

Volume 3, Number 1

What God hath
put asunder

Wilson resigns

Sue happy

Plausible deniability

INCIDENT IN
ATKINSON: The
Arrest and Trial of
Israel Danimon

Knight's Darkest
Hour

A Spark in the Dark

A Fizzle in the
Drizzle

AN UNAUTHORIZED, FREE PRESS SUPPLEMENT TO OFFICIAL SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST PUBLICATIONS

adventist currents

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FROM THE PUBLISHER:

The publisher and editorial staff of *Adventist Currents* are committed to the belief that Christian freedom is enhanced by information that makes judicious choice a possibility.

Adventist Currents represents an effort to put before Seventh-day Adventists, in a careful, creative, and lively way, information and ideas not usually discussed in official, denominational publications.

Readers should find *Adventist Currents* stimulating and accurate at all times, even when they disagree with its editorial posture. Also, it must not be assumed that the publisher of *Adventist Currents* subscribes to the opinions of its contributors.

It is expected that readers will understand the humor sprinkled throughout the magazine as a useful relief to the curse of protracted seriousness. Amen.

CURRENT CURRENTS

EDITOR

Douglas Hackleman

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

J.B. Goodner

Dennis Hokama

Alice Gregg

COPY EDITORS

Cherie Rouse

April Harmony

VISUALS EDITOR

David Baker

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CURRENTS NEEDS

PEOPLE

Adventist Currents needs people in a variety of geographical locations who will report to the magazine local matters that are of interest to the general readership.

Particularly needed are individuals in or around church administrative offices who can help *Currents* to better understand the minds and actions of conference, union, and General Conference officers.

Also needed are reporters from Seventh-day Adventist college campuses — continuing sources of information and news.

Friends of *Currents* who can assist in its distribution and/or the acquiring of mailing lists are essential.

INFORMATION

Adventist Currents welcomes carefully written articles about Adventism's past, present, and future — articles about issues, events or individuals (maximum length, 5,500 words).

Currents needs brief, specific, and documented news items that provide information that is generally not available through the "General Organ of the Seventh-day Adventist Church" (maximum length, 1,800 words).

Guest editorials are welcome, so long as they do not address the characters of individuals or employ language that is untoward (maximum length, 1,200).

Letters to the editor are encouraged. Those that are not published will be polled.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Adventist Currents needs contributions to promote the growth in size, quality, and readership of the magazine.

Currents needs friends with stamina who will send tax-free contributions on a regular basis — what is elsewhere termed "systematic benevolence."

Adventist Currents' publisher, Mars Hill Publications, Inc., intends to publish books that address various issues of interest to *Currents'* subscribers. Suggestions for topics and potential authors are welcome.

A Question of Character

by Douglas Hackleman

The Ellen G. White Estate representatives continue to demonstrate their disdain for candid history and for the right of church members to acquire a realistic and thorough understanding of the most significant figure in their religious roots. In this instance, the Seventh-day Adventist historical discovery of the decade—if not the century—is being studiously ignored by the Ellen G. White Estate.

If we weren't already so well acquainted with how thinking is done at the White Estate, it would seem absolutely astonishing that people who place such a great degree of importance on Mrs. White are so disinterested in the earliest, contemporary, public, eyewitness descriptions of her in-and-out-of-vision conduct.

The discovery in question is an extended New England newspaper account (The *Piscataquis Farmer*, 7 March 1845) of the arrest and trial of one of Ellen Harmon's friends, Israel Dammon (see this issue page 18). Dammon had been arrested on the Sunday morning of February 16, 1845, during a Millerite meeting at a home in Atkinson, Maine. Ellen Harmon was present at the arrest, and fifteen years later (1860) described Dammon's apprehension and subsequent trial (which she did not attend) in *Spiritual Gifts* volume two.

In the 124 column-inch *Farmer* abridgment of the testimony of the thirty-eight witnesses who testified at Dammon's trial (twenty against, eighteen for), there are numerous incidental references to the activities of two visionaries who were present at the Saturday evening meeting that preceded Dammon's Sunday arrest; one of them was Ellen Harmon of Portland, Maine.

La Sierra professor of history and political science, Frederick Hoyt, ran across the *Farmer* account in 1983 while researching the beginning of Adventism in Maine but did not share his find publicly until it was published in *Spectrum* in August 1987.

One-time Andrews University Seminary graduate student Bruce Weaver (a casualty of the Glacier View era) "discovered" the same article in March of 1986 independently of Hoyt. The reading of Mrs. White's remarkable *Spiritual Gifts* 2 account of Dammon's arrest and trial had stimulated Weaver's search for any mention of it in Maine newspapers. His article in this issue represents a painstaking effort to bring the available evidence to bear on a comparison of the two

versions—that of the thirty-eight witnesses at Dammon's trial, under oath, and that of Mrs. White fifteen years later, (ostensibly) under inspiration.

Several of the sworn eyewitnesses described the activities of Ellen Harmon on the evening of 15 February 1845, within four months of the great disappointment, and only days following an Exeter, Maine, meeting

December 1, 1986. Wrote Olson:

"I read the document through at once but found nothing in it which, in my opinion, required an explanatory statement from the White Estate. The other staff members agreed with me. The republication of the [Farmer] article in the August, 1987, issue of *Spectrum* has resulted in further discussion of the matter by our staff, but we still feel that a

The SDA historical discovery of the decade — if not the century — is being studiously ignored by the Ellen G. White Estate.

(also with Dammon) at which she later recalled having had her first vision of the Bridegroom moving from the holy to the most holy place in the heavenly sanctuary.

But the White Estate is not interested in what the witnesses had to say, much less in sharing its perspective on the document with Seventh-day Adventists today. In a 21 October 1987 memo to the trustees, staff, and research center directors of the White Estate, Robert Olson indicated that he had "received a complimentary copy of this [7 March *Piscataquis Farmer*] newspaper article" on

formal response by the White Estate is not needed."

Olson uses the rest of his three-and-a-half-page memo to discuss with his colleagues "three aspects of the account that" he believes "might, to some minds, call into question Ellen Harmon's activities or character." But the problem with the account that is of serious concern is not among his "three aspects." Olson does not even hint at the organic contradiction between the account of

(concluded on page 47)



Donald Muth practices his fine, artistic craft in Sedona, Arizona. His cover rendering contributes to the unmaking of a longstanding Adventist myth.

Wilson/White at odds over GC move

In 1903 General Conference president A.G. Daniells was determined to remove the church headquarters from Battle Creek, Michigan. In this endeavor he had the support of Ellen White, whose counsel he had requested concerning a new location.

In August of 1903 Daniells wrote to J.J. Wessels describing three letters that Mrs. White had recently written him. The first indicated that she had no specific light as to location. (Daniells had been vetting locations near New York City.)

A few days later she had written again to say that "she had received light that New York City was not the place and in the same communication she said that Washington, D.C., had advantages that we ought to carefully consider."

"Just a little later," Daniells continued, "a letter came from Sister White telling us that the Lord had made it plain to her that we should locate in Washington, D.C., [and] that our books and papers should have the imprint of Washington, D.C. . . . The printing house," Daniells informed Wessels, "will be located just inside the District line, so that our publications can rightly bear the Washington imprint" (A.G. Daniells to J.J. Wessels, 3 August 1903).

Daniells had represented Mrs. White's 26 June 1903 letter to him accurately:

"In regard to Washington, I will say that twenty years ago memorials for God should have been established in that city, or rather in its suburbs [She didn't say Maryland suburbs] . . . From the light given me, I know for the

present the headquarters of the Review and Herald should be near Washington. If there is on our books and papers the imprint of Washington, D.C., it will be seen that we are not afraid to let our light shine."

More than eight decades later, another GC president arranged for the sale and transfer in stages of the Review & Herald and the General Conference from their District of Columbia addresses. Why? He did not share Mrs. White's enthusiasm for the way the Washington, D.C., address "let our light shine":

"The address 'raises misunderstandings and the suspicion that the Seventh-day Adventist church may somehow be an agency for. . . the United States government,' General Conference President Neal C. Wilson wrote in a letter to [Montgomery] county officials.

"No matter how you try to explain the situation to people in some parts of the world, there is the lingering idea that our church may have certain political affiliations."

"Wilson said the 'disarming and nature-related address' of Silver Spring would be advantageous to the church" (*Prince George's Journal*, 6 January 1986).

The "imprint of Washington, D.C.," was dropped from Review & Herald publications with the publishing plant's transfer to Hagerstown in late 1983. And it appears that Wilson soon will have it removed from General Conference letterhead as well, unless he repents upon seeing belatedly this counsel from the one he fawningly refers to as "the Lord's messenger." □

Plausible deniability

After several years of slow-moving preparation, an eleventh volume of the *SDA Bible Commentary* series slated for unveiling at the 1990 General Conference quinquennial session has been cancelled. The project, begun in 1983 as a joint venture between the Biblical Research Institute and the Review & Herald Publishing Association, was to be a comprehensive and official elaboration of fundamental SDA beliefs.

Spokesmen for both the BRI and the Review cite as a reason for cancellation the inability of many of the thirty-four authors to complete their contributions to the volume in a timely way. One spokesman, when asked about the quality of the articles that had been submitted, asked that the question not be asked.

One of the difficulties faced by those in charge of the project was that of finding qualified writers who were willing to write mere descriptions of Adventist doctrine as it had evolved during the last half of the nineteenth century. No creative reunderstandings, applications, or even apologetics were solicited.



Seventh-day Adventists Answer

Questions on Doctrine



But most theologians are loathe to think of their discipline as static.

One of the reasons for a commentary volume on Adventist beliefs was the void that has been left by the longstanding refusal to reprint *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*. *Questions on Doctrine*, of course, had a controversial history and its tendentiously evangelical interpretations of SDA doctrine made it anathema to those Adventists who believe in victory life and the fallen human nature of Christ. Nevertheless BRI associate secretary Frank Holbrook told *Currents*, "I'm comfortable with *Questions on Doctrine*," and added that he personally would be willing to have it reprinted.

In the meantime, the Ministerial Association is preparing a guide to Adventist doctrine, entitled *Adventists Believe*, to be published by the Review & Herald Publishing Association in late 1988. The book will also serve as a supplement to those Sabbath School quarterlies that are emphasizing Adventist doctrine. *Ministry* magazine assistant editor David Jarnes says that while *Adventists Believe* will not be light reading, it will not be as scholarly as what the BRI had in mind with its aborted commentary volume.

Even though the Ministerial Association is a General Conference entity, and in spite of the fact that *Adventists Believe* will be published by the Review & Herald, because it will not be voted by a General Conference annual council action, it will not be "official." This means that if a great argument should occur over some point or points in the book, GC spokesmen will be able to deny that it represents the "official" church position. Church officials would have something like what Oliver North in another context referred to as "plausible deniability."

Some Adventist theologians are pleased with the news that the church's theology will continue to meander somewhat pluralisti-



Courtesy, David S. Baker portfolio

Neal Wilson

cally, languishing for an "official" volume that articulates its fundamental beliefs—believing that the church is better off without it because they know that on several substantive doctrinal points, Adventists simply are not agreed. □

Wilson resigns

In 1987, Neal Wilson resigned from his position on the thirteen-member board of management for General Conference Risk Management Services.

Wilson and another board member, Atlantic Union College treasurer and business manager Vernon H. Siver, were replaced by Robert Earp, president of the Fred S. James Corporation (an insurance brokerage house) and Erwin Mallernee, director of risk management for the Weston Hotel chain.

GC insiders speculate that Wilson's resignation may indicate that he learned something from the Harris Pine Mills disaster. (Wilson was chairman of the Harris board that threw the company prematurely into chapter 7 bankruptcy.)

A Risk Management spokesman said that the two board replacements reflect an intention to add disinterested lay experts and perhaps a client or two to a board heretofore composed entirely of church workers. □

White Estate opens all files

A "Newsbreak" item entitled "White Estate Opens All Files" (*Adventist Review* 28 May 1987) and an article a month later asking "What's the White Estate Attempting to Hide?" (*Adventist Review* 2 July 1987), recently caught *Currents*' attention. Both the news item and the article were so misleading that a few corrections and clarifications are needed.

The "Newsbreak" item indicated that—

- 1) the White Estate board had voted "to open the Z file."
- 2) "the Z file contained her letters of a personal and sensitive nature."
- 3) "the board action returns these letters to the general file."
- 4) "four sensitive letters...to Lucinda Hall...up to now likewise restricted, [would be placed] in the general file."

Those four assertions will be misunderstood by any *Review* reader who has not personally experienced White Estate access and release policies. Those few who have will realize that—

- 1) the vote "to open the Z file" in no way increases the access of the Adventist membership to the interesting items which that file has for so long contained. For the last several

years anyone who requested permission to review the contents of the Z file was permitted to read its contents—even, until last year, *Currents* editor.

2) the Z file contained other troubling documents belonging to Mrs. White, not just "her letters of a personal and sensitive nature."

3) although "the board action returns these letters to the general file," they now will be just that much harder to locate, scattered among the roughly 200 file drawers of source materials in the White Estate vault.

4) the four "sensitive" letters to Lucinda Hall had not been available with the Z file documents in the past, but were kept in a location sometimes referred to as "beyond the Z file."

Furthermore, neither the "Newsbreak" item nor the subsequent article by Coon hinted at the fact that the four "sensitive" letters to Lucinda Hall would not be available at the White Estate branch offices at Andrews and Loma Linda universities, nor any of the seven White Estate research centers circling the globe. It would be necessary for the avid Ellen White researcher to travel to Washington, D.C., to read those four letters. A month later the White Estate board was persuaded to recognize the silliness of this four-letter exception, and it allowed them to go the way of the Z file.

In his *Review* article, Roger Coon ridicules the notion that there are any "secrets lurking in the White Estate files" or that there are "conspiracies to hide or to withhold." Coon camouflages his false denials by employing exaggerated phrases such as "secrets lurking" and "conspiracies to hide." Secrets don't lurk; at the White Estate they just hang in files. But by dictionary definition, the White Estate has been involved in ongoing "conspiracies to...withhold" Ellen White manuscripts, letters, and other documents from the Seventh-day Adventist membership

(*The Random House Dictionary* on conspire: "1. to agree together, especially secretly, to do something wrong, evil, or illegal. 2. to act together toward the same goal.").

The board meets monthly in closed session and has a secretary who takes minutes, listing the requests for manuscript releases that are approved and those that are denied (and sometimes the reason). Both the board meetings and the meeting minutes are secret, i.e., they are closed to the Adventist membership.

The conspiracy is to some extent formalized in the White Estate manuscript release policies. At present those policies allow church members to read anything in the vault. (This is not to say that patrons may browse through the Estate holdings.) But to gain permission to copy what has been read in any form requires an action by the board of trustees to release the passage or document requested. If the trustees see merit in the request, their action must then be approved by the General Conference Spirit of Prophecy Committee.

Coon writes that "as late as 1980 the prevailing question raised in such sessions was 'Why should we release this material...?'" He implies that 1980 saw the last of this obscurantism in White Estate manuscript release attitudes. "The question now," Coon says, "invariably is 'Why not?'" Continuing, Coon elaborates on the magnanimity of the White Estate board:

"Even though a researcher has asked for only one sentence or paragraph, unless there are compelling reasons to the contrary, the trustees invariably release the entire document in which the quotation appears."

That is news to the editor of this journal. In April of 1983, before *Adventist Currents* existed, Robert Olson wrote informing him (Olson to Hackleman, 4 April 1983) that the



Courtesy, David S. Baker portfolio

OF CURRENT INTEREST

board had refused four of his manuscript release requests. Regarding one of the four, Olson wrote:

"We voted not to release the 'Report of an Interview Between Mrs. E.G. White and Elder A.T. Jones, Sabbath Morning, August 15, 1903,' which is found in DF 53. This is 17 [double spaced] pages long, and frankly I simply cannot take the time that would be necessary to edit [Edit?!?!?!] this document. If

Ellen White in the *Desire of Ages* should be available by the end of this 1888 centennial.

But how many of these "church leaders" have (a) the time or (b) the inclination to spend the months that would be necessary to sift carefully and critically through tens of thousands of documents and letters?

If (per impossible) one had the inclination and took the time, he (unfortunately there are no women among the church leaders) would

you." Wilson ignored the next two sentences which, in the opinion of many Adventists, condemns a rash of lawsuits recently filed by the GC: "Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?"

While Wilson's words appear hypocritical in view of the many legal threats and actions that the GC has initiated against church members and their businesses since 1982, they seem even cynically so in light of the preparations that were made in 1980 and 1981 to establish the legal groundwork for such suits.

The impetus for this groundwork appears to have been the expectation among GC leaders that the result of Desmond Ford's Glacier View appearance would be the dandelion-like emergence of Seventh-day Adventist "gospel" fellowships that might wish to incorporate the words Adventist, Seventh-day Adventist, or the initials SDA into their fellowship titles.

Worst of all, the 7 May 1980 GC trademark filing date (just prior to Glacier View) suggests that those involved in the decision to file had also decided that Glacier View would be—despite repeated and public denials—a trial.

Currents does not know who was first approached by GC counsel with the demand that they quit using one or more of the words registered by the GC Corporation. But by May 1983, *Currents* had received a letter from Catholic trademark counsel, Vincent Ramik, on behalf of the SDA church, warning that the word "Adventist" was not to be used in its proposed publication title.

This is the same Ramik who "in effect" lied during an *Adventist Review* interview (17 September 1981) by stating that "in the legal case of *Emerson v. Davies*, Massachusetts Circuit Justice [Joseph] Story in effect exonerates a writer who has used other men's words and ideas and woven them into his own composition" (emphasis added). That's like saying that the Denver Broncos "in effect" won Superbowl XXII.

GC suing members

Ramik's letter to *Adventist Currents* antedated by more than six months the guidelines adopted at 1983 Annual Council for protecting church trademarks. Since then, the GC has both threatened and brought suits against numerous Adventist and ex-Adventist groups, in each case alleging trademark infringement. Most of the parties approached have simply agreed to desist. Others, such as an SDA Samoan congregation in Orange County, California, have put up brief legal resistance and then capitulated.

One eleven-member congregation in Kealahakua, Hawaii, that could not afford an attorney, was recently handed a judgment by a Hawaiian court requiring them to give up their name, Seventh-day Adventist Congregational Church. Having heard of their plight,

The vote "to open the Z file" in no way increases the access of the SDA membership to the interesting items that file has contained.

you had asked for one or two specific paragraphs, it might have been different. We simply don't release 17-page documents in their entirety unless we have some very good reason to do so" (editor's emphasis).

The underlined portions of Olson's 1983 statement fly directly in the face of Coon's claim that "even though a researcher has asked for only one sentence or paragraph... the trustees invariably release the entire document," and that "the question now invariably is 'Why not?'"

(For the curious, Mrs. White had a lot to say, in her seventeen-page 1903 interview with Jones, that indicated the depth of her opposition to doing whatever was necessary to have Adventist institutions of higher learning accredited. And she discussed J.H. Kellogg's *Living Temple* with Jones. Probably the board rejected the interview release request because it would have provided considerable "inspired" ammunition for the proponents of Adventist education along the lines of Wildwood, Weimar, and the Hartland Institute. Also, the transcript indicates that Jones is conversing with an aged woman who clearly had never learned English grammar.)

"How," Coon asks disarmingly, "could anything be kept secret with 64 church leaders around the world" having totally unhindered access to the files? Let us count the ways:

The White Estate itself [its board (15 trustees), the staffs of the White Estate home office (10), its two branch offices at Andrews University (5) and Loma Linda University (3), and its seven research centers (15)] accounts for forty-eight of the sixty-four unrestricted clearances; and a preponderant majority of this forty-eight do not qualify as "church leaders."

The remaining sixteen are church leaders and include six GC officers and general vice presidents not already on the White Estate board, nine division presidents, and a special dispensation for Fred Veltman, whose GC-sponsored research into the sources used by

begin to notice the oddities, the contradictions, and the meannesses—not to mention the evidence that undermines many myths. But what then would an Adventist church leader be likely to do about it?

Most of those in the past who met some of the closeted skeletons did little or nothing. Myriad others actively disseminated misinformation. L.R. Conradi, the exception to the rule, was cast into outer darkness for his pains. □

Sue happy

Sue happy is not a girl from Queens; it is the posture of the General Conference toward independent ministries (those not sponsored or approved by the GC) that use the words "Seventh-day Adventist" or the initials "SDA" to designate their title, activities, ministry, or publications.

The General Conference Corporation filed trademark and service mark applications for the words ADVENTIST, MINISTRY, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS, and the initials SDA with the United States Patent and Trademark Office on 7 May 1980. That office registered ownership of those word and letter combinations to the GC Corporation on 3 November 1981.

Preaching against lawsuits

Three months later, Neal Wilson editorialized in the *Adventist Review* (4 February 1982), warning church members against taking their grievances to secular courts. Quoting Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, Wilson wrote that "according to God's Word, litigation is definitely not the... answer to resolving disputes and misunderstandings" among "those of us 'upon whom the end of the ages has come' (chap. 10: 11, R.S.V.)."

Wilson also quoted chapter 6, verse seven—but only its first sentence: "To have lawsuits at all with one another is defeat for

an Adventist attorney from Houston has been trying to reopen their case.

Against the preference of his regional conference's leaders, Morris Patterson, then pastor of the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church in Huntsville, Alabama, had utilized the charismatic evangelist, Oscar Lane of Last Day Revival Ministries, in an outreach

District of California (located in Los Angeles) for injunctions to prevent Kinship from using the words Seventh-day Adventist or the initials SDA in any of its activities, services, advertising, or publications.

The court gave Kinship twenty days to reply. On request of its attorney, Leonard Grafft, the period was extended to 22 Febru-

viewed fourteen of Cook's Quest counselees. In a thirteen-page letter to Neal Wilson (23 October 1986), Lawson excerpted the (mostly taped) interviews he had been granted by counselees that portrayed explicitly the variety of sexual activities Cook had pressured them (at least one a minor) to participate in. These included nude massage and mutual masturbation. (Lawson's letter indicates that copies of it were sent to twenty-eight other individuals—including members of Quest's board, church leaders, and other Adventist thought leaders.)

Eleven days later (3 November 1986), Cook wrote a one-half-page letter to Wilson, recognizing that Wilson must have been "deeply shocked and disappointed over the contents of the letter... regarding my behavior." "I acknowledge my sin and am also coming to admit a level of delusional thinking that I have let myself be deceived by," Cook added. (Copies of his letter also went to those on Lawson's mailing list.)

On 19 November 1986, the Quest Learning Center board, chaired by retired GC general vice president W. Duncan Eva, accepted Cook's resignation and voted "that all Quest operations be closed out by June 1, 1987 if not sooner...." But the board explicitly stated that it had "no reservations about the basic counseling philosophy of Quest...."

The only notice in SDA publications that anything had gone wrong at Quest was a note in the *Adventist Review* (21 May 1987) indicating that Cook had resigned his directorship and that the counseling center was closed. No hint was given as to why.

Christianity Today (6 March 1987) printed a column-and-a-half news story on Quest's failure. But it was nearly a year after his forced resignation that *Ministry* (September 1987) published another interview with Cook, this one entitled "Homosexual Recovery—Six Years Later." Many readers thought that the title should at the very least have ended with a question mark.

The wording in the five-page interview is

Independent Adventist ministries have budded in the climate of lost confidence that has attended the Wilson presidency.

effort for new members. Even though the effort resulted in 200 new members, Patterson was stripped of his congregation and his ministerial credentials.

It was when he independently formed the Congregational Seventh-day Adventist Church that Patterson began hearing from GC trademark attorney Ramik. The GC wanted Patterson to pay in damages three times the amount that the fifty-member congregation had contributed to its own existence. When, in a second pretrial hearing, Patterson indicated that the name Seventh-day Adventist did not have to be in his church's title, the case was dropped. Patterson's renamed Word of Faith Fellowship Center continues as a sabbath-keeping, advent-anticipating congregation that seems to be getting along, somehow, without the trademarked words Seventh-day Adventist.

All of this has become part of a larger effort to minimize the effectiveness and distribution of various independent ministries and publications that have budded in the climate of lost confidence that has attended the Wilson years.

The primary issue, unfortunately, is money. Church spokespersons argue—as do their attorneys in court—that a "confusion" of identity occurs when unauthorized Adventists use the words Seventh-day Adventist or the initials SDA in their promotional materials to advertise their programs and publications. This confusion, they complain, results in the inadvertent diversion of tithes and offerings that would otherwise go to GC coffers.

GC sues gay Adventists

This would appear to be a difficult argument to sustain in a case filed December 1987 against Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. For seven years SDA Kinship has been, by its own description, a "support group for Seventh-day Adventist (former or current) gay men and lesbians and their friends."

Through a west coast Adventist attorney, Douglas Welebir, the GC petitioned the United States District Court for the Central

ary 1988. Grafft, a widely recognized Gay Rights attorney, has assumed the defense of Kinship *pro bono*.

GC Corporation v. SDA Kinship (case #87-08113) has been assigned to Judge Mariana Pfaelzer. It probably will be March or April before the opposing counsel meet for a status conference in Pfaelzer's chambers to schedule the initial hearing.

GC's ministry to gays collapses

Kinship representatives consider it significant that the injunction was filed the day after a lengthy article appeared in the Sunday *Los Angeles Times* (6 December 1987) chronicling the scandal-ridden collapse of a GC-supported gay-to-straight counseling facility—Quest Learning Center—in Reading, Pennsylvania.

Quest director and one-time SDA pastor, Colin Cook, had electrified both Adventist and non-Adventist audiences through the first half of the 1980s with his I-am-a-recovered-homosexual-and-you-can-be-too message. In its September 1981 issue, *Ministry* magazine ran a ten-page interview with Cook that touted his GC-sponsored Quest Learning Center. There followed articles in the union papers and repeated articles for *Insight*, and appearances by Cook on "It Is Written" and

Some GC leaders share an almost concupiscent desire to believe that homosexuals can become straight — in this lifetime.

"the Phil Donahue Show" (aired twice in 1986).

But it was in November 1986 that Cook resigned his Quest directorate following numerous allegations from his counselees that he had, over a period of years (1980-1986), taken sexual advantage of them, primarily during counseling sessions.

Sociologist Ron Lawson, until recently Kinship's liaison officer to the GC, inter-

viewed fourteen of Cook's Quest counselees. Anyone who reads the generally unavailable excerpts from Lawson's fourteen interviews is struck by Cook's ability to euphemize, minimize, and rationalize his behavior. And interviewer Robert Spangler, *Ministry's* editor, asks questions that provide Cook the opportunity to make it all sound like little more than a slip. He asks "Would you share with us how you *seemingly* reverted back to the old pattern?"

(emphasis added) "Would you say that now your convictions are stronger relative to the possibility of homosexual recovery?" "Isn't this comparable to what Christ said to the adulterous woman: 'You are forgiven;...?'" "Do you feel that continuing growth allows at times for blight on the growing cornstalk?"

Much of this results from an almost concupiscent desire on the part of some GC leaders to believe that homosexuals can become heterosexuals—in this lifetime.

In Kinship's newsletter, *Connection* (October 1987), the reaction to Cook's failures and his *Ministry* interview was blunt. A Quest program graduate decried Spangler's failure "to report that Duncan Eva and Neal Wilson were informed of Cook's indiscretions, months [actually at least ten months] prior to the Lawson letter."

Cook tells Spangler in the *Ministry* interview that he had not regressed to "the full homosexuality of years ago," adding that the "major bondage of homosexuality was over well before my marriage." The *Connection* writer wonders, "What kind of homosexuality did he practice years ago?" "Taking advantage of counselees has criminal implications," he added, "superseding those of

anonymous sex in bathhouses."

Quest sued

Those "criminal implications" may be realized in a lawsuit filed by six former counselees against Cook and Quest, on 22 February 1988 in a Berks County Court. The plaintiffs, represented by Philadelphia attorney Marie Inyang, are requesting the return of their counseling fees, an injunction against the use of their files by Cook in future books or articles that he may write, and (two of the plaintiffs are requesting) a minimum of \$10,000 for psychological and emotional damage caused by sexual harassment.

Even if a settlement is arranged out of court, the GC may come to believe that the \$47,000 per year it had been investing in Quest was far more than it could afford.

When Quest was being established in 1979, a cross section of interested parties advised GC leaders that at least some review should be made of the existing literature discussing the etiology of homosexuality, before supporting a particular approach.

Again, when some of Cook's attempts to seduce clients were made known to Eva and Wilson in the spring of 1985, his work should

have been investigated by the Quest board immediately. And certainly when Lawson's documentary letter was received in October of 1986, Cook's victims should have been sought out and at the very least their counseling fees should have been refunded.

A contributing factor to the lawsuit was the apparent return of Cook to favor with the GC-backed Homosexuals Anonymous. Cook was the primary lecturer at seminars and workshops of Homosexuals Anonymous in the last half of 1987. Also, the caption next to Cook's picture in the 1987 *Ministry* interview, according to *Currents*' sources, was left in the magazine by accident—the same information having been deleted from galleys of the interview itself. The caption reads: "Colin Cook, former director of Quest Learning Center, is currently writing book manuscripts and will resume leading seminars for recovering homosexuals."

So the GC is suing the gay Adventist association Kinship, and six gay former counselees of Colin Cook are suing him and Quest Learning Center—the GC's solution to the homosexual problem. Everyone is miserable and it all adds up to another public relations gaffe for the caring church. □

What God hath put asunder

Arranged marriages are rare in twentieth-century America, and the effort by the administration of Loma Linda University to arrange nuptials between its Loma Linda and La Sierra campuses so far has proven difficult.

The first indication the general Adventist public received that a courtship might be in progress appeared in the 17 November 1986 *Pacific Union Recorder*. The *Recorder* story said that in August the Loma Linda University board had "appointed a subcommittee...to study the possible consolidation" of the university's two campuses.

Proposing

President Norman Woods contextualized his consolidation proposal with jeremiads about the economy and diminishing student enrollment, and he charged the board with the "responsibility of strengthening Loma Linda University as it faces immense challenges of higher education."

The consolidation proposal put the La Sierra faculty on edge. Rennie Schoepflin, assistant professor of history on the undergraduate campus, reported in *Spectrum* (17:4) the result of a La Sierra faculty poll conducted in November 1986 which "revealed that 65 percent of the respondents...opposed consolidation, while 22 percent had mixed and 13 percent supportive feelings."

