Christian Seventh Day Sabbath Observers in North America: The Legacy of Stephen Mumford

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

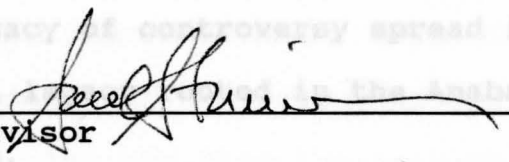
for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the

History Program

The Graduate School



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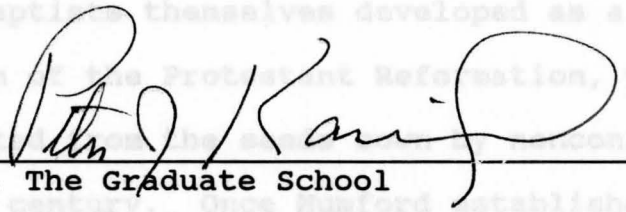

Dean, The Graduate School 6/7/94

Date

Youngstown State University

June, 1994

Abstract

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When Stephen Mumford arrived in Rhode Island from England in 1665, he brought with him the practice of Christian Seventh Day Sabbath observance and introduced it to the Baptist Church at Newport. As a result, he began a controversy that divided that church and initiated the spread of the Saturday Sabbath throughout North America. His legacy of controversy spread into other doctrines as well, a legacy rooted in the Anabaptist movement from which he came.

Anabaptists themselves developed as a radical expression of the Protestant Reformation, which, in turn, had sprouted from the seeds sown by nonconformists dating to the first century. Once Mumford established Christian Sabbath observance on the American continent, it spread to form hundreds of denominations and sects, each different from all the others.

By the nineteenth century, the movement that sprang from Mumford began to call itself the Seventh Day Baptist

Church. From a member of this church--Rachel Oakes--Sabbath observance was introduced to a small group of the followers of William Miller, who had predicted the date of the return, or second advent, of Jesus Christ, the failure of which became known as the Great Disappointment.

By the mid-1800s, the doctrines of Sabbath observance and the second coming of Christ combined in the formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church under the leadership of James and Ellen G. White. At the same time, the much smaller Church of God (Seventh Day), led by a number of individuals, most prominently Gilbert Cranmer, sprang up as an offshoot of this movement. Later, in the 1920s and 1930s, Herbert W. Armstrong came into contact with the Church of God (Seventh Day) and formed what became the Worldwide Church of God. These Sabbath-keeping churches all are products of the legacy of controversy Stephen Mumford brought with him from the Anabaptist movement in Europe.

Introduction

In the United States, Sabbatarians make up a disparate group of churches and sects whose practices and beliefs vary as much as those of the mainline Protestant denominations. Thus, problems arise from the very beginning when embarking on a study of this movement. For example, what do the terms "Sabbatarian" and "Sabbath" mean?

Some refer to Sabbatarians as Christians who demand a strict Biblical observance of Sunday as a day of worship. For them the terms Sunday and Sabbath are interchangeable. Others apply the word "Sabbath" only to the seventh day of the week (Saturday), and "Sabbatarian" solely to those who observe that day. In looking for seventh day Sabbath observers, the researcher must first determine the source's definitions of those terms. For the purposes of this thesis, therefore, Sabbath refers exclusively to Saturday, the seventh day of the week, and Sabbatarian applies only to those who observe that day as their day of worship.

While the Sabbatarian movement began on the American continent in the latter seventeenth century, some claim the practice of Christian Sabbath observance continued uninterrupted from New Testament times to the present. A brief overview of this belief and some of the objections to it are given in the opening chapter, "The Sabbath Controversy." Additional schismatic groups are also

examined to illustrate the wide divergence of religious opinion that existed between the first century and the Protestant Reformation, and because Sabbatarians believe some of these movements included Sabbath-keepers. The remaining chapters deal with the establishment of Sabbatarians in America and the forces that caused them to separate into so many differing groups. Four of these organizations are considered in this thesis: Seventh Day Baptists; Seventh-day Adventists; The Church of God (Seventh Day); and the Worldwide Church of God.

Since Sabbatarians depart from traditional Christian teachings as to day of worship and numerous other beliefs, it is only natural that they would point to the Bible as the authority for their faith. They use it to establish virtually all of their doctrines, and claim it authorizes Sabbath, but not Sunday observance. Although there are many translations of the Bible, for the purposes of this thesis, the King James Version is used throughout.

A word of thanks is in order for the many individuals who helped in making this thesis possible. First of all, Dr. L. S. Domonkos and Dr. Saul S. Friedman, my readers, who gave the necessary criticism and encouragement that made a positive contribution to this thesis. Many thanks also to Dr. William Jenkins, Dr. F.J. Blue, Dr. Lowell Satre, Dr. Martin Berger, Dr. George Kulchytsky, and Dr. Martha Pallante, in whose classes I received a valuable education.

Thanks are also due to Professor Hugh Earnhart, whose Oral History class was especially helpful to me when it became necessary to conduct interviews essential to my thesis. And Mary Belloto, secretary in the History office, provided the logistical support necessary for the successful completion not only of my thesis, but of my class work as well.

In addition, many others contributed by supplying information or guidance. LeRoy Dais and Calvin Burrell, of the Church of God (Seventh Day), Denver, Colorado, provided information which would otherwise have been inaccessible. Don A. Sanford, of the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society, Janesville, Wisconsin, furnished important information and insights into the beginnings of the Seventh Day Baptist Church. Oscar Burdick, of the Graduate Theological Union Library in Berkeley, California, contributed greatly, especially with his insights concerning Stephen Mumford.

The Pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Warren, Ohio, Elder Robert Maehre, deserves thanks for the books and other literature he made available to me, as well as his insightful comments during our discussions. And finally, for giving of their time in personal interviews, three ministers of the Worldwide Church of God in Youngstown, Ohio, the Pastor, Lloyd Briggie, and Local Church Elders Charles Whetson and Oran Telford, many thanks.

J. F. G.

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Chapter 1

The Sabbath Controversy

Most professing Christians have traditionally observed Sunday, the first day of the week, as the time set aside for public worship. Yet some, like the Seventh-day Adventists, observe Saturday, the seventh day, citing the Sabbath command in the decalogue for their authority. Christian Sabbath observance did not originate with that church, however, but has a much longer history. John Kiesz, a Church of God (Seventh Day) minister, claims that a number of the Pilgrims on the Mayflower were, "strict Sabbath-keepers on the seventh day of the week instead of Sunday."[1] If that is true, they did not form any organized church, but kept their religious practices to themselves or maintained only local congregations that were not necessarily identified as Sabbath-keepers.

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[1]John Kiesz, A History of the Sabbath and Sunday (Fairview, Oklahoma: The Bible Sabbath Association, n.d.), pp. 32-3. Kiesz claims Hugh Sprague, editor of the St. Joseph Gazette (Missouri), wrote an editorial in December 1934, claiming that at least some of the Pilgrims observed a Saturday Sabbath. He concludes: "In a private conversation between Elder A.N. Dugger [a leader in the Church of God (Seventh Day)] and Editor Hugh Sprague, after the editorial appeared, the latter stated that the Pilgrims were his direct ancestors, and that he very well knew their religious beliefs and practices. And in addition, he stated that all his grandparents and great-grandparents knew that the Pilgrims of the Mayflower days were strict Sabbath keepers on the seventh day of the week instead of Sunday."

Henry Clarke, a nineteenth century Seventh Day Baptist minister, maintains that some Christians have, "at all times since the apostles' days, been in the observation of the seventh day as a Sabbath."[2] Not until the arrival of Stephen Mumford (1639-1707) from England in 1664, however, does a reasonably accurate record of Christian Sabbath observance in North America begin. The purpose of this thesis, then, is to examine that record and the controversy that began with Mumford and continues with the division of Sabbath-keeping Christians into many different groups. But first it is necessary to understand the Sabbath controversy, for it helped shape the concepts Mumford brought with him to the New World.

Justification for holding public worship on Sunday rather than the Sabbath rests primarily on one point: a Sunday morning resurrection of Jesus Christ.[3] However, Henry Clarke in the nineteenth century and Herbert W. Armstrong in the twentieth assert that the resurrection took place on Saturday, and claim the crucifixion was not on Friday, even though the scriptures call the next day a Sabbath. They insist this was not the weekly Sabbath, but

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[2]Henry Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America (Utica: Seward and Williams, 1811), pp. 6-9.

[3]Norman F. Douty, Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1962), p. 81. Douty is a Baptist minister who has written extensively on religious subjects.

the annual Passover Sabbath, which can fall on any day of the week. They claim Christ was crucified and buried on a Wednesday, was in the grave Thursday (the annual Sabbath), Friday and most of Saturday, and resurrected near sunset on the Sabbath.[4]

In addition, there are numerous lesser issues which also have a direct bearing on the Sabbath controversy. One of these is the claim that scripture authorizes Sunday as the day for public worship because the Holy Spirit was given to the church on the first day of the week.[5] Some do not

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[4]Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America, p. 27, and Herbert W. Armstrong, The Resurrection Was Not On Sunday (Pasadena, California: Worldwide Church of God, 1972). Clarke is vague on this point, but Armstrong, the late Pastor General of the Worldwide Church of God, states it more clearly. He points out that the Bible establishes the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month in the Spring of the year (Hebrew calendar), and is followed by seven days of unleavened bread, the first and last of which are holy convocations, or Sabbaths (Ex. 12:1-17). As these Sabbaths are set on specific days of the month, they can occur on any day of the week. The first of these annual Sabbaths, also called the first day of unleavened bread because it begins the observance of that festival (Lev. 23:5-7), is the one that followed the crucifixion of Jesus, not the weekly Sabbath. In that year, Armstrong claims, it fell on a Thursday, placing the crucifixion on a Wednesday and the resurrection three days later, on the following Saturday evening.

