

Supplement

Welcome Visitor

"Surely I Come Quickly. Even So, Come, Lord Jesus."

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OUR PIONEERS.

MORE AND MORE.

The light of the world shines brighter and brighter,

As wider and wider God opens my eyes;
My trials and burdens seem lighter and lighter,
And fairer and fairer the heavenly prize.

The wealth of this world seems poorer and poorer,

As further and further it fades from my sight;
The prize of my calling seems surer and surer,
As straighter and straighter I walk in the light.

My waiting on Jesus seems dearer and dearer,
As longer and longer I lean on his breast;
Without him I'm nothing, seems clearer and clearer,

And more and more sweetly in Jesus I rest.

May joy in my Saviour is growing and growing,

And stronger and stronger I trust in his word;
My peace like a river is flowing and flowing,
As harder and harder I lean on the Lord.

—Selected.

By request I give a few items of my early experience in the rise of the Third Angel's Message. Truly the good hand of our God has been with us. In March, 1856, under the first labors of Elder Isaac Sanborn, of Green Co., Wis., my wife and I, with a few others, heard these vital truths and took our feet off God's holy Sabbath day and were delighted to keep it. We were the first converts known in southern Wisconsin.

The truth soon spread to other neighborhoods. "The dragon was wrath." Former dear friends turned against us. Anonymous letters were received. The schoolhouse where we met on the Sabbath for worship was locked against us. These only proved a blessing in disguise. Although poor we all had a mind to work. Through the blessing of God, we built, as we believe, the first church by Seventh-day Adventists in Wisconsin, at Avon, Rock Co.

June 4, 1859, I was ordained elder of the Avon church. Previous to this time Seventh-day Adventists had no organization, and no tithing system as now. Every one who went out in the ministry went on his own charges. Although bitterly opposed by nearly all the ministry, the truth spread rapidly. Wisconsin and Illinois were or-

ganized into one conference, as *non-combatants* in the Civil War which was then raging. Would to God I could tell you how the Lord opened the way in answer to prayer for H. W. Decker, now Elder Decker, and myself in behalf of our conference to visit Governor Soloman of Wisconsin and Governor Yates of Illinois to have our people recognized as non-combatants which they did. The Lord was our helper. Later the ravages of the war were likely to interfere with God's work. A three days' fast was appointed for all Seventh-day Adventists. My recollection is that we neither tasted food nor drank water for three whole days. We cried mightily to God for help. Immediately victory was given to the Union arms. The backbone of the rebellion was broken. General Sherman marched his army through the Southern States to Savannah. Three million slaves were freed; the war ended in answer to prayer. Have faith in God.

In July, 1869, we moved to Barton Co., Mo., not knowing of a Seventh-day Adventist in that State. Later we learned of a small company north, near the Iowa line. Also that several families from Illinois had settled in the county adjoining us. The Lord opened the way for meetings at our school house and vicinity. Among a goodly number who accepted the faith, was Elder J. W. Watt, a promising young man, now president of the Vermont Conference.

My first continued labor in the ministry was in the fall of 1872. Early in the summer of 1873 I was ordained to the gospel ministry by Elder James White at a camp-meeting in Missouri, having closed our first tent meeting with about twenty-five converts. That season I labored in connection with Elder T. J. Butler. We held tent meetings in five different towns closing late in the fall at Nevada, county seat of Vernon County. Elder Butler reported 100 converts in the *Review*. We had no tithing fund; our dependence for board, etc., was the charity of the people. For several years I received very little or no pay. My good wife and boys stayed on the farm and raised stock, which year by year was gradually reduced; then the farm was sold. We had no family

tent to use in tent labor. A straw tick filled with straw or hay spread on the platform and rolled back of the speaker in time of service, was our bed. To help start the work we also contributed of our means—\$50 toward the first tent, a fifty foot circular; \$500 later to help start the tract and missionary work. In all this the Lord blessed us and his work. Whenever we went we expected opposition from the various ministers of the place. Their most able men from a distance were often sent for at a cost of \$100. We praise the Lord for this. It served to call the people together that they might see the distinction between truth and error. My work has been largely single handed. Starting long before day I have gone thirty or forty miles on horseback to meet an opponent that evening, in order to defend those young in the truth. As the tithing system was preached and adopted the financial stress was much relieved.

Along in the '80's, under the advice of the General Conference, I spent about six years in another new field, Arkansas. We continued the interest started at Springdale by Brother Wellman from Michigan who took sick and died at his post. A meeting house was built. Here we organized the first Seventh-day Adventist church in Arkansas. Bitter opposition and much persecution had to be met. The exemption clause was repealed. The law gave Seventh-day Adventists no protection. I was the only ordained Seventh-day Adventist minister in the State. Day by day we pleaded with God for divine wisdom. Our brethren were watched and arrested upon the most trifling pretext. J. W. Scoles, a young man just licensed, was with me in tent labor. We had just started in our first tent meeting when he was arrested. He had to give bail or go to jail. I rode twenty-five miles, swam my horse across a raging river, and procured bail. The trial was set for the November term of the circuit court to be held at Fayetteville, the county seat. Our tent meetings continued four in number. We were threatened by a furious mob at Siloam Springs, the third place. We closed at Fayetteville, the county seat, so as to attend the trial. Under all

these obstacles the Lord gave the victory. Some embraced the truth in every place.

It was necessary to procure counsel for the trial. The General Conference, George I. Butler, *President*, sent Elder E. W. Farnsworth, and he remained with me some two or three weeks. Legal counsel was sought, and \$250 was the price paid.