LLU vice president for academic affairs, Helen Thompson, responding to Schoepflin's report in *Spectrum* (18:1), seemed to misunderstand the poll (See box entitled, "A vice presidential tutorial."); and her list of dis-

agreements with Schoepflin's overview gave readers the impression that he was anti-consolidation, which he says he is not.

Schoepflin also reported that La Sierra Alumni Association president Walter Hamerslough "had received more than sixty letters and fifty phone calls or personal contacts" from alumni. Of these, "almost 90 percent opposed the move."

In 1966 the administration and board of the medical and health-related programs taught at Loma Linda were anxious to achieve accredited university status. This would require what is the core of any university—an undergraduate college.

Following an abortive attempt to organize a 400-student, elite, undergraduate program at Loma Linda, the administrators and board of the medical school turned to La Sierra College, twenty miles away. What some have termed a "shotgun wedding" was soon arranged.

On 23 April 1967, at its very first session, the Loma Linda University constituency affirmed an action that sounds ironic today:

"Voted...that instruction and research in liberal arts on both graduate and undergraduate levels be centered primarily on the La Sierra Campus and that instruction and research in medical, dental, paramedical, collegiate nursing, and related professional sciences be centered primarily on the Loma Linda Campus."

Stormy courtship

Twenty years later, in the months leading to the January 1987 LLU board meeting,

President Woods and other administration officers called or attended numerous forums to present their vision of a geographically consolidated university. These were well attended and often acrimonious. Woods was sometimes viciously criticized for his effort and was occasionally presented with potentially slanderous accusations about his motives. Although keeping a consistent cool under fire, Woods had a difficult time articulating persuasive arguments for a combined campus.

On 12 January 1987, after discussion that continued well into the evening, including a 45-minute speech favoring consolidation by General Conference president Neal Wilson, the LLU board voted "to approve...the consolidation of both campuses at Loma Linda." Recognizing that he had a conflict of interest, Pacific Union College president Malcolm Maxwell did not vote.

At a press conference in Randall Visitor Center the next day (13 January 1987), Woods refused to specify the number of trustees who had voted for and against proceeding in the direction of consolidation.

Already aware of the figures, *Currents* asked Woods how he expected to bring about such an ambitious project when his board was split almost down the middle—twenty-two to nineteen, with one abstention. Before Woods could answer, several reporters from Inland Empire newspapers asked if *Currents* figures were correct. At that point Gus Cheatham, LLU vice president for public affairs, jumped to his feet saying, "You can have a press conference with him when we're done here."

In the next day or two, when the board vote became widely known through newspaper

A Vice Presidential Tutorial

Currents is confident that given her commitment to Adventist higher education, Loma Linda University's vice president for academic administration, Helen Ward Thompson, will not mind if both a little fun and a bit of learning take place at her apparent expense.

La Sierra campus assistant professor of history, Rennie Schoepflin, in a *Spectrum* (17:4) article reviewing the struggle over campus consolidation, had described a November 1986 poll of the La Sierra campus faculty which revealed "that 65 percent of the respondents (more than 70 percent of them responded) opposed consolidation, while 22 percent had mixed and 13 percent supportive feelings."

In suggesting an alternate way to express the poll's findings [letter to *Spectrum* (18:1)], Thompson fell into errors of both language and numbers. (Students measured by Graduate Record Exams for verbal and quantitative abilities will sympathize.):

If numbers instead of percentages are used an interesting fact comes into focus: 65 percent of the 70 percent of the faculty who responded against consolidation become 59 in number. Note how 59 relates to 130—the total faculty polled.

Thompson's language problem is simply an inadvertance in sentence structure that many people read right over. And one knows it is an accident because she concludes with the correct number of La Sierra faculty who the poll indicates were against consolidation—59. But if what Thompson wrote is taken at face value it indicates that a percentage (65%) of a percentage (70%) "of the faculty who responded against consolidation [X] become 59 in number."

The equation reads: 65% of 70% of X = 59. And the arithmetic reveals that X equals 130. But 130 is the total number of the faculty polled. And the last thing Thompson wanted her readers to infer was that the La Sierra faculty is united unanimously against consolidation. What she could have correctly said was that 65 percent of the 70 percent of the faculty who responded to the poll were against consolidation, and that 65 percent represented 59 opponents of the merger.

Thompson's more serious mistake occurred in her comparison of the numbers. After stating that "if numbers instead of percentages are used an interesting fact comes into focus," she invites her

readers to "note how 59 relates to 130—the total faculty polled."

What is the "interesting fact" that comes into focus? That although Schoepflin had indicated that 65 percent of those responding to the poll had been against consolidation, when the real number (59) that made up the 65 percent opposed was compared to the 130 polled it appeared that actually less than half of the La Sierra campus faculty were opposed to consolidation? That, of course, is misleading.

When *Currents* asked Thompson to consider the statistical impropriety of comparing the 59 who responded opposing consolidation with the total of 91 who had responded plus 39 others who had not, she said that she could not see the problem. Said Thompson: "I refuse to speculate about what the unresponding 30 percent of the faculty would have said had they responded."

But she had done worse than speculate. The logic of her apples/oranges comparison in *Spectrum* was to invite readers to assume that the 30 percent who had not responded to the poll were all in favor of consolidation. Otherwise, to "note how 59 relates to 130" is meaningless.

Suppose there were 1300 faculty and seven rather than 70 percent had responded; would Thompson have written, "Note how 59 relates to 1300—the total faculty polled"?

Had Schoepflin written that "13 percent of the faculty who responded (70 percent responded) in favor of consolidation represents 12 individuals; note how 12 relates to 130—the total faculty polled," Thompson might have demanded his resignation, and understandably so.

What is "interesting" about a poll is the probability of guessing reliably what an entire population thinks about a given issue when only a percentage of the population is heard from. It is fair to assume that if the other 39 (30 percent) members of the faculty had responded to the poll, that roughly 25 (65 percent) of them also would have opposed consolidation. One may reasonably conclude from the poll that approximately eighty-six of the 130-member La Sierra campus faculty opposed consolidation in November 1986.

By refusing to see that which is apodictic, Thompson has reminded *Currents* that as much as it is hoped that increasing numbers of women will find their place in Adventist academic administration, it was myopic of *Currents* not to intuit that as more and more women "share the fantasy" they will also share the astigmatism.—Ed.

reports, many observers thought that the reason Woods had been unwilling to give the figures was obvious: The vote of twenty-two for, nineteen against, and one abstention did not meet the university bylaws stipulation requiring "the affirmative vote of a majority of the total membership... to adopt or change major policy," because twenty-two was less than half of the forty-five member LLU board.

General Conference chief legal counsel Warren L. Johns told a gathering of the GC Executive Committee that the vote for consolidation violated provisions of the university's bylaws and articles of incorporation.

LLU Board attorney Kent A. Hansen countered that the board vote was in compliance with the university bylaws. He told the *Riverside Press Enterprise* (19 February 1987) that the consolidation vote did not constitute a "major policy" decision, as defined by the university's policy handbook.

Johns, on the other hand, said that the decision constituted a major financial decision and told the *Enterprise*: "When you talk

about selling an entire campus, or making an invitation to sell it, in the neighborhood of \$60 million..." it is clearly a major financial decision.

The fact that Pacific Union president Tom Mostert did not favor the move became apparent shortly after the board vote. In early 1987, when the LLU administration tried to reach the Pacific Union membership with a handsome, four-page document promoting consolidation through an insertion in the *Pacific Union Recorder*, Mostert unilaterally disallowed the insert. This infuriated certain officers of the administration.

Within days of the 12 January 1987 vote to consolidate, Southeastern California Conference president L. Stephen Gifford mailed a letter to all conference members that provided quite a hint about the reaction at the SECC office: "The next morning [13 January 1987], as I reported on the board meeting at worship in the conference office, I noticed many sober faces. We in this office, living almost next door to the campus, feel definite pain as a

result of the vote... I have received many, many letters, every one from opponents of consolidation."

Within days of the board vote, a group of influential alumni had organized an opposition effort under the heading "Concerned Friends of La Sierra Campus." The "friends" had a number of concerns, among them that—

—although the January 12 vote was a vote to "move in the direction of consolidation," in news releases and TV appearances the vote was proclaimed as a directive to sell the property, to set up an endowment for undergraduate students with part of the proceeds, but not to go into any long-term debt.

—the legality of the vote was questionable because in cases of adopting or changing major policies, adopting budgets or electing officers an affirmative vote of a majority of the total board is required (Article 5, Section 12). The twenty-two pro-consolidation votes were not half of the forty-five trustees.

—since the LLU administration denied that

selling the undergraduate campus is a major policy, budget, or personnel matter, they were willing to proceed without a majority vote of the total board.

The Concerned Friends believed not only that a majority of the total board was necessary, but also that the decision to consolidate required, according to LLU bylaws, a two-thirds majority of the nearly 600-member LLU constituency.

As a former La Sierra campus financial officer said, "There are valid arguments for consolidation, but they aren't financial."

Individuals who have played a significant place in the university's life are numbered among the Concerned Friends: two former Pacific Union vice presidents, R.R. Bietz and W.R. Blacker (Blacker was for many years chief financial officer for LLU, and Bietz was for a time LLU board chairman.); Willard H. Meier (emeritus dean LLU School of Education); Donald W. Hunter (retired GC officer); and Wilfred J. Airey (professor emeritus LLU department of History and Political Science).

Sue the suitor?

Airey and then-La Sierra Collegiate Church senior pastor Lynn Mallery were reported in the *San Bernardino Sun* (23 January 1987) as committed to challenging the legality of the board vote. Airey told the *Sun* that his view of the vote would hold up in court but that he "would prefer that university President Norman J. Woods and the board reconsider their stand."

The efforts of the Concerned Friends and others bore fruit. By April of 1987 they had acquired nearly 7,000 signatures on a petition opposing consolidation. More importantly to

the Concerned Friends, on April 1 during GC Spring Meeting, Woods recommended a delay of plans to implement consolidation, to explore further the usefulness and viability of consolidation, and to involve those who might be affected by the move including a presentation to the constituency.

R.R. Bietz, also speaking to the Spring Meeting delegates said that "the confidence of the people is more important than the

authority of our office . . . If the consolidation of the campuses is not put into the hands of the constituency, there will be further slippage of confidence" (*Adventist Review* 16 April 1987).

Nevertheless, there has been little if any participation or involvement of those who might be affected by the move. There was, however, an LLU administration-appointed Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) whose size during the second half of 1987 increased from thirty-two to forty-five members—despite outside campus planning consultant George Keller's recommendation that the committee be limited to fifteen individuals.

The Pacific Union Executive Committee was concerned that "seventy-five percent of the . . . Strategic Planning Committee members . . . were University employees, . . ."

Some faculty members seem to have been persuaded to switch to a proconsolidation position on the possibility suggested to them by university administration that it will open the way to wage parity. But a former LLU board chairman has been quoted as saying that the board will discuss wage parity when the Lord returns.

According to Norman Woods' December *Communique*, "an overwhelming majority of the [Strategic Planning] committee" "voted Monday, November 30, to recommend to the University's Board of Trustees that all university operations now located on the La Sierra campus be united at Loma Linda." Wood's "overwhelming majority" was based on a vote in which twenty-three of thirty-two SPC members present favored consolidation.

The significance of the SPC recommendation to the board depended on two things: one, the board's recognition that the recommendation came from a committee appointed by an administration that was absolutely intent on consolidation; but, more importantly, two, a thorough digestion of the facts and arguments that were assembled by the committee for the board.

Four alternatives

An eighteen-page synopsis of the SPC report became available on 30 November 1987—the day the committee voted to recom-

mend consolidation to the board. The synopsis reviewed four alternatives: (I) retain two-campus structure; (II) move administration to La Sierra; (III) move La Sierra operations to Loma Linda; (IV) independent La Sierra College. The advantages of each approach were summarized in the synopses:

(I) "The two-campus structure must be retained because it:

- 1) protects essential identities [liberal arts from medical arts]
- 2) maintains good undergraduate environment and room to grow
- 3) provides more new money, eliminates risk of losing old money
- 4) capitalizes on existing alumni support"

(II) Retain the two-campus structure and move university administration to the La Sierra campus because:

- 1) all the arguments in (I) above apply plus
- 2) administration needs to identify with and strengthen its liberal arts programs—the "core" of a university
- 3) it would reduce "second-class citizenship" felt by La Sierra faculty

(III) "We must unite on one campus because doing so will:

- 1) allow integration of liberal arts throughout professional curricula
- 2) provide opportunity for multidisciplinary research
- 3) improve our marketing image
- 4) provide new facilities for learning and still fund endowment"

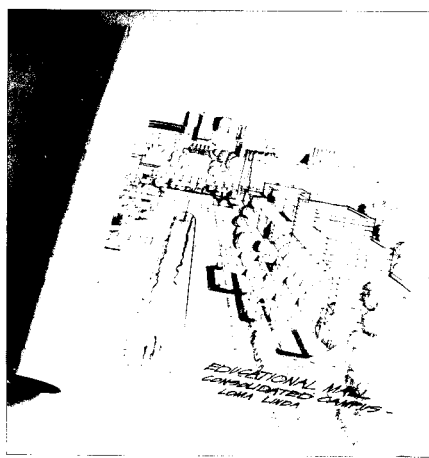
(IV) "La Sierra College must become independent because it will:

- 1) preserve the advantages of location and environment
- 2) allow LSC to flourish free from domination by medically-related entities
- 3) support a research program independent of medical concerns
- 4) secure endowment funds from non-LS use
- 5) provide services and administration focussed on LSC"

Money

The largest single factor for assessing the financial wisdom of any of the two-campus scenarios versus the consolidation proposal is this: The consolidation scenario is based on the sale of the entire La Sierra parcel of 550 acres—\$50 million for the 330-acres of undeveloped farmland, and \$25 million for the 220-acre campus itself. The administration believes that with the \$50 million received from the sale of the La Sierra farmland, plus ten of the \$25 million from the sale of the campus, it can build sufficient facilities to provide for the undergraduate programs on the Loma Linda campus. With the remaining \$15 million, it proposes to endow the undergraduate programs at their new location.

All three scenarios that presuppose a continued separation of campuses envision the sale or development of the 330-acre La Sierra farm property for the endowment (around \$50 million worth) of a growing and improving undergraduate program on the remaining 220-acre La Sierra campus.



THE LOMA LINDA CONSOLIDATION
The University Moves Forward

preliminary sketch

As the SPC discovered and reported, what might be saved through the elimination of redundancies in the consolidation scenario are offset by far greater building expenditures and losses in endowment. As a former La Sierra financial officer said, "There are valid arguments for consolidation, but they aren't financial."

By 30 November 1987, the arguments from financial exigency had dissolved because the economies of maintaining the two existing campuses and of consolidation, as calculated by the SPC, were equally attractive.

Propinquity

The remaining arguments for consolidation depended entirely on the heuristic benefits that might be derived from propinquity—a vision of academic excellence kindled by the physical closeness of faculty and students on a single campus.

Nevertheless the financial argument appeared in President Woods' *Communique* for December 1987. Dr. Gordon Madgwick, executive secretary for the North American Board of Higher Education and chairman of the SPC is cited as attributing to the SPC the shared opinion that consolidation will "effect long-range cost savings" for the two schools. But he did not indicate the fact that any savings would be more than offset by other factors in the consolidation scenario that make it not a saving over against retaining the two campuses.

Two weeks after the SPC report and recommendation appeared, only eight (one-third) of twenty-four faculty senate members present for the senate meeting of 14 December 1987 voted for consolidation.

Before consultant Keller became a consolidation partisan, he had told Norman Woods that to make the campus unification proposal viable he would need the support of at least 51 percent of the faculty. Nevertheless, on December 15, the day after the faculty senate no vote, at a meeting of the SPC, Keller called Pacific Union resident Tom Mostert a "sore loser" and a "verbal terrorist" after Mostert described responses being considered by the Pacific Union Conference Executive Committee and indicated that as far as the Pacific Union was concerned, the SPC vote marked the beginning of the discussion—not the end. Woods later apologized to Mostert for Keller's intemperate remarks.

Following the SPC meeting of Tuesday, 15 December 1987, assistant professor of history and SPC secretary Ronald Graybill was flown to Washington, D.C., where on Wednesday the sixteenth he had a number of one-on-one meetings with General Conference leaders to lobby for campus consolidation.

On Thursday the seventeenth, Graybill was joined by Norman Woods; Department of Physics chairman, Ed Karlow; Department of Physical Therapy chairman and faculty senate president, Liz Rogers; and professor of English, Ken Matthews for a joint presentation to the General Conference Committee.

At the conclusion of their presentation, Neal Wilson disallowed any discussion by the Committee members.

Pacific Union opposition

Shortly after Christmas 1987 and a few days before the 11 January 1988 LLU board meeting, a twelve-page "background information" packet on the issue of consolidation was mailed from Pacific Union headquarters to the forty-five trustees. A cover letter representing the Union Executive Committee, the union officers, conference officers and educational directors contained this paragraph:

"All local conference administrators and educational directors, Union leadership and over three-fourths of the Executive Committee members are opposed to using the sale of La Sierra assets for a few new buildings at Loma Linda. We believe those funds should not be consumed but rather invested to provide perpetual income for the undergraduate programs now located on the La Sierra campus. Such a plan would provide the opportunity for hundreds more of our youth to attend an Adventist college while at the same time providing for a sound financial operation."

The "background information" packet contained a list of eight concerns of the Pacific Union leadership. Among them were the concerns that "consolidation will not provide a whole new undergraduate campus, rather just a few new facilities," and that the proposed recreation complex and parking facilities would be erected from La Sierra campus monies.

Pacific Union leaders were particularly troubled by LLU administration's argument that consolidation would result in long-range financial savings. "You will notice," the Pacific Union paper argued, that "when you put operating and capital factors together, there are greater savings with two campuses" (see Pacific Union financial comparison box pp. 12, 13).

Mostert and the Union Executive Com-

Green, informed the assembled La Sierra faculty that the University has a negative cash position of \$54 million. But when pressed by La Sierra Provost Dale McCune, Green admitted that \$51.5 million of that was a Loma Linda campus liability. When the calculations that make up Green's "negative cash position" are examined, they seem patently constructed to alarm. This alarm dovetailed with the mistaken premise that consolidation was intended to be a fix for financial exigency.

But there really is no exigency, unless it is on the more free-spending Loma Linda campus; and it is now quietly admitted that consolidation would not be a fix. Administration officials have conceded in faculty senate (14 December 1987) that the financial advantages of staying or moving are a toss-up. But, again, they would not long remain a toss-up if the Pacific Union Conference were to withhold its annual College of Arts and Sciences subsidy.

Furthermore, alumni contributions are certain to plummet if consolidation becomes a reality. For example: South coast (Long Beach) physician/alumnus Edward C. Allred (School of Medicine 1964) has contributed \$635,000 to the University between 1981 and 1987. He contributed \$225,000 to the College of Arts and Sciences in 1987, but he is likely to continue his eleemosynary activity in another direction if the La Sierra campus is closed. Allred is reported to have promised \$1 million dollars for an administration building on the La Sierra campus if the LLU administration will move its offices to the Riverside property. And Concerned Friends say Allred has indicated he would contribute up to half his worth, if the arts and sciences remain at La Sierra.

This has been called "greenmail" by some consolidation partisans, and "blood money" by others because abortions have been performed at some of Allred's twenty-eight family planning medical offices. The *Riverside Press Enterprise* (2 January 1988) reported

Unless Wilson was admitting to being with the devil on consolidation, everyone against it had to be Satan's dupe.

mittee have drawn up contingencies should the consolidation push succeed. One alternative under consideration is to run La Sierra as a Union-owned institution a la Pacific Union College. This would lead inevitably to a fight over who owns La Sierra College. (There is some doubt about the status of the property title and the question of who owns the buildings.)

Another Pacific Union response could be to redirect part or all of its La Sierra subsidy (\$1.8 million for 1987) to Pacific Union College. This would make the finances of consolidation less attractive.

LLU vice president for finance, James

that Allred has "said he would underwrite the cost of legal action if the trustees voted to close down the campus."

During the January 11, Monday morning Board Finance and Budget Committee meeting, committee members discussed Allred's contingent philanthropy and Pacific Union president Tom Mostert's possible future withholding of the Union's annual La Sierra subsidy.

But Gus Cheatham, LLU vice president for public affairs told *Currents* that Allred has not offered the University money with strings. And he said that the University does not make a practice of determining how its

The Pacific Union's

NOTE #1

COST ESTIMATES ARE BASED ON INFORMATION TAKEN FROM JANUARY, 1987 FEASIBILITY STUDY PREPARED BY LLU ADMINISTRATION.

CONSOLIDATION AT LOMA LINDA

1. **CONSOLIDATION INCOME** (Sell the entire La Sierra campus) The 330 acres of undeveloped land at La Sierra could yield a cash income of \$150,000/acre. This is based upon the current experience of land sales in Riverside. It also assumes that necessary zoning clearances have been obtained. If all 330 acres are sold, the income would be \$49,500,000 or \$50,000,000 in round numbers. The Coldwell-Banker evaluation estimated the La Sierra campus to be worth \$25,000,000. If this campus was sold along with the undeveloped land, a total of \$75,000,000 could be available.

\$75,000,000

2. CONSOLIDATION EXPENSES

A) Buildings

1) Academic space - 145,000 sq ft/\$70 sq ft	\$10,150,000
2) Classrooms with labs - 150,000 sq ft/\$150 sq ft	22,500,000
3) Library expansion - 30,000 sq ft/\$75 sq ft	2,250,000
4) Recreation complex - \$7,000,000 Student Center Cash on Hand at Loma Linda	1,250,000
Net Cost	5,750,000

5) Dormitories for 750 students Baths between rooms - 81,000 sq ft/\$80 sq ft	6,480,000
6) Parking structure for 1,000 cars	6,500,000
7) Food service expansion - 10,000 sq ft/\$94 sq ft	940,000
ESTIMATED COST OF BUILDINGS	\$54,570,000

B) Equipment & Other

1) Equipment & furnishings for new buildings (Assumes use of most old equip. & furnishings on the present La Sierra campus)	\$ 2,000,000
2) Moving expense \$500,000 - \$1,500,000 estimated	1,000,000
3) Inflation of approx. 5% on building costs January, 1987 to January 1990, the proposed time when construction would start.	2,700,000

ESTIMATED TOTAL RELOCATION COSTS	\$60,270,000
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CONSOLIDATION ON LOMA LINDA CAMPUS

INCOME ASSUMPTIONS

- To generate \$75,000,000 by selling all of the La Sierra property and spending \$60,000,000 to consolidate the University on the Loma Linda campus, thus leaving a balance of \$15,000,000 to be invested, using only the earnings for future operating and capital needs. (See NOTE #1)
- The annual Pacific Union subsidy will continue at \$1,000,000 per year which is \$800,000 less than the current amount. (See NOTE #2)
- Operational savings amounting to \$494,000 may be realized. (See NOTE #3)

INCOME INCREASE BASED ON CONSOLIDATION

ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME

Investment Income (\$15,000,000 Invested)	At 7%	\$1,050,000	At 10%	\$1,500,000
Pacific Union Subsidy		1,000,000		1,000,000
Operational Savings		494,000		494,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED INCOME		\$2,544,000		\$2,994,000
LESS Current Union Subsidy		1,800,000		1,800,000
ESTIMATED NET INCREASE		\$ 744,000		\$1,194,000

POSSIBLE USES FOR ADDITIONAL INCOME (See NOTE #4)

- Operating Subsidy
- Additional Student Aid
- Faculty and Academic Enhancement
- Capital Improvements

COMPARISON OF AN-

RATE OF RETURN	CONSOLIDATION AT LOMA LINDA*
7%	\$ 744,000
10%	\$1,194,000

* \$15,000,000 INVESTED

NOTE #2

The Pacific Union Conference currently subsidizes the La Sierra campus of Loma Linda University in the amount of \$1,800,000 per year. The subsidy is given for both

operating and capital expenses. Income from the development of the agricultural property at La Sierra (purchased through the years by the Pacific Union) if invested would provide sufficient funds to support the capital needs of undergraduate

Financial Assessment

RETAINING THE LA SIERRA CAMPUS

INCOME ASSUMPTIONS

- A) To generate \$50,000,000 by selling 330 acres of land at \$150,000 per acre which will be invested using only the earnings for operating and capital needs. (See NOTE #1)
- B) The annual Pacific Union subsidy will continue at \$1,000,000 per year which is \$800,000 less than the current amount. (See NOTE #2)

INCOME INCREASE BASED ON RETAINING LA SIERRA CAMPUS

ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME

Investment Income (\$50,000,000 Invested)	At 7%	\$3,500,000	At 10%	\$5,000,000
Pacific Union Subsidy		<u>1,000,000</u>		<u>1,000,000</u>
TOTAL ESTIMATED INCOME		\$4,500,000		\$6,000,000
LESS Current Union Subsidy		<u>1,800,000</u>		<u>1,800,000</u>
ESTIMATED NET INCREASE		\$2,700,000		\$4,200,000

POSSIBLE USES FOR ADDITIONAL INCOME (See NOTE #4)

- A) Operating Subsidy
B) Additional Student Aid
C) Faculty and Academic Enhancement
D) Capital Improvements

ANNUAL INCOME INCREASE

RETAINING LA SIERRA CAMPUS**	ADVANTAGE RETAINING LA SIERRA CAMPUS
\$2,700,000	\$1,956,000
\$4,200,000	\$3,006,000

** \$50,000,000 INVESTED

education at Loma Linda University. In fact, income from investment and subsidy would increase by \$2.7 million (at 7% interest) or \$4.2 million (at 10% interest) over present levels of similar income. This would allow the Pacific Union Conference to transfer to

Pacific Union College an additional \$800,000 subsidy from the present \$1,800,000, giving Pacific Union College a total of \$2,600,000 subsidy. This is still two to four million dollars less subsidy per year (depending on interest earned) than under-

graduate education at Loma Linda University would receive.

NOTE #3

The 1986 Feasibility Study showed how a net savings of \$1,900,000 in annual operating might be saved through reduction in common or duplicated services. The full amount of this projection is no longer available since reductions in support services are being effected now.

The current cuts are in Custodial, Landscape, Maintenance, and Physical Plant. The total projected savings in these four areas shown in the 1986 Feasibility Study is approximately \$600,000. Because deep cuts are being made in these areas, and further cuts are being considered, it is not reasonable to assume that any further savings in these areas will be retained upon consolidation. The net savings afforded by consolidation of the remaining entities is probably about \$1,300,000. (From the November 30, 1987, University Strategic Planning Committee Report, page 9, No. 17).

The projected operational savings from consolidation are divided among 25 cost centers. These operational savings will accrue to the University as a whole rather than to the liberal arts programs, thus it could be misleading to show the entire \$1,300,000 savings to the liberal arts programs. Thirty-eight percent (or \$494,000) of the savings represent costs now charged to La Sierra. In actual practice liberal arts on a merged campus will have to compete with all other schools for any operational dollars saved.

NOTE #4

- A) *Operating Subsidy*
Operating subsidy at La Sierra is presently \$1,300,000 taken from the \$1,800,000 Pacific Union subsidy.
- B) *Additional Student Aid*
For every \$500,000 in student aid, you could provide 200 \$2,500 student aid scholarships.
- C) *Faculty and Academic Enhancement*
The Strategic Planning Committee proposes spending \$360,000 in this area to equalize faculty pay scales.
- D) *Capital Improvements*
There is \$500,000 in the present La Sierra budget for capital improvements which consumes the remainder of the Pacific Union subsidy. However, with the additional income projected, extensive building could take place on the La Sierra campus in a short period of time.

donors make their money.

Allred indicated to Concerned Friends that he was prepared to contribute an additional \$450,000 this year to arts and sciences programs as long as they remained on the La Sierra campus; nevertheless, the administration eliminated both agriculture and geology from the curriculum. (The geology offerings could have been continued for a mere \$40,000 a year. Partisans for arts and science independence are concerned about what will be left of their programs if consolidation becomes a reality.)

Board meeting January 1988

The university administration would not share with *Currents* either the board minutes or the names of those who were absent.

One of the seven missing trustees was George Akers, director, GC Department of Education. Akers, who was in South America, is said by Concerned Friends to be philosophically in the anticonsolidation camp and would have found himself in opposition to board invitee Gordon Madgwick, executive secretary for the North American Division Board of Higher Education and chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee.

Ronald Graybill who served as secretary to the SPC and helped to draft its report, also presented that report to the trustees.

The university administration had a full complement of invitees to the session. And it presented an impressive slide show representing its vision of a consolidated university. President Woods indicated to the board that the Loma Linda campus which now accommodates 2,500 students could handle an additional seven thousand five hundred. He made one proposal among several made—calculated to bread down Pacific Union resistance—that Pacific Union College receive one million dollars a year for eleven

administration's point man and invitee to the board session, responded negatively to Mostert's remarks and without naming names referred to "snake in the grass" tactics that had been used to resist consolidation.

Neal Wilson arose late in the meeting to say that he was for consolidation. He also said, "The Holy Spirit does not work in two different directions; so somebody else's hand must be involved." Unless Wilson was admitting to being with the devil on consolidation, everyone against it had to be, according to Wilson's logic, Satan's dupe.

When it came time for Norman Woods to make his motion, no one could understand him. And so he left the room with English professor/invitee Ken Matthews, GC general vice president Calvin Rock, and Derrill Yaeger to get his motion in order.

During this 9:30 p.m. break, businessmen/trustees Tom Zapara and Larry Vigil both left the meeting—Vigil to catch a plane.

Immediately after the result of the vote was announced, Mostert rose to challenge it, claiming that one of the votes was an invalid, proxy vote—the trustee, Zapara, not being present for the balloting. (Zapara had left his "yes" vote before the motion, with its four stipulations, had been formed.)

As ballots were being passed out again, Neal Wilson took the microphone and persuaded the trustees that Zapara's ballot should be allowed and the vote should stand, since he had been present for the entire day's discussion.

After some discussion of what constitutes a legitimate proxy vote, Zapara's ballot was allowed to stand. If his proxy vote had not been counted, once again there would have been no legal majority of the board's forty-five members in favor of consolidation.

The board voted twenty-three to fourteen (23 to 14) to consolidate, with Maxwell

stipulation.]

"2. No assets from the disposal or development of La Sierra land be used to subsidize the LLU School of Medicine. [This one is so easy to circumvent that it seems to be meaningless. As with tithe reversion, administration could simply say arts and sciences have their land sale subsidy, so divert other income previously appropriated for them to the medical school.]

"3. The university must expand its remedial program and continue an open enrollment policy. [Open enrollment and "preferred" universities mix like iron and clay.]

