of a chance.

The evangelist interrupted his sermon as Bietz entered the tent with his wriggling catch, and the audience came near to applauding, for they felt that justice was at last being done. After the service, the boy was taken to the police.

During the interrogation it was discovered that one of the deacons in the Baptist church had been so

stirred up by his minister's remarks that he had taken his truck, loaded up the boys and some rocks and driven to the top of the hill, where he commanded, "Go to it, fellows. Let'em have it!"

Realizing that the boy and his friends had merely been the pawns of an adult, the police chief asked if the evangelist wished to press charges, which could conceivably land the deacon in jail. "No," was the answer. "Let the boy go. But we do want you to make it clear to our friend the Baptist deacon that if this continues we may not feel so charitable."

On the street a few days later, Bietz and the deacon met. The latter was quite angry. "I understand you told the police to put me in jail," he snarled. Bietz was as cool as his adversary was hot. "No, we didn't say that. We don't think you'd enjoy going to jail. But we do want you to know that this is a free country and we have a right to preach here without stones being thrown at us." This marked the end of overt hostility in this particular effort, but, undoubtedly, it did *not* mark the beginning of friendship with the Baptists.

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*An advertising gimmick which produced results was this handbill used by Australian evangelist Alvin Cook, in Johannesburg, South Africa.*

Courtesy P. J. Landa

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**F**rancis Wernick says, "To be sure, we had our share of opposition. In fact, we expected it and to some degree courted it. Our messages were mainly doctrinal and prophetic, and while 'salvation in Christ alone' was presented, it probably would be an overstatement to say our sermons were Christ-centered." Wernick began his evangelism in an area that was largely Lutheran and Roman Catholic. The latter ignored him, but the Lutherans were concerned and let it be known that the Adventists were heretics. Wernick and his older companions were not deterred by this. "We did little, if anything, to seek the cooperation of other ministers, but we felt quite willing to meet them on the battleground of doctrinal argument."

Relationships with other churches were not always bad, though. J. L. Dittberner, when he needed to borrow a baptistry, turned—inevitably—to the Baptists. The minister of that particular church welcomed Dittberner warmly and offered him the use of his own baptismal robe. He said, "I am interested in seeing people accept Christ." One of the candidates was a member from his own church!

Since many of the Seventh-day Adventist evangelists were conspicuous by their youth, older ministers of other churches often attempted to intimidate them on the theory that they, as older men, were bound to have more to offer and knew more about the Bible than the "upstarts" could possibly know. But the youthful evangelists were a pretty hardy breed and did not rout easily. Leo Van Dolson for one remembers the occasion when a family with whom he was holding Bible studies, in conjunction with an effort, arranged for the minister of their church to be present for the study. They wanted to see whether or

not he had satisfactory answers for the searching questions Van Dolson had been raising in regard to their long-held beliefs. He proved unable to match Van Dolson, "not because I was any smarter than he was, but I had been teaching truth based completely on the Bible, and he had not."

The informal discussion inevitably turned into a debate and sensing defeat, the older minister became angry: "Young man," he frothed, "I've been in the ministry for thirty years, and I'm certainly better acquainted with the Bible and truth than you are. How dare you sit there and argue with me! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" With that, he rose and left the room, leaving his members sadly convinced that he really did not know the truth.

In Van Dolson's next series of meetings in Oregon, he faced a carefully orchestrated opposition from a coalition of other churches. They printed and widely distributed a brochure which proclaimed: "They're at it again. Who? The Seventh-day Adventists." It went on to describe what the preaching would consist of, and warned everyone to avoid hearing this heresy. One of the local ministers was particularly vituperative from his own pulpit. He made the mistake of announcing that on a coming Sunday night, he would preach on the topic "Why the Adventists Are Wrong."