[5]Douty, Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism, p. 82. Pentecost (the word means "to count fifty") received its name from the method used to determine the date of its observance. It occurs fifty days from the Sabbath that falls during the days of unleavened bread, always on ". . . the morrow after the seventh sabbath" (Lev. 23:15-16). This places it on a Sunday, and since the Holy Spirit was given to the church on Pentecost in the year of the crucifixion (Acts 2:1-4), this had to have been the first day of the week.

accept this theory, however, because that day was Pentecost, an annual Old Testament Holy Day that always falls on Sunday, a day the Israelites observed yet still kept the Sabbath. This fact alone, they say, makes it irrelevant in determining any change regarding the Sabbath, and supports the idea that the annual Holy Days of Leviticus 23 should also be observed.[6]

Another scripture, Acts 20:7, states that Christians assembled in the evening of the first day of the week, "to break bread." Norman F. Douty claims the Didache uses these same words with reference to the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, and dates this document to A.D. 100, making it only about a generation removed from the apostles.[7] He concludes that this supports Sunday worship.

Sabbatarians, however, tend to accept only the scriptures for the establishment of their doctrines, leaving the Didache without authority. Clarke writes, "As this denomination universally hold the bible to contain God's

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[6]Herbert W. Armstrong, God's Festivals and Holy Days (Pasadena, California: Worldwide Church of God, 1982). Pentecost was one of several Holy Days listed in Leviticus 23, and since New Testament Christians observed that day after the resurrection, Armstrong maintains this is strong evidence that they also kept all the others. These days include the weekly Sabbath (Lev. 23:1-3), the first and last days of unleavened bread (vv. 4-8), Pentecost (vv. 9-16), the feast of Trumpets (vv. 24-25), the day of Atonement (vv. 27-32), The seven day feast of Tabernacles, the first day of which is a Sabbath (vv. 34-35), and the Last Great Day, which immediately follows the feast of Tabernacles (v. 36).

[7]Norman F. Douty, Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism, p. 83.

holy will revealed to men. . . so they generally, esteem any prescriptions of man, in those latter ages of the world, as to rules of faith and morals, not only useless, but nearly presumptuous."[8] In keeping with this concept, Samuele Bacchiocchi maintains that as the Bible uses a sunset to sunset reckoning of days, the evening of the first day of the week in Acts 20:7 began with sunset, making it what today would be called "Saturday night," and the breaking of bread an ordinary meal.[9]

Douty also claims I Corinthians 16:2 sanctions Sunday as the day for public worship. It reads, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."[10] But to the Sabbatarian, this is not a Sunday morning collection of money, but according to the next verse, a gathering of food from the fields to be taken to

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[8]Henry Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America, p. 61.

[9]Samuele Bacchiocchi, From Sabbath to Sunday (Rome: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press), pp. 101-6. Dr. Bacchiocchi was the first non-Catholic to graduate from the Pontifical Gregorian University, and received a gold medal from Pope Paul VI for graduating summa cum laude. At the time this book was written, he taught theology and church history at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

[10]Norman F. Douty, Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism, pp. 83-4.

the needy in Jerusalem, something unlikely to have been done in connection with a worship service.[11]

A difference of opinion also exists concerning the concept of the "Lord's Day." Most professing Christians apply this title to Sunday, yet Bacchiocchi claims the term does not appear as an unquestioned Christian designation until the end of the second century, and that it does not appear in the Gospels at all. Similar words, "Lord of the Sabbath," occur in Matthew 12:8, Mark 2:28, and Luke 6:5, but in these passages, Saturday, not Sunday, is the day in question.[12]

This Seventh-day Adventist position is not above question, however. The Didache, as well as Ignatius' Epistle to the Magnesians, uses the term in apparent reference to Sunday, and some conclude that at the close of the apostolic age Christians considered the "Lord's Day" to

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[11]Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath (Pasadena, California: Worldwide Church of God, 1976), pp. 90-2.

[12]Bacchiocchi, From Sabbath to Sunday, p. 17. The author claims that the Biblical phrase in question, "Lord of the Sabbath," was ". . . used by Christ at the end of a dispute with the Pharisees over the question of legitimate Sabbath activities," which a reading of the verses in question confirm. The implication of this claim is that the day which Christ is Lord of is the day the Pharisees recognized as the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, not Sunday, the first day of the week.

be the first day of the week and not the seventh.[13] The Didache reads, "On every Lord's Day--his special day--come together and break bread and give thanks, first confessing your sins so that your sacrifice may be pure."[14] Ignatius states, "Those, then, who lived by ancient practices arrived at a new hope. They ceased to keep the Sabbath and lived by the Lord's Day. . ."[15]

Bacchiocchi comments on Ignatius and claims the last sentence should read that those, "who lived in ancient ways [have] attained a new hope, no longer sabbatizing," or keeping the Sabbath under the old rules of the Pharisees.[16] That is, the Sabbath was still observed, but with a different intent and understanding. He makes no comment on the Didache because it does not specify which day is regarded as the "Lord's Day."

Not all Sabbatarians find it necessary to agree with Bacchiocchi in this matter. Neither Ignatius nor the Didache have the authority of scripture, and even though

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[13]Norman F. Douty, Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism, pp. 85-6.

[14]Early Christian Fathers (Cyril C. Richardson, ed. and trans., New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1970), p. 178. In a footnote, Richardson says the phrase in question should be literally translated, "On every Lord's Day of the Lord." Richardson claims the date for the Didache has been set ". . . as early as A.D. 70 or 90. Recent study, however, has conclusively shown that, in the form we have it, it belongs to the second century" (p. 161).

[15]ibid., p. 96.

[16]Samuele Bacchiocchi, From Sabbath to Sunday, p. 214.

they may have been written soon after the days of the apostles, they do not necessarily express the apostolic view. Dr. Herman Hoeh, an evangelist in the Worldwide Church of God, for example, points out that an apostasy began among Christians at an early date,[17] so the claims of documents such as Ignatius' Epistle to the Magnesians and the Didache, even if Douty's interpretation is correct, could merely reflect this apostasy.

Douty makes still one more assertion concerning Sunday. In Revelation 1:10, the author writes, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. . ." and then records the visions he had at that time. This day, Douty claims, was Sunday, and since God gave this vision on that day, it shows His approval of its use for public worship.[18] But Sabbatarians note that it

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[17]Herman Hoeh, A True History of the True Church (Pasadena: Ambassador College Press, 1959), pp. 6-8. Evidence from within the Bible supports this view. III John, a rather late epistle, indicates an apostasy was well under way by the time of its writing: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. . . . and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbids them that would, and casteth them out of the church" (v. 9-10). Jude also writes of this apostasy: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 4). The Apostle Paul also warned Christians at Ephesus, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30).

[18]Norman F. Douty, Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism, pp. 84-6.

is only an assumption that this "Lord's Day" was a Sunday, as it is not specifically identified as such. They also claim the context of the book indicates the reference is to the "day of the Lord," the time of Christ's return, not any specific day of the week.[19]

In the end, the question comes down to this: did Christians observe Sunday as a special day of worship during the first century, and if so, did the apostles sanction it? It appears evident that some did begin worshipping on the first day of the week, while others retained the Sabbath as a part of their concept of Christianity. David Christie-Murray writes, "The Ebionites, of whom there were several varieties, kept the Sabbath," and adds that the sect of the Nazarenes, "held the view, not unreasonable in the context of the times, that Christians of Jewish descent should be circumcised, observe the Sabbath and obey the laws governing foods, without necessarily demanding the same behavior from Gentile converts."[20] Eusebius (c. 260-c. 340) indicates that Ebionites kept both days, for he writes, ". . . they used to observe the sabbath and the rest of the Jewish

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[19]Bacchiocchi, From Sabbath to Sunday, pp. 111-131.

[20]David Christie-Murray, A History of Heresy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp.17-18. Christie-Murray, a member of the Royal Archaeological Institute, has been a journalist and publisher, and taught English and Latin at St. Lawrence College, Ramsgate, Kent, England. He also taught English, Latin and Divinity at Harrow-on-the-hill, Middlesex, England. He places the activities of the Ebionites and Nazarenes between the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and the end of the second century.

ceremonial, but on Sundays celebrated rites like ours in commemoration of the Savior's resurrection."[21]

Clearly, a division concerning the day of worship began within the church at an early date. The controversy continued even after the death of the apostles, and included not only the weekly Sabbath, but other practices as well. Early in the second century, for example, Polycarp (c. 70-c. 156), bishop of Smyrna in the East, met with Anicetus, (c. 155-c. 166), bishop of Rome, claiming Christians should observe Passover on the fourteenth of the Hebrew month, Nisan (also called Abib), and not the Western tradition of Easter. Anicetus refused to accept the custom, even though Polycarp said it had been handed down to him by the Apostle John. The two did not satisfactorily resolve the conflict at that time, and parted, each following the dictates of his own opinion.[22]

Again, about a generation later, Polycrates (late second century), another Eastern bishop, confronted Victor I (c. 189-199), bishop of Rome, over the same issue. Victor threatened to excommunicate all the churches of the East if they refused to observe Easter instead of Passover, so the controversy involved an entire region and was not just a

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[21]Eusebius, The Ecclesiastical History (Kirsopp Lake, trans., The Loeb Classical Library, London: Harvard University Press, 1965), vol. I, bk. III, ch. XXVII, pp. 261-3.

[22]Ibid., book V, chapter XXIV, pp. 505-13.

disagreement between two men. However, others convinced Victor not to attempt such an action, and the situation remained unresolved.[23]

Those who kept the Passover were called "quartodecimans" (from quatro, meaning four, and deci, meaning ten) because they observed the Lord's Supper on the fourteenth of the month of Nisan. This dispute has much to do with the Sabbath controversy because quartodecimans observed the Eucharist only once a year, on Passover, but the churches in the West kept a weekly mini-Easter in honor of the supposed resurrection of Christ on Sunday. If the quartodecimans rejected Easter, it is likely that at least some of them also rejected Sunday as the day of public worship because the two practices are so interconnected. It is also possible that a number observed Sunday, or even both days, as did some of the Ebionites. What is certain, however, is that the Sabbath controversy had not yet abated by the early fourth century, and was not officially resolved--and even then not unanimously resolved--until the time of the Emperor Constantine (c. 280-337).