"4. Decision subject to viable financial and land disposal or development plan.

"5. Entire consolidation proposal must be ratified by the LLU constituency."

How did the campus unification proposal manage to receive twenty-three votes? Probably because there is a presumption by the trustees, on balance, in favor of the judgment and proposals of the man who they earlier voted to lead the university. To vote against his proposals is, to some extent, a vote of no confidence. Consequently, when a trustee is uncertain or divided in his or her opinion, he/she will vote with administration.

Many observers believe that given the absence of constituency support, the campus consolidation initiative could become for the Norman Woods' administration a tombstone rather than a monument.

Courting the family

Since the January board meeting, the LLU administration has begun a propaganda campaign to persuade various constituencies that what they now insist on calling "unification" (it sounds friendlier) is best for everyone concerned. Mostert, busy licking his wounds, allowed the administration's four-page, four-color unification instrument to be inserted in the *Pacific Union Recorder*. The *Recorder* is sent to the nearly 100,000 Pacific Union members living in southern California and Arizona. A similar centerfold went to the 23,000 recipients (mostly alumni) of the Loma Linda University *Scope*.

The problem with both versions of the administration's consolidation promotional vehicle is that they seem to be misleading.

One version states that "the Trustees concluded that...long-term cost-savings would best be achieved on a single campus." The other version described a board "faced with the cost of maintaining both campuses," as if that would be more expensive than consolidation.

Both instruments pictured Ronald Graybill, along with his statement that consolidation "will save millions in overhead costs now wasted on duplicate services." Isolated as it is, Graybill's statement is true; but over against the costs that will be incurred to produce a consolidated university, there is no apparent saving.

A point is put forward in one of the versions—a point that was argued in the insert

Cheatham replied that it actually might be harder to change the university board makeup than to move the La Sierra campus.

years from any gain acquired from the sale, lease, or development of the La Sierra property.

Trustee Major C. White, secretary for the Pacific Union, was quite proud that his pro-consolidation position was independently different from that of his union president, Tom Mostert, and he was heard during the Monday lunch break saying that he had voted for consolidation last time and he was gonna vote for it again.

The session did not take the form of a debate; rather it was comprised of a long series of presentations by invitees and speeches by trustees.

In the evening, after Mostert had expressed the Pacific Union's reservations about consolidation, consultant Keller, the

abstaining again. A full complement of the Board is forty-five members. The approval of twenty-three trustees—the bare minimum necessary majority required in the bylaws to pass a motion—is not exactly a mandate.

Yes, but

The board meeting began at 9 a.m., and thirteen hours later it was all over—for the moment. But even then there were stipulations:

"1. Income from the sale or development of the La Sierra College property must be used to underwrite and strengthen arts and sciences programs when they are merged to the LLU campus. [The administration's proposal to send \$11 million to Pacific Union College would conflict directly with this

disallowed by Mostert for the *Recorder* a year earlier—that “accrediting groups who evaluate the educational programs of Loma Linda University,” repeatedly underscore the advisability of a single campus program.”

This argument is almost laughable when one realizes that the Western Association of Schools and Colleges has actually warned LLU to adjust the makeup of its board of trustees to avoid conflicts of interest—an adjustment that would cost the university nothing. When *Currents* called this irony to Gus Cheatham’s attention, he replied that it actually might be harder to change the board makeup [given Adventist political reality] than to move the La Sierra campus.

The most outrageous assertion contained in both versions of the consolidation promotional vehicles was the quote by the LLU Councilors president, Ronald Drayson, that the unification plan “represents a giant step in the development of Loma Linda University into a school of the ‘highest order’ as described by Ellen G. White.” However one regards the writings of Ellen White, it has to be recognized that they don’t relate in any way to the idea of a modern university. (The Ellen G. White Estate has refused for years to release a lengthy and adamant statement by Ellen White in a 1903 interview rejecting the importance of accrediting for Adventist colleges.)

Finally, one version of the instrument refers to administration’s vision of a “preferred” institution. This is a bit hard to reconcile with the “open enrollment” policy that is to be continued under one or both campus scenarios. Cheatham says that the administration is not using the word “preferred” in the sense of top drawer or elite; rather, he says, they hope that when they are done with consolidation that Adventist young people will “prefer” to go to LLU over other denominational colleges.

Should there be a fair fight over consolidation? Does it matter that official publications and mailing lists are used exclusively to promote the proconsolidation position?

Invitations to the wedding

Considerably more than 60 percent of the nearly 600 LLU constituents are “permanent” members—a percentage comprised of those members of the GC Executive Committee (nearly 200) who reside in the United States and Canada, the executive committees of the Pacific Union (49) and its three conferences (54), the officers of the LLU corporation (8), the vice presidents and deans of all the schools (10), and the members of the Board of Trustees (45).

Significantly fewer than 40 percent of the members are “appointed” constituents, most of whom are more immediately involved with Loma Linda University. These board-appointed delegates include: faculty (60), employees (30), alumni (64), “other” board appointees (20), students (12), LLU Board of Councilors (10), and ten “other persons” seated by vote of the constituency.

Norman Woods told *Currents* that the various board-“appointed” constituent clusters (faculty, students, alumni, etc.) would be chosen by their peers; and the board would simply ratify those choices. (If that is how it works, Article 4 of the bylaws needs rewriting.)

But who will actually attend such a meeting? Ordinarily a majority of the GC Committee’s nearly two hundred “permanent” constituents do not attend quinquennial sessions. Apparently they have the option but would have to make the time and submit a travel expense voucher to the appropriate office for remuneration. How each of those permanent members to the constituency will decide whether or not to attend this forthcoming pivotal session is not clear to *Currents*.

Woods did not know when the constituency session would meet; but he affirmed *Currents*’ speculation that it would occur after, but temporally adjacent to, a board meeting in order to reduce the travel time and costs of the trustees, who are all constituents. Many observers guess that it could happen as early as January 1989.

Currents suspects that the constituency session could be very interesting and the outcome difficult to project. To ratify consolidation, two-thirds of the delegates present at a constituency session would have to approve it—at least that is what has been assumed. However, a scrutiny of the bylaws reveals that the situation is not clear-cut.

First of all, Article 5 (Section 15,d.), says that “The Board of Trustees reserves to itself final authority” over “the sale or other disposition of University-owned land and property which is used or occupied for its primary purposes.”

Does that mean that a bylaw adjustment will have to make so that the board legally can abdicate to the constituency its authority over the La Sierra property? If so, according to the bylaws’ Article 5 (Section 4,f.), the board would have “to appoint from constituent members, at least thirty days prior to a regular constituency meeting, a committee to review the . . . Bylaws” and recommend the necessary bylaw revision to the assembled members, who would have to approve the recommended bylaw change, before the constituency could vote meaningfully on the question of the La Sierra campus’ future.

Article 3 of the bylaws is a description of the “Legal Entity” that comprises Loma Linda University. It states that “the term Loma Linda University is used to refer to the entire organization and is the legal entity responsible for the functioning of its three divisions which are:

- a. The Loma Linda campus
- b. The La Sierra campus
- c. The Loma Linda Foundation”

There are those who wonder whether the removal of “b. The La Sierra campus,” from Article 3 is legally anything more significant than a descriptive change. The article would remain the same, but part of what it applied to would be removed. Do the bylaws require a

two-thirds majority of the assembled constituents to make that adjustment?

When the constituency next meets and the challenge is publicly put, “If anyone can give cause why these two campuses should not be brought together, let him speak now,” without doubt, many, many delegates will not even begin to hold their peace. □

Davenport reprise

The Department of Consumer Affairs Board of Medical Quality Assurance *Action Report* for May 1987 listed disciplinary actions against fifty physicians, among them one against Donald J. Davenport, M.D., of Corona del Mar.

After he entered a guilty plea, Davenport was convicted on 25 June 1985 in the Municipal Court of the Orange County Harbor Judicial District of violating two California Health and Safety Code statutes (three counts each) regulating controlled substances.

Between May 29 and October 31, 1984, Davenport had prescribed or dispensed directly, on eight occasions to three different undercover agents, various quantities of two or more dangerous drugs, without a good faith prior examination or medical indication. The drugs were Dalmane, Doriden (trade name for Glutethimide), Fastin (trade name for Phentermine Hydrochloride), and Tylenol #4 with 1 grain of Codeine.

On the advice of his attorney, Davenport voluntarily waived his right to a hearing, reconsideration, or appeal. The disciplinary action he received was based on his conviction of a crime that was substantially related to the qualifications, functions, and duties of the practice of medicine.

The decision by the Division of Medical Quality of the Board of Medical Quality Assurance (ordered August 27, 1986, effective September 26, 1986) was to revoke Davenport’s Physician’s and Surgeon’s Certificate. However, the revocation was stayed and he was placed on five years probation with terms and conditions.

These included restricting Davenport’s right to dispense or prescribe certain controlled medications, except in a hospital setting, and an annual continuing education program of forty hours beyond the usual relicensure requirement.

Subsequently, Davenport closed his medical office in Corona del Mar, and it appears that he has decided to retire from medical practice rather than meet his probation stipulations.

He recently returned from an extended trip to Europe (including Switzerland) where some who know him speculate he has deposited several million dollars of church and church members’ money. He owes the Internal Revenue Service a large sum, but it does not appear to have affected his lifestyle.

The really bad news is that Davenport, according to *Currents*’ sources, has returned to the investment business. □

INCIDENT IN ATKINSON: The Arrest and Trial of Israel Dammon

by Bruce Weaver

Grateful appreciation is due the following individuals for their invaluable assistance with the research involved in this article: Robert Taylor, president, Androscoggin County Historical Society; Stephen Trent Seames, *Portland Telegram* archivist (Seames was at one time assistant curator of manuscripts at the Maine Historical Society); James B. Vickery, retired former president, Bangor Historical Society, widely recognized as “the dean” of Maine State history; J.B. Goodner, semi-retired manager, refractory division, Goodner Construction Co., the lay-expert on early SDA historical documents; the staff of the Greensboro interlibrary loan department for dozens of transactions; and the University of Maine Fogle Library for all Maine newspaper microfilm loans.

For more than a century, Seventh-day Adventists have relied unquestioningly on Ellen G. White’s personal account of her first, postdisappointment travels (first published in 1860) for their understanding of her initial calling and her earliest ministry.¹

In a personal letter to J.N. Loughborough in 1874, Mrs. White describes how she spent the winter/spring of 1845 traveling from town to town, primarily in Maine, fighting the various forms of fanaticism that preoccupied those Millerites who (following the disappointments of 1843 and 1844) still refused to believe that God had not shared His timetable with them.²

However, recently resurrected newspaper accounts of a February 1845 weekend incident in Atkinson, Maine, involving Ellen Harmon, James White, Dorinda Baker, Israel Dammon, and others, call into question the reliability of Ellen White’s autobiographical sketches.³

While Mrs. White’s retrospective of her earliest travels emphasizes her fanaticism-fighting role, she also frequently dwells upon startling miracles that she says either attended her ministry or that took place in its presence. Mrs. White’s three-page, published account of the arrest and trial of Israel Dammon⁴ is so remarkable that, while reading it over in March of 1986, it occurred to me that some specific contemporary reference to it must have survived in the New England newspapers—especially since it involved the police and the courts.

My research was soon and richly rewarded. It turned up the earliest existing eyewitness accounts of Ellen Harmon in vision—accounts included as part of sworn courtroom testimony regarding the activities that led to Dammon’s arrest. The most historically significant find was an article in the 7 March 1845 *Piscataquis Farmer* under the heading “Trial of Elder I. Dammon.” This Dover, Maine, weekly newspaper provided a 124-column-inch abridgement of the court reporter’s transcript of Dammon’s February 17 and 18 arraignment and trial.

Ellen Harmon’s presence at the arrest of Dammon, and references at his trial to her behavior during the activities that led to his arrest, make this document particularly fascinating to Adventists. Fascination turns to concern, however, when Mrs. White’s account of the affair is compared with that of the witnesses at the trial. But before making those comparisons it is necessary to establish context and to read the documents in question.

“Misty, snowy, and hail[ing]”

Ellen Harmon left her Portland, Maine, home in January 1845 and travelled by sleigh with her brother-in-law, Samuel Foss, to visit her sisters in Poland.⁵ She had experienced one vision in December of 1844 as well as a “call” to travel and share her vision with other Maine Millerites.⁶

An early victim among Andrews University seminary graduate students of the Glacier View era, Bruce Weaver is a field instructor for the copy division of Canon USA. He writes from Greensboro, North Carolina.

The great disappointment was nearly three months past, and the conservative New England populous could not understand why Millerism had outlived the bitter disappointments of 1843 and 1844. Even before Christ’s failure to appear many believed that there were “arguments enough in favor of holy living without resorting to the possibility of the speedy end of the world for motives with which to address men.”⁷

While most Millerites quietly rejoined the mainstream denominations and society as a whole, small pockets of fanatical true believers were scattered throughout the northeast. Some of them, in Ellen Harmon’s home town of Portland, worshipped “with propriety of conduct . . . at Beethoven Hall.”⁸ The meetings of others (attended by Miss Harmon), who met almost exclusively in private homes, were characterized by the “holy” salutation kiss, loud shouting and singing, physical prostrations, promiscuous (mixed) footwashing, multiple baptisms by immersion, odd exhibitions of voluntary humility (i.e., crawling, barking), and the presentations of a few (mostly female) visionaries.⁹

But it was the no-work policy advocated by a number of leading Adventist extremists that most attracted them to municipal authorities. Piscataquis County was the first to bring serious civil intervention to the fanatical Millerites of Maine. This precedent was soon followed by arrests, trials, and imprisonments or guardianships in Orrington, Bangor, Paris, Norway, Poland, Woodstock, and Portland.¹⁰

Ellen Harmon moved continuously among these Adventist extremists, and it is likely that she narrowly avoided arrest in Orrington by fleeing the scene.¹¹ And it is possible that she was arrested—along with Joseph Turner—at Poland in April 1845 (see below, “Was Ellen Harmon arrested?”).¹² But there is no question about Ellen Harmon’s presence during and involvement with the incident in Atkinson that led to the arrest of Israel Dammon.

The following paragraphs from the second volume of *Spiritual Gifts* (pp.40-42) contain Ellen White’s only account of the February 1845 incident in Atkinson.

Ellen White’s account

From Exeter we went to Atkinson. One night [February 15] I was shown something that I did not understand. It was to this effect, that we were to have a trial of our faith. The next day, which was the first day of the week, while I was speaking, two men looked into the window. We were satisfied of their object. They entered and rushed past me to Eld. Damman [sic]. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, and his strength was taken away, and he fell to the floor helpless. The officer cried out, “In the name of the State of Maine, lay hold of this man.” Two seized his arms, and two his feet, and attempted to drag him from the room. They would move him a few inches only, and then rush out of the house. The power of God was in that room, and the servants of God with their countenances lighted up with his glory, made no resistance. The efforts to take Eld. D. were often repeated with the same effect. The men could not endure the power of God, and it was a relief to them to rush out of the house. Their

number increased to twelve, still Eld. D. was held by the power of God about forty minutes, and not all the strength of those men could move him from the floor where he lay helpless. At the same moment we all felt that Eld. D. must go; that God had manifested his power for his glory, and that the name of the Lord would be further glorified in suffering him to be taken from our midst. And those men took him up as easily as they would take up a child, and carried him out.

After Eld. D. was taken from our midst he was kept in a hotel, and guarded by a man who did not like his office. He said that Eld. D. was singing, and praying, and praising the Lord all night, so that he could not sleep, and he would not watch over such a man. No one wished the office of guarding him, and he was left to go about the village as he pleased, after promising that he would appear for trial. Kind friends invited him to share their hospitalities. At the hour of trial Eld. D. was present. A lawyer offered his services. The charge brought against Eld. D. was, that he was a disturber of the peace. Many witnesses were brought to sustain the charge, but they were at once broken down by the testimony of Eld. D.'s acquaintances present, who were called to the stand. There was much curiosity to know what Eld. D. and his friends believed, and he was asked to give them a synopsis of his faith. He then told them in a clear manner his belief from the Scriptures. It was also suggested that they sung curious hymns, and he was asked to sing one. There were quite a number of strong brethren present who had stood by him in the trial, and they joined with him in singing.

"When I was down in Egypt's land,

I heard my Saviour was at hand," &c.

Eld. D. was asked if he had a spiritual wife. He told them he had a lawful wife, and he could thank God that she had been a very spiritual woman ever since his acquaintance with her. The cost of court, I think, was thrown upon him, and he was released.

Newspaper accounts and other records provide additional context for the incident which Mrs. White described with such economy.

Saturday evening, 15 February 1845, found a number of disappointed Millerites (probably fifty or sixty) gathered "at the house of James Ayer, Jr., in the southwest part" of the small eastern Maine town of Atkinson.¹³ Nearly nine inches of snow had already fallen at nearby Bangor that month. The Bangor meteorologist described that Sabbath

as "misty, snowy, and hail[ing]." The high temperature for the day was 33 F, but it was 18 F by nine o'clock that evening.¹⁴ The visitors—more than a score of whom had arrived by sleigh from other towns such as Exeter, Garland, and Orrington—were groping for meaning in their disappointment.¹⁵ Although the Ayer household was alive with warm worshippers, nearby Dead Stream or one of its tributaries¹⁶ would be the site of at least two icy baptisms later that night.¹⁷

The meeting was presided over by a former sea captain from Exeter, Israel Dammon,¹⁸ and featured two visionaries (Miss Dorinda Baker of Orrington and Miss Ellen Harmon of Portland) as well as Elders Hall, White, and Wood.¹⁹

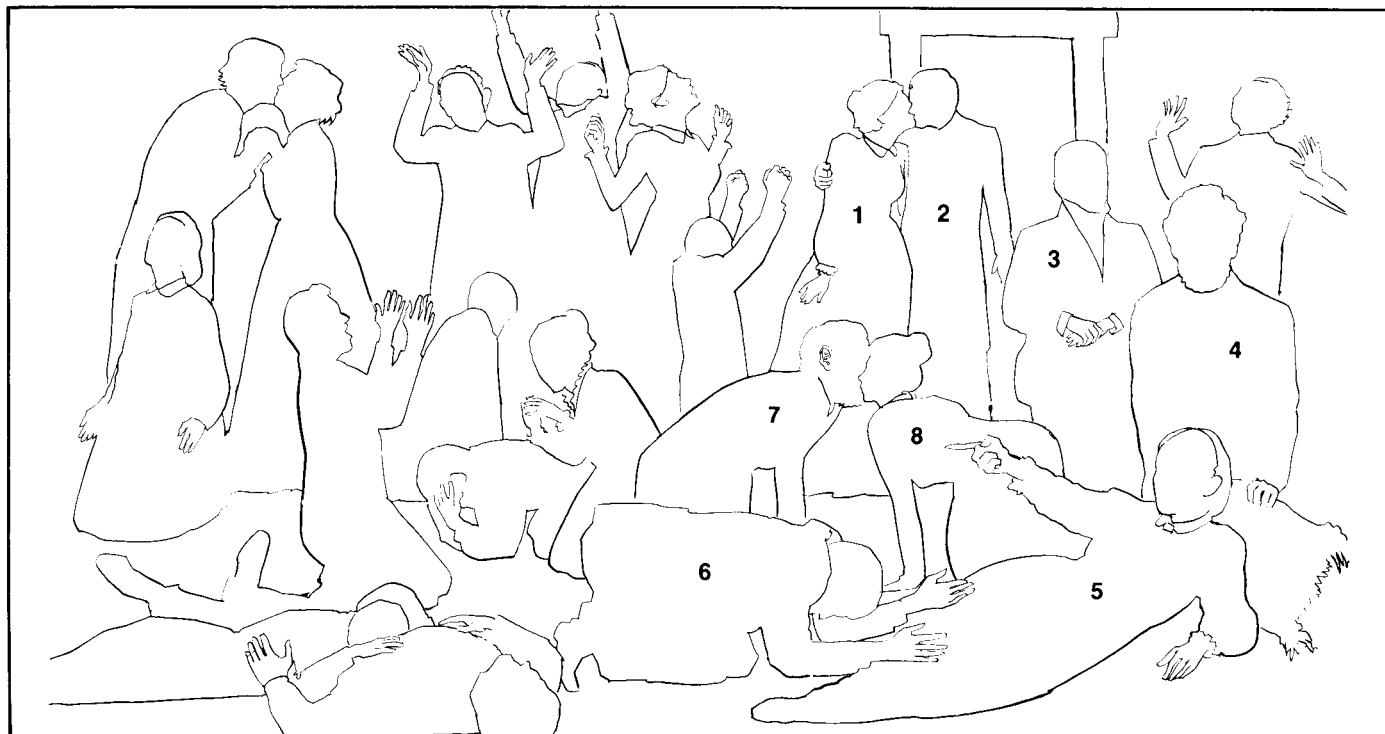
Prosecution witness William Crosby, a thirty-seven-year-old attorney²⁰ who attended the Saturday night meeting, described it in court two days later:

They would at times all be talking at once, halloing at the top of their voices. . . . There was a woman on the floor who lay on her back with a pillow under her head; she would occasionally arouse up and tell a vision which she said was revealed to her. . . . By spells it was the most noisy assembly I ever attended—there was no order or regularity, nor anything that resembled any other meeting I ever attended. . . .²¹

It may be useful to say about the full report from the *Piscataquis Farmer* which follows that its publisher, George V. Edes, was a fifty-eight-year-old justice of the peace.²² His civil appointment may explain why he assigned a volunteering layman to abridge the trial transcript for the *Farmer's* readers. But it also suggests the reason that so much space was given to its coverage in his paper.

A typical Maine newspaper of the period consisted of four pages, half of which usually contained public notices and advertisements for patent medicines. It was highly unusual for news items to exceed one column in length. Only speeches by the president of the United States or other important national figures claimed the amount of space allotted to the Dammon trial—seven long columns.

The entire *Piscataquis Farmer* report is reproduced below. All material appearing within brackets has been added for clarification, and some cosmetic editorial corrections have been made for easier reading. My commentary on the incident and the documents that illuminate it resumes at the conclusion of the *Farmer* report.



1 Dorinda Baker, 2 ??, 3 Wm. C. Crosby, 4 James White, 5 Ellen Harmon, 6 Joel Doore, 7 Israel Dammon, 8 Mrs. George S. Woodbury.

PISCATAQUIS FARMER.



DEVOTED TO POLITICS, AGRICULTURE, LITERATURE, MORALS, TEMPERANCE, NEWS, &C. &C.

VOL. 3

DOVER, MAINE, FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 7, 1845.

NO 31

TRIAL OF ELDER I. DAMMON

REPORTED FOR THE
PISCATAQUIS FARMER

In offering the public the following report I feel it due to them as well as myself, to make a few remarks. When I volunteered to do it, I had no doubt but that the examination would have been gone through with in the course of a few hours. Judge then, what must be my surprise on finding the Court House filled to overflowing, and having it occupy such a length of time. To the witnesses I will say, I have abridged your testimony as much as possible, and have omitted much of the most unimportant part, in order to shorten the work, but have endeavored in no case to misrepresent you, and if you find an error, I beg you to impute it to my head, instead of heart.—To the reader I will remark, that much of the testimony was drawn out by questions, and I have omitted the questions in all cases where it could be dispensed with and shorten the work. To all, I offer it as an imperfect and impartial report. In consequence of my total inexperience, being but a laboring man, I should shrink from publishing it, but from the urgent solicitation of others. Thanking the Court for the favor of a seat, by them, and the Court and Counsel for the use of their minutes, I sign myself this once THE REPORTER.

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

“HARTFORD J. ROWE, of Dover, in the Co. of Piscataquis, Yeoman, upon his oath complains, that Israel Dammon, Commorant of Atkinson, in said County, Idler, is, and for several days last past, has been a vagabond and idle person, going about in the town of Atkinson, aforesaid, in the county aforesaid, from place to place, begging:—that he the said Israel Dammon is a common railer or brawler, neglecting his calling, or employment, misspending his earnings, and does not provide for the support of himself family, & against the peace of the State of Maine, and contrary to form of Statute in such cases made and provided.

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

Plead Not Guilty.

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

Opened agreeably to adjournment.

C.P. Chandler, H.G.O. Morison, for State. J.S. Holmes, for Respondent.

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

Ebenezer Blethen, sworn. Have been in the house three times, saw nothing out of the way in Elder Dammon. Have seen others.

Objected to by Holmes. Confine your remarks to prisoner, he can in no ways be accountable for the conduct of others, and I object to any testimony except what goes to show what respondent [Dammon] has said or done, as wholly irrelevant.

that took place at the meetings, where the respondent was presiding elder.

Witness [Blethen]. The first meeting I attended was two weeks ago yesterday [2 February 1845]—saw people setting on the floor, and laying on the floor; Dammon setting on floor; they were leaning on each other. It did not have the appearance of a religious meeting.

Cross-examination. Saw nothing like licentiousness—there was exhortation and prayer each evening. Was there last time after [for the purpose of retrieving] part of my family.

J.W.E. Harvey, sworn. Have attended their meetings two days and four evenings. First meeting lasted eight days—have known Dammon six weeks—Dammon, White and Hall were leaders. Dammon said the sinners were going to hell in two days. They were hugging and kissing each other—Dammon would lay on the floor, then jump up—they would frequently go into another room. Dammon has no means to support himself that I know of. The meeting appeared very irreligious—have seen him sit on the floor with a woman between his legs and his arms around her.

Cross-examined. The room they went into was a back room; don't know what was in it—I was in two rooms where there was a fire. In the back room they said the world's people must not go. Dammon said the meeting was to be a private meeting and they wanted no one to come unless they believed as he did in the Advent doctrine. I did go considerably—if the meetings were religious ones I thought I had a right to go to them—I went to satisfy myself what was done. I had no hostile feeling against them. I think they held the first meeting a fortnight [two weeks before]. Dammon said he wanted no one to attend their meetings unless they believed in the advent doctrine.

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

Dammon, [James] White and Hall were leaders. Dammon said the sinners were going to hell in two days.

Monday, Feb. 17, 1845.
STATE OF MAINE,
vs.
ISRAEL DAMMON.

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

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

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

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

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

By the Court. You may relate any thing

band, and pointed at me, and said, I mean you, Sir. Subsequently he addressed me again—said, you can't drive us out of town; he stared me in the face and said, I am an honest man, or I could not look you in the face, and you have hell's brass or you could not look me in the face. Dammon said if he was owner of the house he would compel all unbelievers to leave it—they were setting and laying on the floor promiscuously and were exceedingly noisy.

Cross-examined. Did he not say if there was any there who did not come for instruction he did not want them there.

Ans. That is not what he said—he pointed to me and said he meant you—I never was more pointedly addressed in my life—we stood five or six feet apart, most of the men were on the floor—most of the women in chairs—Do not know how long Dammon has been in town.

Thomas Proctor, sworn. Saw the prisoner last Saturday—was present when he was taken; know nothing of the meetings myself.

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

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

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

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

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

Leonard Downes, sworn.—Went to meeting with Loten Lambert, and kept with him; heard him testify, and know what he has related to be true. He omitted one thing. I saw Dammon kiss other people's wives. (Witness

derers, &c. He said read the *Star*. By spells it was the most noisy assembly I ever attended—there was no order or regularity, nor anything that resembled any other meeting I ever attended—Dammon seemed to have the lead and the most art. I don't say Dammon shouted the loudest; I think some others stronger in the lungs than he.

Deacon James Rowe, sworn. I was at Ayer's a short time last Saturday evening—Elder Dammon found fault with us for coming to his meeting—he spoke of other denominations as Esq. Crosby has just testified—said the church members were the worst people in the world. I have been young, and now am old, and of all the places I ever was in, I never saw such a confusion, not even in a drunken frolic. Dammon stood up on the floor and said, I am going to stand here—and while I stand here, they can't hurt you, neither men nor devils can't hurt you.

Cross-examined: He said all churches, made no distinction. I put no meaning to what he said, I only state what he did say. I have been acquainted with the prisoner twenty or thirty years; his character was good until recently.

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

Ebenezer Trundy, sworn. I was at meeting week before last,—I heard Dammon say, “God's a coming! God's a coming!” Mr. Boobar was telling of going into the woods to labor—Dammon said he ought not to go. Boobar said he had a family to support and was poor. Dammon told him he must live on them that had property, and if God did not come then we must all go to work together.

Joseph Moulton, sworn. When I went to arrest prisoner, they shut the door against me. Finding I could not gain access to him without, I burst open the door. I went to the prisoner and took him by the hand and told

Imitation of Christ told her vision to a cousin of mine, that she must be baptized that night or go to hell....

underwent a severe cross-examination, in which his testimony was so near a repetition of Mr. Lambert's, that it is by me, considered useless to copy it.)

Wm. C. Crosby, reexamined. I saw no kissing, but heard about it. I did not stay late, went about 7, left about 9 o'clock. After the visionist called them up she told them they doubted. Her object seemed to be to convince them they must not doubt.—Dammon called the churches whoremasters, liars, thieves, scoundrels, wolves in sheep's clothing, mur-

him my business. A number of women jumped on to him—he clung to them, and they to him. So great was the resistance, that I with three assistants, could not get him out. I remained in the house and sent for more help; after they arrived we made a second attempt with the same result—I again sent for more help—after they arrived we overpowered them and got him out door in custody. We were resisted by both men and women. Can't describe the place—it was one continued shout.

Wm. C. Crosby, Esq., called again. Prisoner has been reported to have been there about a fortnight, with no visible means of support.

J.W.E. Harvey, reexamined. Prisoner has been there considerable. I know of no means he has of support, other than to live on his followers.

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

Jacob Martin, sworn. It is the common report that the prisoner is living upon his followers. I have attended no meetings of their's. Have seen a number of sleighs there, and fifteen or twenty strangers.

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

Here the government stopped. Court adjourned to half past 6 o'clock.

Evening—Respondent's [defense] witnesses.