Thanks to our good brothers and sisters who responded to a call in the *Review* and sent of their means to help meet the expense, a new tent was bought and pitched at the county seat. Several of our dear brothers and sisters camped on the grounds waiting for the trial. With the help of Elder Farnsworth and a good choir of singers a rousing meeting was held about two weeks before the case was called. Not only citizens of the place but many in attendance at the court helped to make up our large audience. The Lord gave great power to his servants.

At the day of the trial the court granted Brother Scoles the privilege of speaking. He occupied forty-five minutes on the Sabbath question before a crowded courtroom. Thus the Lord gave us favor with the people. We rejoiced in God that he "turned the wrath of man to praise him." "For we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth." For about two years this state of things continued, until the exemption clause was reinstated. My labors in Arkansas extended from the northern to the extreme southern part of the State, in most of the large cities on the western border.

My ministry since April, 1891, has been in Ohio, most of the time in the cities, Washington Court House, Columbus, Cincinnati, four years, Dayton, three years; Springfield, three years, and some in other places. In all the cities named the Lord has added precious souls to the church.

I have been connected with the Seventh-day Adventist people and their faith since the early spring of 1856, more than forty-eight years. I was then just thirty years old. I am now in my seventy-ninth year, and my wife is seventy-six. We have been constant readers of the *Review*, also been officially connected with the cause most of the time. We have seen it in all its phases. The combined influence of the so called Christian churches from its infancy has been hurled against it. Some who were strong men apparently, have become exalted, self-sufficient, lost their hold on God, and apostatized from the faith. Others became bitter against the testimonies of God's spirit by Mrs. E. G. White, and said and wrote hard things. Amid all this God's truth, in the hands

of his humble servants, has moved steadily forward shining brighter and brighter like the rising sun in a clear day. No power on earth can stop it. Its rays will reach every nation, kindred, tongue and people. "Then shall the end come."

"To the Law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

We take no honor or praise to ourselves for the little we have done. God has wrought for and through us only as we have put our trust in him, claiming his promises in humble prayer, "He is a present help in every time of need." J. G. Wood.

Deshler.

It was in 1876 that my attention was first called to the truth as believed and taught by Seventh-day Adventists. Brother George Edwards and I went to Defiance. He gave me a partial history of that people, enough so that I was interested. A short time after this Brother T. J. Butler and wife came to his house and made ready to hold meetings in a small room formerly used as a grocery. Brother Edwards, as he was passing my place, called me and told me of the meeting and invited me to come and hear him. From what he had learned and taught me on the way to Defiance, I was anxious to hear more. Brother Butler gave us a history of the world from Daniel 2. The next evening from Daniel 7. The weather was stormy so I did not get to the meeting for an evening or two. Brother Edwards called to me again and told me that Brother Butler was going to present the Sabbath question. There was a United Brethren meeting in progress at the same time. The minister tried very hard to prejudice the minds of my wife and two eldest girls, and accomplished his purpose quite successfully, but I persuaded my wife to go with me to hear the Sabbath question. On the next night he gave the best reasons, and all the reasons, for Sunday keeping, and showed from sacred and secular history that it came to us direct from heathen sun worship and enforced by the Catholic church. These two sermons convinced my wife and myself that there was no sacredness in Sunday or Sunday keeping.

Brother H. A. St. John preached for us and Brother O. F. Guilford, pitched a tent in Hamler, O., where we first met Brother H. H. Burkholder, at that time tent master, if I mistake not. We can count from this time additions added to the Hamler church. We called O. F. Guilford, who now

sleeps, Father of the Hamler church. I might mention G. W. Edwards and family, Ellen Frederick, Louisa Panches, C. H. Panches, and David Panches, and their families, Brother Stevens, Brother J. S. Fisher, and many others who have labored earnestly in the Hamler church. I must speak of John F. Rayle as helper in the Sabbath-school work. My wife and I joined the Adventists in January 1876, twenty-eight years ago.

R. FISHER.

Hamler.

DEAR READERS OF THE WELCOME VISITOR: Fifty years ago this winter I spent working for an 1844 Adventist near North Liberty, Ind. He caused a feeling to take possession of my mind in that I believed I would be on the earth when our Lord would come for the faithful. Then in the summer of 1858 with my father, Samuel E. Edwards, I heard our dear brother, M. E. Cornell, giving the Message at Gilboa, O. What most attracted our attention when we drove our ox team into town was the following well chosen words printed on a streamer and fastened to the center pole, "What is truth."

We were members of the Disciple church, that at that time boasted of being victorious in debate. Dear old pioneers, with you I am a lover of the Third Angel's Message. In this generation our Lord will come.

G. W. EDWARDS.

DEAR READERS OF THE WELCOME VISITOR: I am sixty-seven years old. I am glad that the Lord has spared my life to see the Message going to all the world.

I am one that heard the present truth and accepted it in Gilboa, O., in the year 1857 or 1858. It was proclaimed by Brother Cornell. The truth looked very clear and precious to me at that time, but more so now as we see the end so near. I am still of good courage and desire to help in this Message till the work is done, and then have a part with the remnant.

MRS. S. A. CLYMER.

"THE experienced laborers, those who toiled under the weight and the oppressive burdens when there were but few to help bear them, God regards; and he has a jealous care for those who have proved faithful. He is displeased with those who are ready to find fault with and reproach those servants of God who have grown gray in building up the cause of present truth."—"Testimonies," vol. 3, pp. 320, 321.