Constantine, considered to be the first Christian Emperor even though he was not baptized until shortly before his death, in his Edict of Milan (313), gave religious freedom to Christians, stating, ". . . we resolved. . . to grant both to the Christians and to all the free choice of

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[23]Ibid.

following whatever form of worship they pleased. . ."[24] But the religious freedom he offered quickly vanished, for he soon restricted all worship to the official state religion, which he called "the most holy and Catholic church."[25]

One of the criteria that had to be met to have freedom of religion at this time was that of worshipping on Sunday. Constantine issued this regulation in A.D. 321, commanding all to, "remain quiet on the Holy Day of Sunday."[26] He also determined to resolve the quartodeciman controversy. To do this, he called a council at Nicaea in Bythinia, assembling Christian bishops, as well as non-Christians, from all over the Roman world.[27] This council fixed the date for Easter, but the quartodecimans continued to observe Passover on Nisan 14. Because of this, Constantine sent a letter to the churches putting the full force of Rome behind Easter Sunday

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[24]Eusebius, The Ecclesiastical History (trans. J. E. L. Oulton, The Loeb Classical Library, London: Harvard University Press, 1964), vol. II, bk. X, ch. V, p. 447.

[25]Ibid., book X, chapter VI, pp. 461-3.

[26]Corpus Juris Civilis: The Civil Law (trans. S. P. Scott, Cincinnati: The Central Trust Company, 1973), Liv. 3, Tit. 12:3, p. 275.

[27]Socrates Sozomen, History of the Church, Edward Walford, trans. (Bohn's Ecclesiastical Library, London: Henry G. Bohn, 1855) bk. I, ch. XVIII, p. 41. Sozomen writes, "While these disputations were being carried on, certain of the Pagan philosophers became desirous of taking part in them; some because they wished for information as to the doctrine that was inculcated, and others, because, feeling incensed against the Christians on account of the recent suppression of the Pagan religion, they wished to stigmatize them with engaging in strife about words, and to introduce dissensions among them."

observance.[28] This forced Christian non-conformists, including quartodecimans and Sabbath-observers, to either follow the dictates of the Emperor or to flee into the far reaches of the Empire, away from the power of Rome.

Among those who faced the wrath of Rome were the followers of Arius (?-c. 335), a priest of Alexandria. They believed that Christ was not truly divine, but a created being, who at one time did not exist.[29] Once this doctrine was declared heretical, Arians, as well as those who kept the seventh day Sabbath were forced to flee from the grasp of the Emperor. From this time until the Protestant Reformation, non-conformists had to remain in the shadows of history. Those who came to the attention of the authorities were regarded as heretics and either killed or tortured into recanting their beliefs. Considering the heatedness of the Sabbath and quartodeciman controversies, it would be strange indeed if those doctrines did not continue to be followed during these centuries.

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[28]Isaac Boyle, "A Historical View of the Council of Nice with a Translation of Documents," The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1981), pp. 23, 51-4. Boyle's work was originally published in Philadelphia by J. B. Lippincott and Company in 1879 and is an addendum to the work listed here.

[29]Traditionally, Christianity has believed that Jesus Christ has always existed, that he was co-eternal with God. The Arians insisted, instead, that Christ was a created being. Constantine assembled the Council of Nicaea primarily to resolve this dispute and a number of others, including the quartodeciman controversy.

It is difficult to determine who did or who did not observe the Sabbath during the Middle Ages, a difficulty that becomes quickly evident. For example, in the British Isles, in the late sixth century, lived a sect of Christians some Sabbatarians claim were Sabbath-keepers. Their chief seat was on the island of Iona, off the west coast of Scotland. Columba (c. 521-597), their leader, is said to have foretold his death on a Saturday with these words: "This day is called the Sabbath, that is, the day of rest and such will it truly be for me, for it will put an end to my labors."[30]

It is not at all certain, however, that Columba kept the Sabbath, although he apparently understood this day to be Saturday, not Sunday. He referred to the Sabbath as being, "At the end of the week. . . ."[31] But he also makes reference to "the Lord's-day" and observed the Mass on that day.[32] Whether the term "Lord's Day" refers to Sunday or the Sabbath may be disputed regarding references to it at the end of the first century, but by this late date it almost certainly refers to Sunday.

Another group, which some Sabbatarians believe included Sabbath-keepers, was the Paulicians, who settled in Bulgaria

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[30]Kiesz, A History of the Sabbath and Sunday, p. 23.

[31]Adomnan's Life of Columba, Alan Orr Anderson and Marjorie Ogilvie Anderson, ed. and trans. (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1961), p. 241.

[32]Ibid., pp. 271, 293, 305, 501, 519, 521.

after being exiled by Justinian in the sixth century.[33] They are considered to be the spiritual ancestors of the twelfth century Bogomils in the Balkans and the Albigenses in the south of France.[34]

With the Petrobrusians in the twelfth century, led by Peter de Bruys (d. 1126?) in Languadoc, we have another hint that the quartodeciman and Sabbath controversies had not yet been resolved, for de Bruys is said to have rejected the Easter tradition and perhaps held to the Sabbath as well. In addition, Henricians, under the leadership of Henri de Lausanne (d. 1145?), also held non-conformist views regarding the sacraments, including the Eucharist. An enraged crowd burned Peter de Bruys to death, and Henri de Lausanne was turned over to the authorities and charged with heresy.[35]

Arnold of Brescia (c. 1100-1155) gained adherents in the twelfth century, but was hanged for heresy in 1155. His followers joined the Waldenses, or Vaudois, a sect led by Peter Waldo (c. 1140-c. 1200), a wealthy merchant of Lyons.

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[33]Dean C. Blackwell, a minister in the Worldwide Church of God, links early Paulicians with Sabbath observance in his 1973 Master's Thesis in Theology at Ambassador College, entitled, A Handbook of Church History, pp. 42-43. He claims that before their exile these Christians lived in the "valleys and mountains of Europe and Asia Minor," with many living in Armenia.

[34]David Christie-Murray, A History of Heresy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 30.

[35]Ibid., p. 102.

Among the doctrines he held, and that eventually caused his rejection at the Third Lateran Council in 1179 and excommunication in 1184, was that he denied the "blessed Sacrament." In 1212 Waldenses were burned in Strassbourg, and others were condemned by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. In Grenoble, in 1393, zealots burned 150 of them in a single day. Survivors sought refuge in the Italian Alps, but Innocent VIII (1691-1700) organized a not altogether successful crusade against them in Dauphiné and the Savoy.[36]

Sabbatarians point to Waldenses as Sabbath-keepers, as we shall see in Chapter III. Perhaps some were, for the movement often adopted local heresies,[37] which could have included that practice. However, some Waldensian documents indicate that they observed "the Lord's Day,"[38] almost certain to mean Sunday, and there is no evidence that Peter Waldo ever observed the Sabbath.

Reflecting a Protestant sentiment current in the seventeenth century, Peter Allix claimed Waldenses existed before the time of Peter Waldo, writing, ". . . it is absolutely false, that these churches were ever founded by

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[36]Ibid., pp. 102-4.

[37]George Huntston Williams, The Radical Reformation (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), p. 520. Williams is a minister, Professor of Church History at Harvard, Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Hollis Professor of Divinity, and Fulbright Lecturer, University of Strassbourg, France.

[38]Ibid., p. 523.

Peter Waldo."[39] He claims they were, ". . . of great antiquity. . . some say it hath been continued down ever since the time of the . . . Apostles."[40] He quotes the Bishop of Meaux as saying they had existed "since the year 120," and that they broke with Rome during the pontificate of Pope Sylvester I (313-335).[41] Allix maintains their name came not from Waldo, but from the place they inhabited, les Vaus de Lucerne et Angrogne, or "The valleys of Lucerne and Angrogne" in the Piedmont, from which they were called Vallenses.[42]

Allix also suggests that some of Waldo's followers, "did probably join themselves with the churches of the valleys of the Piedmont."[43] He says, "they affirm that they alone are the true Church of Christ. . . the Apostle's successors. . . that baptism is of no advantage to infants because they cannot actually believe. . . [and] hold all oaths to be unlawful."[44]

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[39]Peter Allix, Some Remarks upon the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of the Piedmont (London, 1690; reprint, Gallatin, Tennesee: Church History and Archives, 1989, p. 192.

[40]Ibid., p. 193.

[41]Ibid., pp. 193-4.

[42]Ibid., p. 197.

[43]Ibid., p. 199.

[44]Ibid., pp. 205, 209-11.

Other non-conformist groups also existed during this period as well, such as the Lollards,[45] found in Germany and other parts of Europe as far east as Livonia.[46] One of their leaders in England, John Wycliffe (c. 1340-1384), influenced vernacular translations of the Bible. His teachings were condemned at a council at Oxford in 1382 and again at Blackfriars the following year. Although he died in 1384, because of the controversial nature of his teachings, his bones were exhumed and burned in 1428.[47] Lollardy, forced underground, revived under King Henry VII and re-emerged during the Protestant Reformation,[48] although some believe there is no direct connection between pre-Reformation and post-Reformation Lollards.

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther (c. 1483-1546) nailed his ninety-five theses to the castle church door of Wittenberg and began a chain of events that made it possible for non-conformists to emerge from the repression of earlier

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[45]Hoeh, A True History of the True Church, p. 23. The author claims that at least some Lollards kept the Sabbath. The term Lollard comes from a Middle English word meaning "a mumbler of prayers." Members of this sect were often seen mumbling to themselves--either in prayer or in memorizing portions of the Bible, possession of which could bring persecution or even death--and this resulted in their being given their name.

[46]W.H. Summers, The Lollards of the Chiltern Hills (New York: AMS Press, 1980), p. 41.

[47]Ibid., p. 58.