James Ayer, Jr., affirmed. The most of the meetings were at my house. I have generally attended them—sometimes I was out. I have heard the testimony on the part of the State. Some things stated I do not recollect. I was there last Saturday evening—saw no kissing. I agree with Crosby and Lambert substantially. I understood prisoner to say there were members of the churches who he referred to instead of the whole. Saw the woman with a pillow under her head—her name is Miss Ellen Harmon, of Portland. I heard nothing said by her or others about imitation of Christ. I saw Miss Baker laying on the floor. I saw her fall. Saw Miss Baker and Sister Osborn go into the bedroom—Sister Osborn helped her on to the bed, came out and shut the door. There was no man in the bedroom that evening. I heard the noise in the bedroom—Brother Wood of Orrington and I went in; asked her what was the matter, she made no reply, and I went out. Brother Wood assisted her off of the bed, and helped her out—she appeared in distress. She told brother Doore she was distressed on his account—was afraid he would loose his soul, and advised him to be baptized. Did not see them kiss each other. It is a part of our faith to kiss each other—brothers kiss sisters and sisters kiss brothers, I think we have Bible authority for that. I understood the prisoner to say, there was an account in the *Star* of a deacon who had killed seven men. The reason of our kneeling, I consider an object of humiliation.

Cross-examined.—I know nothing about Miss Harmon's character. I did not say there was no kissing—I saw none. Did not hear her called Imitation of Christ. Elder Dammon

has had no other business, but to attend meetings. He and another man from Exeter, came with a young girl. Dammon said he had a spiritual wife and he was glad of it. I went to Mr. Lambert and said if he disturbed the meeting, he must go out door. We went to the water after 11 o'clock—Brother Dammon baptized two. I know nothing about Sister Baker's character—seen her at meeting in Orrington. I understood Sister Harmon had a vision at Portland, and was travelling through the country relating it.

Job Moody, affirmed. I was at meeting Saturday evening. Brother Dammon said in relation to other churches they were bad enough; said they were corrupt; he spoke of

exhortation for that. Sister Baker has a good character—the wickedest man in Orrington says she has a good character, and that's enough to establish any character, when the worst man admits it. (roar of laughter) We wish to go through the ordinance of washing feet in secret. Did not see any kissing, but presume their was, as it is a part of our faith. Think Esq. Crosby's testimony correct.

By Court [a question]:—

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

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

I again sent for more help... We were resisted by both men and women. Can't describe the place — it was one continued shout.

the *Star*—he did not say they were thieves, &c. I am not certain, but think he said that evening there was exceptions. Sister Harmon would lay on the floor in a trance, and the Lord would reveal their cases to her, and she to them.

By the Court [a question of Moody].

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

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

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

Cross-examined. She told them their cases had been made known to her by the Lord, and if they were not baptized that evening, they would go to hell. We believed her, and Brother Dammon and I advised them to be baptized. Brother Dammon thought it best to keep the meetings secret, so they would not crowd in. Hold to kissing—have scripture

reformation has followed his preaching.

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

Court adjourned to Tuesday morning 9 o'clock.

Tuesday, [Feb.] 18.

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

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

Joel Doore, affirmed. Reside in Atkinson—Elder Dammon said there was bad characters in the churches; I did not under-

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

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

John H. Doore, sworn. I was not at meeting Saturday evening. I belong to the society, and have seen nothing out of character in anyone. Don't consider Elder Dammon a bad man—he a man I highly esteem. My

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

By the Court [a question].

Answer. Elder Dammon advises us not to work, because there is enough to live on until the end of the world.

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

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

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

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

Cross-examined. I believe in visions, and perfectly understand that, but suppose we are

what others have testified to, of which the reader I think must be weary.)

I did not see White go into the bedroom with Miss Baker—heard the noise in the bedroom. Others did go in. Elder D[ammon] said the churches were in a fallen state, and he had rather risk himself in the hands of the Almighty as a non-professor, than to be in the place of some of the churches. I believe fully in the faith. (Witness affirmed the story of kissing, rolling on the floor, and washing of feet.)

Joshua Burnham, sworn. I have known Miss Dorinda Baker from five years of age—her character is good—she is now twenty three or twenty-four years of age. She is a sickly girl, her father has expended \$1,000 in doctoring her. I was at the meeting Saturday night—it was appointed for the lady to tell her visions.

Adjourned to half past one o'clock.

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

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

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

By Morison. Why do you say that his mode of worship is similar to what it used to be? Because he preaches similar. Did he use to preach that the end of the world was at hand, and baptize in the dead hours of night? Ans. No. The reason we sit on the floor is to convene more people—sometimes we take some in our laps, but not male and female. Don't know of Brother D[ammon] spending money uselessly. I am a believer. Sometimes we sit on the floor for formality. Our faith don't hold it to be essential. (Witness repeated the mode of kissing, visions, &c. similar to the others.) I never heard Brother Dammon say he wished to destroy the marriage covenant. (Respondent here reexamined a number of witnesses, all of whom testified that he used his wife well, and appeared to love her.)

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

WITNESSES FOR STATE.

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

John Bartlett, of Garland, sworn. I have heard the respondent say that one of their

We kissed each other with the holy kiss — I think Elder White was not in the bedroom that evening.

daughter was baptized Saturday evening—she has been baptized before. I have seen both men and women crawl across the floor on their hands and knees.

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

(This witness was very lengthy in his testimony, both on examination and cross-examination. It amounts to the same as the preceding witnesses for the defense with the following additions.)

He thinks Elder White was not in the bedroom, but others were in. We don't acknowl-

not before an Ecclesiastical Council.—Elder Dammon does not believe as he used to. (Witness read from the Bible.) We do wash each other's feet—do creep on the floor very decently. I think he has baptized about eleven, but can't say certain how many—I have the privilege of knowing how they behave as well as anyone else. I have no doubt Sister Harmon's visions were from God—she told my daughter so. I was in favor of my daughter being baptized—I could not see ahead to see the devil's rabble coming, but since they have come, I am certain we did just right.

Abel S. Boobar, affirmed. (Most of the testimony of this witness was a repetition of

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

Loton Lambert, reexamined. He affirmed all his former testimony—does not know Elder White, but Joel Doore told me it was White that was in the bedroom with Miss Baker.

Cross-examined. There was nothing to

the meetings a number of times—I have seen prisoner on the floor with a woman between his legs—I have seen them in groups hugging and kissing one another. I went there once on an errand—Dam[mon] halloed out “Good God Almighty, drive the Devil away.” I once saw Elder Hall with his boots off, and the women would go and kiss his feet. One girl made a smack, but did not hit his foot with her lips. Hall said “he that is ashamed of me before men, him will I be ashamed of before my Father and the holy angels.” She then gave his feet a number of kisses.

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

obstruct my views—the man had on a dark colored short jacket, and I think light pantaloons.

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

Thomas Proctor, reexamined. Prisoner stated to me that Miss Baker had an exercise in the bedroom, and he went in and helped her out.

Cross-examined. I have said I wished they were broken up, and wished somebody would go and do it. I have said Elder Hall ought to be tarred and feathered if he was such a character as I heard he was. I was at one meeting, but as to divine worship there was none. They told us they allowed none there but believers.

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

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

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

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

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

J.W.E. Harvey, called. I have attended

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

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

Joel Door, Jr., called. Brother Wood had light pants and dark jacket.

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

James Boobar, called. Sister Baker and Br[other] Wood were about all the evening. Elder White had a frock coat and dark pants.

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

Morison summoned up the testimony and closed with a few brief and appropriate remarks.

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

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

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

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

“COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE.”
See Rev. 18th Ch. 4th V.
By John Craig.

While I was down in Egypt’s land,
I heard my Saviour was at hand;
The midnight cry was sounding,
And I wanted to be free,
So I left my former brethren
To sound the jubilee.

They said that I had better stay
And go with them in their old way;
But they scoff at my Lord’s coming—
With them I could not agree,
And I left their painted synagogue
To sound the jubilee.

Then soon I joined the Advent Band,
Who just came out from Egypt’s land;
They were on the road to Canaan,
A blest praying company,
And with them I am proclaiming
That this year’s the jubilee.

They call us now a noisy crew,
And say they hope we’ll soon fall thro’;
But we now are growing stronger,
Both in love and unity,
Since we left old mystic Babylon
To sound the jubilee.

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

Though opposition waxes strong,
Yet still the battle won’t be long;
Our blessed Lord is coming,
“His glory we shall see;”
Keep up good courage brethren—
This year’s the jubilee.

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

The battle is not to the strong,
The weak may sing the conqueror’s song;
I’ve been through the fiery furnace,
And no harm was done to me,
I came out with stronger evidence
This year’s the jubilee.

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

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

(Note: In what follows, all unreferenced quotes will be from the 7 March 1845 *Piscataquis Farmer* story. After each unreferenced quote, two numbers separated by a colon (for instance, 19:3) will be printed in parentheses. These indicate the page and column in this journal where the quote may be found.)

Under oath or under inspiration—who to believe?

The *Piscataquis Farmer* report of the Dammon trial raises two important questions for Seventh-day Adventists. One, are Mrs. White's retrospectives on her own lifework reliable, even in a general way? And, two, to what extent did she participate in post-1844, Millerite fanaticism?

A start can be made in answering question one by comparing and contrasting Mrs. White's account of Dammon's arrest and trial with the *Farmer* reporter's abridgement of the trial testimony.

The *Piscataquis Farmer* coverage of the Israel Dammon trial has overwhelming face-value credibility: (1) the number of witnesses (20 for the prosecution, 18 for the defense); (2) the integrity of the witnesses, most of whom were God-fearing people who would not take an oath lightly; (3) the quality of the witnesses (several of the prosecution

witnesses were attorneys and justices of the peace who had a vested interest in the integrity of their legal system); (4) the almost total agreement among the witnesses—both for the defense and the prosecution—about the incident; (5) the contemporaneity of the testimony to the event (two days later); (6) the obvious authenticity of the dialogue; (7) the exceptionally long and verbatim reporting; (8) the reporter's use of court and counsel minutes; and (9) the reporter's expressed concern for the faithfulness of his report to the witnesses' testimony: "I...have endeavored in no case to misrepresent you, and if you find an error, I beg you to impute it to my head, instead of heart....I offer it as an imperfect and impartial report." (18:1)

White Estate undersecretary Paul Gordon grasped at the reporter's candor and modesty to denigrate his report: "I think we must remember that the reporter...apologizes for it not being perhaps as accurate as it could be....At any rate, it appears to be one reporter's account of the trial that is imperfect, to say the least."²³

Actually the reporter was telling the witnesses and the *Farmer's* readers just what pains he had taken to be accurate. "I have abridged your testimony as much as possible" from the minutes of "the Court and the Counsel," omitting only "the most unimportant part." (18:1)

Dammon Trial Witnesses

Thirty-eight individuals (including Dammon) testified during the two-day trial of Israel Dammon at the Piscataquis County courthouse in Dover, Maine. Twenty witnesses appeared for the prosecution and eighteen spoke for the defense. Two state and six defense witnesses (including Dammon) were from adjacent Penobscot County.

The 1850 United States Census Bureau records for Piscataquis and Penobscot counties contain entries for fifteen of the state and twelve of the defense witnesses. An alphabetical listing of all the witnesses is printed below. Ages are extrapolated from the age given in the 1850 census. Place of residence, profession, and marital status are also provided. (Hartford J. Rowe is included among the prosecution witnesses because he brought the complaint against Dammon.)

Witnesses for the prosecution

1. A.S. Bartlett, Esq. (31). Dover trader. Wife, Lydia (25). Lived next door to Elder Flavel Bartlett.
2. Elder Flavel Bartlett (53). Dover trader. Wife, Hannah (50).
3. John Bartlett (23). Garland farmer. Wife, Sarah (23).
4. Ebenezer Blethen (40). Atkinson farmer. Wife, Margaret (43).
5. Plyn Clark (54). Atkinson farmer. Wife, Deliverance (54).
6. William C. Crosby, Esq. (37). Attorney who moved to Bangor. Wife, Mary (33).
7. Leonard Downes (19). Dover farmer. Wife, Mary J. (20). Lived near Ebenezer Lambert and Hartford J. Rowe.
8. Moses Garrish (25). Greenville farmer.
9. Jeremiah B. Green.
10. J.W.E. Harvey. Any one of three census entries could have been this Harvey.
11. Joseph Knight (28). Garland farmer. Wife, Lydia A. (21).
12. Ebenezer Lambert, Esq. (51). Dover farmer. Wife, Sarah (53). Lived between Hartford J. Rowe and Leonard Downes.
13. Loton Lambert. Probably the son of Paul Lambert and brother of Ebenezer.
14. Jacob Martin (52). Atkinson farmer. Wife, Abigail (43). Neighbor to Ebenezer Blethen.
15. Joseph Moulton (47). Township .8, Range 8 farmer; also deputy sheriff. Wife, Abigail (47).
16. Thomas Proctor (40). Dover farmer. Wife, Margaret (39).
17. William Ricker (37). Dover farmer. Wife, Mary (38).
18. Deacon James Rowe. Pioneer resident of Dover, settling there in 1808. Famous for his role in apprehending the "Exeter counterfeiters" in 1829.
19. Hartford J. Rowe (33). Dover farmer.
20. Benjamin Smith, Esq. Atkinson Selectman and Justice of the Peace.
21. Ebenezer Trundy (41). Dover farmer. Wife, Hannah P. (38).

Witnesses for the defense

1. Abel Ayer.
2. James Ayer, Jr. (39). Atkinson farmer. Wife, Elmira (22). 15 February 1845 Saturday night meeting was held in his home. Lived four houses from John Doore.
3. Abel S. Boobar (30). Atkinson farmer. Wife, Sarah (25).
4. James Boobar.
5. Joshua Burnham (59). Atkinson farmer. Wife, S. (57).
6. Elder Israel Dammon. Exeter, former sea captain.
7. Joel Doore (65). Atkinson. Wife, Hannah, 64. His son, Joel, Jr., and family lived with him. Neighbor to Isley Osborn and Levi Doore.
8. Joel Doore, Jr. (31). Atkinson. Wife, Sally (27).
9. John H. Doore (43). Atkinson.
10. Levi M. Doore (35). Atkinson. Wife, Patience (22).
11. Gardner Fariner. Garland.
12. Stephen Fish (34). Corinth blacksmith. Wife, Betsey (38).
13. John M. Gallison (50-60). Dover.
14. Jacob Mason (27). Garland farmer. Wife, Elizabeth (26).
15. Job Moody (32). Bangor porter. Wife, Abigail (30). Lived near Daniel Oakes and his daughters who were imprisoned briefly in April 1845 for being "Idlers, and Vagrants and disturbers of the public peace" in Bangor.
16. Isley Osborn (35). Atkinson. Wife, Susan (31). Lived next to Joel Doore.
17. Abraham Pease. Possibly Abram (69) or Abram Jr. (40) of Wellington.
18. George S. Woodbury (23). Dover millman. Wife, Jane (21).

Information not supplied by the 1850 census was drawn from Amasa Loring's *History of Piscataquis County Maine. From its Earliest Settlement to 1880* (Hoyt, Fogg & Donham, Portland, ME.:1880). Data regarding the Daniel Oakes family is from the *Bangor Whig and Courier*, 2 April 1845.

Gordon has another argument: "You can quickly see that their [defense and prosecution witnesses] testimony contradicted each other in almost every case.... It would appear that those against Dammon were telling one story, and those that were for him told another."²⁴

Apparently Gordon had not taken the opportunity to read the reporter's abridgement of the trial minutes very carefully. The witnesses all agreed on all points of any substance except whether or not Ellen Harmon was referred to as "imitation of Christ," and who was in the bedroom with Dorinda Baker and why.

Three defense witnesses, each represented at length in the *Farmer* report, expressly affirmed the testimony of prosecution witness William Crosby, Esq. James Ayer, Jr., host for the Saturday evening meeting, testified: "I agree with Crosby and Lambert substantially." (20:1) Isley Osborn said, "Think Esq. Crosby's testimony correct." (20:3) And Jacob Mason added, "I have heard Crosby testify, and think him correct." (20:3)

It does appear, as Gordon surmises, that Dammon did not serve his sentence. But it was not, as Gordon further speculates, "because there was such conflicting testimony."²⁵ Had the testimony been as conflicting as Gordon claims, the Dover Court would not have "sentenced the prisoner to the House of Correction for the space of Ten Days."

Apparently, defense counsel Holmes appealed. Because Dammon himself wrote that after his sentencing he "was put over until May term [district court session], then the warrant was quashed; and I was acquitted without date."²⁶

Calling it "one of the grandest defenses of religious toleration and freedom, that it has ever been my pleasure to listen to," one of Holmes' contemporaries, Joseph D. Brown, remembered Holmes' representation of Dammon as an "eloquent argument for religious freedom and toleration and the right of every person to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, under his own vine and fig tree."²⁷

Dammon did not get off, as Gordon suggests, "because there was such conflicting testimony"; or, as Mrs. White remembered, because the testimony of the prosecution's "many witnesses... were at once broken down by the testimony of Eld. D.'s acquaintances present, who were called to the stand."²⁸ It was argument from law, not testimony, that rescued Dammon from ten days in jail.

It is ironic that this defender of a fanatical Adventist was a veteran Free Mason who became the first Master of the Masonic Lodge organized at Foxcroft in the year of Dammon's trial. "Religiously he was a Free Thinker, though he affiliated with the Universalists."²⁹

Former White Estate associate secretary Ronald Graybill wove an apologetic of his own—suggesting that in Atkinson, James White and Ellen Harmon were caught off their guard and out of their element:

I don't know how much of this fanatic behavior went on in Portland. But in a sense she had her own first exposure to it in Atkinson. After she went through this experience, she rode calmly to the next town with James and Sister Foss in the carriage. James may have said, "Boy, I hope we never get into one of *those* again."³⁰

It can be established clearly from Mrs. White's publications and letters that Atkinson was not Miss Harmon's "first exposure" to fanaticism.

It can be established clearly from Mrs. White's publications and letters that Atkinson was not Miss Harmon's 'first exposure' to fanaticism.

On an autumn evening in 1842 she was for the first time prostrated by the power of the Holy Spirit—what was termed the "second" blessing—and was unable to return home that night.³¹

Before she met Israel Dammon, Ellen Harmon's very first vision (December 1844) clearly indicates that she believed in "wash[ing] one another's feet and salute[ing] the brethren with a holy kiss."³²

In her earliest published account Mrs. White names some of the towns that she visited on her first journey to eastern Maine: Poland,

Witnessing for Dammon

Serving as a witness for Israel Dammon wasn't necessarily easy, as Levi M. Doore discovered. Neither did his experience in the witness box corroborate Mrs. White's assertion that the prosecution witnesses "were at once broken down by the testimony of Eld. D.'s acquaintances, who were called to the stand." Assistant prosecutor H.G.O. Morrison cross-examined Doore following his testimony that "Elder Dammon's mode of worship now is similar to what it used to be."

Morrison: Did they use to sit on the floor?

Doore: No.

Morrison: Did they use to lay or crawl on the floor?

Doore: No.

Morrison: Did they use to kiss each other?

Doore: No.

Morrison: Did they use to go into the bedroom?

Doore: No.

Morrison: Did they use to tell visions?

Doore: No.

Morrison: Why do you say that his mode of worship is similar to what it used to be?

Doore: Because he preaches similar.

Morrison: Did he use to preach that the end of the world was at hand, and baptize in the dead hours of night?

Doore: No.

Orrington, Garland, Exeter, and Atkinson (see map p. 27).³³

Before the arresting weekend in Atkinson, Miss Harmon had been to Orrington, where she joined forces with James White. At Garland she received a letter from her mother "begging" her to come home to Portland because "false reports were being circulated concerning me." But she had "great freedom" in bearing her testimony there, and "heart-felt shouts of glory and victory went up from that house" in Garland.³⁴ At the very least, the Garland meeting must have been a bit noisy.

Miss Harmon's next stop was Exeter, Israel Dammon's home town. Two years later Mrs. White wrote to Joseph Bates about her part in that meeting:

The view about the bridegroom coming I had about the middle of February, 1845. While in Exeter, Maine, in meeting with Israel Dammon, James, and many others, many of them did not believe in a shut door. I suffered much at the commencement of the meeting. Unbelief seemed to be on every hand.

There was one sister there that was called very spiritual. She had traveled and been a powerful preacher the most of the time for twenty years. She had been truly a mother in Israel. But a division had risen in the band on the shut door. She had great sympathy, and could not believe the door was shut. (I had known nothing of their differences.) Sister Durben got up to talk. I felt very, very sad.

At length my soul seemed to be in an agony, and while she was talking I fell from my chair to the floor. It was then I had a view of Jesus rising from his mediatorial throne and going to the holiest as bridegroom to receive His kingdom. They were all deeply interested in the view. They all said it was entirely new to them. The Lord worked in mighty power setting the truth home to their hearts.

Sister Durben knew what the power of the Lord was for she had felt it many times; and a short time after I fell she was struck down, and fell to the floor, crying to God to have mercy on her. When I came out of vision, my ears were saluted with Sister Durben singing and shouting with a loud voice. Most of them received the vision and were settled upon the shut door.³⁵

What Mrs. White wrote Joseph Bates of the Exeter meeting with Dammon, James, and others obviously was not intended as a description of the meeting as a whole; but what she did portray had the flavor of

a charismatic service. She and Sister Durben were both “struck down” or “slain upon the floor,” and Durben was shouting while Harmon was in vision. What else happened is not mentioned; but given Israel Dammon’s presence and probable leadership of the meeting, there is no good reason to doubt that he was involved in those “exercises” that he had been performing since the new year began.

Witnesses at the Dammon trial agreed that for several weeks he had been presiding over meetings at Garland, Exeter, and Atkinson; and that he was teaching and practicing no work, no more salvation for sinners, “holy kissing,” footwashing, creeping, and rebaptism.

John Bartlett of Garland testified that he had known Dammon for seven years and that “his character was always good until about six weeks [ago].” (22:1)

Jeremiah B. Green, under oath, said: “I attended an afternoon meeting a fortnight ago yesterday [Sunday, 2 February 1845] . . . elder Dammon was the presiding elder.” There Green witnessed footwashing and “saw Dammon kiss Mrs. Osborn.” (19:3)

J.W.E. Harvey told the court that he had attended several meetings. “First meeting lasted eight days—have known Dammon six weeks—Dammon, [James] White and Hall were leaders.” (18:3)

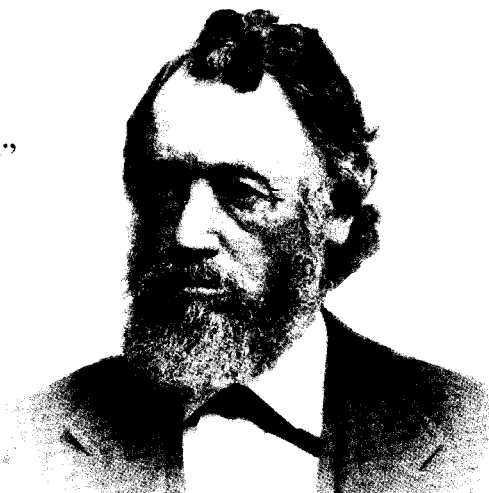
The Atkinson meeting obviously was not James White’s initiation; and Ellen Harmon had been traveling with him for at least a couple of weeks.³⁶

John Gallison testified that he had been acquainted with Dammon “a number of years,” had “attended every meeting” (including those “at his house”), and he believed Dammon had “baptised about eleven.” (21:2) The baptism rate began to pick up in the month after Dammon’s trial, as the new date (April 1845) set by O.R.L. Crosier and others for the Lord’s return approached.³⁷ March 20–24 found ten to fifteen candidates being baptised daily from among those still meeting at the James Ayer, Jr., home in Atkinson.³⁸ And, according to the *Oxford Democrat*, Dammon was still “their presiding elder.”³⁹

That Mrs. White was not put off by Dammon’s behavior in Atkinson is easily inferred from her own writing. In 1860 she recalled the meeting at Exeter and “what I had been shown concerning some fanatical persons present, who were exalted by the spirit of Satan.”⁴⁰ This cannot refer to Dammon whom “the Spirit of the Lord rested upon” a few days later (and on the next page)⁴¹ during his arrest in Atkinson. Mrs. White lionized Dammon at the trial; and not long thereafter she and Dammon were together in Topsham, Maine, where, she wrote, “Brother D. cried out in the Spirit, and power of God,” to encourage a prayer of healing for Frances Howland.⁴²

Graybill says that “after she went through this [Atkinson] experience, she rode calmly to the next town with James and Sister [Louisa] Foss in the carriage.”⁴³ It is unlikely that Miss Harmon “rode calmly to the next town.” She and James were departing the scene of an arrest. Had they been feeling calm and courageous, they might have joined their supporting testimony with that of the “strong brethren present who” Mrs. White later wrote, “had stood by him [Dammon] in the trial.”⁴⁴

William C.
Crosby, Esq.,
witness
for the
prosecution.



Courtesy: James B. Vickery collection

“Sister Foss” most likely was not “in the carriage.” This is probably why Ellen’s mother was “begging” her “to return home.”⁴⁵ The available documentation suggests that Louisa Foss first accompanied Ellen some time later, upon her initial journey to New Hampshire.⁴⁶ And, whoever she was traveling with, they were transported in a sleigh, not by carriage.

James White would not have said, “Boy, I hope we never get into one of *those* again.” As indicated by J.W.E. Harvey at the Dover courthouse, “Dammon, White and Hall were leaders” at an earlier meeting that “lasted eight days.” (18:3) And later in the summer of 1845 White identified closely with the fanatical Adventists, writing, “Most of our brethren are under guardianship,” and defiantly paraphrased part of his lady friend’s first vision:

By this time God made them [non-Millerite Christians] to know that he had loved the “fanciful,” “fanatical,” “disgraceful,” band, who could wash “one another’s feet.”⁴⁷

A year later, and four days before his wedding to Ellen, James White complained to “Brother Collins” about “a congregation of hard, ugly Congregationalists and Methodists” before which he was to preach a funeral service. He made certain that Collins understood that he was not “going to try to convert people to the Advent faith. No; it’s too late. But it’s our duty on some occasions to give a reason of our hope I think, even to *swine*.” A few lines later White mentioned a recent visit with some of his Adventist friends, concluding, “We had a Holy Ghost time together.”⁴⁸

Ellen White in the dock

Both the prosecution and defense witnesses agree essentially on what took place at the Ayer home in Atkinson on Saturday night, February 15, 1845. But there is substantial disagreement between Mrs. White’s 1860 account—fifteen years after the fact—and the testimony of the witnesses as reported in the *Piscataquis Farmer*. The record and the witnesses contradict her on major and minor points, and no witness supports her on any contested point (see box).

The contradiction that matters most is between the testimony of the arresting officer, Joseph Moulton, and the memory of Mrs. White over whether or not the participants in the Ayer home resisted Dammon’s arrest. Deputy sheriff Moulton testified that when he notified Dammon that he was under arrest, “a number of women jumped on to him—he clung to them, and they to him.” Moulton said that “so great was the resistance” that he had to send twice for reinforcements to help him and the three assistants who accompanied him. “We were resisted by both men and women,” Moulton said. (19:3)

Ellen White says that when the sheriff and his three deputies tried to arrest Dammon, “the Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, and his strength was taken away, and he fell to the floor helpless.” In their efforts to drag Dammon from the house, she recalled, the men “would move him a few inches only, and then rush out of the house” because “the power of God was in that room, and the servants of God with their countenances lighted up with his glory,” she insisted, “made no resistance.” But, despite a dozen men’s efforts, “Eld. D. was held by the power of God about forty minutes, and not all the strength of those men could move him from the floor where he lay helpless.”⁴⁹

Not only does Mrs. White contradict the arresting officer’s account of what he and his men experienced, but her version describes an event that clearly is beyond ordinary human experience. True or false, her version is fantastic. If Mrs. White was accurately describing a *supernatural* event, then the response of the people who witnessed or experienced it seems very *unnatural*. Such a remarkable event certainly would have become the focus of much attention. Yet not one of the many witnesses for either the defense or the prosecution contradicts Sheriff Moulton’s terse description of the arrest.

In fact, if twelve men worked strenuously and unsuccessfully to budge one prone and otherwise unimpeded individual, and if there had been such a powerful but invisible aura in the room that “it was a relief to them to rush out of the house” periodically, normal men would have been sufficiently spooked (or converted) by the experience to abandon their mission long before forty minutes had expired.

Mrs. White's errors on lesser points involving the trial itself further weaken the credibility of her account:

White: "A lawyer offered his services."⁵⁰ Witness Joel Doore, a Dammon partisan: "I did engage counsel in this case to defend the prisoner." (21:1)

White: Dammon "was asked to give them [the court] a synopsis of his faith."⁵¹ *Piscataquis Farmer*: "Court indulged him to speak." (22:2)

White: Dammon "was asked to sing one" of their "curious hymns."⁵² *Farmer* report: "The prisoner and his witnesses asked permission, and sung as follows: . . . 'While I was down in Egypt's land, . . .'" (22:2)

This incident from early 1845 presents modern Adventists with the unhappy choice between contemporaneous witnesses and the memory of their prophet—between testimony given under oath and statements made under inspiration.

Mrs. White a fanatic?

Adventists who are willing to let the accumulating weight of evidence influence their assessment of Mrs. White's memory will find helpful an overview of her participation in the fanaticism she insists she was fighting. The sworn testimony of the witnesses at the Dammon trial—for both the prosecution and the defense—suggests that Ellen Harmon was more involved in the bizarre "exercises" that precipitated Israel Dammon's arrest than Seventh-day Adventists have ever imagined.

All of Mrs. White's later published and unpublished statements about her earliest experience deny any participation in fanaticism. In fact, she strongly insists that her primary duty was to travel among the disappointed Adventists and fight fanaticism:

It became my unpleasant duty to meet this [fanaticism], and we labored hard to suppress it. We had no part in it, only to bear a testimony decidedly against it wherever we met it. . . .⁵³

The nominal Adventists charged me with fanaticism, and I was falsely, and by some, wickedly, represented as being the leader of the fanaticism that I was laboring to do away.⁵⁴

It would be unfair to find Mrs. White guilty of fanaticism merely because she continually associated with fanatics. After all, how could she fight fanatics without being where they were? However, the witnesses at Dammon's trial, along with independent documentation, suggest that she participated in some of the very activities she later denounced and remembered combatting (see box: "Fanaticism and Miss Harmon" p. 29).

Rebaptism

"Some had distressed spells (or pretended to) declaring it was the duty of some particular person to be baptized again," wrote John Cook to the editor of the *Morning Star*.⁵⁵ Cook, if he read the newspaper, may have had Ellen Harmon in mind. Because both friendly and unfriendly witnesses at Dammon's trial (quoted in the *Piscataquis Farmer*) testified that Miss Harmon presented some individuals visiting the James Ayer, Jr. home that Saturday evening with painful alternatives: they could undergo an icy baptism that very night or "go to hell." Loton Lambert informed the court that Harmon

told her vision to a cousin of mine, that she must be baptized that night or go to hell—she objected, because she had once been baptized.