Van Dolson's senior evangelist felt that he needed to hear what the man had to say, but did not feel impressed to close down his meeting in order to attend his rival's lecture. It was decided that the evangelist's wife, accompanied by several Adventist members, would go to listen and take notes. They did so, walking right down the aisle to the front seat. Apparently the preacher recognized them and became so uncomfortable that finally he simply

stopped. There was no alternative but for him to announce to the congregation: "I can't seem to think too clearly tonight. We'll just dismiss the meeting and take up this subject some time in the future."

Incredible as it may appear today, this type of experience was not unusual in that era. Often preachers yielded to the temptation to adopt a strictly *ad hominem* approach to another church group, but when confronted by members of the opposing group, they found themselves too uncomfortable to proceed. One may hope that this was never the technique of the Adventist evangelists, but it is likely that from time to time, it probably happened. Again, it was completely acceptable to boast of the routing and discomfiture of one's antagonist, all in the name of religion.

L. P. Knecht, in one of his first evangelistic series of meetings, had "thrown in" a sermon on Moses, telling the audience that Moses had been resurrected and was in heaven with Christ. Apparently, a minister from the Christian Church had been attending the meetings, for he promptly ran a notice in one of the local papers announcing that he would give a \$50 reward if Knecht could *prove* that Moses had been resurrected. At first Knecht ignored the challenge, but as more and more of the people attending his meetings asked him what he was going to do, he could see that to evade the issue would be to convince them that he was not prepared—and probably the eventual result would be that they would drift away.

After thinking it over and pondering various courses of action, he put an advertisement in the same newspaper stating that he would answer the challenge the following Sunday night, but it would be done in front of a "jury" (Jury trials to decide the validity of the Sabbath were a common method with evangelists, but they were seldom used for other subjects). Knecht, expecting a crowd, rented a public-address system for that one night. He had a speaker set up outside, for the church held only 150 people. The crowds gathered on surrounding lawns, across the street on porches, and wherever standing or sitting room could be found. "The speakers could be heard about a half a mile away," Knecht states.

In preparing for the crucial evening, Knecht's plan was to prove to the audience that Michael, the archangel, was "one like unto God." He used the standard text, Jude 9. Then he went to the Transfiguration. As he neared the end of his presentation, he said to the jury—which included three members of the Christian Church and not a single Seventh-day Adventist—"You may now be excused and go outside where you can arrive at your verdict privately." Immediately the foreman stood and announced, "We have already reached our verdict."

His heart in his mouth, Knecht answered, "Then please announce your verdict to the audience." The foreman replied, "Reverend Knecht has proved his point beyond a reasonable shadow of a doubt." Needless to say, the evangelist was much relieved.

**I**n Florida, Fordyce Detamore faced anti-Adventist sentiment squarely when he planned a three week campaign. The local pastor, who had been given the responsibility for physical arrangements, told Detamore that he could get the use of a city-owned lot for only two weeks. Nothing else was available to them for a three week period.