[48]Christie-Murray, A History of Heresy, pp. 115-16.

years. Lollards reappear, primarily in Essex, Kent, the Chilterns, the Thames valley, the Midlands, parts of East Anglia, the towns of Bristol, Coventry, Cordwainer, and Cheap in London.[49] Waldenses also reappear, but most were absorbed into mainline Protestantism.[50]

What Luther began later came to be known as the Magisterial Reformation because it shifted religious authority from Pope and priest to king and prince. It also rejected the concept of penance--the "works" the Catholic Church claimed were necessary for salvation--and adopted Luther's idea of salvation by faith alone. Soon, however, this reformation took another dramatic turn.

In Switzerland, Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) urged his followers to rely neither on Pope nor king, but on the scriptures alone to determine Christian doctrine, beginning what has been called the Radical Reformation. Zwingli established a council in Zürich to guide this movement, but events took still another even more radical turn. Disagreement broke out between the Swiss reformer and another leader named Conrad Grebel (1498?-1526).

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[49]John Guy, Tudor England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 25-6. Guy is Reader in British History at the University of Bristol and the John Hinkley Visiting Professor at the Johns Hopkins University (1989-90). He has authored many books on the Tudor period and is contributor to The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain.

[50]Williams. The Radical Reformation, p. 528.

Grebel disagreed with Zwingli over the issues of the Mass and the use of images and charged him with not relying on the scriptures for determining doctrines. Then, on January 21, 1525, Grebel baptized George Blaurock (d. 1529), a former priest, at the home of Felix Manz (1500?-1527).[51] Like the Waldenses, Grebel's followers believed that only those capable of making sound judgements could receive what they called "believer's baptism." They maintained, therefore, that infant baptism was useless because children were not old enough to believe the teachings of the Bible.[52] Since they took a position against infant baptism, they came to be called anti-baptists, or Anabaptists.

George Huntston Williams claims Anabaptists and Lollards had much in common.[53] Lollard beliefs varied widely, not only from group to group, but from individual to individual within the same group.[54] So it was with

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[51]William R. Estep, The Anabaptist Story, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), pp. 10-13). Estep is Professor of Church History at the Southwestern Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

[52]Ibid., 150.

[53]Williams, The Radical Reformation, p. 401.

[54]John A.F. Thompson, The Later Lollards, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 239. Thompson is a lecturer in history at the University of Glasgow. He also writes, "There was such a variety in the doctrines which were held by the Lollards that it would appear an impossible operation to try to draw up a list of Lollard beliefs which could then be compared with the doctrines of Lutherans or Anabaptists" (p. 250).

Anabaptists; they, too, held many differing beliefs, including the observance of the seventh day Sabbath.[55]

A major accomplishment of the Reformation is that it produced the conditions that made it possible for nonconformists to emerge from obscurity, although it did not eliminate their persecution. Anabaptists, for example, were drowned, burned or beheaded for their beliefs, and accused of fomenting revolts and other crimes against society--and this repression came from Protestants as well as Catholics.[56] It is possible some of the charges against them are true, but this cannot be established with certainty because most of the records are those of their accusers. However, Anabaptists in general appear to have been peaceful, law-abiding people. Yet they were so independent-minded that their various sects never could agree to unify their doctrines and beliefs.[57]

Extremists sometimes threatened the movement as well. In 1534, Anabaptists gained control of Münster and fanatics from the surrounding area poured into the city. A year later, Catholic forces recaptured the city and tortured the nonconformist leaders to death. The charges against them included polygamy, the confiscation of the property of unbelievers, and the intention of world conquest.

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[55]Williams, The Radical Reformation, pp. 257, 408-10.

[56]Christie-Murray, A History of Heresy, p. 162.

[57]Ibid., p. 163.

Anabaptism had been proscribed by many governments and this incident brought even greater difficulties to their cause.

In England during the Commonwealth and Protectorate, another group called the Fifth Monarchy Men came into prominence. They believed that the time was at hand when they would succeed all previous governments and rule with Christ for a thousand years. This led to violent confrontations, and an armed uprising in 1657 and again in 1661. These rebellions were easily suppressed, but the majority of peaceful Anabaptists were often associated with these extremists as well as the abortive situation at Münster.

By 1600, Europe had been divided between Protestant and Catholic factions and religion was in a state of flux, especially in England. For a while Presbyterianism gained the ascendancy there when Parliament won the Civil War and beheaded Charles I in 1648, but numerous non-conformist sects existed during this time: Baptists, led by John Smyth; Quakers, under the guidance of George Fox; and many others.[58] Among these were the independent-minded Anabaptists, some of whom observed the seventh day Sabbath.

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[58]Ibid., p. 179.

Chapter II

Stephen Mumford and the Seventh Day Baptists

During the religious turmoil in mid-seventeenth century England, two types of Baptists emerged: Particular Baptists, who believed in Calvin's concept of predestination, a church intended only for particular individuals whom he called "the elect," and General Baptists, who believed Christ's atonement alone was sufficient for all. Because they held a great diversity of ideas and practices, they were often unfairly associated with some of the more violent movements, such as the Fifth Monarchists. Among these Baptists existed a small group of Sabbath-keepers, who maintained a strongly independent mind-set.

Sabbath-keepers, as well as many other nonconformists, relied on the Bible as the primary source for their doctrines. The belief that each man was his own authority for the interpretation of the Scriptures became a major thorn in the side of the established churches, Protestant and Catholic. As a result, religious leaders attempted to prevent the Bible from being circulated among the population in general. Samuel Hubbard (c. 1610-c.1678), who became a Sabbath-keeper after coming to the American colonies from England, wrote of this problem in his diary: "Now 1675 I have a testament of my grandfather Cocke's printed in 1549,

which he hid in his bedstraw lest it should be found and burnt in Queen Mary's days."[1]

In England by the middle of the seventeenth century, a number of nonconformists had adopted the Sabbath. Among them was Edward Stennett (d. 1705), who accepted the Sabbath sometime in the 1650s. It was he who wrote a letter to Sabbath-keepers in the American colonies which led to the establishment of the first Sabbath-observing church in the New World. The Stennett family was active in the Baptist and Sabbatarian movements for more than a century, and suffered persecution for it.[2] This family played a major role in the formation of Seventh Day Baptists in England.

Stephen Mumford left the religious turmoil of this period, and landed on the shores of the American colonies in 1665.[3] Little is known about him prior to this date

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[1]Samuel Hubbard, Register of Mr. Samuel Hubbard (transcription of excerpts with notes by Isaac Backus, ca. 1775), B 136 i Mss., Providence: Rhode Island Historical Society.

[2]Don. A. Sanford, A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists (Nashville, Tennesee: Broadman Press, 1992), pp. 71-3. Sanford is a minister and historian in the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society, Janesville, Wisconsin.

[3]Isaac Backus, A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Baptists, (Middleborough, 1777; reprint, New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1969), vol. 1, p. 324. In volume 1, Backus sets the date of Mumford's arrival as "the beginning of 1665," but in vol. 2, p. 500, he gives it as 1664, a discrepancy probably caused by the author's failure to use new style dating for the 1664 date. Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America, p. 8. This source places Mumford's arrival in the year 1664.

because nonconformists in England lived under the threat of persecution. If authorities discovered their identities, they could be imprisoned, tortured, or even put to death. As a result, nontraditional churches often kept coded records of their members. Most of these have not yet been deciphered, so not much can be ascertained about Mumford's life before he came to the American colonies.[4]

For many years it was believed that Mumford had been a member of the Bell Lane Seventh Day Baptist Church in London because he and his followers had correspondence with that church and because John Comer (1704-1734), writing in 1730, said that Mumford and his wife, "were members of a 7th day church in England."[5] However, more recent research indicates this is not the case. Oscar Burdick, of the Graduate Theological Union Library in Berkeley, California, has deciphered the coded records of the Tewkesbury Baptist Church in England and found the Mumfords' names on the roll.[6]

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[4]Sanford, A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists, pp. 57-58. Although little can be determined about Mumford's early life, according to John Osborne Austin's Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1982), p. 136, it appears he was born in or near London in 1639.

[5]John Comer, History of the Baptist Churches in Newport R.I. (MS, 1730), p. 25. A copy of this document is found in the archives of the Newport Historical Society, Vault A, Box 50, Folder 5.

[6]In a letter to James Guy dated July 20, 1993, Burdick says this information is contained on "...leaf 21 verso and 22 recto (one opening) of the Tewkesbury Baptist record

There is another reason it is unlikely Mumford was known to the Bell Lane Church. In a letter dated March 26, 1668, William Gibson (late seventeenth century), who would later come to the American Colonies, and ten other members of that church wrote to Mumford and the others, "Beloved and precious Brethren, although unknown to you by face, yet through grace trust we can call you so. . . ."[7] If unknown to them "by face," it seems evident that the Mumfords never attended there.[8]

Before Mumford's arrival, however, the ground had to be prepared to receive the seed of the Sabbath Mumford would sow. Roger Williams (c. 1603-1683), a minister from England, provided this preparation. He arrived at Nantasket in the winter of 1631, and served as a pastor in Plymouth and Salem.[9] He believed in the separation of religious from secular authority, which eventually led to his banishment from Massachusetts and his flight to what became Rhode

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book" (p.2). With his letter, he included the deciphering of that document and the coded characters used in it (see the Appendix).

[7]Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America, p. 11.

[8]Oscar Burdick was the first to notice the significance of the statement, "although unknown to you by face," and its implication that the Mumfords were not a part of the church at Bell Lane. His discovery of the Mumfords' names in the Tewkesbury Baptist Church document supports this concept.

[9]Backus, A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Baptists, vol. 1, pp. 39-43.