Lambert further testified that Harmon

Contradicting Stories

Mrs. White's *Spiritual Gifts 2* account of the arrest and trial of Israel Dammon contradicts—on major and minor points—the testimony of both friendly and unfriendly witnesses and the court record as reported in the 7 March 1845 *Piscataquis Farmer*. Those contradictions are presented in adjacent columns below.

Mrs. Ellen G. White

(*Spiritual Gifts 2*, 1860)

The power of God was in that room, and the servants of God with their countenances lighted up with his glory, made no resistance.

They would move him a few inches only, and then rush out of the house. . . . The men could not endure the power of God, and it was a relief to them to rush out of the house.

Elder D. was held by the power of God about forty minutes, and not all the strength of those men could move him from the floor where he lay helpless.

A lawyer offered his services.

Many witnesses were brought to sustain the charge, but they were at once broken down by the testimony of Eld. D.'s acquaintances present. . . .

He was asked to give them [the court] a synopsis of his faith.

It was also suggested that they sung curious hymns, and he was asked to sing one.

Witnesses and trial record abridgment

(*Piscataquis Farmer* 7 March 1845)

Joseph Moulton: "When I went to arrest prisoner, . . . so great was the resistance, that I with three assistants, could not get him out. . . . We were resisted by both men and women."

"I remained in the house and sent for more help. . . ."

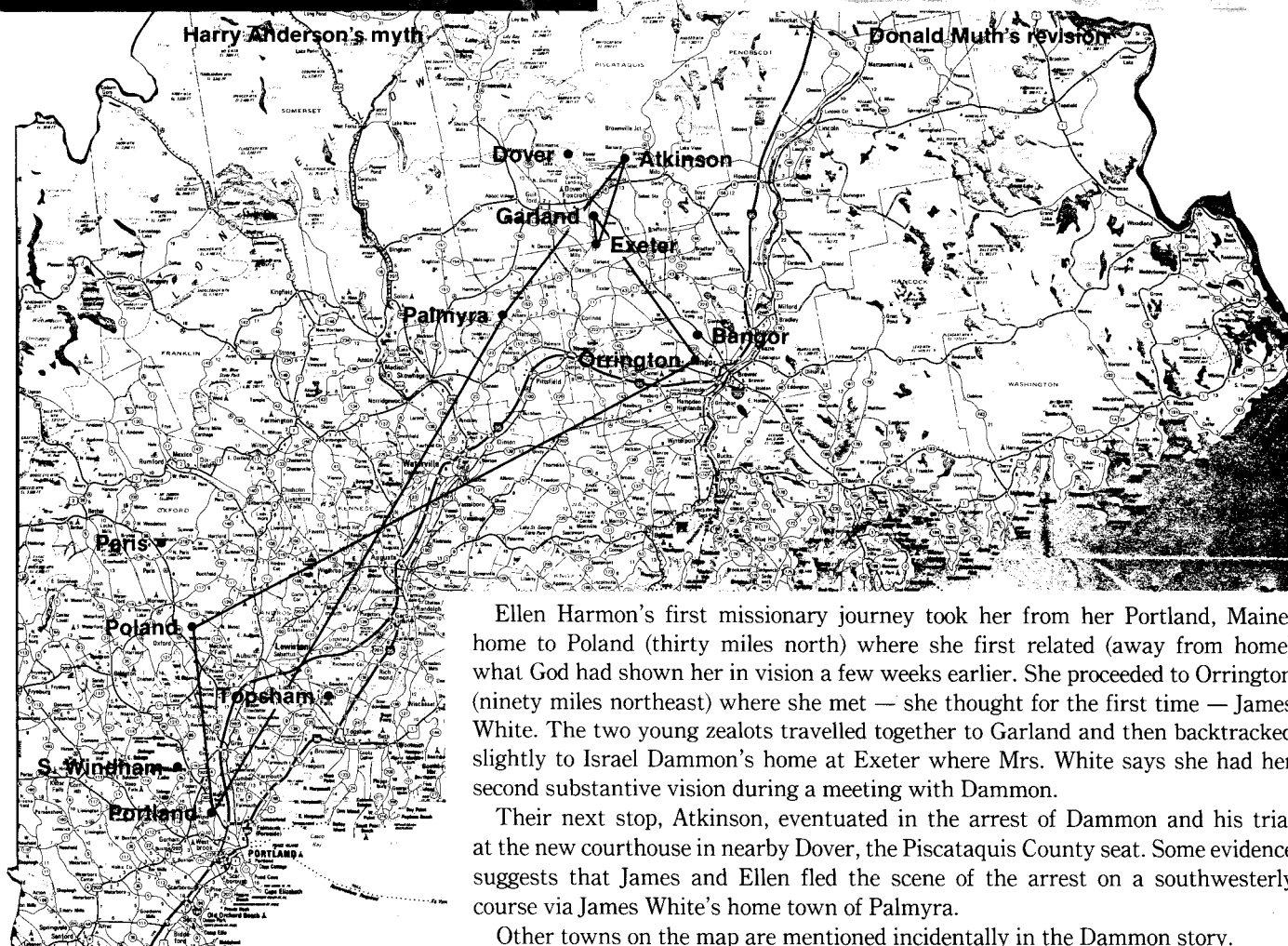
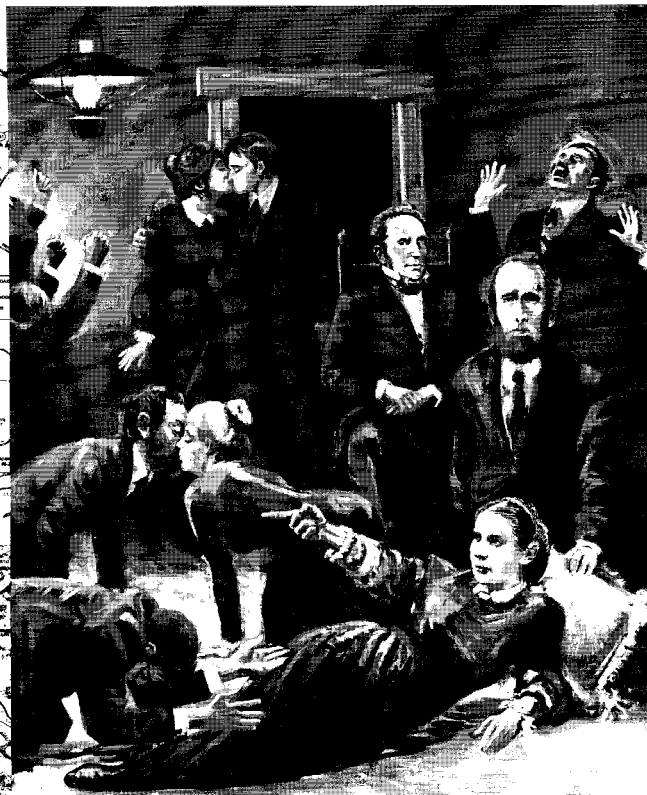
"We overpowered them and got him out door in custody."

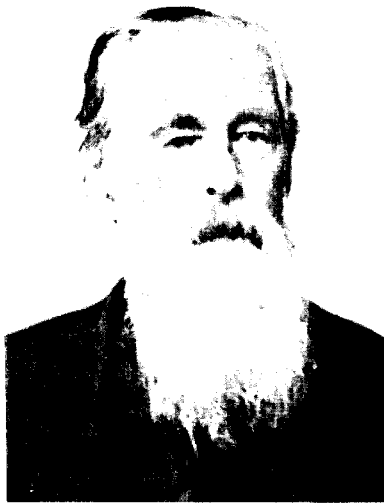
Joel Doore, under cross-examination: "I did engage counsel in this case to defend the prisoner."

The Court after consultation sentenced the prisoner to the House of Correction for the space of Ten Days, . . .

Court indulged him to speak.

The prisoner and his witnesses asked permission, and sung as follows. . . .





James S.
Holmes, Esq.,
attorney
for the
defense.

From M. C. Lowell's Old Foxcroft



Charles P.
Chandler, Esq.,
attorney
for the
prosecution.

Courtesy, James B. Vickery collection

called Joel Doore, said he had doubted, and would not be baptized again—she said Br. Doore don't go to hell. Doore kneeled to her feet and prayed. (19:1)

Isley Osborn, a friendly witness, stated:

She told them their cases had been made known to her by the Lord, and if they were not baptized that evening, they would go to hell. We believed her, . . . (20:2)

On this point and at that time Ellen Harmon was no hypocrite. She was first baptized at the age of fourteen on June 26, 1842, in Casco Bay.⁵⁶ Later, James White wrote, she received "baptism at my hands, at an early period of her experience."⁵⁷ And she preached from vision what she practiced—at least into 1850. On July 29 of that year, while in Oswego, New York, she had a vision that those who since 1844 had kept Sunday for the Sabbath

would have to go into the water and be baptized in the faith of the shut door and keeping the commandments of God and in the faith of Jesus coming to sit on the throne of his Father David and to redeem Israel.

I also saw those who have been baptized as a door into the professed churches will have to be baptized out of that door again, into the faith mentioned above, and all who have not been baptized since '44 will have to be baptized before Jesus comes and some will not gain progress now until that duty is done.⁵⁸

Later, Mrs. White backed away from both her Oswego Vision theology and her Atkinson meeting methodology:

Several . . . of our ministers I was shown were making a mistake . . . [by] making a test question of rebaptism. This is not the way that the subject should be treated. . . . These good brethren were not

She told them their cases had been made known to her by the Lord, and if they were not baptized that evening, they would go to hell.

bringing those newly come to the faith along step by step, cautiously and guardedly, and . . . some were turned from the truth, when a little time and tender, careful dealing with them would have prevented all such sad results.⁵⁹

The shut door⁶⁰

In 1845 Miss Harmon believed that probation had closed for "all the wicked world"⁶¹ on October 22, 1844. She admitted in a letter to J.N.

Loughborough in 1874 that "after the time passed in '44, I did believe no more sinners would be converted." This is accurate. However, her next words suggest that the door was shut on both her memory and her theology:

I never had a vision that no more sinners would be converted, and I am clear and free to state no one has ever heard me say or has read from my pen statements which will justify them in charges they have made against me upon this point.⁶²

The "they" who had made "charges" were four of Mrs. White's friends and acquaintances from the early days. They remembered her relationship to the shut door differently. Israel Dammon, of course, was there:

It has been some twenty years or more since we were associated with Mrs. W., but we remember very perfectly that her first visions, or vision, was told both by herself and others (especially by Mrs. W.) in connection with the preaching of the "shut door," and went to substantiate the same.⁶³

The first time Ellen Harmon related her first vision away from her Portland home was in January of 1845 at Megquier Hill (pronounced Me-gweer) in Poland.⁶⁴ John Megquier remembered:

About the first visions that she had were at my house in Poland. She said God had told her in vision that the door of mercy had closed, and there was no more chance for the world, and she would tell who had got spots on their garments; and those spots were got on by questioning her visions, whether they were of the Lord or not.⁶⁵

Mrs. Lucinda S. Burdick met Ellen Harmon several times in 1845 at her uncle's house in South Windham, Maine. Mrs. Burdick recalled that during one of Miss Harmon's visions "her position upon the ground seemed so uncomfortable that I placed her head in my lap and supported her thus throughout the event."⁶⁶ Wrote Mrs. Burdick:

Ellen . . . said God had shown her in vision that Jesus Christ arose on the tenth day of the seventh month, 1844, and shut the door of mercy; had left forever the mediatorial throne; the whole world was doomed and lost, and there never could be another sinner saved.

. . . I have been told that they deny on this [west] coast that she ever saw the door of mercy closed; but there are thousands of living witnesses who know that a blacker lie could not be invented, and I am one of the number.⁶⁷

Pastor I.C. Wellcome, who was rebaptized by James White,⁶⁸ remembered that he "several times caught her [Miss Harmon], while [she was] falling to the floor, at times when she swooned away for a vision."

I have heard her relate her visions of these dates. Several were

published on sheets [he probably refers to the early broadside, *To the Little Remnant Scattered Abroad*]⁶⁹ to the effect that all were lost who did not endorse the '44 move, that Christ had left the throne of mercy, and all were sealed that ever would be, and no others could repent. She and James taught this one or two years.⁷⁰

Although these four witnesses contradict Mrs. White's 1874 statement in which she says "I never had a vision that no more sinners would be converted, and . . . no one has ever heard me say or has read from my pen" such statements, it is not a case of their word versus hers. It is Mrs. White versus Mrs. White. Twenty-seven years earlier—on July 13, 1847—while she still believed in an irrevocably shut door, Ellen White had written to Joseph Bates about a vision she had received in February of 1845 on her first missionary journey:

While in Exeter, Maine, in meeting with Israel Dammon, James, and many others, many of them did not believe in a shut door. . . . It was then I had a view of Jesus rising from His mediatorial throne and going to the holiest as Bridegroom to receive His kingdom. . . . Most of them received the vision and were settled upon the shut door.⁷¹

By 1883 Mrs. White not only denied having had a vision that "no more sinners would be converted," but she added the contradiction that her first visions had disabused the little band of their shut-door error:

For a time after the disappointment in 1844, I did hold, in common with the advent body, that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world. This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error, and enabled us to see the true position.⁷²

Damned to hell

Five times witnesses (two friendly and one unfriendly) at the Dammon trial attributed to Ellen Harmon the specific words "go to hell" as the option afforded individuals at the James Ayer, Jr., home who either would not "be baptized," "be baptized again," or "forsake all their friends." It is clear from her vision at Oswego, New York (29 July 1850), that Ellen White believed those who would not be rebaptized were lost. But some Adventists—who won't mind the unbiblical theology involved—ironically, might be troubled to learn that she would use the expression "go to hell."

In July of 1874 Mrs. Burdick recalled that Miss Harmon had used the expressions "doomed and damned" to describe the whole world after 1844, and to doomed individuals "as soon as they took a stand against" her visions.⁷³ The next month, in a private letter to J.N. Loughborough, Mrs. White denied Burdick's statement:

I never have under any circumstances used this language to anyone, however sinful. I have ever had messages of reproof for those who used these harsh expressions. . . . I have never stated that this one or that one was doomed or damned. I never had a testimony of this kind for anyone. I have ever been shown that God's people should shun these strong expressions which are peculiar to the first-day Adventists.⁷⁴

In the third issue of *The Present Truth*, Ellen White appears to have slipped while recounting a vision and to have used one of those "strong expressions" so "peculiar to the first-day Adventists":

I saw that Satan was working through agents, in a number of ways. He was at work through ministers, who have rejected the truth [that October 22, 1844, was an eschatologically crucial date], and are given over to strong delusions to believe a lie that they might be damned.⁷⁵

Usually, however, Mrs. White got across the same message through euphemisms such as "spots on their garments,"⁷⁶ or "hearts . . . as black as ever,"⁷⁷ or "forever lost."⁷⁸

It does seem clear that Mrs. White was denying only the use of cer-

Fanaticism and Miss Harmon

Postdisappointment fanaticism	Evidence indicates Ellen Harmon—
Mandatory rebaptism	taught/participated.
Shut door	taught it from vision.
"Go to hell" (intemperate expressions)	used phrase repeatedly; trial witnesses agree.
The holy kiss	taught it from vision.
The holy laugh	described an instance of it affirmatively.
Mixed footwashing (women wash men's feet)	taught it from vision.
Shouting	participated actively.
Slain by the Spirit	fell on many occasions.
The dead are raised	denied this belief, and no evidence refutes her.
Time setting	does not deny it; early friends say she was.
No work doctrine	did not work; but says she fought this doctrine.

tain expressions; she did not deny having told individuals (or a class of people) that they were, or would be, lost. She was very clear that William Miller's associates, who did not maintain their faith in the shut door and adopt the seventh day Sabbath, were all lost.⁷⁹

In fact, the day following a vision given in late 1850 at Paris, Maine, she wrote of "Laodiceans" who had "said the shut door was of the devil, . . . They shall die the death." Why? Because, she explained, "the sin against the Holy Ghost was to ascribe to Satan . . . what the Holy Ghost has done."⁸⁰

The holy kiss

The New England populous was both amused and scandalized by newspaper accounts of the promiscuous public kissing that attended the home meetings of fanatical, postdisappointment Millerites. One paper reported a Millerite meeting in Portland at which

Brother M. stated that he had a special impression that he must kiss sister N. Her husband being present, thought such an impres-

It is clear from her vision at Oswego, New York, that Ellen White believed those who would not be rebaptized were forever lost.

sion must come from the Devil—as no good impression would expose his wife to be kissed by such an "ugly looking mug" as that brother were. So he took her away unknissed, and will probably keep her away.⁸¹

The subject of kissing came up repeatedly at the trial of Israel Dammon, with variations on the word (e.g., kiss, kissed, kissing) occurring

at least twenty-six times. Witnesses for the accused stoutly defended the practice.

One particular instance of this “exercise” that received so much attention at the trial had more the flavor of a make-up kiss than a holy kiss. Dorinda Baker, the other visionist present, approached Joel Doore saying, “You have refused me before.” Doore recalled Miss Baker saying that he “had thought hard of her.” Doore became “satisfied of my error, and . . . we kissed each other with the holy kiss.” (21:1) Loton Lambert was watching and testified that Miss Baker had said, “that feels good.” (19:2) Joel Doore remembered, “When she kissed me, she said there was light ahead.” (21:1)

Job Moody testified that “kissing is a salutation of love . . . we have got positive scripture for it . . .” (20:2) And Isley Osborn added, “It is a part of our faith.” (20:3)

Ellen White later wrote in agreement. Including herself among the 144,000, she stated:

Then it was that the synagogue of Satan [“fallen Adventists,” who had given up 1844 as a mistake, and “the nominal churches”]⁸² knew that God loved us who could . . . *salute the brethren with a holy kiss*, and they worshipped at our feet.⁸³ (Curiously, the italicized words were omitted from the sixth edition of *Spiritual Gifts 2*.)

There are several appendix notes in the fifth edition of *Early Writings* (placed there in 1963 by the trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate) that are “provided to explain expressions and situations not so well understood now. . . .” The trustees write:

It was the custom among the early Sabbath keeping Adventists to exchange the holy kiss at the ordinance of humility. No reference is made to obvious impropriety of exchanging the holy kiss between men and women, but there is a call for all to abstain from all appearance of evil.⁸⁴

Perhaps the next edition of *Early Writings* will contain a rewrite of that appendix to “explain expressions and situations not so well understood” by the trustees in 1963.

James Ayer, Jr., the man in whose Atkinson home Dammon was arrested, witnessed to the court that “it is a part of our faith to kiss each other—brothers kiss sisters and sisters kiss brothers, I think we have biblical authority for that.” (20:1) Mrs. White concurred, citing 1 Thessalonians 5:26.⁸⁵ In fact, all of the specific instances of kissing mentioned in the Dammon trial abridgment were kisses between members of the opposite sex: Joel Doore and Dorinda Baker, Israel Dammon and Mrs. Isley Osborn, and Dammon and Mrs. George S. Woodbury.

The holy laugh

Neither as biblical nor perhaps as controversial as the holy kiss, the “holy laugh” is mentioned in a *Bangor Whig and Courier* report of the arraignment of nine Millerites and in a list of postdisappointment Millerite fanatical manifestations contributed by a reader to the *Morning Star*.⁸⁶

In an August 1850 letter, Mrs. White seemed to acknowledge and affirm the holy laugh. James White had taken suddenly and seriously ill. Ellen, Sister Harris, Clarissa Bonfoey, and Ellen’s sister, Sarah, who were alone with the sick man, united their prayers on his behalf:

Sister Harris and Clarissa were set entirely free and they prayed God with a loud voice. The spirit caused Clarissa to laugh aloud. James was healed every whit; . . .⁸⁷

It seems odd that when Mrs. White wrote this story for publication, she did not mention a charismatic prayer session nor did she indicate that “the spirit caused Clarissa to laugh aloud.”⁸⁸

Promiscuous footwashing

Prosecution witness Jeremiah B. Green testified that he had witnessed footwashing during an earlier Millerite meeting at which “Elder Dammon was the presiding elder”; but he only “saw men wash men’s

feet, and women wash women’s feet.” (19:3) John Gallison testified that “we do wash each other’s feet”; (21:2) Jacob Mason referred to “wash[ing] feet in the evening”; (20:3) and Isley Osborn said they preferred “to go through the ordinance of washing feet in secret.” (20:3)

Ellen White’s footwashing practice in 1851 was more progressive than the trial record indicates was Dammon’s 1845 protocol in Atkinson. Citing “duties . . . the performance of which will keep the people of God humble and separate from the world, and from backsliding, like the nominal churches,” Mrs. White wrote: “I saw that the Lord had moved upon sisters to wash the feet of the brethren and that it was according to gospel order.” But, she cautioned, “there is no example given in the Word for brethren to wash sisters’ feet.”⁸⁹

In her very first vision (December 1844), Ellen Harmon was shown that her enemies “knew that God had loved us who could wash one another’s feet.”⁹⁰ (This phrase also was deleted from the vision as published in 1860 in *Spiritual Gifts 2*.)

Voluntary humility (creeping)

Crawling was another exercise, intended to promote and demonstrate humility, that was in vogue at Dammon’s meeting in Atkinson. John Doore testified on the witness stand that he had “seen both men and women crawl across the floor on their hands and knees.” (21:1) And George S. Woodbury said, “My wife and Dammon passed across the floor on their hands and knees.” (21:2)

A description of the creeping that took place at the home of Captain John Meguire in Poland, Maine, was provided by a correspondent of the *Norway Advertiser*:

They seldom sit in any other position than on the bare floor. . . . A woman, at the meeting he attended, got on her hands and knees, and crept over the floor like a child. A man, in the same position, followed her, butting her occasionally with his head. Another man threw himself at full length upon his back on the bed, and presently three women crossed him with their bodies.⁹¹

This creeping was a humiliation that—however literally biblical (“except ye become as little children” Matt. 18:1-6)—Ellen White, thirty years later, insisted she had not been prepared to bear:

Duties were made by men, tests manufactured that God had never required, and which found no sanction in His Word. I state definitely I never crept when I could walk, and have ever opposed it. I was shown in vision, after I refused to accept this as a duty, that it was not a requirement of God, but the fruit of fanaticism.⁹²

Mrs. White was reacting—although not publicly—to the remarks of Mrs. Lucinda Bodge Burdick published in an 1874 issue of *The World’s Crisis*. Mrs. Burdick had become well acquainted with Ellen Harmon and James White when the three of them stayed together several times

“I saw that the Lord had moved upon sisters to wash the feet of the brethren and that it was according to gospel order.” — Ellen G. White

in 1845 at the home of Josiah Little (Burdick’s uncle) in South Windham, Maine, a few miles from Harmon’s parent’s home in Portland.⁹³ It was this 1874 statement by Burdick, published in *The World’s Crisis*, that Mrs. White objected to so strongly:

At the time of my first acquaintance with them [James White and Ellen Harmon in “early 1845”] they were in a wild fanaticism,—used to sit on the floor instead of chairs, and creep around the floor like little children. Such freaks were considered a mark of humility.⁹⁴

Although the absence of independent, contemporary evidence on

this point leaves the 1874 statements of Mrs. White and Mrs. Burdick in apparently unresolvable tension, the uncommitted reader will have to give Burdick the edge because of Mrs. White's unwillingness to make a public refutation.⁹⁵

Shouting

The incoherent din that marked the proceedings at the Ayer household on the night before Israel Dammon's arrest was not unusual for a Millerite home meeting. Defense witness Joel Doore minimized the

Mrs. White's Weak References

At the end of *Spiritual Gifts 2*, the only publication in which Ellen White tells the Israel Dammon story, there are fifteen lists of individuals whose names are published as vouching for various segments of Mrs. White's autobiographical sketches.

Of these fifteen lists, five pertain specifically to events she experienced in the state of Maine (including the Dammon incident in Atkinson) during the first fifteen to eighteen months of her public ministry (roughly January 1845 to June 1846). These five lists of testimonials include sixty-one entries; but when they are sifted for repetition, thirty-eight different names remain.

By examining the 1850 United States Census Bureau records for Maine, and reviewing dozens of Maine local histories housed at the Library of Congress, I was able to identify twenty-eight of the thirty-eight individuals (73 percent) printed on the five lists. (Three or four others have been identified only tentatively.)

Twenty of the twenty-eight witnesses (71 percent) I was able to identify were from five families. Nine of the twenty-eight were sixteen-years-old or younger (the youngest being six) when the time passed in 1844. Two were charged in 1845 with vagrancy and/or disturbing the peace. Two others were deceased before 1859 or 1860 when the lists probably were compiled. One of those, Uriah Smith's father-in-law, Cyprian Stevens, died on September 6, 1858, five days after being bitten by a rattlesnake.

It seems surprising that eight (or 29 percent) of the twenty-eight individuals I was able to identify were strongly denounced by Mrs. White in 1860—the same year that she published their names—for fanaticism and for not receiving her visions, including Cyprian Stevens' daughter, Harriet (Mrs. Uriah) Smith:

Harriet, I was carried back and shown that there has never been a reception of the visions given in Paris. . . . I was pointed back, away back to the time when those in Paris, especially Brn. Andrews' and Stevens' families were ensnared in error, and for years were in a perfect deception of Satan. They suffered while in this error, but they will never obtain a particle of reward for it. If they had been willing to be taught, and receive light in God's appointed way, they would not have been held in error, fanaticism and darkness all that length of time. ("To Brother J.N. Andrews and Sister H.N. Smith," W58, 1860, Advent Source Collection, pp. 7 & 10.)

The lists of names at the end of *Spiritual Gifts 2* vouching for Mrs. White's stories were discussed in 1874 by Isaac Wellcome in his *History of the Second Advent Message and Mission, Doctrine and People*, page 408:

The most of these signers were as deeply in fanaticism as [James and Ellen White] themselves; some were leading ones. But signers who had *not been personally associated* in the fanaticism being scarce, to certify in these prepared papers, the names of two young ladies (perhaps more) are added, who, *at the time specified for the events*, were aged, respectively, nine and fourteen years. Prodigies in intellect and judgment, surely, or, perhaps, endowed with the "gift of discerning of spirits." But it is no difficult task to procure the names of partisans, associates, accomplices, their children, cousins, and aunts, to certify to one's rectitude, sanity, or orthodoxy. It is more safe and important, however, to have a good "record in heaven."

Of the five lists of names under scrutiny, one list was made up

of five individuals who were supposed to have signed the following statement:

We bear cheerful testimony to the truthfulness of the statements relative to Elder Dammon, on pages 40, 41 [of *Spiritual Gifts 2*]. As near as we can recollect we believe the circumstances of his arrest and trial to be fairly stated.

Wm. T. Hannaford,	H.A. Hannaford,
James Ayer, Sen.,	D.S. Hannaford,
	Mrs. R.W. Wood.

As references go, this list of five is not very impressive. None of the five were witness at Dammon's trial. James Ayer, Jr., owned the home in which Dammon's arrest took place and he did testify at the trial. But it is his father who was seventy-two at the time of the incident, and eighty-seven when *Spiritual Gifts 2* was published, whose signature apparently was obtained.

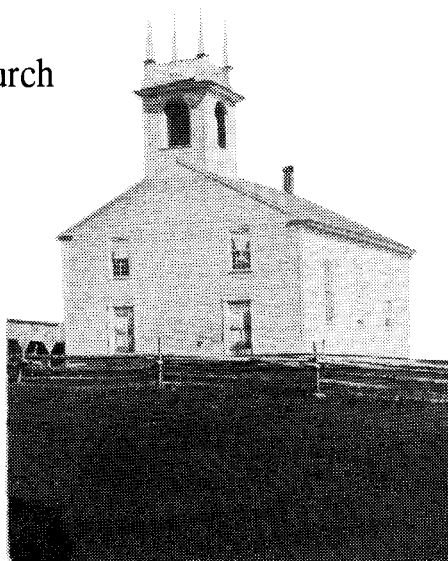
The remaining four witnesses resided in Orrington, across the Penobscot River from Bangor. The four were sufficiently close neighbors to be included on the same page of the 1850 federal census. Laborer William Hannaford, his wife, Dorcas, and their daughter, Hester A., comprised three of the four Orrington testimonials. They were ages forty-three, forty, and sixteen, respectively, in 1845. It is quite possible that William was the Mr. Hannaford who figured reluctantly in a 28 March 1845 report from a *Piscataquis Farmer* correspondent in Atkinson:

The Millerites have been collecting for the past four days and held their meetings at the house of Mr. James Ayer, Jr., in the southwest part of this town. All secular business has been suspended by them, to await the coming of the Lord, which they say will take place on the 4th day of April next. From 10 to 15 have been baptised daily, many of them six or eight times each. Last evening a party of Indians or anti-Routers arrived on the ground about nine o'clock, and upon being refused admittance, burst open the doors and took the Millerites belonging out of town and carried them off with them. They harnessed Mr. Ayer's horse to a sled, and packed on a load, and pressed a Mr. Hannaford one of their number to drive the team through the woods to Dead Stream, about five miles distant, where they intended to deposit them—and I understand they have threatened to tar and feather them in case they continue to hold their meetings any more.

The final name published as vouching for Mrs. White's account of Dammon's arrest and trial, a Mrs. R.W. Wood, was twenty-three in 1845 and married to a twenty-nine year old farmer named Newall Wood (probably the Brother Wood mentioned at the trial). A troubling reference to Mrs. Wood's *Spiritual Gifts 2* testimonial appears on page 117 of E.S. Ballenger's unfinished manuscript entitled "Early History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church":

In a private letter dated May 16, 1888, Mrs. Wood denies that she ever signed this statement and she did not know that her name was attached to it until many years after. She also denies the accuracy of Mrs. White's statements regarding the [Dammon] affair. She was present and remembered the experience very well, and her account does not agree with Mrs. White's account. If they will forge Mrs. Wood's name to a document they would forge other names; therefore we have good reason for doubting the value of their testimonials.

Universalist church where Israel Dammon was arraigned.



volume: "There was not one tenth part of the noise Saturday evening, that there generally is at the meetings I attend." (21:1) But it was loud enough to astonish the prosecution witnesses.