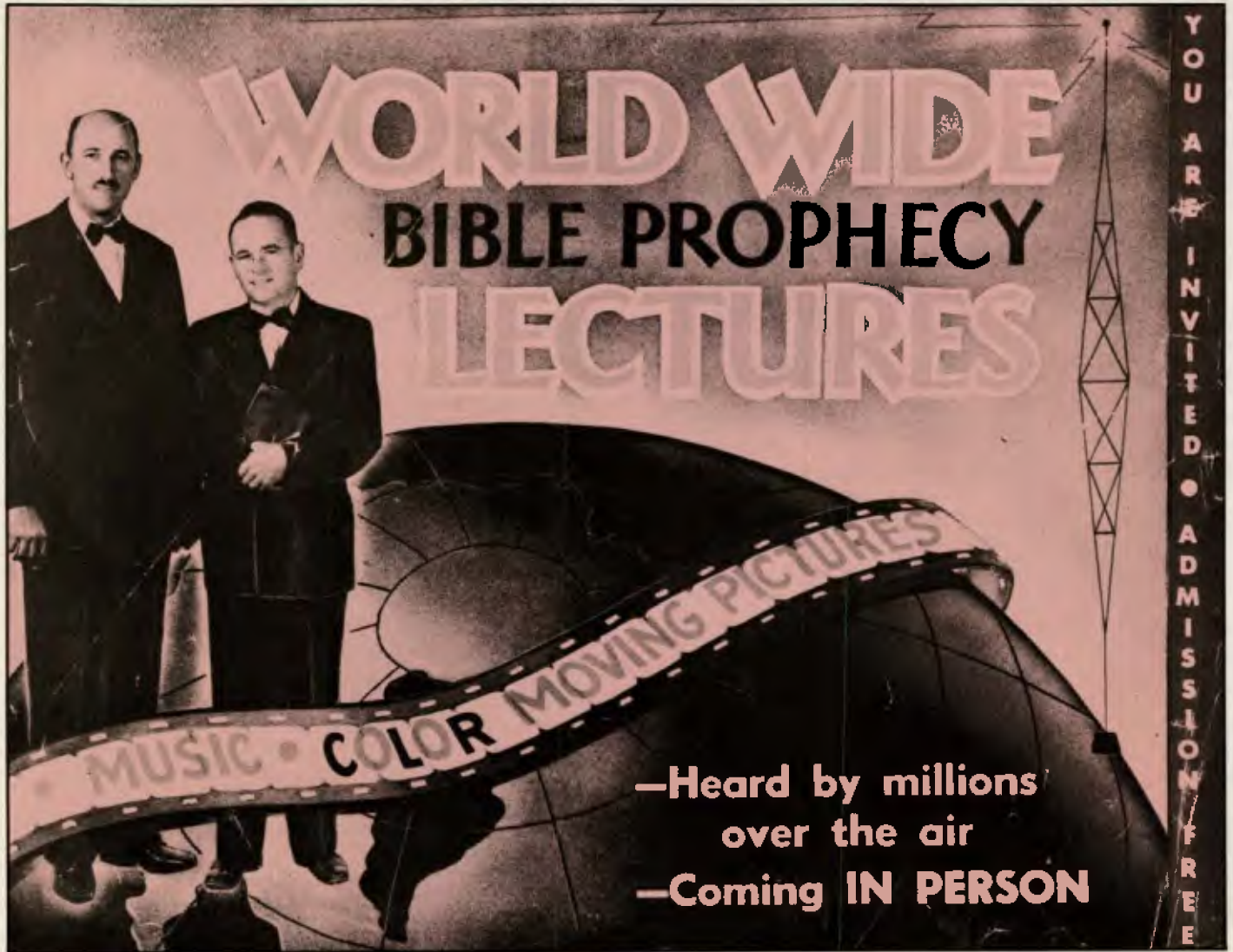
After pondering for a moment, Detamore replied, "Well, let's put up our air tent and go ahead and hope that we'll be able to stay the full three weeks." Banking on the fact that the meetings might attract some influential persons who would intercede on their behalf, Detamore and his company swung into the cycle of meetings. Unfortunately, it was not to be. Not only did they fail to attract supporters, but they antagonized some persons, who determined to shut the meetings down after only a few nights. But the lease held firm for the two weeks. Detamore was not one to be defeated without putting up lively resistance. He announced the situation to his audience and suggested that if anyone had influential friends, he should contact them to plead for a time extension.

One little woman took his suggestion very literally. Though she had never met the man, she promptly phoned one of the city councilors and insisted that he do what he could to extend the meetings. Understandably, he protested that he did not know the entire circumstances and felt that he could not make any promises. "Well, I want you to come to supper at my house and I'll tell you all about it," was her reply.

There was a moment of silence on the telephone line. Then the councilman, obviously realizing that he had met his match, replied, "I'm really too busy to come to supper, but the City Council is in session right now, and if you will hold the phone I'll get back to you." In a few moments he returned: "You can have the extra week and you'll have no more trouble," he told her.