Island. He named this land Providence, after purchasing it from the Narragansett Indians, and established the first Baptist Church on the American continent there.[10]

Mumford and his wife settled in Newport, Rhode Island, and each Sunday attended the Baptist Church founded by Roger Williams while keeping the Sabbath privately. Soon others joined them, but by 1671 four of these individuals stopped their Sabbath observance and some of Mumford's followers began calling them apostates.[11]

The Sabbatarians wrote to London for advice on how to deal with those who had stopped keeping the Sabbath. Edward Stennett (late seventeenth century) replied in a letter dated March 6, 1670: " [You must] not take pleasure in them, but must withdraw yourselves from them, as sinful and disorderly persons; and if the church will hold communion with those apostates from the truth, you ought then to desire to be fairly dismissed from the church. . . ."[12] The Stennett family had been prominent nonconformists for many years. Edward Stennett was apparently a minister in the church at Bell Lane in London, so his letter would bear special weight.

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[10]Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, In America, p. 7.

[11]Backus, A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Baptists, vol. 1, p. 324. John Comer claims four stopped observing the Sabbath: "Nicholas Wild & his wife. . . John Solmon and his wife. . ."

[12]Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 500-501.

In 1671 the Sabbatarians severed their relationship with the Baptists as Stennett had suggested. Obadiah Holmes (1606-1682), during a sermon in June of that year, "gave them [the Sabbath-keepers] great offense so that the communion on the day following they withdrew from the table of the Lord, being July 12th, 1671. The Lord's Day following they were cited to give reason for their so doing which they did & after much debate from time to time 'twas thought proper by those who still observed the 7th day, that William Hiscox [1638-1704], a leading man on that side of the controversy should declare the minds of all of them which was the same. Accordingly Mr. Hiscox proceeded to say. . .

"That he admonished the church in the name of God and of the rest. . . because

"1. The Elders of this church had denyed the 10 Commandments as moral rules for gentile christians

"2. Because of those backsliders and the churches [sic] upholding of them. . . (i.e. N. Wild and J.W. Solmon & their wives). . .

"3. For Obadiah Holmes false speaking publicly and often denying God's Holy Law. . . (Note Mr. Holmes had said that some had left Christ to go to Moses in the observation of days & in the time of trouble in his public preaching which was exceedingly offensive). . . After Mr. Hiscox had thus done Mr. John Clark [the pastor of the church]

signified it was a false witness for he himself had said that the 10 Commandments were moral rules. Mr. Joseph Tory seeing how things were, said, we must look upon you as gone out from us because you are not of us, to which Mr. Hiscox replyed, What you please. So division in the church commenced on the 7th day of December 1671."[13]

Baptist leaders from Boston heard of the conflict and admonished the Sabbath-keepers in a letter: "And although we dare not judge your consciences in the observation of a day or days to the Lord, yet, brethren, your judging them that have so done, and we hope have not unadvisedly changed their minds, to be apostates, seems to our understandings to savor too much a censorious spirit."[14] After this confrontation, the Sabbatarians organized their own church in Hopkinton, with Hiscox as pastor.[15]

Mumford returned to London in 1675, possibly with the hope of bringing additional Sabbath-keepers to the American colonies. On March 14 of that year, he wrote, "About the 14th of January, we sailed from Boston and had a comfortable time and fair wind for three weeks, in which time we came to

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[13]Comer, History of the Baptist Churches in Newport, R.I., pp. 23-4.

[14]Backus, A History of New England with Particular Reference to the Baptists, vol. 1, p. 324.

[15]Tamar Davis, A General History of the Sabbatarian Churches (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1851), p. 133, and Henry Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America (Utica: Seward and Williams, 1811), p. 20.

soundings, as they judged near the Isle of Scilly, and then we met with a cross wind that kept us three weeks more, and then we came to anchor in a road between the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth. I took my journey to London in the waggon, where I was received by the brethren with much joy, in some of them who had a great desire to hear of our place and people; some of them talk of coming with me." He returned to the colonies that October with two more Sabbath-keepers: William Gibson (c. 1638-1717), a signer of the 1668 letter, and his wife.[16] When William Hiscox died in 1704, Gibson succeeded him as pastor.[17]

Mumford's wife, Ann, died February 22, 1697 (old style) and Stephen died in July 1707. They had three children, none of whom apparently joined them in observance of the Sabbath. The oldest, also named Stephen, was a merchant; their second son, John, was appointed by Rhode Island's Assembly to survey land for settlement; their only daughter, Ann, died unmarried at age 26.[18]

By 1811, these pioneer Sabbatarians and their successors had established churches in Hopkinton, Rhode Island; Piscataway and Cohansey, New Jersey; Burlington and

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[16]John Osborne Austin, The Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1982), p. 136.

[17]Backus, A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Baptists, vol. 2, pp. 501-502.

[18]Austin, Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island, p. 136.

Waterford, Connecticut; Berlin, Brookfield and Deruyter, New York; and Lost Creek and Salem, Virginia (now West Virginia).[19] A westward population movement that took place at this time tended to depopulate some of the eastern churches and threatened the cohesiveness that bound them together. Henry Clarke admitted he knew little about the distant congregations that were forming in the west.[20]

Since Seventh Day Baptists[21] sprang from the independent-minded Anabaptists of England and had been associated with a church divided into General and Particular Baptists, they developed along more democratic congregationalist lines, each local church, ". . . transacting its own concerns, of receiving or expelling members, of appointing its own pastor and other officers, fixing their salaries, and suspending their ministrations in case of impiety or gross immorality. The internal regulations of these churches are simple and democratic, every member being equally entitled to a vote. . . ."[22] Because of this local autonomy and the westward population movement causing new churches to form and older ones to

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[19]Clarke, A History of Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, In America, pp. 20-58.

[20]Ibid., p. 57.

[21]The name "Seventh Day Baptist" did not come into universal use until the church's General Conference in 1818. Davis, A General History of the Sabbatarian Churches, p.130.

[22]Ibid., p. 134.

relocate or disband, Seventh Day Baptists faced a constant struggle to establish a general conference. As a result, records are scarce and agreement on mutual beliefs, other than the Sabbath, is irregular. The fact has already been noted that these churches could not agree on a name for the movement until 1818, more that a hundred years after they formed their first church.

Seventh Day Baptists took root in the American colonies only a few years after their establishment in England. Between 1664 and 1811, the independence of each local church to determine its own internal regulations came from the idea of conscience being the guide of each individual. This concept functioning within a church organization, if carried to excess, can only lead to a divergence of opinion and ultimate division. This is not to say that too doctrinaire a position might not have the same results, but that in the case of Seventh Day Baptists, it was the lack of a decision-making central authority that contributed to their meager growth and the splintering of local bodies into other denominations. This was the legacy of Stephen Mumford.

Henry Clarke observed this lack of central authority and notes its effect regarding a conflict of beliefs concerning the doctrine of the Trinity. He writes, "But there are few if any, of this denomination, as I conceive, who believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three

absolute distinct persons. . . ."[23] In addition, he associated this doctrine with the baptizing of infants (which he regarded as improper), but does so in a manner leaving any decision open to question.[24] Clearly, he tried to avoid controversy, probably to appease both sides of the issue. Whatever the members' beliefs concerning the Trinity were then, today, it is a doctrine they now apparently accept.[25]

Even with their schismatic beginnings when they broke away from the Baptist Church at Newport, Seventh Day Baptists have shown a willingness to cooperate with other denominations. If a "first day" church[26] found itself without a pastor, a Sabbatarian minister would serve there

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[23]Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America, p. 62.

[24]Ibid., pp. 121-2. Early Seventh Day Baptists, as well as European Anabaptists before them, regarded the doctrine of the Trinity and infant baptism (often called pedobaptism) as unbiblical. If a tenet could not be clearly established on Scriptural authority alone, it was rejected. In their eyes, both infant baptism and the doctrine of the Trinity were examples of beliefs established by later synods or councils and thus lacked Biblical sanction.

[25]Sanford, A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists, p. 322. He states, ". . . as a denomination, Seventh Day Baptists have generally found more agreement and basis for cooperation with other Baptists [who generally accept the Trinity doctrine] with whom they disagree primarily on one issue, the Sabbath, while finding agreement on most other doctrinal questions."

[26]Seventh Day Baptist writers consistently refer to churches that worship on Sunday, the first day of the week, as "first day" churches.

as long as necessary.[27] At the same time, Sabbatarians often permitted ministers from other denominations to serve as their preachers, sometimes for years.[28] These were not just temporary arrangements, but semi-permanent ones, creating a situation that could lead to a weakening of their own peculiar tenet of a Saturday Sabbath. At best this hampered growth, and at worst sometimes led to divisions within the local church, if not its dissolution.

In spite of these impediments, with the establishment of the first Sabbatarian church at Newport, additional ones continued to be added. Usually numerical growth within a church caused the need for another meeting place to better accommodate members. Sometimes unusual circumstances brought about the development of additional churches.

In 1700 or 1701, a Baptist leader, Edmund Dunham (fl. 1700), saw a man working in his field on a Sunday and admonished him for it. The man challenged him to prove from the scriptures that the first day of the week was holy. Dunham studied the matter and became a Sabbath-keeper himself, gained several followers and went to Westerly to be ordained in 1705,[29] founding a church in Piscataway, New

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[27]Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America, pp. 21-2, 27-8, 43-4, 48.

[28]Ibid., p. 33.

[29]Because of the preference for local autonomy, as has already been noted, ordination into the ministry was left to the judgement of the local churches. In general, the

Jersey.[30] Don A. Sanford maintains Dunham played a more significant role in the church than Stephen Mumford.[31]

Keithian Seventh Day Baptists are another example of this independent acceptance of the Sabbath and eventual unity with the Seventh Day Baptist Church, although in this case the relationship is somewhat tenuous. This organization began when George Keith (c. 1639-1716) and forty-eight others left the Quakers in 1691 to form their own church. In 1700, Able Noble (fl. 1700) introduced the Sabbath to them and the issue caused their society to break up into opposing groups.[32]

Conrad Beissel (1690-1768), a native of Germany, left the Dunkards in 1728 to form his own Sabbath-observing church in Ephrata, Pennsylvania.[33] He and his followers

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applicant had to appear before church leaders and meet whatever requirements they imposed. The minister then served at the discretion of that church. Other churches recognized these ordinations, however, but the qualifications and methods used varied from place to place and from time to time.