William C. Crosby described it as "exceedingly noisy." "They would at times all be talking at once, halloing at the top of their voices." In fact, he added, "by spells it was the most noisy assembly I ever attended.... I don't say Dammon shouted the loudest; I think some stronger in the lungs than he." (19:3)

Dammon's shouting was not limited to the Saturday night meeting: "Tuesday morning the prisoner having taken his seat, rose just as the Court came in, and shouted Glory to the strength of his lungs." (22:2)

Ellen Harmon, and Ellen White up to at least the age of twenty-five or thirty, would have appreciated Dammon's outburst had she been there: "Singing, I saw, often drove away the enemy and shouting would beat him back. I saw that pride had crept in among you, and there was not childlike simplicity among you."⁹⁶

Ellen White's letters, from 1853 and previously, indicate her early support for unreserved worship. She admonished one Adventist congregation in 1850: "I saw you should rise together, and unitedly get the victory over the powers of darkness and sing and shout to the glory of God."⁹⁷ "I saw there was too little glorying God, too little childlike simplicity among the remnant."⁹⁸

On November 7, 1850, Ellen White described a conference she had recently attended of twenty-eight Adventists at Topsham, Maine:

Sunday the power of God came upon us like a mighty rushing wind. All arose upon their feet and praised God with a loud voice.... The voice of weeping could not be told from the voice of shouting. It was a triumphant time.... I never witnessed such a powerful time before.⁹⁹

In late 1851 James White wrote of a "powerful vision" that "had a mighty effect. Ellen came out of vision," he said, "then shouted till she went off in vision again."¹⁰⁰

According to Ron Graybill, "In the 1870s, feeling still ran high on some occasions"; and he quotes from an Ellen White letter to her boys in 1872:

The blessing and power of God rested upon your father and mother. We both fell to the floor. Your father, as he rose upon his feet to praise God, could not stand. The blessing of God rested upon him with remarkable power.... Elder Loughborough felt the power of God all through his body. The room seemed holy.... We shouted the high praises of God.¹⁰¹

But by 1874 Mrs. White had lost much of her "childlike simplicity." She recalled somewhat censoriously an early 1845 meeting in Orrington, Maine, a few weeks after Dammon's trial, at which she had

reprimanded fanatics for their "shouting and hallooing." Just before she left Orrington, a few assembled with her, she said; and "God was worshipped without boisterous noise and confusion, but with calm dignity."¹⁰²

By 1900 Mrs. White's memory had joined her childlike simplicity:

I bore my testimony, declaring that these fanatical movements, this din and noise, were inspired by the spirit of Satan, who was working miracles to deceive if possible the very elect.¹⁰³

"Slain by the Spirit"

Nine Millerites were arraigned before the Bangor, Maine, police court on 2 April 1845, charged with being

Idlers and Vagrants and disturbers of the public peace, and sentenced to the House of Correction for a term of time varying from five to thirty days. These trials caused great excitement and the City Hall was crowded to its utmost capacity....

There was evidently a misunderstanding among the spectators, of many of the technical terms in use among the Adventists... such as "salute," "embrace," "slain upon the floor," "shouting," "laughing," &c. Whenever these terms occurred in the testimony, they created much merriment.... This was especially the case when the acts which these terms express were described.¹⁰⁴

The expression "slain upon the floor" or "slain by the Spirit" was used to designate a sudden and total loss of physical strength that sometimes overcame Millerites during their ecstatic worship services.

Isaac Wellcome, a minister of the Advent Christian Church and author of *History of the Second Advent Message*, "was often in meeting with Ellen G. Harmon and James White in 1843 and 45."¹⁰⁵ Wellcome recalled Miss Harmon's actions:

She was strangely exercised in body and mind, usually talking in assemblies until nature was exhausted and then falling to the floor, unless caught by someone sitting near (we remember catching her twice to save her from falling upon the floor), remaining a considerable time in the mesmeric state, and afterwards, perhaps not until another meeting, she would relate the wonders which she claimed had been shown her in spirit....¹⁰⁶

Reacting privately in 1874 to Wellcome's testimony, Mrs. White wrote:

It might have been, but I have no acquaintance with him, and never knew him by sight. Before '44, I sometimes lost my strength under the blessing of God. I.C. Wellcome may have confounded these exercises of the power of the Spirit of God upon me with the visions.¹⁰⁷

Mrs. White seemed to be trying to say that while she had visions after 1844, she was not thereafter "so overpowered by the Spirit of God as to lose all strength...."¹⁰⁸ Arthur White does not agree. And, for evidence, he quotes from his grandmother's account of an experience she had "several days" after her second vision. As Father Pearson was praying for her, Mrs. White remembered: "My strength was taken away, and I fell to the floor. I seemed to be in the presence of the angels."¹⁰⁹

In 1847 Mrs. White described how she "fell from my chair to the floor," at the onset of her third vision (February 1845); "and a short time after I fell," Sister Durben "was struck down" by "the power of the Lord."¹¹⁰

"Such experiences were repeated again and again," says Arthur White, who has had the opportunity to browse for decades through tens of thousands of pages of Mrs. White's unpublished letters and manuscripts.¹¹¹

Limited-access policies of the Ellen White Estate force us to leave the disagreement on this point between Mrs. White and her grandson unresolved. But Mrs. White's belief that others around her were being slain by the Spirit throughout the late 1840s has been clearly demon-

strated by her descendent and by former associate secretary of the White Estate Ron Graybill.¹¹²

Also, it is clear that whether she was “slain upon the floor” (in or out of vision) during her early travels, Ellen Harmon spent a lot of time ministering prone from the floor. In Atkinson, on the evening of 15 February 1845, according to witness Loton Lambert, she lay on the floor having and telling visions for more than five hours. (19:2) Jacob Mason testified that James White “some of the time . . . held her head.” (20:3)

Later, Lucinda Burdick recalled that in the autumn of 1845 on a Sunday afternoon in South Windham, in a grove near the home of Andrew Bodge, that “suddenly, Ellen Harmon became rigidly prostrate upon the ground Her position upon the ground seemed so uncomfortable that I placed her head in my lap and supported her thus throughout the event.”¹¹³

Months later, in Randolph, Massachusetts, Ellen Harmon spent most of four hours “in vision . . . inclined backward against the wall in the corner of the room.” Mrs. White was quoting Otis Nichols for her description of that session, except that where he described her “talking in vision with a shrill voice,” she changed the word “shrill” to “clear.”¹¹⁴

The dead are raised

In 1874 Mrs. White recalled encountering and rebuking fanatics at Orrington in the summer of 1845, who “believe[d] the dead are raised,” and telling them “I know this is all a delusion.” She also recalled that at Garland in 1845 “Elder Dammon and many others . . . were in error and delusion in believing that the dead had been raised.”

While I was repeating this Scripture, Elder Damon [sic] arose and began to leap up and down, crying out, “The dead are raised and gone up; glory to God! Glory, Hallelujah!” Others followed his example, Elder Dammon said, “. . . I cannot sit still. The spirit and power of the resurrection is stirring my very soul.”

“Our testimony,” Mrs. White recalled, “was rejected, and they clung tenaciously to their errors.” “Elder Dammon . . . became my enemy only because I bore a testimony reproving his wrongs and his fanatical course”¹¹⁵

Ellen Harmon may never have taught, as Dammon did, that the dead are raised. But it is difficult to believe that she strongly rebuked those (especially Dammon) who did believe it. Although Mrs. White wrote in 1860 that “distracting influences” had “separated Eld. D. from his friends who believe the third message,” she recalled that Dammon

Dammon’s travels with the married Whites would have followed their wedding, more than a year after he became Mrs. White’s “enemy.”

joined with her at Topsham in the healing of Frances Howland, some time after his Atkinson arrest:

Bro. D. cried out in the Spirit, and power of God, “Is there some sister here who has faith enough to go and take her by the hand, and bid her arise in the name of the Lord?”¹¹⁶

If Dammon became Mrs. White’s “enemy” over her rebuke (in the spring or summer of 1845) of his fanatical belief that the dead were being raised, it seems odd that both Joseph Bates and R.S. Webber placed Israel Dammon in the wagon with Elder and Mrs. White and Bates, behind a “refractory colt,” shortly after the November 1846 Topsham meeting at which Mrs. White had the vision of the planets, that convinced Bates her visions were genuine.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, Uriah Smith, J.N. Andrews, and G.H. Bell substantiate references “to Eld. Damman [sic] as . . . having traveled with Bro. and Sr. White, and [having] been well acquainted with their early labors.”¹¹⁸ Dammon’s travels with the married Whites would have followed their wedding on August

Dover
courthouse
where Israel
Dammon
was tried.



Courtesy, James B. Vickery collection

30, 1846, more than a year after he became Mrs. White’s “enemy.”

What Ron Graybill wrote about Mrs. White’s memory of her childhood—“she consistently dates events . . . too early”—appears to be true for her early adulthood as well.¹¹⁹

Time setting

The lessons to be learned from the uneventful passing of firm dates set by William Miller’s followers in 1843 and 1844 for the second coming of Christ were lost—for varying lengths of time—on those Adventists who were later to be seen as pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist movement. O.R.L. Crosier, James White, and Joseph Bates all set dates after 1844 for the Lord’s return—each later than the other.¹²⁰

Ellen Harmon may well have been among the time setters of 1845. John Cook wrote on 5 April 1845 that some Millerites “were confirmed in the belief that the appointed time was the 4th day of April, on account of the visions (?) of a girl.”

In these exercises she wrote with her finger on her hand April 4th, 1845, and then counted over her fingers each one for a day from the time of the vision (so called) to the 4th of April.¹²¹

Mrs. Burdick was very specific in her personal memory of Ellen Harmon’s time setting:

At one time, she saw that the Lord would come the second time in June, 1845. The prophecy was discussed in all the churches, and in a little ‘shut-door paper’ published in Portland, Me. During the summer, after June passed, I heard a friend ask her how she accounted for the vision? She replied that “they told her in the language of Canaan, and she did not understand the language; that it was the next September that the Lord was coming, and the second growth of grass instead of the first in June.”¹²²

Mrs. Burdick’s statement was published in the July 1, 1874 issue of *The World’s Crisis*. Two months later, Ellen White privately denied all of Mrs. Burdick’s claims (and there were several)—except her statement regarding time setting.¹²³

In 1847, James White claimed that Miss Harmon had experienced a vision a few days before October 22, 1845, that indicated “we would be disappointed” again.¹²⁴ True or not,¹²⁵ Ellen, like James, continued to believe that Jesus’ second coming was truly imminent. This belief delayed both their effort “to try to convert people to the advent faith” and their ability to see “that the way . . . [was] made plain” for them to marry.¹²⁶

Even after she surrendered the notion of time setting, Mrs. White had trouble admitting that those who had done so during the Millerite period were really, biblically, mistaken (see *Early Writings*, pp. 232-237).

But whether or not she was setting specific dates for the Lord’s return in 1845, during the 1850s Mrs. White was placing clear limits on God’s timetable. In a 27 June 1850 vision, she was told that “now time is almost finished.” Her “accompanying angel” indicated that “those

who have of late embraced the third angel's message" would "have to learn in a few months" "what we have been years learning."¹²⁷

At an early morning meeting in Battle Creek in late May 1856 Mrs. White stated:

I was shown the company present at the Conference. Said the angel: "Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus." Solemn words were these, spoken by the angel....¹²⁸

Mrs. White did not (and logically could not) live to see her prophecy fail.

No work

While some of the Millerites annoyed their fellow citizens by crawling in public places,¹²⁹ and others disturbed their neighbors (as Noah Lunt did) with late night warnings under their windows,¹³⁰ it was primarily the no-work teaching and practice that caused civil authorities to place fanatical Millerites under guardianship or, for brief periods, in jail.¹³¹

These actions were taken in the best interest of both the community and the individuals arrested. Atkinson, where Dammon was apprehended, was little more than a village. In 1850 its population numbered 895—474 men and 421 women.¹³² When a few individuals left their crops to rot, their cows unmilked, their chickens unfed, or failed to show up somewhere for work, the impact on the tiny community was severe. The *Bangor Whig and Courier* reported:

An industrious farmer, living in Orrington [35 miles southeast of Atkinson] who has for several years, supplied customers in this city [Bangor—five miles from Orrington] with milk has recently.... abandon[ed] selling milk... to... make earnest preparation for the immediate end of the world. He has not since waited upon his customers....¹³³

The Selectmen of Orrington placed several Millerites under guardianship in February 1845 and cautioned the public "against purchasing any property, real or personal of them, as all contracts or deeds will be void on account of their incompetency to manage their affairs."¹³⁴ These legal actions began too late to save some Adventists from "expos[ing] themselves and their families to the peltings of the pitiless storm of poverty."¹³⁵

The Adventists' theological misjudgment left many of them and their children to the mercy of generous and more farsighted neighbors. Mrs. M. C. Stowell Crawford recalled:

After the time passed [1844] there were several large families that father had to supply with everything. He would purchase eight barrels of flower at a time.¹³⁶

Ellen Harmon appears to have lived (but perhaps not taught) the no-work fanaticism of Millerite leaders such as Jesse Stevens, Joseph Turner, and Dammon. The no-work doctrine—like the shut-door teaching—was the logical outgrowth of sincere belief in the imminent return of Christ. While Miss Harmon was certain that no sinners could be brought to Christ, she did believe that the saved could lose their faith and thereby their salvation while the Bridegroom tarried (Matthew 25).

The *Piscataquis Farmer* account of the Dammon trial and some of Mrs. White's own memory statements indicate her preoccupation with the mortal sin of doubt.¹³⁷ Prosecution witness William Crosby testified: "After the visionist called them up she told them they doubted. Her object seemed to be to convince them they must not doubt."¹³⁸ (19:2)

Neither Ellen Harmon nor Ellen White believed that anyone could be saved who had once believed in the 1844 movement and then gave it up—except William Miller.¹³⁹ And so those who believed their Saviour would appear momentarily had only two responsibilities: one, to keep the faith; and, two, to bolster the faith of their brethren.

By her own estimate, Ellen Harmon "journeyed for three months" during the winter/spring of 1845 encouraging the scattered flock of dis-

couraged Millerites with what the Lord had shown her in vision.¹³⁹ Yet "financial resources for her journey did not concern her," says Arthur White, because "she had now assumed a confident trust in God."¹⁴⁰ But so, of course, had those like Dammon, Stevens, and Turner, who advocated the no-work doctrine, "assumed a confident trust in God."

During her travels Miss Harmon was transported, fed, and boarded by new-found friends. The Nichols family boarded her for eight months (between August 1845 and June 1846) at their home near Roxbury, Massachusetts.¹⁴¹ Mrs. White remembered that "they were attentive to my wants, and generously supplied me with means to travel."¹⁴²

While Ellen Harmon herself did not work, she remembers laboring strenuously with those in Paris, Maine, "who believed that it was a sin to work."

The Lord gave me a reproof for the leader [Jesse Stevens] in this error, declaring that he was going contrary to the Word of God in abstaining from labor, [and] in urging his errors upon others....¹⁴³

Stevens rejected Harmon's counsel; and she recalled having seen, before the fact, "that his career would soon close." "At length," she wrote, "he made a rope of some of his bed clothing with which he hung himself."¹⁴⁴

It may be that Ellen Harmon was speaking out against the no-work doctrine in 1845, but a subsequent issue of *Adventist Currents* will demonstrate just how unlikely it is that Jesse Steven's suicide was related to his rejection of her counsel.

Was Ellen Harmon arrested?

Was Ellen Harmon arrested in 1845 for her fanatical behavior? Otis Nichols, writing to William Miller in April 1846, said that

there have been a number of warrants for her arrest, but God has signally protected her. At one time a sheriff and a number of men with him had no power over her person for an hour and a half, although they exerted all their bodily strength to move her, while she or no one else made any resistance.¹⁴⁵

Arthur White believes that Nichols was confusing Ellen Harmon with Israel Dammon,¹⁴⁶ even though Nichols—writing within months of the alleged arrest attempt—had reason to tell Miller, "What I have written I have knowledge of and think I can judge correctly." Why? "Sister Ellen has been a resident of my family much of the time for about eight months."¹⁴⁷

Whether or not Nichols was confused, Arthur White proceeds on his next *Early Years* page to confuse the "hour and a half" that Nichols says the sheriff and his men spent trying to arrest Miss Harmon with his

One of the leaders, well known as Joe Turner, another named Harmon,... were arrested at the house of Mr. Megquier, in Portland,...

own account of the Dammon arrest—even though Arthur's only source for the Atkinson incident is his grandmother who was there and says Dammon's arrest took forty minutes.¹⁴⁸

The most tantalizing piece of this puzzle is found in an April 1845 issue of the *Daily Eastern Argus*, a newspaper from Miss Harmon's home town of Portland:

Millerism. The proceedings of the professors of this belief, have been such, that the officers of Norway and some other towns in the vicinity have felt it their duty to take means to put a stop to them.... On Wednesday [April 23], one of the leaders, well known as Joe Turner, another named Harmon, with one or two others were arrested at the house of Mr. Megquier, in Poland, by the Selectmen of that town, as was reported....¹⁴⁹

Mrs. White remembered that she initially related her first vision away from home in Poland,¹⁵⁰ in (Otis Nichols says) January 1845.¹⁵¹ And John Megquier, at whose house Turner and Harmon were arrested, remembered that “about the first visions that she had were at my house in Poland.”¹⁵² By her own account she was in Poland on two occasions during the winter/spring of 1845. And her second visit to that town came after her initial, three-month journey east, which began

The records suggest that it would have been convenient for Miss Harmon to have been at John Megquier's house on April 23, 1845, in Poland.

sometime in January.¹⁵³ The records, the date, the geography, and the relationships, suggest that it would have been convenient for Miss Harmon to be at John Megquier's house on April 23, 1845, in Poland, Maine.

Added to all of this, Miss Harmon was a friend and admirer of the arrested Joseph Turner. In 1847 she described to Joseph Bates her great relief upon learning that the shut-door position that she received from her first vision was compatible with what Turner was teaching from Scripture.¹⁵⁴ And so it would not be surprising to find them together in late April 1845, at a popular Millerite gathering spot—the home of John Megquier.

Thirty years later Mrs. White remembered being shown in advance

that we would be in danger of imprisonment and abuse.

....the emissaries [sic] of Satan were on our track, and we would fare no better than those who had been fanatical and wrong, and suffered the consequences of their inconsistent, unreasonable course by abuse and imprisonment.¹⁵⁵

Three paragraphs after seeming to predict her own imprisonment, she writes of

brethren believing the truth... [who] were imprisoned and beaten.

But we rode through these very places in broad daylight, visited from house to house, held meetings, and bore our testimony....¹⁵⁶

There is presently not available sufficient evidence to indicate conclusively whether or not Ellen was the Harmon who was arrested along with Joseph Turner in Poland, Maine, on April 23, 1845.

Conclusion

Most Adventists who learn of it will probably be able to accommodate the revised image of Ellen Harmon as a “shrill”-voiced, lounging, shouting, kissing, condemning, fainting, and footwashing, postdisappointment, Millerite fanatic. It may take some Adventists a little longer to assimilate the implications of Mrs. White's inability to remember her early ministry the way it actually took place. They will either have to assume that she possessed a particularly fecund delusional system, as Jack Provonsha does,¹⁵⁷ or that she consciously distorted the past for her own (however complicated and even, perhaps, well-intended) purposes.

Those who have the fortitude and the wits will recognize what the implications are for so many other stories of Providence that dot the landscape of Adventist history. And it will become easier to identify with A.G. Daniells' question at the 1919 Bible Conference about “just how much of that is genuine, and how much has crawled into the story?”¹⁵⁸

It was Ellen White who advised that it is only as we see how the Lord has led us in the past that we can set our faces courageously and confidently to the future.¹⁵⁹ Can Adventists be blamed then for moving forward timorously? Because it is becoming increasingly clear that Mrs. White did not leave us a credible picture of her pivotal place in our religious roots. □

ENDNOTES

1. Ellen G. White *Spiritual Gifts* 2 (James White, Battle Creek, MI. 1860).
2. Ellen G. White to J.N. Loughborough, 24 August 1874.
3. “Trial of Elder I. Dammon,” *Piscataquis Farmer*, 7 March 1845.
4. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2:40, 41, 42.
5. Otis Nichols to William Miller, 20 April 1846. Arthur White, in his book, *The Early Years*, p.75, quotes Nichols; but he arbitrarily changes Nichols' “(January, 1845)” to “[February, 1845].” In so doing White also contradicts his own “mid-January” statement, from *The Early Years*, p. 65.
6. Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches* (Steam Press, Battle Creek, MI.: 1880):72.
7. *Bangor Whig and Courier*, 26 October 1842.
8. *Daily Eastern Argus*, 13 March 1845.
9. Dorinda Baker: *Piscataquis Farmer*, 7 March 1845; Emily C. Clemons: J.V. Himes to William Miller, 12 and 29 March 1845, as quoted in Ronald Numbers, *Prophetess of Health* (Harper & Row, New York, N.Y.: 1976):17; Mary Hamlin: M.C. Stowell Crawford to Ellen White, 9 October 1908; Phoebe Knapp: White to Loughborough, 24 August 1874.
10. *Daily Eastern Argus*, 28 April & 28 May 1845; *Oxford Democrat*, 8 April & 18 November 1845; *The Norway Advertiser*, 28 March 1845; *The Bangor Whig & Courier*, 19 February and 5 March 1845; “Letter from Bro. White,” *Day-Star*, 6 September 1845.
11. White to Loughborough, 24 August 1874.
12. Otis Nichols to William Miller, 20 April 1846; *Daily Eastern Argus*, 28 April 1845.
13. *Piscataquis Farmer*, 25 March 1845.
14. Meteorological journal for Bangor, ME., February 1845. National Archives microfilm.
15. *Piscataquis Farmer*, 7 March 1845.
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18. *Oxford Democrat*, 1 April 1845.
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20. United States Census, 1850, Piscataquis County, Maine.
21. *Piscataquis Farmer*, 7 March 1845.
22. *Maine Register*, 1843, p.63.
23. Paul Gordon to Ingemar Linden, 17 February 1987.
24. *Ibid*.
25. *Ibid*.
26. Israel Dammon to Samuel S. Snow, 28 May 1845, published in *The Jubilee Standard* 1 (5 June 1845):104.
27. John F. Sprague, Esq., “James Stuart Holmes, The Pioneer Lawyer of Piscataquis County,” *The Bangor Historical Magazine* IV (July 1888—June 1889):34.
28. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2:38,39,40.
29. Sprague, “Holmes, The Pioneer Lawyer,” 35.
30. “Scandal or Rite of Passage? Historians on the Dammon Trial,” *Spectrum* 17 (August 1987):44.
31. White, *Life Sketches*, 38, 39.
32. Ellen White, *Early Writings* (Review & Herald Pub. Assoc., Battle Creek, MI.: 1882):15.
33. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2:38-40.
34. *Ibid*, p.39.
35. Ellen White to Joseph Bates, 13 July 1847. This letter is photographically reproduced in Ellen White's handwriting in *Adventist Currents* 1 (July 1984):13-15.
36. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2:38; *Life Sketches*, 73.
37. O.R.L. Crosier, “Prophetic Day and Hour,” *The Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings* (9 April 1845):15.
38. *Piscataquis Farmer*, 25 March 1845.
39. *Oxford Democrat*, 1 April 1845.
40. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2:39.
41. *Ibid*, 40.
42. *Ibid*, 40.
43. “Scandal or Rite of Passage,” *Spectrum*, 44.
44. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2:42.
45. *Ibid*, 39.

46. White to Loughborough, 24 August 1874; *Spiritual Gifts* 2:46.
47. James White to "Dear Bro. Jacobs," 19 August 1845, published in *The Day-Star* 7 (6 September 1845).
48. James White to "My Dear Brother Collins," 26 August 1846.
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50. Ibid, 41.
51. Ibid.
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55. John Cook, 5 April 1845 letter to the editor, *Morning Star*, 16 April 1845.
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59. Ellen White to G.I. Butler, 13 December 1886, quoted in *Evangelism*, 375.
60. For a parsimonious discussion of the shut-door problem, see *Adventist Currents* 1:4 (July 1984).
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62. White to Loughborough, 24 August 1874.
63. Israel Dammon, *The World's Crisis*, 1 July 1874.
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68. Isaac C. Wellcome, *History of the Second Advent Message*, (Isaac C. Wellcome, Yarmouth, ME.:1874):403.
69. James White, publisher, 6 April 1846.
70. Isaac C. Wellcome, *The World's Crisis*, 1 July 1874.
71. This letter is reproduced in Ellen White's handwriting in *Adventist Currents* 1(July 1984):13-15.
72. Ellen White, *Selected Messages* 1 (Review & Herald Publishing Association, Wash., D.C.:1958):63.
73. Burdick, *Crisis*, 1 July 1874.
74. White to Loughborough, 24 August 1874.
75. Ellen White, *The Present Truth* 1 (August 1849):21,22.
76. Megquier, *Crisis*, 1 July 1874.
77. White, *The Present Truth* 1 (August 1849):22.
78. White to Eli Curtis, *A Word to the Little Flock* (30 May 1847):12.
79. White, *Early Writings*, 257,258.
80. Ellen White vision given 24 December 1850, written 25 December 1850, published in *Adventist Currents* 1 (June 1985):9.
81. *Piscataquis Farmer*, 4 April 1845.
82. James White, *Day-Star*, 6 September 1845; Ellen White, *Spiritual Gifts* 1, 171, 172.
83. White, *Early Writings*, 15; or *Spiritual Gifts* 2:32.
84. White, *Early Writings*, appendix, 302.
85. White, *Early Writings*, 117.
86. *Bangor Whig and Courier*, 3 April 1845; John Cook to Bro. Burr, 5 April 1845, letter published in *Morning Star*, 16 April 1845.
87. Ellen White to Bro. and Sis. Howland, 15 August 1850.
88. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2 (1860):138; *Life Sketches* (1880):274; *Life Sketches* (1915):137.
89. White, *Early Writings*, 116,117.
90. Ibid, 15.
91. *Norway Advertiser*, 28 March 1845.
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93. Burdick, notarized statement, 26 September 1908.
94. Burdick, *Crisis*, 1 July 1874.
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99. Ellen White to "The Church in Brother Hasting's house," Letter 28, November 7, 1850.
100. James White to "Dear Brethren," 11 November 1851, quoted by Ron Graybill in "Glory! Glory! Glory!" *Adventist Review* (1 October 1987):13.
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102. White to Loughborough, 24 August 1874.
103. Ellen White to Bro. & Sis. Haskell, 10 October 1900.
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109. White, *Life Sketches* (1915):69,71.
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121. Cook to Burr, *Morning Star*, 16 April 1845.
122. Burdick, *Crisis*, 1 July 1874.
123. White to Loughborough, 24 August 1874.
124. James White, *Word to the Little Flock* (30 May 1847):22.
125. Wesley Ringer, *The Shut Door and the Sanctuary: Historical and Theological Problems*, (April 1982):53,54. This 128-page monograph was written at the request of the Southern California Conference. In it Ringer argues compellingly that the contemporary evidence does not support James White's claim that his wife had predicted the disappointment of 22 October 1845.
126. James White to Bro. Collins, 26 August 1846.
127. White, *Early Writings*, 64-67.
128. White, *Testimonies for the Church* 1:131,132.
129. *Bangor Whig and Courier*, 21 February 1845.
130. *Oxford Democrat*, 8 April 1845.
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132. United States Federal Census, 1850.
133. *Bangor Whig and Courier*, 5 March 1845.
134. *Bangor Whig and Courier*, 19 February 1845.
135. Ibid.
136. M.C. Stowell Crawford to Ellen White, 9 October 1908.
137. White, *Life Sketches*, 89,90.
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139. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2:38.
140. A.L. White, *The Early Years*, 69.
141. Otis Nichols 8-page, pre-1860 statement; Otis Nichols to William Miller, 20 April 1846.
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147. Nichols to Miller, 20 April 1846.
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149. *Daily Eastern Argus*, 28 April 1845.
150. White, *Spiritual Gifts* 2:38.
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154. White to Bates, 13 July 1847.
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156. Ibid.
157. Jack W. Provonsa, "Was Ellen G. White a Fraud?" unpublished 25-page monograph (Loma Linda, CA.:1980).
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159. White, *Life Sketches*, 196.

Knight's Darkest Hour: Biography as Indictment

A critique of George Knight's *From 1888 to Apostasy: The Case of A. T. Jones*

by Dennis Hokama

Seventh-day Adventist apologists, such as Andrews University historian George Knight, face peculiar problems when they attempt to write biographies of men like Alonzo T. Jones. Since Jones eventually "apostasized," becoming one of Adventism's most severe critics, he must be thoroughly discredited. But because he came to have considerable position and influence in the denomination, and because Ellen White endorsed his theology so explicitly, to discredit him too much might appear to be an indictment of her judgment and foresight.

The formula

Fortunately for Adventist apologists, there is a standard formula for handling cases like Jones's; and Knight was not too proud to use it: "Fallen" leaders such as A. T. Jones were talented, godly men at first, when Ellen White endorsed them. But gradually human pride made them ambitious; and when they did not attain the elevated church offices they thought they deserved, the devil came into their hearts and turned them into bitter critics. Was there any merit to their criticism? No, just sour grapes and a defective understanding of the nature of inspiration.

Whether it be Crosier, Canright, Jones, Kellogg, Conradi, Waggoner, or Ballenger, the formula is more predictable than a made-for-TV movie. Move over, Canright; it's A. T. Jones's turn. What Knight has written is basically a subtle and sophisticated *I Was A. T. Jones' Secretary*.

Knight tracks Jones's church career from his baptism in 1874 to his disfellowshipping in 1909. This reviewer does not recall a single incident during that entire period in which Knight suggests that Ellen White's counsel may have been in any way flawed such that Jones would have had sufficient reason to wonder. It was always Jones's defective mind or hypertrophied pride that made him misinterpret or misunderstand her meaning.

Nevertheless, in his postmortem, Knight concludes that Jones's alienation from Mrs. White was due largely to his inerrancy view of inspiration that set so high a standard for the "spirit of prophecy" that it simply could not be met. His "high" view of inspiration coupled with his idealistic, all-or-nothing mentality, Knight concludes, led him ultimately to reject many of her testimonies as not from God.

As Jones himself would have been quick to notice, Knight's conclusion does not square, logically, with his assertions, earlier in the book, that Ellen White's inconsistencies and mistakes existed only in Jones's unsanctified imagination. For Knight to admit at the end that Ellen White actually made mistakes is to tacitly admit that he has twisted the facts against Jones.

"I am not a prophet." The coverup of a coverup

On page 223, Knight dismisses in a single sentence the "I am not a prophet" incident as one in which Jones distorted the meaning of Ellen White's words. But the issue was much more volatile than Knight is willing to admit in his book. He cannot acknowledge its explosiveness for at least two reasons.