Still, evidence of prejudice continued. Detamore realized that other kinds of influential people were working behind the scenes when, during his sermon a few nights later, the fire department appeared in full regalia to shut the meetings down. At that time an "antifire guarantee" had to be secured to hold public meetings in tents and this guarantee had expired while the meetings were in progress. Detamore was more than a little stunned to hear blowtorches being applied to the walls of the tent while he was preaching, as the firemen supposedly tested the combustibility of the canvas. Early the next morning he called on the fire chief. He explained how the fire guarantee had expired just at the wrong time but that there was no smoking in the air tent and that every kind of safety measure was observed. The fire chief obviously recognized the prejudice that was behind the incident and courteously replied, "That's quite all right, Mr. Detamore. Feel free to continue your meetings." And so he did, as did many others, in their evangelistic tents, rented halls and theaters.





And what was accomplished by it all? Even the most cursory examination of the period indicates that a rich heritage of faith, courage, and belief was built by these evangelists and their wives. Out of all the efforts, struggles, conflicts, experimentation and innovation grew the powerful radio and television ministries of our day, with their Bible correspondence schools, their outreach endeavors to

the youth and their better living programs with wide audience appeal. Then there were the great families who joined the Adventist church through the evangelistic series, whose children and grandchildren are now engaged in denominational work themselves, or have become indispensable lay workers. These converts are, in a very real sense, the church of today.

In the  
next issue of  
*Adventist Heritage*

**Malekula Saga:**

The last days of Norman Wiles, pioneer missionary to the New Hebrides, from the pages of Alma Wiles' personal diary.

*By Roy Brandstater*

**The Bible, The Bottle, and The Ballot--**

Seventh-day Adventists and Temperance, 1850-1900.

*By Yvonne D. Anderson*

**For Health and Wealth:**

The birth of Adventism in Colorado.

*By Everett N. Dick*

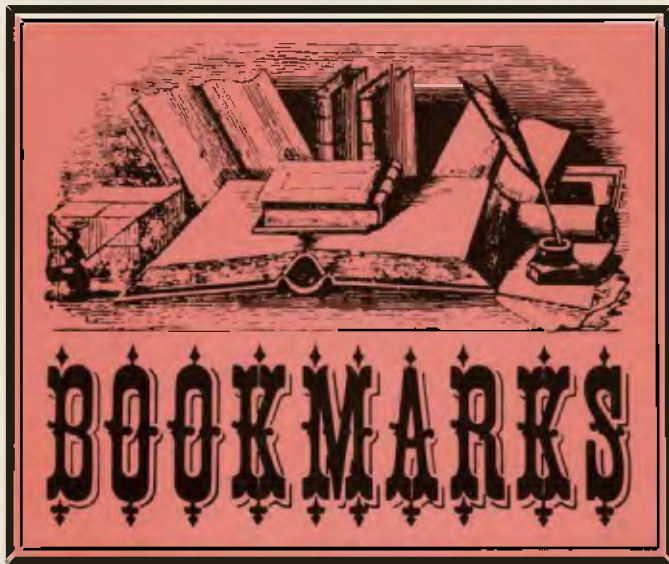
**Seeing Fingers--**

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*By John Treolo*

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**MICHAEL BELINA CZECHOWSKI**  
1818 - 1876

R. L. Dabrowski and B. B. Beach,  
Editors.

Warsaw: Znaki Czasu Publishing  
House, 1979. 553 pages.

BERT B. BEACH

**A** long neglected figure in Seventh-day Adventist historiography has been Michael Belina Czechowski, the first preacher of the Seventh-day Adventist message in Europe. Credit must be given to the organizers of the historical symposium held in May 1976, in Warsaw, Poland, for the successful endeavor to fill this historical vacuum. It was in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of Czechowski's death that the Polish Union, in cooperation with the two European Divisions, organized a four day gathering of some 25 scholars and church leaders from different parts of Europe and the United States. The purpose of this symposium was to gather together all the available historical information on the life and work of M. B. Czechowski and thus enlarge and deepen understanding of early Seventh-day Adventist church history in Europe.