[30]Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America, p. 32.

[31]In a letter to James Guy, dated June 11, 1993, Sanford wrote, "It is true that Mumford was probably the first Seventh Day Baptist in America, but there is little evidence to suggest that he was particularly influential in the conversion of others. Samuel and Tacy Hubbard and Edmund Dunham were far more important."

[32]Davis, A General History of the Sabbatarian Churches, p. 211.

[33]Ibid., pp. 216-17.

formed a monastic society that encouraged but did not require or enforce celibacy, although some left the group to be married, indicating at least social pressure against marriage.[34] Originally, they had established a community of believers that set themselves apart from populated areas. Beissel died in 1768 and the society went into decline by as population began to intrude on the once isolated community. Even though the original society is in effect dead, several other churches sprang from it, and Seventh Day Baptists have considered these as a part of their church.[35]

Clearly, there has been a great divergence of view among those regarded as Seventh Day Baptists. Some believed in the Trinity, some did not; some chose to be celibate, others married. On virtually every point of doctrine except the Sabbath and baptism by immersion, there is little agreement. As a result, schism has been an ever-present danger. Nevertheless, this church was still a major denomination in the mid-1800s.

In 1853, Henry Jackson, a Baptist minister in Newport, Rhode Island, received a commission at the Baptist convention that year to canvass all the churches in the state and report on them. He found that Seventh Day Baptists had greater numbers than many other religious organizations, including Wesleyan Methodists, Second

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[34]Ibid., pp. 220-8.

[35]Ibid., pp. 230-3.

Adventists (influenced by the preaching of William Miller in the 1830s and 1840s), Universalists, Jews, and others.[36]

Seventh Day Baptists have consistently been unwilling to support any church-wide efforts, preferring that local or regional organizations make their own decisions. As a result, optimistic starts soon faced a lack of funds and the abandonment of the projects. Time and again they began evangelistic campaigns only to have them falter due to lack of support.[37] The Church faced the same difficulties the American colonies had when trying to function under the Articles of Confederation. America changed its government with the introduction of a new Constitution; Seventh Day Baptists never fully accomplished this. As a result, insistence on local autonomy has permeated the movement and contributed to divisions not only within this organization, but also in those which would follow.

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[36]Henry Jackson, An Account of the Churches in Rhode Island, Presented at an Adjourned Session of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Baptist State Convention (Providence: George H. Whitney, 1854), p. 97. Jackson was commissioned to make his survey in 1853 and published his results the following year.

[37]Sanford, A Choosing People: the History of Seventh Day Baptists, p. 278. The author lists many examples of sincere efforts falling short of their established goals because of a lack of support from a central body, and points out that ". . . a fear always surfaced that centralization and any concept of a 'headquarters' would detract from the idea of local autonomy and the benefits derived from more diverse participation."

Chapter III

William Miller, Ellen G. White, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Of all Christians who observe the Saturday Sabbath, Seventh-day Adventists are by far the best known. Their doctrines developed through the influence of a number of individuals, most notably William Miller (1782-1849) and Ellen G. White (1827-1915). Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church adopted many of Miller's doctrines, he never became a member of that organization, and never observed the Sabbath. Sabbath observance was introduced to adventists during his lifetime, but is more closely associated with Ellen G. White.

Miller was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, on February 15, 1782, the oldest of sixteen children. When he was four years old, his father, also named William Miller, moved with his family to a farm in Low Hampton, New York.[1] The younger Miller received a limited education, and in 1803, married Lucy Smith and settled in Poultney, Vermont, near her parents' home.[2] He was influenced by deists and

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[1]James White, Sketches of the Christian Life and Public Labors of William Miller (Battle Creek, Michigan: Steam Press, 1875; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1971), p. 5.

[2]Robert Gale, The Urgent Voice (U.S.A.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1975), p. 14.

adopted a moral, but not particularly religious life-style, somewhat skeptical of prevailing Christian teachings.[3]

During the War of 1812, Miller entered the Army and rose to the rank of captain.[4] After leaving the service, he moved his family from Poultney back to his old homestead in Low Hampton, where they lived with his widowed mother and his brother, Solomon. He also purchased another farm and built a house there, and by 1816 became a member of the Baptist Church. Between then and 1822, he developed a detailed theology of his own, and came to believe that there would be a second coming of Jesus Christ.[5]

By August, 1831, Miller concluded that Christ would return in 1844, and began to preach this publicly.[6] He based his prediction on Daniel 8:13-14, which states, "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

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[3]James White, Sketches of the Christian Life and Public Labors of William Miller, pp. 25-6.

[4]Ibid., pp. 33-9.

[5]Ibid., pp. 39-45.

[6]Ibid., pp. 72-9.

Miller believed the 2300 days were in fact 2300 years, after which Christ would return and cleanse the sanctuary. By this way of thinking, if he could determine when the 2300 years began, it would only be necessary to count the years from that time to the return of Christ. To find that starting point, he turned to the history of the Jews, who had been taken into captivity by King Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C., when Jerusalem fell to his army. To Miller, this was equivalent to causing, ". . . both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot," as Daniel had said.

He also turned to the book of Ezra, where King Artaxerxes of Persia gave the captive Jews in his land permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city. He issued this order in the seventh year of his reign, (457 B.C.). Using that date as a beginning, Miller projected the 2300 years forward to 1843 or 1844 A.D.[7] His uncertainty regarding the year centered around the differences between the modern calendar, which starts the new year with January 1, and the Hebrew calendar, which begins the religious new year in the spring and the civil new year in the fall. In the end, he settled on the year 1844.

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[7]J.N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1905; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1972), pp. 54-5, 84-5.

On September 14, 1833, the Baptist Church gave Miller a license to preach.[8] He continued his lectures on the second coming of Christ and gained a large and enthusiastic following from various denominations. Among those he converted was a man named Joshua Himes (1805-1895), a minister in the Christian Church. In 1840, Himes began publication of a newspaper he called the Signs of the Times, and used it to promote Miller's teachings.[9] In 1838, Dr. Josiah Litch (1808-1886), a follower of Miller, claimed the Bible predicted the Ottoman Empire would come to an end on August 11, 1840. Since he based his conclusions on the same year-for-a-day principle Miller used, Litch said that if his prediction was correct, it would prove the accuracy of the calculations for the date of the return of Christ. Then England, Russia, Austria and Prussia intervened in the war between the Turkish sultan and the Pasha of Egypt, and when Turkey gained its independence on the predicted date, adventists considered the prophecy to be fulfilled.[10] Hundreds of ministers from various denominations soon began preaching the Millerite message.[11]

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[8]James White, Sketches of the Christian Life and Public Labors of William Miller, pp. 93-4.

[9]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, pp. 122-3.

[10]Ibid., pp. 128-132.

[11]Ibid., p. 133.

Under Miller's leadership, adventists looked for Christ to return by the end of March or the first of April, 1844, but that time passed uneventfully.[12] Miller reevaluated his calculations and set a new date for the second advent: October 22, 1844. The original date had coincided with the beginning of the Jewish new year in the spring, but Artaxerxes had issued his decree five months into the year, so Miller changed his prediction to match the Biblical Day of Atonement in the fall, the day on which the Jewish High Priest cleansed the sanctuary and entered the Holy of Holies in the temple. Telling the discouraged adventists of this new time of expectation came to be known as "the midnight cry," and injected new hope into the movement.[13]

Because of this new anticipation, some adventist farmers in New Hampshire decided not to cultivate their fields. Later, others made no attempt to harvest their crops, and as these practices spread throughout New England, untended fields stood as visible manifestations of adventist expectations.[14] Such actions of course brought ridicule from those who did not believe the Millerite message, and

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[12]Ibid., pp. 149-50.

[13]C. Mervyn Maxwell, Tell It to the World (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982), pp. 28-31.

[14]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, pp. 157-8.

when October 22 passed as uneventfully as the earlier date, adventists faced additional scorn.

After this "Great Disappointment," Miller's followers splintered into three main factions. The largest body, including Miller, admitted their chronology was wrong, but continued to expect the imminent return of Christ. A smaller group, most of whom eventually joined other religious movements, claimed the second advent had occurred as predicted, but in a spiritual sense, not a physical one. The third faction eventually became the Seventh-day Adventist Church.[15]

Controversy raged around Miller throughout his ministry, yet to the end of his life he held to the belief that Christ would soon return. In January, 1848, he lost his sight, and by April, 1849, his health went into rapid decline.[16] He died December 20, 1849, and a short service took place at the family residence three days later. As there was not room enough to accommodate the many mourners,

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[15]Henry Warner Bowden, Dictionary of American Religious Biography (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977), p. 310, and Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, The Disappointed (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. xv. Bowden is a Professor of Religion at Rutgers. Numbers served as an Assistant Professor of History at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan and as an Assistant Professor of Humanities at Loma Linda University. Butler was a visiting scholar in the Department of History at the University of California at Riverside and the editor of Adventist Heritage: A Journal of Adventist History.

[16]James White, Sketches of the Christian Life and Public Labors of William Miller, pp. 393-4.

a Congregational minister in nearby Fairhaven offered the use of his house for a second, public service.[17]

Since Seventh-day Adventists observe the Saturday Sabbath, the question naturally arises as to whether Miller followed this practice. There is no proof that he did, but five years before his death, during the winter of 1843-44, a group of about forty Millerites in Washington, New Hampshire, did begin keeping it,[18] and from there it was spread by a Methodist circuit rider named Frederick Wheeler (1811-1910).[19] Later in 1844, still during Miller's lifetime, a Free-Will Baptist clergyman, Thomas Preble (fl. 1844), accepted the concept of the Sabbath.[20] Writing in the February 28, 1845 issue of the Hope of Israel, he maintained that the "great apostasy" sought to change "times and laws" by changing the Sabbath to Sunday.[21] But he

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[17]Ibid., pp.104-5.