In the first place, such an admission would destroy his contention that it was primarily Jones—and certainly not the General Conference

leaders—who were using the spirit of prophecy on a level akin to "verbal" rather than "thought" inspiration. After all, if the General Conference and the church membership generally did not share Jones's view that Mrs. White's inspired words necessarily were protected from mistakes, his claim that she had publicly uttered the words "I am not a prophet" would have seemed more curious (or even silly) than a cause for widespread alarm and official denials. But Jones's assertion could not be ignored, because most of Jones's contemporaries held views of inspiration similar to if not more extreme than his. The General Conference Committee, therefore, was forced to fight Jones on the battlefield of verbal inspiration, or a close approximation of it.

The GC Committee issued a 95-page rebuttal entitled *A Statement Refuting Charges Made by A. T. Jones Against the Spirit of Prophecy and the Plan of Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination* (May 1906). This "refutation" did not challenge Jones's "all or nothing" mentality with respect to the testimonies, nor did it deplore his misunderstanding of the nature of inspiration. Instead, it attempted to satisfy Jones's requirement that the testimonies be blameless if they were inspired. It also attempted to demonstrate that there was no selective enforcement of the testimonies, as Jones had charged. In other words, the GC Committee's response to Jones' complaints belied the same underlying assumptions about the nature of inspiration that Knight now condemns in Jones. Daniells may have had private reservations (and there is reason to believe that he did), but publicly he played the hypocrite.

In the second place, if Knight's version of the event was accurate, Jones's assertion simply could not have generated the amount of controversy that it did. After all, if the charge was merely that Jones distorted the meaning of Ellen White's words, why is it that this incident is always singled out, when church leaders have accused Jones of distorting the facts about so many other incidents? Knight's distortion of the "I am not a prophet" incident becomes apparent when we examine the contemporary documents that he refers to in his book.

When Jones began claiming that Ellen White had said "I am not a prophet," Mrs. White and the General Conference leaders did *not* contest that the words meant what Jones said they meant. Instead, they denied that Ellen White had ever spoken those words; and they called Jones a liar—in so many words—for making such a claim. Mrs. White denied it at least four times in three separate documents (*RH* 1/26/1905; *EGW* to O. A. Olsen, 1/30/1905; *RH* 7/26/1906, twice) and apparently went to her grave unwilling to admit that she had said what Knight now so matter of factly admits she did say.

In a 1905 *Review and Herald* piece (26 January, p. 5), the editor, W. W. Prescott, acknowledged the accusation that Ellen White had said she was not a prophet, but then went on to effectively deny the truth of the allegation, and invited his readers to read Mrs. White's version of what she really said:

During the visit of Mrs. E. G. White to Battle Creek, Mich., last autumn, the press dispatches announced under flaming headlines that she had made a public acknowledgement that she was not a prophetess. . . . In Sister White's article in this issue of the *Review* will be found her own report of what she did say. . . . We call special attention to the following paragraph:-

"I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. . . ."

Dennis Hokama is a real estate broker in the Los Angeles area.

On pages eight and nine of the same *Review*, Ellen White's account may be found. She said that she spoke three times in the Dime Tabernacle that weekend, including Sabbath morning, and Sunday afternoon. Her only reference to the controversial statement is in the context of her Sunday afternoon meeting:

Sunday afternoon I spoke again in the tabernacle. The meeting had been advertised, and there were present many citizens of Battle Creek who were not of our faith....

I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. I have not stood before the people claiming this title, though many called me thus.

The GC Committee's 95-page "refutation" that Knight claims was so crushing to Jones likewise denied that Mrs. White ever said such words:

Elder Jones says he heard her say the words "I am not a prophet. I never made any such claim." Those words cannot be found in consecutive order at any place in her talk, and FOUR of the ELEVEN WORDS which he quotes can not be found at any place whatsoever in all her talk upon this matter. Then he did not hear those words spoken by Sister White in Battle Creek (pp. 83,84).

That document, along with Ellen White's denials, became the standard treatment of this incident by SDA "historians" for the next seventy-five years. Adventist college and seminary syllabi were always faithful to this version of the event. A. T. Jones was an inveterate liar, as proven by his claim that Mrs. White had said, "I am not a prophet." These "historians" always took great pains to emphasize the difference between saying "I am not..." and "I do not claim to be..." thus agreeing with Jones—at least in practice—that the exact wording made all the difference in the world. Typical of the apologists was John Robertson in *The White Truth* (Pacific Press:1981, p. 55), widely heralded and endorsed by Adventist leaders around the world:

Notice the difference between what Elder Jones said and what Mrs. White actually said.... There is a world of difference between saying "I am not," and saying "I do not call myself a prophet."

When Arthur White inherited the White Estate job from William C. White, he took up where his father left off by inserting a little footnote in *Selected Messages* 1 (p. 32) to explain his grandmother's comments on the incident:

Reference is here made to a discourse given at Battle Creek, October 2, 1904, in which she said, "I do not claim to be a prophetess."—Compilers

The claim in Arthur White's footnote is, of course, false. On that occasion she said what Jones claims she said: "I am not... a prophet," rather than the words falsely attributed to her by the "compilers"—namely, Arthur White.

With the December 1981 publication of Arthur White's *The Early Elmshaven Years* (p. 354), there is a sudden but unannounced reversal by the grandson:

An interesting event occurred at one of the Tabernacle meetings. On Sunday, October 2, Ellen White addressed an audience of 2,500, including many Battle Creek citizens. She took this occasion to talk about herself and her work.... Then she startled her hearers by saying: "I am not, as I said yesterday, a prophet. I do not claim to be a leader...."—DF 108a, W.W. Cornell report, in AGD to WCW, May 23, 1906.

For some undisclosed reason, Arthur White chose this occasion to abandon the old falsehood and to begin a new one in its place—the myth

that the church's original objection to Jones's claim lay not in its denial that Ellen White had made such a statement, but that they had merely taken issue with the way he had distorted its meaning. Knight, out of duty, ignorance, or, perhaps, even chivalry, follows *The Early Elmshaven Years* lead in the perpetuation of yet another Arthurian legend. But the footnote in *Selected Messages* 1 remains a stark reminder

Mrs. White went to her grave unwilling to acknowledge that she had said what Knight now so matter of factly admits she did say.

of the earlier gloss. Jones had been telling the truth. It was the General Conference leaders and White Estate secretaries who had been prevaricating for seventy-five years.

By 1988 standards, Jones could be criticized for applying too much significance to Mrs. White's words. But it was 1905, and Jones had a field day with the GC Committee's so-called "refutation" of his charges. Their denial of the statement that about 2,500 people had heard could hardly have been crushing to Jones's credibility in Battle Creek. In his rebuttal, *The Final word and a Confession*, he carefully documented the falseness of the General Conference's denial.

It seems incredible that after painstaking research and over a year and a half taken to get the facts straight, the GC Committee had been quoting Ellen White's Sabbath, October 1, address, and using it to deny what Ellen White had said on Sunday, October 2. It is hard to comprehend the degree of incompetence, stupidity, and/or intellectual blindness required to account for such a disaster. The only possible explanation seems to be an infallible view of Mrs. White by the GC Committee that put her word for what she had said beyond question.

After documenting the GC Committee's blunder, Jones, in his *Final Word*, went on to argue, perhaps mischievously, that since Mrs. White had included the phrase "as I said yesterday" on Sunday, it indicated not only that he had quoted from her Sunday address correctly but also that she had meant to say the same thing on Sabbath as well.

As for the GC Committee's response to his charges of selective enforcement of the testimonies, Jones dismissed them as nothing more than "confessions" that were, in some cases, far worse than what he had charged them with in the first place. He then apologized to a list of people whom he had formerly abused with testimonies that he then assumed were always correct. Finally, he confessed that he had given up that extreme view, and now was in agreement with the leading brethren in believing that the testimonies may sometimes be mistaken.

Knight claims that Jones's response fell flat because he could not answer the GC Committee's rebuttal, and that church leaders (A.G. Daniels) did not see that any further response would be necessary (pp. 223, 224). To the extent that the rebuttal was successful, the success was because in certain instances the rebuttal outdid Jones—from a verbal inspiration perspective—in vindicating the testimonies; and because church members were in awe of the General Conference leaders and their pronouncements. Also the General Conference owned the presses and the mailing lists, and had the tithe to misappropriate.

But it is obvious that any further attempt to deal with the "I am not a prophet" issue would have been profoundly embarrassing, if not downright politically suicidal, for members of the GC Committee. They would have had to explain away Mrs. White's explicit and false denial in the *Review and Herald* 26 January 1905. (The 1906 *Review* denial was still misleading, but some confusing ambiguities were created that could have served as loopholes.) And correspondence from Daniells to Willie White (23 May 1906) indicates that both were aware that it was a falsehood by the middle of 1906. But a public correction or admission would have given Jones a weapon infinitely more devastating than the "I am not a prophet" statement.

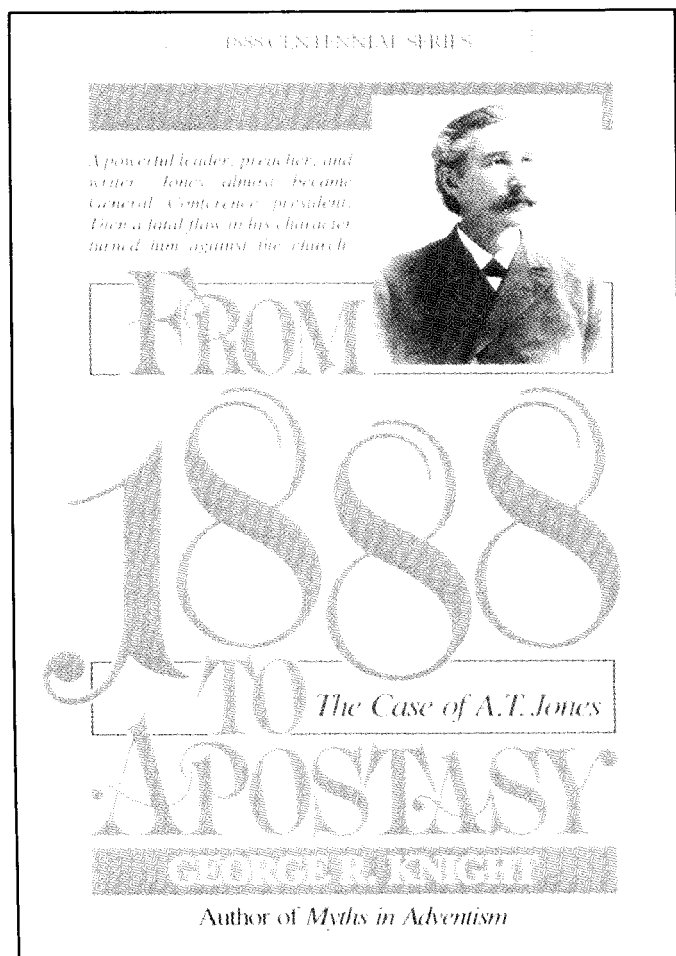
What the church received instead was seventy-five years of coverup. And now, from George Knight, by way of the Review & Herald Publishing Association, a coverup of the coverup.

One might conjecture benign motives for everyone involved: Ellen White forgot what she had said and, therefore, couldn't have known that her denials were false. Her reading of newspapers from Battle Creek, in which her words were published, made her head hurt. Daniells and Willie White discovered the truth, but could not afford to print a retraction because of a tithe shortage. Arthur White did not read any of the contemporary documents—including his grandmother's accounts—except for Daniells' letter to Willie White (23 May 1906); or else in his dotage he had forgotten about the event except for a few lines from that letter and therefore thought he was being truthful in 1981. George Knight never read the documents he refers to; he simply relies on Arthur White's account.

This incident demonstrates the inability of church leaders to admit the mistakes of the past, particularly where Ellen White is concerned; and their penchant for problem solving by coverup. The fact that in this case the coverup was so successful, despite its crudeness, illustrates the degree to which church leaders have been able to control the presses and therefore the minds of the members. And it demonstrates the fact that the passage of time was not needed for Mrs. White to develop a self-serving recollection of an event.

1888: Ellen White the open-minded liberal

Beginning with the 1888 righteousness by faith controversy and on through the 1910 "daily" debate, Knight portrays Ellen White as consistently refusing to use her authority to settle theological arguments.



This, says Knight, should have taught Jones that his over-reliance on her writings was wrong. But he conveniently neglects to mention that in 1905 Mrs. White wielded her authority like a sword to excise A.F. Ballenger's sanctuary heresy. The lesson that the logical Jones actually learned was that whether or not Mrs. White settled theological debates by prophetic fiat would depend on whose ox was being gored. But it

Jones learned that whether or not Mrs. White settled theological debates by prophetic fiat depended on whose ox was being gored.

should be emphasized that Jones did blame Mrs. White so much as those around her.

It seems that the unannounced purpose of Knight's indictment of A.T. Jones is the promotion of a nondoctrinaire, open-minded Ellen White who is only concerned with loving relationships and openness to new light. At Minneapolis, he claims, she was not concerned with theology per se, but only about the church's close-minded, hostile, unchristian attitude. While it is possible that at Minneapolis in 1888 Mrs. White appeared less doctrinaire than usual, Knight strives to make that stance appear characteristic of her entire career. He presents us with Ellen White the great ecumenical spirit of Adventism. Try selling that to Ballenger.

Although he tells us that it was of little importance, Knight does have a solution to the great debate about what it was that Ellen White endorsed in 1888. It was whatever Mrs. White tells us it was (p. 65). He reasons that it was her endorsement that made Waggoner's teaching important. We may as well go directly to Mrs. White's account. But given her record of inaccurate and often self-serving claims, it is hard to take Knight seriously. Even taken at face value, Ellen White's statements regarding the 1888 message are fuzzy and ambiguous. Which is probably fortunate for Knight who implies that Jones taught a totally objective (forensic) justification in 1888 (p. 53).

Jones, the mad architect of the 1901 reorganization

Adventists on the far right will claim that the reorganization of 1901 was the last time that the General Conference returned to right principles of organization. In their view Ellen White and A.T. Jones were the messengers through whom God was attempting to bring a radical message of reformation. And they point sadly to a fork on their historical charts that begins within months following the 1901 GC session and diverges continuously thereafter.

Mainstream Adventists, however, see it just the opposite. To them the reorganization of 1901 was the work of an anarchist named Jones—a temporary setback from which the church quickly recovered. Representing this position, Knight does his best to distance Ellen White and Daniells from the 1901 reform, while attempting to pin the blame for it on Jones.

Such a thesis is difficult to accept if one actually reads Ellen White's anti-organizational, April fool's day speech delivered in the Battle Creek library at 2:30 in the afternoon—the day before the 1901 General Conference session began. As so often is the case, Knight hardly provides a glimpse of the documents he is working from; he just explains what they mean, throwing in little phrases here and there as garnishes to his assertions.

Knight cites Ms. 43a, 1901, as his source document for this speech. It is an unreleased White Estate document. Consequently his not quoting from it is understandable. But if he had really wanted to give his readers a peek at this colorful and historically important speech, there was a simple solution.

The White Estate has five versions of the library speech—

manuscripts 43, 43a, 43b(I), 43b(II), and 43b(III). Ironically, the trustees have released only Ms. 43 (release #1028) which, along with Ms. 43b(I), is obviously the most heavily edited (sanitized) of the five. The remaining three appear to have two sources: stenographers hired by the General Conference and by John Harvey Kellogg. Although Ms. 43a is based on the General Conference version, there is so little overall significant difference between Kellogg's version and the two GC versions that, for practical purposes, the three can be considered interchangeable. Not only is this self-evident from inspection, but it was tacitly conceded by the GC Committee of 1906. Not once during their 95-page "refutation" did the GC Committee challenge the accuracy of the paragraphs from Mrs. White's library speech (extracted from Kellogg's stenographer's transcript) that Jones quoted in *Some History, Some Experience, and Some Facts*. Even without a White Estate release, Knight could have quoted from the library speech what Jones had already published from the Kellogg version, Ms. 43b(II), as this reviewer will do now:

From the light that I have, as it were in figures. There was a narrow compass here; there *within that narrow compass is a king-like, a kingly ruling power*. God means what He says and He says, "*I want a change here. Will it be the same thing?*" Going over and over the same ideas, the same committees—and here is the little throne—the *king is in there*, and these others are all secondary. God wants that those committees that have been handling things for so long should be relieved of their command and have a chance for their life and see if they cannot get out of this rut that they are in—which I have no hope of their getting out of, because the Spirit of God has been working and working, and yet *the king is in there still*. Now the Lord wants His Spirit to come in. *He wants the Holy Ghost King*.

From the light that I have had for some time, and has been expressed over and over again, not to *all* there are here, *but has been expressed to individuals*—the plan, that God would have all to work from, that *never one mind or two minds or three minds, nor four minds, or a few minds* I should say be considered of sufficient wisdom and power to control and mark out plans and let it rest upon the minds of one or two or three in regard to this broad field that we have. (*Some History, Some Experience, and Some Facts*, A. T. Jones, p. 14, underling mine. Sentences seem to be verbatim from Ms. 43b(II), although there should be ellipses where Jones omitted sentences that he thought were dispensable.)

Knight can only say, "Much that Mrs. White said gave Jones the idea that she was behind his proposal," and that "Jones interpreted

Even without a White Estate release, Knight could have quoted from the library speech what Jones had already published of it.

Mrs. White's statements as a validation of his position" (p. 186). And given the ubiquitous theme of his book, one cannot help interpreting Knight to mean that Jones conveniently misunderstood Sister White again.

It would have been much more fair to the data for Knight to say that what Ellen White said gave everyone present, including Daniells, the idea that she supported Jones' proposal for reorganization. Daniells immediately conscripted Jones as the main speaker on reorganization at the GC session, despite the fact that Jones was attending only as a reporter.

Knight tries to extricate Daniells from responsibility for the 1901 reorganization by claiming that he and the majority of the delegates "missed the central meaning of Jones' message" (p. 186). It may be

true that the logical extension of Jones' message was more radical than Daniells realized. But Jones was only preaching what most Christians give lip service to—the notion that the church must be led by the Holy Spirit rather than by mere human beings. Nor was Jones subtle about his message. He expressed it as clearly and as forcefully as he could, and Jones was a blunt and forceful speaker. Daniells may have agreed wholeheartedly only because he had no idea that Jones was sincere.

None of this philosophizing extricates Daniells or Ellen White from responsibility for what happened in 1901. The question then was not about the logical extension of Jones's organizational beliefs, but how to implement Mrs. White's conviction that there had to be a real change in the organization, which included a dethronement of the "king."

Ellen White spoke, and everyone present thought it was clear. The church was to replace the presidency with a committee headed by a rotating chairmanship. Daniells was so enthusiastic about the idea that Kellogg nominated him to be the first chairman, and Jones seconded the motion. Knight mentions this fact in passing only as an irony; but it actually demonstrates the degree to which Jones, Kellogg, and Daniells were agreed on the reorganization of 1901. If Jones misunderstood Mrs. White, then so did everyone else. But if everyone is united in misunderstanding a speech, then it is probably the speaker's fault.

If there remains any doubt about who was to blame for this "misunderstanding," then Ellen White's glowing endorsement of the final results should be enough to dispel those reservations. In her remarks at the end of the GC session, she exclaimed that she "was never more astonished in all my life than at the turn things have taken at this meeting. This is not our work. God has brought it about" (*GC Bulletin*, 1901, p. 464). What greater endorsement could Jones and Daniells have received for their interpretation of her speech?

Incredibly, Knight quotes Ellen White's words of joy as if they were just another example of the excuses Jones could find to justify his own thinking. But the GC delegates never would have agreed to such a radical solution unless they believed, along with Jones, that it was the will of God as expressed through his prophet. If it was a misunderstanding, then Mrs. White must bear the responsibility for creating, encouraging, presiding over, and, finally, blessing that misunderstanding.

Knight implies that Ellen White's endorsement of the 1901 reorganization did not necessarily apply to the abolition of the office of president. And yet the abolition of that office was the most spectacular, controversial, and symbolic achievement of the 1901 reorganization. If Mrs. White's library speech had a theme at all, it was a call to rid the church of its human "king." It is therefore extremely difficult to understand why Knight would criticize Jones for citing Ellen White's praise as proof that she was in favor of the abolition of the presidency at that time. She may have changed her mind later; but, as usual, she could not bring herself to openly retract her previous position.

Mrs. White's unretracted words have resulted in continuous agitation over organization since 1901 that will never end so long as there are people who take her words seriously. At the time, Mrs. White said that reorganization was God's doing; but by 1903 and thereafter it had become Jones's doing—presumably because it didn't work. Such is the nature of denominational historiography.

In 1901 as in 1888, Ellen White strongly endorsed a viewpoint and said it was of critical importance. Participants in the attendant meetings felt that the battle lines were clearly drawn and they made their decisions. Letters and pamphlets flew back and forth, preserving for posterity the issues then discussed and the positions then taken. And yet today, Adventists cannot agree—in either instance—on what it was that Mrs. White endorsed. It appears that she was either an incompetent communicator, or that church leaders have deliberately misunderstood her in order to avoid having to admit that she at one time advocated positions that are now embarrassing.

Jones the political opportunist

Knight does his best to have his cake and eat it by portraying Jones as both an uncompromising ideologue and an opportunist who was willing

to adopt the most self-serving viewpoint. The incidents he uses to create the opportunistic Jones, however, are unconvincing, and depend on Knight's omniscience and correlations that he assumes are causes.

The most notable incident that Knight uses to establish this thesis is Jones's decision to join forces with Dr. Kellogg in Battle Creek. There probably were a number of factors that Jones took into account in deciding to join Kellogg, but Knight can only see a coincidence that he postulates as the cause: Kellogg's attempt to unseat Daniells in favor of Jones as General Conference Executive Committee chairman in November 1902.

Knight would have readers believe that at that moment Jones came to see Kellogg as his ticket to the throne of Adventism. For this mess of pottage, he implies, Jones sold his soul to the devil. As proof, he says that Jones would later give that very month and year as the time when he decided to cast his lot with Kellogg (p. 189).

Knight's conclusion could be predicted on the basis of his formula; but if one takes the time and trouble to find and read the document he lists as a reference, the kind conclusion is that he is being totally irresponsible as a biographer. In 1902, Jones was working as a conciliator to close the rift that had been developing between Kellogg and General Conference leaders. He had assumed that both parties were dealing in good faith—until November 18, 1902.

In *Some History, Some Experience, and Some Facts* (pp. 24-27), Jones describes the traumatic incident that shattered his assumption. On behalf of Daniells and the General Conference Committee, Jones had read Kellogg a testimony from Ellen White that was severely critical of the doctor. Much to Jones's relief, Kellogg, in the presence of Daniells and the rest of the Committee, repented and was conciliatory. This is how Jones described the incident in a letter to Daniells:

Even while I was reading it [the testimony], Dr. Kellogg spoke out and said, "I see that, I see it now. And I will stop it immediately. We will stop those contracts." In the same meeting he also made other changes and concessions; so that the only thing I expected to see, was that you would reach out your hand to him and say: "all right, brother, here is my hand. Let us go on together, working to find out whatever else may be wrong and to put it away."

But Lo, instead of that or anything of that nature, I was surprised and humiliated and hurt, at your standing up, and planting yourself on your heels, and in a decisive tone saying: "I'm not satisfied. Dr. Kellogg has an imperious will that's got to be broken—with God."

From that moment I have not had any sympathy with you nor any support for you in this campaign [against Kellogg]. The thing there said and the tone and manner of saying it, all showed that there was such an element of personal domination of personal triumph, of a man ruling man, that I would have no part in it. . . . Surely the effect, or at least the danger of the effect, of such a statement would be bad enough if spoken only to a man in perfect privacy. How much more when spoken about a man, openly to a company of other men with the man himself present. To this day I feel the impression that the words made on me. (*Some History, Some Experience, and Some Facts*, pp. 25, 26.)

On the afternoon following the meeting at which Daniells had made his "imperious will" statement to Kellogg, Jones wrote the following note to himself:

I am obligated to say that it is impossible for me to see any basis for harmonious cooperation between the General Conference and Medical Missionary Association so far as Brethren Daniells and Prescott are concerned. And if the next General Conference finds no entanglements it will surely have to be because of Brethren Daniells and Prescott changing their attitudes in mind and spirit in meeting Dr. Kellogg's allowances and concessions. (*Some History, Some Experience, and Some Facts*, p. 27.)

All of that may be only Jones' self-serving recollection; but neither Jones nor Kellogg ever forgot Daniells' words, and Daniells never denied saying them. He only protested the inferences Jones drew from them. But how can a historian responsibly reference the above account as evidence that Jones sided with Kellogg because it would have been politically expedient? As it reads, it proves just the opposite. Instead of Jones the expedient, it portrays Jones the principled champion of lost causes. Jones left the winning side for that of the losers.

Knight of course approves Daniells' obvious yen for power; but in Jones, to the extent that it exists, it is a vice. Of the failed attempt to unseat Daniells in 1902, Knight says: "Daniells rose to the occasion, declaring . . . 'I'm not a football: to be kicked into the ring, and then kicked out again'" (p. 189). There was nothing in that statement except political ego, and it turned out to be prophetic. Once Daniells ascended to the chairmanship, he began using the title of president and fought off all challenges to his position for twenty-one years. And when he was ousted finally, in 1922, he complained bitterly about the campaign that had been waged against him. For Knight to be accusing Jones rather than Daniells of harboring political ambition reveals an incredible shortfall of historical objectivity.

Jones never campaigned for the General Conference presidency and never gave any hint that he wanted the job. If anything, he gave indications that he would have refused it. The best that Knight can do to justify his thesis that Jones had a secret, hypocritical, lust for the GC presidency is to chronicle Jones's reluctant acceptance of the presidency of the California Conference following repeated urgings by Ellen White that he accept the post. Says Knight, "That acceptance, for whatever reason, leaves one with the *suspicion* that he would have found some justification to take the General Conference presidency in 1903 had the church offered it to him" (p. 193, underlining mine).

Knight's language gives the impression that Jones is suspected of something shameful, like incest, or solitary vice. But even if his "suspicion" is true, accepting the GC presidency is not necessarily sinful, nor would it have been necessarily inconsistent or hypocritical for Jones to accept it—despite his tirades against its evils. Jones still believed Ellen White's testimonies to be the voice of God. To accept her word that God wanted him to replace Daniells would have been perfectly consistent with his beliefs.

Also, Jones regarded Daniells as someone who by his behavior in office had betrayed his trust. Jones might have been willing to accept the opportunity to overturn things from the inside. Knight fails to see that there can be consistency in being willing to take office specifically to reform abuses or to decentralize the power of that office.

Jones may not have accepted the office in 1903 had it been offered to

Knight is basically "suspecting" Jones of the same "pragmatism" that he finds so admirable in both Mrs. White and A. G. Daniells.

him. Either way, it is not necessarily the moral issue Knight makes it out to be. And any imagined hypocrisy on Jones's part, had he accepted such an offer, is the artifact of Knight's contrived analysis. He is basically "suspecting" Jones of the same "pragmatism" that he finds so admirable in both Mrs. White and Daniells.

Jones' brief stint as California Conference president in 1901 provides some idea how Jones might have fared as GC president. He devoted his time to reforming the California institutions according to what he believed were Christian principles, and left the running of the conference pretty much up to the dictates of the Holy Spirit. W.T. Knox, president of the Pacific Union, while praising Jones's reform work, soon began complaining that "the real conference work of California is in a most decidedly unorganized condition and things are drifting" (p. 201).

Probably Jones would have made a terrible GC president. But to make the supposed frustration of Jones's supposed political ambitions the "real" reason for his later rift with the church is desperate speculation. From Jones's perspective, the church had apostasized. He shook the dust from his sandals and moved on. But that would leave Jones with too much integrity; so Knight, working within the formula, must discover and establish a lower motive.

Jones the unconverted charismatic with a character defect

Knight continually tries to draw lessons from the conflicts he sketches. Unfortunately, his perspective is so parochial that his analysis is simplistic and *ad hominem*. If it is not the devil, then it is a lack of submission to the Holy Spirit, or a character defect that accounts for the "real" problem. Yet much of the controversy surrounding Jones stems

In the 1840s, the Adventist pioneers had appealed to the authority of the Holy Spirit to justify their total disregard for church organization.

from the contradictions inherent in Christianity generally and Adventism in particular. His uncompromising logic and his contempt for pragmatic hypocrisy only served to highlight the contradictions.

The real tragedy of A. T. Jones is that he was cursed with an incurably consistent mind that simultaneously accepted by faith the untestable assumptions of revealed religion. Knight does not take issue with Jones's premises or his analogies which were perfectly orthodox. He does not even challenge the accuracy of Jones's reasoning from those premises. What he does attack is the legitimacy of ratiocination per se, as if Jones's insistence on reasoning syllogistically from his premises was a grave character defect. Why is reasoning so inappropriate? Because it may lead one from orthodox premises to radical and heretical conclusions. Such a result might lead other people to re-examine their premises, but to Knight it can only be an indictment of reason in general and Jones's character in particular.

So long as it remained lip service, church leaders could not fault Jones's strong stance on leaving things up to the Holy Spirit. They just objected to putting that stated belief into practice, since they knew things don't work that way in real life. The party line, that Knight repeats like a mantra, is that Jones's emphasis on letting the Holy Spirit lead was admirable. It was his failure to apply that emphasis to his own life that led him to renounce his brethren. The obvious implication is that Jones was a hypocrite.

Knight seems not to recognize that there has always been an irreconcilable and often even scandalous tension between the authority of church organization and the prompting of the Holy Spirit. That prompting often has led to anarchy and confusion. And it is human organization that has to rescue movements from their confusion—just as it was organization (formalized in 1863) that rescued our pioneers from the anarchy and confusion of the 1840s (see cover story).

It was the contradiction between theory and practice that Jones could not accept. But Knight is not about to blame the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Despite two thousand years of consistent failure and even bloodshed over this problem, he can only blame Jones's lack of conversion and his distortion of the Pauline teaching that the church is a body under the direct leadership of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. By "distortion," of course, Knight really means that Jones took the analogy seriously.