Eighteen papers were presented and discussed. In connection with the symposium, there was an interesting display of printed and reproduced photographic materials and Czechowski memorabilia (mostly collected by Jacques Frei). At the end of the symposium, it was agreed that the Polish Publishing House should produce a book which would bring together the papers, documents and results of the symposium. This book was published in 1979 and contains over 500 pages of historical information and biographical essays on M. B. Czechowski. As such it represents a substantial contribution to Adventist historiography and early mission history. Materials and facts previously unknown, or known only to a handful of specialists, have now been gathered together and published. Until the appearance of this book, statements in denominational books or periodicals regarding Czechowski tended to be rather sketchy: he was a former Roman Catholic priest from Poland who emigrated to the United States and became a Seventh-day Adventist in 1857, after first serving as a Baptist minister during the middle fifties. He had an overpowering desire to go to Europe as a missionary. When the General Conference did not see its way clear to sponsor him, he

sailed for Europe in 1864, under his own steam, with some financial support from various Sunday keeping Adventist groups. Adventist literature mentions that he won a few Sabbath-keeping followers in Switzerland who established contact with the General Conference in 1868. About this time he had serious financial difficulties and "deserted" both the work and his family in Switzerland. He presumably "apostatized" while traveling in the Balkans, before his death in Vienna in 1876. (Erroneous stories have circulated regarding his final illness and the date of his death. Even the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia mistakenly lists a wrong given name — *Bonaventura* rather than *Belina*).

The publication of the symposium papers not only corrects some of the mistaken information, but adds a wealth of new information. Czechowski emerges as a man of considerably larger stature than was previously thought. There is conclusive evidence that he was directly responsible for the beginnings of Seventh-day Adventism in Italy, Switzerland and Romania. It is possible that he also gained individual followers in Germany and Hungary, though so far no evidence has been found tying his pioneer work to the establishment of Seventh-day Adventist churches in these two countries.

The attraction of Czechowski to Polish Adventists is obvious: the first pioneer preacher of Seventh-day Adventism in Europe was a Pole! This in part explains why the Polish Union was happy to organize the symposium and undertake the complex task of publishing this book.

**F**rom the very beginning it was decided that the essays would be published both in English and Polish, with the texts appearing side by side. (The left page is always in English and the right page in Polish). The original text is the English version and the Polish text is based on it. Considering that the book was published in Poland, the English text has



# Michael Belina Czechowski 1818-1876

Results of the historical symposium  
about his life  
and work held in Warsaw,  
Poland, May 17-23, 1976,  
commemorating the hundredth  
anniversary of his death

„ZNAKI CZASU” PUBLISHING HOUSE  
WARSAW, POLAND 1979

# Michał Belina Czechowski 1818-1876

Rezultaty sympozjum naukowego  
o jego życiu i działalności,  
które odbyło się w Warszawie,  
17-23 maja 1976 roku.  
z okazji setnej rocznicy jego śmierci

WYDAWNICTWO „ZNAKI CZASU”  
WARSAWA 1979

surprisingly few spelling or printing mistakes.

The book contains sixteen papers or chapters, most of which were extensively edited. The contributors represent a variety of backgrounds: academicians trained in research methods, a self-taught bibliophile in his nineties, a historical Czechowski “hobbyist”, and several church administrators, some with limited historical expertise. There is one common thread, however: interest in Czechowski.

Three chapters do not deal specifically with Czechowski and, at first glance, appear out of character when compared to the other papers. However, two were included in order to provide a general historical setting for a better understanding of the milieu from which Czechowski sprang and in which he labored. The last chapter brings up to date the Seventh-day Adventist church/state relations in Poland, through decades of tenuous toleration to full legal recognition and equality with other denominations, in the framework of a socialist political order and independent Poland. This would no doubt fulfill Czechowski’s patriotic nationalism, but whether the current picture would fully satisfy his Polish-American dream, is another question.