[18]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, p. 249, and Gerard P. Damsteegt, Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), p. 137. Damsteegt studied in England, the United States, Switzerland, and the Netherlands and received his Ph.D. from the Free University of Amsterdam.

[19]Damsteegt, Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission, p. 137.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, p. 250.

discontinued Sabbath observance in 1847 and began to speak against it.[22]

Much more influential in the development of Seventh-day Adventism was Ellen Gould Harmon, the daughter of Robert and Eunice Harmon. While in elementary school, Ellen was struck in the face with a rock and lost so much blood that she suffered lingering damage to her respiratory system. This caused her to be especially susceptible to infections and eventually forced her to drop out of school. When she was twelve, Ellen and her family accepted William Miller's teaching, and the following summer, at a Methodist camp meeting in Casco Bay, near Portland, Maine, she was baptized.[23] Then when October 22 failed to fulfill their expectations, she, like many others, became disillusioned.

Ellen turned seventeen the November after the Great Disappointment, and in December, while in prayer with a group of adventist women, she experienced ". . . her first vision. . . . the first of some 2000 that came to her during her lifetime."[24] These visions became the center of controversy and cause some to reject her leadership.[25] Yet

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[22]Damsteegt, Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission, p. 137.

[23]Maxwell, Tell It to the World, pp. 55-6.

[24]Ibid., pp. 56, 58.

[25]Robert Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day) (Denver: Bible Advocate Press, 1983), pp. 22-3.

they served to unite many believers into what would eventually become the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

On August 30, 1846, Ellen Harmon married James White (1821-1881), a successful adventist evangelist.[26] Their introduction to the Sabbath came about somewhat indirectly. A Seventh Day Baptist widow, Rachel Oakes (1809-1868), moved from Verona, New York, to Washington, New Hampshire, to be with her daughter, Delight, who had taken a position as a school teacher there. As there were no Sabbath-observing churches in that area, she kept it privately and attended church on Sundays with a small group of Millerite adventists. During the winter of 1843-44, she confronted Frederick Wheeler, the minister of this group, and told him of her belief in keeping the Sabbath. Wheeler was convinced and became the first Sabbath-keeping adventist minister in North America.[27]

About forty people in this church began to observe the Sabbath, when a former sea captain, Joseph Bates (1792-1872), learned of it. Wheeler had introduced it to Thomas M. Preble, who published it in his paper, the Hope of Israel, and later, in 1845, as a tract entitled, Tract Showing That the Seventh Day Should Be Observed as the Sabbath. Bates read it and went to Washington to learn

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[26]Maxwell, Tell It to the World, pp. 86.

[27]Ibid., 67-8.

more,[28] and then began preaching this doctrine from state to state.[29] Although he doubted Mrs. White's visions, he told her about the Sabbath in 1846, but she rejected it. Later, however, she claimed God revealed to her in a vision that Sabbath observance would have preserved the world from idolatry, so she accepted it and Bates accepted her visions.[30]

Once committed to this precept, Mrs. White wrote extensively about it, and like the Seventh Day Baptists before her, she came to believe that in every age Christians kept the Sabbath and considered the Bible as the only rule in life.[31] She believed that prior to the Reformation, the Waldenses--in her mind the "true church"--separated from the Church of Rome at least in part because of this issue, and suffered persecution and martyrdom as a result.[32]

Mrs. White's childhood injury caused her to suffer poor health much of her life. Perhaps because of this she wrote not only about spiritual concepts, but about health matters as well. She taught that Jesus was born physically perfect

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[28]Ibid., p. 74, and Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, p. 250.

[29]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, pp. 251-4.

[30]Ibid., pp. 255-8.

[31]Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy (Ellen G. White, 1888; reprint, Phoenix: Inspiration Books, 1967), p. 58.

[32]Ibid., pp. 61-2.

and lived "in conformity to nature's laws."[33] She regarded John the Baptist's temperate lifestyle as an example to a world prone to "sensuous pleasures" that caused poor health and numbed "spiritual perceptions." She maintained that men should hold their appetites and passions in check, just as John did,[34] and believed Christ taught that disease resulted from violating God's laws. She sanctioned the use of simple and natural remedies, but not drugs, and urged everyone to learn how to preserve good health.[35]

As a result of her many books and arduous speaking schedule, as well as her husband's organizational skills, Mrs. White became the preeminent leader in the adventist movement and one of the most prolific woman writers of all time. Yet it was her controversial visions had the greatest effect on the Seventh-day Adventist Church, although they led to early schisms. J.N. Loughborough (1832-1924) wrote that he had the ". . . privilege to be present and witness the operation of this gift about fifty times," and claimed that many others had also witnessed them.[36]

In her books, Mrs. White combines her visions with other religious teachings and addresses many of the problems

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[33]Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages (Boise: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898; reprint, 1970), p. 40.

[34]Ibid., pp. 78-80.

[35]Ibid., pp. 723-4.

[36]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, pp. v-vi.

adventists faced after the Great Disappointment. But she was not alone in attempting to answer the many questions of this time. Hiram Edson (1806-1882), a Millerite from Port Gibson, New York, claimed Miller's date had not been in error, that Christ had entered the heavenly Holy of Holies at that time for a "cleansing of the sanctuary." Association with Seventh Day Baptists, who also believed in the second coming of Christ, caused a minority of Edson's followers to begin worshipping on Saturday instead of Sunday.[37] Then Joseph Bates went to Edson and convinced him to begin observing the Sabbath as well.[38]

When Ellen G. White found out about Edson's views, she claimed they supported one of her visions, where she saw Christ and His Father enter the heavenly Holy of Holies.[39] From this nucleus of Edson, Bates, and the Whites, Sabbath-keeping adventists' numbers grew rapidly. Bates maintained that salvation depended on the observance of the Sabbath, "the crowning truth of all." Mrs. White taught that "God's people" were being tried on the Sabbath truth since October, 1844 (the year of the Great Disappointment), and that those

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[37]Ruth Alden Doan, The Miller Heresy, Millennialism, and American Culture (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), pp. 203-4. Doan is an Assistant Professor of History at Hollins College, Roanoke, Virginia.

[38]Maxwell, Tell It to the World, p. 76.

[39]Ibid., pp. 60-5.

who had died earlier without keeping the Sabbath, "rest in hope" because they lacked essential understanding.[40]

Two factions developed at about this time. One, led by Joseph Turner (fl. 1844), believed adventists were living "in the great Sabbath," a time of total rest from worldly pursuits every day, and should do no manual labor--ever. He also believed that the door to salvation was shut to all but adventists. Ellen G. White opposed this "no mercy" theory, and taught that only those who had knowingly rejected "the light of truth" were in danger of losing their salvation,[41] and in the end it was her position that prevailed.

So it was that two distinct doctrines--the second advent of Jesus Christ and the observance of the Sabbath--blended together in what would become the Seventh-day Adventist Church. While Ellen G. White provided the spiritual thrust of the movement, her husband, James, added his organizational skills. By 1849, publishing facilities had been established in Oswego, New York, and the Whites moved there so James could oversee the operation and write some of the articles. Over the next few years the Whites and the printing facilities moved several more times.[42]

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[40]Ellen G. White, "The Open and the Shut Door," Early Writings, (Ellen G. White, 1892; reprint, Washington, D.C., Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1945), pp. 42-3.

[41]Loughborough, The Second Great Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, pp. 216-224.

[42]Ibid., pp. 283-6.

They borrowed furniture, because they could not afford their own until they moved to Rochester in 1852, where they rented a house for $175 a year. They put the printing press in their basement, which saved the $50 cost for a room to print the Review and Herald.[43] But rumblings of discontent began to surface. Some questioned the White's motives and charged that they were assuming too much control.

In 1855 the printing facilities were moved again, this time to Battle Creek, Michigan, where tent meetings had been held since June of the previous year. Soon the Whites arranged to build the first Seventh-day Adventist meeting house,[44] yet no official organization had been established. The Whites, Edson, Bates and others did all the work with little or no remuneration, yet even in the face of this handicap, publishing activity grew rapidly.

In October, 1860, the church organized under the name Seventh-day Adventist,[45] although not everyone accepted this decision. A letter to the Review and Herald in April of the following year, and signed by J. Dudly, L.E. Jones, and J.P. Flemming, the "Finance committee of Ohio," objected to the name because it was ". . . not an appropriate name for God's

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[43]Ibid., p. 316. The Review and Herald is a monthly magazine still published by the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

[44]Ibid., pp. 287-8, 367.

[45]Ibid., p. 350.

people." Instead, they preferred the name "Church of God."[46] As a result, some no longer associated themselves with the organization, but the church continued to grow.[47]

In 1868, church leaders began holding camp meetings to accommodate the great numbers of adventists that assembled in their general meetings. They provided a large tent for public services and smaller family tents for those who attended. The first of these meetings took place in Wright, Michigan, in September of that year, and eventually more than fifty were held each year in various locations. The largest of these was in Lansing, Michigan, in 1893, where more than 3,400 attended and lived in over 500 tents.[48]

In June, 1874, Adventists began publishing the Signs of the Times, in Oakland, California, and distributed it on the West coast. In 1905, these facilities were moved to Mountain View, Santa Clara County,[49] a rural location more in agreement with Mrs. White's concept of what would produce good health. By this time Adventist publications appeared in forty languages and were printed in twenty publishing

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[46]A.N. Dugger and C.O. Dodd, A History of the True Religion (Jerusalem: Church of God (Seventh Day), 1972), pp. 293-4.

[47]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, p. 290.

[48]Ibid., pp. 327-8.

[49]Ibid., pp. 291, 293.

houses.[50] Income from the sale of this literature grew dramatically. In addition to their interest in health and in publishing their beliefs, Adventists also opened numerous educational institutions. By 1903, they had fourteen intermediate schools in America, and five more in other countries. They also operated a growing number of schools throughout the world.[51]

During this time, the Whites gained almost total control over the activities of the church. However, many Sabbath-keepers were too independent-minded to accept this centralized control. Others did not approve of the name Seventh-day Adventist. Many objected to the reliance on Mrs. White's visions as a means of establishing doctrines. These three issues served to create division within an otherwise unifying movement and prevented the Adventists from bringing all Sabbath-observers into their fold.