Jones in perspective

By an accident of history, Jones appeared on the stage of Adventism—as one born out of time—half a century too late. In the

1840s, when the shoe was on the other foot, the Adventist pioneers had appealed to the authority of the Holy Spirit to justify their total disregard for church organization and authority—what they termed "Babylon." At such a time Jones would have been considered a tower of strength. But by the turn of the century, Jones was as out of place in Adventism as, well, a Knight in King Arthur's GC Committee. He appeared at a time when the "little band" was evolving into a denomination. He was an idealistic revolutionary in an age of accommodation, and he suffered the fate of most revolutionaries after the revolution: he had to be muzzled and discredited so as not to embarrass the "pragmatic" bureaucrats who must make over the revolution.

But Jones would not go quietly into that good night. He had eaten from the tree of radicalism that the pioneers had cultivated for half a century. He had a passionate and confident belief in the truthfulness of what he had imbibed. That is what gave such captivating power to his sermons; and it was also the real basis for his conflict with the church.

Jones could not see how one could believe that every individual was his or her own priest and yet knuckle under, in matters of conscience, to a pope in one guise or another.

He could not see how Adventists as professing protestants could repudiate the authority of the mother church on the premise that the only legitimate authority was the Holy Spirit and then proceed to recreate the same kind of church hierarchy that they had just repudiated.

He could not see how Adventists could validate the claims of Mrs. White on the basis of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh, and then, in practice, restrict application to Ellen White alone.

He could not see how Adventist leaders could believe sincerely that the Testimonies were messages from God, and then presume to edit them or to selectively apply them.

With his optimistic faith, he could not see that the wheels of the church would turn only when greased with the hypocrisy that Knight euphemistically calls "pragmatism."

One of the few sympathetic sketches of his subject that Knight includes in *From 1888 to Apostasy* is his treatment of Jones's relationship to Anna Rice after he had been denounced by Ellen White for endorsing Rice as another prophet. Although Jones accepted Mrs. White's censure immediately, publicly, and without apparent reservation, the experience was humiliating and damaging to his credibility. Rice, a rather fragile young woman, was understandably distraught by the experience. But Jones assisted in her rehabilitation by continuing to treat her with respect, and by appearing in public with her despite Rice's protests that it would not be wise for him. This is not the politically expedient Jones that Knight otherwise tries to market. But at the time, the incident provided a preview of the man who would later stand up for Kellogg when it was no longer popular to do so.

A final word and a prediction

In *From 1888 to Apostasy* Knight seems more concerned with vindicating Ellen White and A. G. Daniells than in providing a biography of A. T. Jones. As such, it is church apologetics poorly disguised as biography. Knight's book is nevertheless sometimes entertaining and even exciting. This is due more to the striking personality of Jones than to the book's humor or prose. Still it is very much worth reading, provided that one can constantly check the source material against the text.

Knight certainly is not guilty of hagiography—a complaint that has sometimes been made about the biography of W. W. Prescott written by one of Knight's students, Gilbert Valentine. What he has written instead is an indictment of Jones—and a patronizing indictment at that.

But the church's integrity has been upheld, and for this, *From 1888 to Apostasy* will be acclaimed as a scholarly masterpiece comparable to other Adventist classics such as *The White Truth*, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, and *I Was Canright's Secretary*. All "good" Adventists should spare no expense and waste no time in getting a copy.

□

A Spark in the Dark:

A Reply to a Sermonette Masquerading as a Critique

George Knight answers Hokama

One always looks forward to being featured in *Adventist Currents*. It is kind of like enjoying a bar-b-que from the perspective of the turnspit. While I am somewhat out of harmony with the journalistic style of Dennis Hokama's critique of *From 1888 to Apostasy*, I feel quite certain that A.T. Jones would see its spirit and tenor as the apex of Christian journalism. In spite of this difference, I am delighted that the editor of *Currents* has allowed me space for a reply. It is not my intention to debate each of Hokama's accusations or judgments, but rather to express selected observations regarding his methodology and those of his major theses that were directly related to the argument of the book. My reply will not address those topics that Hokama imported into the critique from his own agenda. He will undoubtedly be overjoyed to discover that he and I have several points of agreement.

Perhaps my most basic complaint is that Hokama has developed more of a sermonette than a scholarly critique of the book. Now, like all "good Adventists" (and I think I have somewhere been referred to by that dastardly label), I am willing to submit to a sermonette. My problem is that Hokama has used what are often side issues in *From 1888 to Apostasy* to preach soapbox sermons on his own topics. That, as I see it, is hardly what one expects from a critique. On the other hand, I suppose it might be a permissible homiletical technique. All good homiletics, however, should be based upon exegesis (reading the data out of the text) rather than eisegesis (reading one's own ideas into the text). Hokama's sermonette, unfortunately, has relied heavily on eisegetical methodology.

At several points I was gratifyingly surprised to discover how much more Hokama (whom I have never met) knows about my internal thought processes and motivations than I do, even though I am still pondering the validity of several of those insights.

In the remarks that follow, I will treat Hokama's major points in the same order that he presents them. His first point is a stroke of genius. One can only applaud Hokama's description of the Adventist apologetic formula which sees "fallen" leaders as good at first (as long as Ellen White approved of them), but aberrant in their later years. On this point I will have to confess to Hokama that I must have failed to communicate effectively. I was doing my best to demonstrate that Jones was aberrant from beginning to end. In

the late 1880s and early 1890s this is demonstrated by his harshness and failure to demonstrate Christian courtesy, his extreme use of language that seemingly led some toward the holy flesh excitement, his extremes in nearly every area of religious liberty, his support of Anna Rice in 1893 and 1894, and so on. The point that I was attempting to communicate was that throughout Jones's "hero" period, he was beset by serious character traits, in spite of Ellen White's endorsement of him. For her own part, Mrs. White was quite aware that Jones was somewhat less the hero than he has been portrayed to be in Adventist history. I sincerely apologize if I came across as painting A.T. Jones according to the "formula." He never changed over the years. Rather, it was his context within the church that changed.

Interestingly enough, Adventism's far right is also upset with *From 1888 to Apostasy* because it has defamed Jones's character. Apparently operating on the basis of the "formula," the assumption is that since E.G. White supported Jones and Waggoner as the men with God's 1888 message up through at least 1896, they must have developed nearly all of their flaws after that point. Since my book refutes that assertion, it has come under fire. Robert Wieland, for example, has reportedly claimed that the book is the "omega of heresy." Beyond that, the people who put out the *1888 Message Newsletter* are publishing a 32-page book reviewing *From 1888 to Apostasy* entitled, *A.T. Jones: The Man and the Message*.

It is of some interest that not only those on the far right but also those on what might be called the far left of Adventism have criticized *From 1888 to Apostasy* on the same grounds—it indicts the character of Jones. What is even more fascinating is that their criticisms are

and joined hands with the true hero of freedom and truth—J.H. Kellogg. My solution is much simpler: A.T. Jones had problems all along. They just expressed themselves differently at different times in his career.

While writing *From 1888 to Apostasy* I had apparently forgotten that A.T. Jones was the patron saint of the far left as well as of the far right. For that sin I am being bombarded from both sides. Biographers face some peculiar difficulties. Richard Schwarz (the biographer of J.H. Kellogg), for example, was criticized for making Kellogg appear better than he was. Writing his book for an Adventist audience, he wrote about a man who had traditionally been viewed as being somewhat demonic. Thus he stressed those aspects of Kellogg that would lead to balance. I had the opposite challenge. With Jones being seen as almost angelic up through the mid 1890s, I sought to provide some needed balance. Such a task, as I have discovered, is dangerous. At any rate, if I fell into the "formula," please accept my humble apologies.

Hokama's second area of critique is the supposed coverup of Ellen White's statement: "I am not a prophet." He is correct in noting that I passed over the statement in one sentence, but he then shoots off onto a sermonette that goes on for eight typewritten pages, basing a great deal of his argument on the fact that I was contending "that it was primarily Jones—and certainly not the General Conference leaders—who were using the spirit of prophecy on a level akin to 'verbal' rather than 'thought' inspiration." A lot of good ink could have been saved if Hokama had based his argument on something more than my silence on the topic. In agreement with Hokama, I would argue that both sides tended to verbalism.

I was surprised that Hokama used such a

*I must have failed to communicate effectively.
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was aberrant from beginning to end.*

diametrically opposed in what they find to praise and condemn in the man. The far right suggests that he was a good man up through the mid 1890s, but began to become distorted after that—eventually giving up faith in Ellen White and selling his soul to a very perverse J.H. Kellogg. On the opposite side, the far left views Jones as seeing the light in the early 1900s as he came out from under the deceptive (if not hypnotic) influence of Ellen White

huge fire (eight typewritten pages) to fry such a small fish (one sentence that does not even say how Jones distorted the claim). That disproportionate treatment is one reason that I see his critique as a sermonette that merely uses my sentence as a jumping off place for what he really wanted to discuss from the beginning. While Hokama may (or may not) have made some important points in his discussion, it is wide of the mark since I agree

George R. Knight is a professor of church history at the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University.

with his major premise that both sides tended to verbalism. The lesson is that we should locate the enemy before firing. The claim that "George Knight never read the documents he refers to, and simply relies on Arthur White's account" is particularly fascinating to me. Is Hokama himself claiming divine inspiration? If so, I trust that it is not verbal.

Hokama is to be congratulated on his third charge, because he finally hit a real target rather than an invented one. I did suggest that Ellen White did not see herself as a theological policewoman in either the 1888 battle over Galatians or in the raging struggle over the "daily" of Daniel 8 in the first decade of the twentieth century. I also noted that she suggested that Adventists should solve their theological problems through Bible study. Those were my points in the context of my treatment. It was outside of my purpose to discuss in completeness the topic of Ellen White and authority. I agree with Hokama that Ellen White's approach to Ballenger is an excellent test case for my thesis. On the other hand, a preliminary hypothesis in the Ballenger case is that, from Ellen White's perspective, the point at issue had already been well-studied out from the Bible by Adventist scholars; whereas the law in Galatians and the "daily" still needed more attention when disagreement arose over them. Such a hypothesis has yet to be tested, and it certainly lay beyond the scope of the Jones biography. If an author had unlimited space, unlimited time, and infinitely patient readers, he or she might be able to cover every related topic.

Hokama's fourth criticism is that I apparently place on Jones the full blame for the extremes of the 1901 reorganization. He goes on to note several things that I was trying to do, or not to do, or to hide—most of which are news to me. In spite of my devious and subtle nature, however, I would agree with Hokama that Daniells and even Ellen White were satis-

fied with the 1901 reforms; although it appears to me that they were not interpreting the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit in the same terms as Jones, who was more in line with the ecclesiology of the rising pentecostals and the extreme wing of the holiness movement than he was with historic Adventist ecclesiology. The difference between Prescott, Daniells, and Mrs. White as opposed to Jones is not that they were not somehow responsible for or joyful about the 1901 reforms, but that they were willing to modify their opinions when they saw the full implications and problems inherent in the new solution. Jones, on the other hand, could not reverse himself because for him the "presidentless" organizational structure was rooted in his theology and was not just a practical solution to a current problem. At the foundation of Hokama's discussion in this section is, it seems to me, an overly-rigid view of the prophetic gift that exemplifies Jones's personal relationship to Ellen White's counsel quite nicely.

Hokama's fifth point is that Jones was painted as a political opportunist. This section is particularly loaded with "omniscient insights" and value judgments as to what I did, approved of, sought to do, or failed to do or see. The reader of the critique, my book, and the original sources will have to evaluate the arguments, realizing that they are not always primary sources for authoritative statements on the shape (or state) of my psyche. Cross examiners should also beware of the fact that Jones and Kellogg had developed an interesting form of "doubletalk" by 1903, and that statements related to my supposedly total support of Daniells are largely arguments from my silence. After all, I was not writing a biography of Daniells.

Hokama's last point is that Jones was pictured as an unconverted charismatic with a character defect. Character defects is proba-

bly more what I had in mind. I agree with Hokama that much of Jones's difficulty with Christianity in general was rooted in its inherent—and probably inescapable—tensions. I see Jones as an excellent case study of one who sought to come to grips with those tensions with an all-or-nothing mindset—not an uncommon trait among sincere people with a fundamentalist bent. I part company with Hokama's critique in the section where he appears to equate Jones's ideas on rule by the Holy Spirit with the Pauline viewpoint.

Perhaps Hokama's most lucid section is his final perspective. Here he largely throws off the disguise of critique and comes out on his own.

In the part dealing with Jones's public appearance with Anna Rice after her "fall from favor," Hokama—contrary to his oft-used practice in his critique—neglects reading between the lines. As a result, he failed to grasp my suspicion that Jones comforted Rice less out of gallantry than from the fact that he never passed up the chance for a public confrontation. This would put him in character as "the man who would later stand up for Kellogg when it was no longer popular to do so." Jones thrived on unpopular causes throughout his career.

My final suggestion is the same as Hokama's: run right out and buy a copy of *From 1888 to Apostasy*—an action that will make both me and the Review and Herald Publishing Association ravenously happy. After making the purchase, compare my portrayal of Jones with the tenor of Hokama's critique. You will undoubtedly discover that he has seemingly captured the true spirit and tone of A.T. Jones's style in "Knight's Darkest Hour." I hastily and firmly admit (and hope) that I have failed on that count. Whether that is a vice or a virtue within a Christian context is something that our readers will have to decide for themselves. □

A Fizzle in the Drizzle

A Reply to a Confession Masquerading as a Rebuttal

Dennis Hokama's rejoinder

If *From 1888 to Apostasy* had half the wit, color, and verve of *A Spark in the Dark*, I would have felt compelled at least to give Knight high marks for prose and style. His eight, double-spaced-page response to my critique reveals more about his understanding of the role A.T. Jones played in SDA history than his entire book.

Knight's most basic complaint, it seems, is that I have delivered a "sermonette" on what he calls "side issues" that indicates to him that I have an agenda of my own. If by "side issues" he means any incidents or facts which contradict or undercut his thesis, then I plead guilty to at least one count. But it seems to me

that incidents, facts, or circumstances that have a bearing on Knight's thesis (that Jones's disillusionment with institutional Adventism was the result of character defects on his part) are not really "side issues" just because Knight chooses to remain silent about them.

The validity of Knight's thesis depends on the degree to which ordinary people can identify with Jones's frustrations and his sense of betrayal. To the extent that they can, it becomes unreasonable to say that Jones's conclusions were the result of a unique character defect (or defects). In other words, the issue is whether or not there is any objective basis for the concerns that led Jones out of the church.

Judging Jones while remaining silent about, and uninterested in extenuating circumstances seems quite irresponsible. It is rather like trying to prove that a man is paranoid, because he thinks people are trying to kill him, without mentioning that the mafia is after him.

Knight contends that on several occasions I have misfired because he actually was in silent agreement with me. But my criterion for raising an issue was not that Knight necessarily disagreed, but that his silence on the issue distorted the historical context against Jones. A selective silence is not neutral, and can be damning. The real question is, it seems

to me, why Knight chooses to be silent about circumstances that would permit more parsimonious explanations for Jones' reactions than his aberrant-character solution does.

The reason why I had to use eight double-spaced typed pages to set the record straight is that historians like Knight fail to do the job, and then proceed to build castles on inadequate foundations. If not in a biography of Ellen White or A.T. Jones, then where should the real story of a major dispute between them be discussed? And once I raised the subject, is Knight saying that he would have been happier had I provided less documentation?

If the basis for Knight's objection to my discussion of the "I am not a prophet" incident is that it is a trivial matter with no implications for a better understanding of the conflict between Jones and the church, then his objection might have some merit. But for him to insist that I ignore the row just because he tried to slip past it by using ambiguous words that implied agreement with Arthur White's most recent version, is arbitrary and unreasonable. For years church apologists used this clash to prove that Jones was a liar when, if anything, the reverse was true. What justification is there for essentially ignoring that altercation in a biography of Jones, especially when the biography is particularly concerned with the morality and character of Jones? If Knight believes that he has a legitimate case against Jones, then he should be willing to prove his case without the benefit of prejudice that has been built up against Jones by devious White Estate "historians."

Knight complains that I have employed eisegesis rather than exegesis while interpreting his text. It is true that his selective silence and his attempts to portray everything Jones did or said in the worst possible light led me to speculate and hypothesize about possible reasons for such a methodology. Although I may not have labeled every speculative statement as such, I do believe I did so often enough that no one could reasonably conclude that I am omniscient or divinely inspired. Speculation concerning the reasons why the book turned out the way that it did—rather than some other way—is not out of line in a critique, and is often practiced on the "Spirit of Prophecy" and the books of the Bible.

In any case, none of my speculating is at all essential to my basic criticism of *From 1888 to Apostasy*. Knight is here only quibbling over my theory about *why* the book is so biased. That is a side issue; but if Knight was so concerned about it, he could at least have enlightened us as to what the actual reasons were, rather than merely denying that my surmises were correct.

Knight's criticism of my speculation concerning his mindset seems ironic, since he regularly uses omniscient statements concerning Jones's character and mindset to indict and condemn Jones. In *From 1888 to Apostasy*, Knight's speculation masquerading as omniscience is critical to his main thesis. Who is Knight to pronounce that Jones or anyone else is or is not "really" converted?

The double irony is that the quote Knight uses to document my eisegesis is actually a case of Knight's eisegesis of *my* text. He is reading something into my sentence that simply is not there. Quoted in context, my statement reads: "One might conjecture benign motives for everyone involved: . . . George Knight never read the documents he refers to; he simply relies on Arthur White's account." That is not an omniscient pronouncement; rather it is a playful attempt to find a benign

Regarding the 1901 reorganization, Knight now admits that Prescott, Daniells, and Mrs. White joyfully agreed with Jones at the time, but later changed their minds when the organizational reforms proved impractical. If he had said that in *From 1888 to Apostasy*, we would have had no disagreement. But one would have had to read between the lines to discern such an admission in Knight's book.

Omniscience is not needed to guess the

If not in a biography of Ellen White or A. T. Jones, then where should the real story of a major dispute between them be discussed?

rationale for Knight's silence on the "I am not a prophet" controversy.

I certainly do not claim to be a prophet who knows the mind of A. T. Jones or even of George Knight. Apparently I don't know my own mind, for I didn't know that I had a "bitter spirit" until George Knight revealed it to me through a written testimony to *Currents'* editor. I thought I was merely enjoying a vigorous dialogue over SDA history.

Knight's claim that he "was doing his best to demonstrate that Jones was aberrant from beginning to end" surprised me. It sounds to me like Jonesian hyperbole used to contest my claim that his book is based on an overworked Adventist apologetic formula. And I suspect that Knight has cut off his nose to spite his face. Now he *will* have to answer to the radical right.

Knight's claim "that Jones was aberrant from beginning to end" is beset with problems. First, Knight seems to be equating an all-or-nothing mindset, and/or confrontational personality with ungodliness and/or psychopathology. Most of the biblical prophets were a lot more extremist and confrontational than Jones. In fact, it is hard to think of one who wasn't. Second, Knight admits that this trait is not uncommon "among sincere people with a fundamentalist bent." Are we to infer that these sincere people are unchristian and "aberrant from beginning to end"? Third, even if such a questionable equation is allowed, Knight does not properly distinguish between "potential" and "actual" sin. Having a trait that tempts one to a particular sin would be the same as having already acted out the sin, thus equating temptation with sin.

I suspect that Knight is correct in his claim that by 1903 Kellogg and Jones were engaging in a kind of "double talk." But what he is silent about, as usual, is the high probability that there was a lot of double talk going around in the General Conference as well—if we may judge by the admissions that some leaders made at the 1919 Bible Conference. Jones and Kellogg had no corner on the subtlety that has become an Adventist art form, especially among the scholars.

reason for such coyness. It is difficult for the church to admit that such a prayerful, Spirit of Prophecy-blessed decision could be wrong. It is more convenient to blame it on Jones.

Overall, Knight does express agreement with me on a number of important points; and I am certainly relieved and happy about that. His explanation for the book's silence on those areas about which we agree (or at least possibly agree) is that he had a limited number of pages. But *A Spark in the Dark* proves that he did not need more than a sentence or two to prevent such misunderstandings. He did not need to write a book devoted to Ellen White and authority to admit, in his discussion of 1888, that Ellen White did sometimes use her authority to settle theological disputes. He did not have to write a biography of A.G. Daniells to inform his readers that Jones's later animosity towards Daniells may have at least partially been justified. He did not have to write a book about the history of verbal inspiration in the church to mention that most of the church leaders in Jones's time had a conception of inspiration that was just as unrealistic as was Jones's.

Contrary to what Knight may think, my agenda does not include the deification of Jones or the vilification of GC leaders. I assume that all parties to the dispute, including the historians who have chronicled the events, are only doing what they believe to be right. Dishonesty in its varying shades is not necessarily incompatible with this desire to do right, since its practitioners usually have in mind the serving of a "higher cause."

It does seem too bad that Knight cannot take criticism philosophically without feeling a need to find unchristian motives in his critics. I assumed that the give and take atmosphere of the academic community would have inoculated him against such a reaction. I personally did not mind—and actually enjoyed immensely—the sarcasm Knight used in his *Spark in the Dark*. However, my enjoyment was tempered somewhat by my concern that he might not be having as much fun as I am.

□

CURRENTLY POSTED

Robert J. Wieland

[address]

May 25, 1987

Elder Kenneth Wood
Dr. Robert W. Olson
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
6840 Eastern Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20012

Dear Brethren:

I know that many matters press for your attention; nonetheless I would urge you to give a little time to a careful perusal of the article in the March 1987 *Adventist Currents* about 1844. I am embarrassed that a defense of my convictions has to appear in such a journal, but that is truth, wherever it appears. (I had nothing to do with the article—it was a complete surprise to me.)

The title [of the article (“Does 1844 Have A Pagan Foundation”)] is unfortunate, and some expressions can be taken as irreverent. But the writer’s logic and reason are impressive. His bottom line is *not* that Seventh-day Adventism is wrong on 1844, no; but [that] many Seventh-day Adventists have been wrong in uncritically accepting a false view promulgated by a man who turned traitor to the cause, and who openly admits or boasts that his first thought of defection came with his embracing this view (Conradi, 1931).

This article clearly demonstrates (a) that EGW [E.G. White] meant what she said in her EW [*Early Writings*] 74, 75 statement [regarding the “daily”]. There is clear logic in its every word. (b) She never in the slightest endorsed the “new view” of Conradi. (c) To the end, she herself believed the pioneer view. (d) She never gave the slightest encouragement to the agitation of the Conradi view. (e) Her 1 SM [*Selected Messages*] 164-168 statement has been wrested by pro-Conradi partisans to mean what it does not say. For all the pressure they put on her, AGD [A.G. Daniells] and WCW [W.C. White] were unable to get her to repudiate her EW statement which AGD labels as “imperfect,” “susceptible of (invalidating) interpretation,” or to endorse the new view.

Desmond Ford’s sanctuary theories rest solidly on the new view. Likewise, Hauser’s and Waggoner’s futurism and jubilee-ism require as their foundation the same view. Cottrell’s pathetic insistence that there is no biblical support for our 1844 view rests on the same new view of the daily. They are all legitimate offspring of Conradi’s view. We have suffered a massive hemorrhage because of this, having lost literally hundreds of ministers and scholars, all of whom without a single exception assume validity for this new view.

I believe that a wise physician will immediately attend to the internal bleeding of his patient. It must be staunched at its source.

The pioneer view of the daily was never an important issue; it was a “minor point.” But as soon as it is reversed 180 degrees to become the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary (which Hebrews plainly says can never be taken away), it becomes a hemorrhage. This internal bleeding has sapped the energies of Adventism. How many of our ministers have firm convictions about 1844? How many of our youth have such convictions? Precious, precious few! This logical non sequitur exerts a powerful subconscious undertow of doubt and uncertainty that in some places is actually creating a new Seventh-day Adventist church

that is no longer Adventist but is a social-gospel religious club of good cause do-gooders. So, goodbye to “the third angel’s message in verity.”

I think it is incontestable that (a) not one who holds to the pioneer view [that the “daily” represents paganism] has ever abandoned the sanctuary doctrine; (b) not one has ever abandoned confidence in Ellen White’s inspiration; (c) not one has ever embraced jubilee-ism or futurism; (d) not one has left the Adventist message. If I am mistaken, I would appreciate knowing who the exceptions are. [J.S.] Washburn said that both Jones and Waggoner lost their way over this issue, and I think evidence supports him.

Conradi perhaps wittingly, but AGD, WWP [W.W. Prescott], and WCW unwittingly and inadvertently sawed off the limb on which rests the biblical validity of 1844.

Mervyn Maxwell, [William] Shea and [Gerhard] Hasel contend that Conradi’s view has not led *them* to abandon the sanctuary truth. I reply that a front blowout may not throw your car in the ditch if you are prepared for it and deliberately oversteer, but it will frequently throw an unprepared driver in the ditch.

It is true that I have stood practically alone on this matter for decades, protesting this internal hemorrhage; should I regret contending for the faith of the pioneers, insisting that the Lord led them, that there is a “correct view of the daily,” a “true meaning of ‘the daily,’” that the Lord gave to our pioneers that would prevent this tragic confusion of our day?

I would think this issue is of concern to the White Estate, for EGW’s integrity or at least intelligence is implicated. Hokama demonstrates that the E[G]W statement is a masterpiece of clear, perceptive reasoning, every word being logical and self-consistent. This she wrote when she was a very young person. When she became old and infirm, she could not be swayed from the same consistent position. Does this not enhance her credibility?

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

[signed]

Robert J. Wieland

cc: Neal Wilson, W. Duncan Eva, Bert Haloviak, George Reid, Frank Holbrook, E. Zinke

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Dammon's arrest provided at the trial (and challenged by none of the eighteen friendly witnesses) and Mrs. White's later account of his arrest. (More about that below.)

Two of the "three aspects" of the story that Olson raises for discussion with his colleagues are straw men that he therefore handles easily enough: the fact that Ellen Harmon attended a meeting at which fanatical

Spectrum readers have long ago become cynical about the integrity of the White Estate. Olson's memo is coercive evidence that their cynicism is well founded. And then, too, many *Spectrum* readers could not care less about Ellen White.

On those two grounds Olson should be very careful about what he deduces from the fact that only two *Spectrum* readers wrote the

stories of the miraculous that Mrs. White claims attended her ministry. In almost every such story where contemporary documentation is available, the evidence is either extremely weak, or (worse) it contradicts the story, or (still worse) it suggests that there has been an attempt to fabricate evidence to sustain the story. The evidence for this instance is provided in Weaver's article "Incident in Atkinson."

Among others, the disparity between Ellen White's stories and what the evidence so often suggests raises the same kind of questions that have caused two candidates for the presidency to drop out of the race for their party's nomination—the question of character.

Are accounts of events given under inspiration as reliable as accounts provided under oath? In the case of Israel Dammon's arrest and trial, clearly not. At the very least the story bears out the conventional wisdom of historians who recognize that contemporary accounts are more dependable than later reminiscences.

To save inspiration's good name, or rather Ellen White's, Olson might argue—as he has elsewhere—that this or that Ellen White statement was not inspired. But Olson and other White Estate apologists have made it clear repeatedly that it is the person who is inspired, not their thoughts or words. Inspiration, they argue, is not something that can be turned on or off. Neither, they contend, are there any "degrees" of inspiration.

Not once in "official" Adventist publications of this decade has *Currents* seen any ref-

"We doubt that she was quoted correctly when she was alleged to have said that 'they would go to hell'" — Robert Olson

activities were manifested; and the fact that she lay on the floor for several hours in the middle of that meeting.

Olson's third "aspect," that "Ellen Harmon allegedly advised certain individuals to be rebaptized that night or they would go to hell," is more problematic and he trips badly over it. He seems to be perfectly comfortable with Miss Harmon's theology of rebaptism (even citing her manuscript 5, 1850, to support it)—that those who were not rebaptized will die the second death. But he cannot believe that the sensitive Miss Harmon would use the words "go to hell" to describe that awful death:

"We doubt that she was quoted correctly when she was alleged to have said that 'they would go to hell' if they were not baptized that evening. Her writings are not characterized by such severe language." ("Not really surprising. Even ordinary people are more circumspect when they write for publication than when they speak.")

Olson is more comfortable with a euphemism: "She might have said that they would 'lose their souls,' or something similar. The witness could easily have used his own more colorful language when testifying as to what Ellen had said." (Yup, he could have; but he wasn't alone. Actually three witness—two of them friendly—attributed precisely those words to Ellen in four instances and in regard to several sinners.)

Before leaving Olson to his imagination, his conclusions need to be corrected. He sums up:

"In the three months that have elapsed since *Spectrum* republished the newspaper account of Israel Dammon's trial the White Estate has received only two inquiries about the matter. Apparently our church members consider the account of little significance."

One of the gifts that separates men from animals and some men from other men is the ability to draw valid inferences from established facts. Given the White Estate track record, why would a *Spectrum* reader write to the White Estate about anything? Most

White Estate inquiring about the Dammon matter and even more careful about generalizing from his deductions. Instead he plunges forward, equating *Spectrum* readers with "our church members"—as if *Spectrum* readers were a representative sample of the Adventist church membership. (This will come as a shock to Roy Branson.) Olson seems to know nothing about population statistics or valid polling procedures.

To help Olson understand what he doesn't seem to understand the question might be posed: How many letters inquiring about the Dammon affair would the White Estate have received if the *Piscataquis Farmer* article had been reprinted (per impossible) in the *Adventist Review*?

If we have seemed too hard on the White Estate director, keep in mind that the alterna-

The disparity between Ellen White's stories and what the evidence so often suggests raises the question of character.

tive to revealing the disorderliness of his analysis would be to suggest that he has been disingenuous in his recent memo to the White Estate family.

Actually, of much more concern than Olson's lame attempt to disbelieve the witnesses who said Miss Harmon used the words "go to hell," or the "looking glass" logic he employs when suggesting that Adventist church members consider the account of little significance, is his failure to even mention the fundamental problem raised by the *Piscataquis Farmer* account of the arrest and trial of Israel Dammon. Is it possible that Olson didn't notice the fundamental contradiction between the account of the sworn witnesses and Mrs. White's SG2 (and only) retrospective?

The contradiction that Olson ignores illustrates again the problem that dogs so many

ference to the traditional "tests" of a prophet—not since Ellen White's literary "habit" became widely known. In fact, Mrs. White fails in various instances all of those traditional tests. And so the White Estate representatives have taken to arguing that the biblical prophets similarly fail. No doubt Olson also has some scriptural examples indicating that Old Testament characters misrepresented reality. But unlike White Estate publications, the wonderful fact is that such stories are candidly preserved in the biblical narratives.

Currents would like to put forward a new test or criterion for distinguishing the genuinely inspired from the spurious—the test of candor. But one can see where that would leave Ellen White and the literary estate that bears her name.