Most of the chapters represent straightforward

historical presentations of various aspects of Czechowski’s life and work, in chronological order (e.g. Czechowski in America, in Switzerland, in Romania; Czechowski’s relations with the General Conference and First Day Adventists).

The chapters by G. Oosterwal, G. De Meo, K. F. Mueller and B. B. Beach involve, in addition to historical description, a greater degree of analysis and interpretation of Czechowski’s significance (e.g. his contribution to Seventh-day Adventist mission, his preparatory work for the missionary task of J. N. Andrews, his relationship to Ellen G. White).

In addition to the sixteen essays, the book contains a valuable exhaustive bibliography of materials by or about Czechowski. There is an interesting picture section which includes a photostatic copy of Ellen G. White’s letter to him, released to the public for the first time. In the back of the book there are sections dealing with colorful incidents in Czechowski’s life and how his contemporaries saw him. The work concludes with the “Symposium Statement,” authored by B. B. Beach and agreed to by the participants. While an index would have been helpful, the bilingual edition would have involved much extra work and cost. For these reasons, it was omitted.

**T**he published papers are based on the original research and documents discovered or collected by four individuals. Alfred Vaucher, a long-time Bible teacher at the French Adventist College and grandson of Catherine Revel (who was a Czechowski convert), found Czechowski materials in the Sunday-keeping Adventists' publications *World's Crisis*, *Voice of the West*, *Advent Herald*, and the Vatican archives. Jacques Frei, a long-time Czechowski "hobbyist," has gathered much information on the Polish pioneer, including geographical and documentary sources in Switzerland. He has even traced a Czechowski descendant living in Zurich, Switzerland (A great grand-child of Ludomir, Czechowski's oldest son who died in 1875). Ray Dombrowski, editor of the Polish Publishing House, discovered Czechowski letters in the Janowski collection of the Jagiellonian library, in Cracow, together with other documents dealing with Czechowski's early life in Poland. Giuseppe De Meo, teacher and pastor in Florence, Italy, uncovered Czechowski correspondence in the Count Piero Guicciardini archives in Florence. Others have located official documents in Romania (a marriage certificate with M. B. Czechowski as a witness) and Vienna, Austria (Czechowski's death certificate).

There is thus a considerable amount of original source materials on or about Czechowski. One would hope for still more, especially regarding his early life and career as a priest in Poland and his last seven years in the Balkans and Austria. It is true that we have at our disposal Czechowski's autobiography covering his experiences as a Catholic priest. However, this biography reads at times like what the French call "une histoire romancée". He seems to have seen himself as a little "Polish Luther" and tended perhaps to color the historical events of his life in order to fit the image he wished to project.

As one reads the sixteen essays, a rather full picture emerges, "warts and all." One meets Czechowski the romanticist, the Polish revolutionary nationalist, but most of all the tireless itinerant evangelist. "This one thing I do" could very well



Credit: Znaki Czeanu Publishing House

have been his motto. He was fanatical in regards to the task he wished to accomplish, but surprisingly ecumenical in spirit for the time in which he lived. Missionary evangelism was his overwhelming ambition. All else—family, creature comforts, even life itself, came in second place and at times, appeared as matters of comparative inconsequence. One detects a man with charismatic personality, with printer's ink in his veins, with talent and also weaknesses. There is a negative side of Czechowski that also emerges: a poor provider for his family, he could bite off financial responsibilities too big for him to chew. He was not deceitful, but could at times use a skillful artfulness that seemed, at least to the uncomplicated Swiss, to border on craftiness and smacked of "the end justifies the means" philosophy—perhaps a fall-back to his early education. The book, from various biographical angles, places in evidence Czechowski's lasting contributions:

1. He launched the Seventh-day Adventist work in Europe and prepared the ground for the official J. N. Andrews Central European Mission.
2. He trained converts to become workers for the newly emerging church. Several became denominational pioneers under the aegis of the organized Seventh-day Adventist church after Andrews' arrival.

Credit: Znaki Czeanu Publishing House





3. His influence and sense of mission produced a new missionary impetus in the church and helped to move the Battle Creek leadership to accept a vision of world missionary work.
4. He provided a European footing for the Seventh-day Adventist work in Europe. Thus, from the very beginning, Europeans were involved in the leadership and development of the church in Europe. In this way European Adventism avoided some of the problems associated with long-lasting foreign missionary leadership, which developed in other parts of the world.
5. He gave a needed example of missionary identification with the local cultural setting.
6. He emphasized literature work and carried on a large correspondence. It has been argued that he was the first to use full-time literature evangelists.
7. He exhibited an early interest in New York city and wanted to come to grips with the evangelistic challenge of this giant cultural and linguistic melting-pot—long before the church in North America felt the extraordinary challenge of this megapolis.

Despite the wealth of information brought together in the Czechowski symposium volume, there are still a number of questions that remain unanswered and call for further study:

1. Czechowski's purported audience with Pope Gregory XVI in 1844 and his presentation of a memorial regarding needed reforms of the Catholic Church in Poland. Nothing, so far, has been found in the Vatican archives confirming Czechowski's memorial and audience with the pope.
2. Did Czechowski actually receive E. G. White's letter of 1861 (1864)?
3. Many facts mentioned in his autobiography have thus far not been corroborated by other documentation regarding his early life in the Catholic Church.
4. His relationship to Wilhelmina Schirmer needs to be clarified. When and where were they married? Where was she, and their two children, when he died in Vienna, apparently alone? What happened subsequently to her and to the two children?
5. There is very meager information regarding the activities of Czechowski between 1870 and his death in 1876. What was he doing during this six year period and why was he in Vienna at the time of his death?
6. What happened between Czechowski and the

General Conference during the early months of 1864? (J. N. Andrews speaks of "misunderstandings").

7. There is still a mystery surrounding Czechowski's burial. So far no conclusive evidence has been found regarding the place where he was buried.

There are weaknesses in the book, mostly related to its "symposium" character and the publishing of an English text in a non-English speaking country. There are repetitions and overlapping between chapters. This was unavoidable if each paper or chapter was allowed to represent in itself an original, relatively complete entity.

There are a few printing and spelling mistakes and a few chronological errors: in the photographic section, Catherine Revel is called the "granddaughter" of A. Vaucher. She was, of course, his grandmother (p. 390). Czechowski's letter to Kraszewski was written in 1865, not 1885 (p. 301). Czechowski did not go to Romania during the winter of 1868/69, but several months later (p. 346).

Some of the authors could have been more meticulous in their transcriptions of quotations. In a few instances the original punctuation and abbreviations have not been kept (compare for example, on page 132, the quotation from the *World's Crisis* with the same quotation on page 106.) At times the reader is left with incomplete information (p. 126 makes reference to D. F. Snook stating "apparently he apostatized [sic]," when there is no doubt that he left the S.D.A. Church and became for a short time a leader in what is now known as the "Church of God [Seventh Day]," based in Denver Colorado).

These minor faults do not significantly diminish the major contribution to Seventh-day Adventist Church history made by this book. It is hoped that solutions will in due course be found to some of the unanswered questions and furthermore, that more serious attention will be given by denominational leaders, especially in Switzerland, to some of the practical suggestions made in the Symposium Statement (pp. 532-536), including the purchase by the Seventh-day Adventist denomination of the still existing first Seventh-day Adventist Church building outside of North America. This small wood structure in Tramelan, the scene of Czechowski's best known work in Europe, risks being torn down and lost forever.

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