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[50]Ibid., pp. 296-7.

[51]Ibid., pp. 391-402. Perhaps the best known of these schools is Loma Linda University in California, but Loughborough lists many others, including Battle Creek College (1874), in Michigan; Heraldsburg College (1882), in Pennsylvania; South Lancaster College (1884), in Massachusetts; Walla Walla College (1892), in Washington; Mt. Vernon Academy (1893), in Ohio, and Claremont Union College (1894), in Kenilworth (near Cape Town), South Africa.

Chapter IV

Gilbert Cranmer and the Church of God (Seventh Day)

When Rachel Oakes challenged Frederick Wheeler on the question of the Sabbath, she began a series of events that led not only to the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but also to the founding of a much smaller denomination. When Joseph Bates started keeping the Sabbath, he began preaching this doctrine in several states, and influenced Gilbert Cranmer (1814-1903) in Michigan, who would become instrumental in organizing the Church of God (Seventh Day).

Cranmer was born in Newfield, New York, on January 18, 1814, and at the age of seventeen joined the Methodist Church.[1] Two years later, Cranmer said he ". . . became convinced they [the Methodists] were wrong about the godhead," and left that church for the Christian Church, which gave him a license to preach. He then preached in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana, as well as in Canada. He married Mariah Averille, he settled on a farm near Chicago, where his wife and two children died. Then he

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[1]Gilbert Cranmer, Autobiography of Gilbert Cranmer, 1814-1903 (Denver: Bible Advocate Press, n.d.), p.3. In a letter to James Guy dated December 13, 1993, Mr. LeRoy Dais of the Bible Advocate Press said the manuscript of this work had no date, but that Cranmer dictated his autobiography to his stepson, M.A. Branch, probably during the last few years of his life.

moved to Augusta, Michigan, and in 1840 married Betsy Heath and continued to preach as he worked his farm.[2]

Cranmer learned of the Sabbath in 1844, in an article by J.C. Day (fl. 1865) in The Midnight Cry, a Millerite publication, although he did not begin keeping it at that time.[3] That same year, he accepted William Miller's theories and experienced the Great Disappointment with thousands of others, but continued to believe that Jesus would soon return. Opposition from his wife's family caused him to move west to a farm where the city of Holland, Michigan, now stands. His only neighbors were Indians, and he rarely had occasion to visit what he called "civilization," so he moved again, this time to a farm near the village of Comstock.[4]

Although he had learned of the Sabbath earlier, Cranmer did not begin observing it until confronted by the teachings of Joseph Bates. In 1852, Bates made a trip to Jackson, Michigan, and convinced a young adventist preacher, Merritt E. Cornell (1827-1892), to keep the Sabbath. From there, he went to Battle Creek and converted David Hewitt (1805-1878)

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[2]Ibid., pp. 4-5, 7-9.

[3]Ibid., p. 10.

[4]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), pp. 10-11.

to the practice. Cranmer later said he and Hewitt both began to keep the Sabbath on the same day.[5]

In 1848, as we saw in the previous chapter, James and Ellen G. White began a series of conferences expounding their beliefs and started their publishing enterprises. They moved to Battle Creek, Michigan, in late 1855, and met Cranmer in December, 1857, in Otsego, Michigan.[6] During this time, many Sabbath-keeping adventists adopted the "shut door" doctrine, which claimed that the day of salvation for sinners was past, but Cranmer did not agree with it. At the same time, he refused to believe that Mrs. White's visions had any validity. "By this time," he wrote, "I became suspicious that I had got on board the wrong ship." Yet he remained with them for a while, ". . . hoping they would get sick of the visions of E.G. White, and that we could yet walk together in unity of spirit."[7]

In January, 1858, before he severed his relationship with the Whites, he asked them for a license to preach, but because of his disagreement concerning the visions, they rejected his request. As a result, that year he began a

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[5]Cranmer, Autobiography of Gilbert Cranmer, 1814-1903, p. 10.

[6]Ibid., p. 12.

[7]Gilbert Cranmer, "My Experience," The Hope of Israel (Casco, Michigan: The Church of Christ, Aug. 10, 1863), p. 2.

separate organization of his own.[8] At this point, there appears to be some disagreement concerning why he left the Whites. Although he associated the "shut door" policy with Ellen G. White's visions, J.N. Loughborough claimed that instead of the visions' leading to the view of a shut door to salvation, they in fact did just the opposite.[9] However, the controversy became so widespread--as was the confusion surrounding it--that Cranmer may not have clearly understood the White's position in the matter.

C. Mervyn Maxwell, chairman of the department of church history and professor of church history in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, paints a somewhat different picture of why Cranmer rejected the White's leadership. He claims Cranmer was a member of "The Smoke and Chew Party." That is, while the use of tobacco was not yet a "test of fellowship," it was disparaged by most Sabbath-keepers, and Cranmer, ". . . encouraged them to keep both the Sabbath and their tobacco." But Maxwell also mistakenly claims that Cranmer's followers ". . . soon faded from the scene."[10]

After his split with the Whites, Cranmer and his colleagues published a paper of their own, The Hope of

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[8]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day, pp. 13-14.

[9]Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, p. 222.

[10]Maxwell, Tell It to the World, p. 136.

Israel. The first issue appeared August 10, 1863, and in it he wrote, "I also found the spirit of prophesy, with them, was confined wholly to a woman. . . . I then commenced to giving her visions a thorough investigation. I found they contradicted themselves, and that they contradicted the Bible. . . ."[11] Once he broke with the Whites, he established ten congregations with eight ministers who associated themselves with him. In 1860, his followers organized a conference of the churches in Michigan, and by 1863, they had adopted the name, "Church of Christ."[12]

It is possible that Cranmer drew some of his support from isolated groups of Sabbath-observers that had sprung up before the 1844 disappointment. These organizations went by several different names, such as Sabbatarians, Church of God, Church of Christ, and Independents, in addition to the Seventh Day Baptists. In the early 1860s, on tours through the eastern and midwestern states, the Whites also encountered a number of these groups and attempted to bring them into the Seventh-day Adventist movement, yet some refused to align themselves with either the Seventh Day Baptists, the Whites, or Cranmer.[13]

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[11]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), pp. 13.

[12]Ibid., p. 14.

[13]John Kiesz, History of the Church of God (Seventh Day) (Private publication, n.d.), pp. 1-5.

Cranmer was not the first to withdraw support from the Whites, however. Some from Ohio left earlier, followed by a group from southern Iowa,[14] where Merritt E. Cornell had established several churches. Cornell believed in the imminent return of Christ and the unconscious state of the dead. His followers called themselves the Church of Jesus Christ and adopted a covenant that set forth their beliefs, which included, ". . . keeping the commandments of God and faith of Jesus, taking the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the rule of our faith and discipline."[15]

Within about a year and a half, Cornell sought to lead his followers into the Seventh-day Adventist Church by claiming certain recent publications--the published visions of Ellen G. White--were of equal authority with the Bible. This issue severely divided the churches in the association. Those who rejected the visions were ousted and held a meeting on November 15, 1862, in Marion, Iowa, to establish that they, and not the others, held fast to the original covenant which based their beliefs on "the Bible alone."[16]

At this time, there was little organization within the adventist movement. The Whites pushed for central control, while many others preferred local autonomy. As a result,

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[14]Ibid., p. 8.

[15]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), pp. 14-15.

[16]Ibid. pp. 15-17.

each local church established its own doctrines and selected its own ministers, much as the Seventh Day Baptists before them. This accounted in part for the schism that split the Marion church, and for similar disagreements that had sundered other local adventist churches as well.

Eventually, the Church of Jesus Christ in Marion learned of the congregations of Cranmer's Church of Christ in Michigan, and they united in a loose-knit association. The groups in Michigan had earlier conducted conferences throughout the eastern United States and started publishing a magazine, The Hope of Israel. Printing facilities were in Hartford, Michigan, but later moved to Waverly. Its first editor was Enos Easton (fl. 1865), but he was replaced after only two issues by an experienced editor and publisher, H.S. Dill (fl. 1865).[17]

The first issue spelled out its editorial policy and thus the consensus of the leaders of the organization: "The Bible and the Bible alone contains the whole moral law," no addition of any other creed or articles of faith were acceptable; death is the total extinction of being, and there can be no hope for eternal life except by a resurrection from the dead. They also believed Christ would soon return to set up His Kingdom on the earth and restore it to Edenic perfection. Then God would come down to live

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[17]Ibid., 17-18.

in the "New Jerusalem," and eternal life without sorrow or suffering would finally be achieved.[18]

Fewer than forty people subscribed to The Hope of Israel when it began publication, but within a little more than a year it was being sent to eighteen states and eastern Canada. Financial problems caused several interruptions in its publication. On October 18, 1865, the presses shut down in Michigan, but started up the following year in Marion, Iowa, although on a semi-monthly basis, with W.H. Brinkerhoff (fl. 1860) as editor. Brinkerhoff was a lawyer and former follower of the Whites, but had opposed their demands for a central church government. In 1872 the paper's name was changed to the Advent and Sabbath Advocate and Hope of Israel. Then, about two years later, the phrase Hope of Israel was dropped from the title.[19]

In 1888, church leaders moved the paper to Stanberry, Missouri, and renamed it the Sabbath Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom. Publication facilities remained in Stanberry until 1972, when it was moved to its present location in Denver, Colorado, and renamed the Bible Advocate.[20] Like the Seventh-day Adventists, the Church of

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[18]Enos Easton, ed., "Introduction," Hope of Israel, (Hartford, Michigan: Church of Christ, August 10, 1863), p. 2.

[19]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), pp. 20-23.

[20]Ibid., p. 21.

God (Seventh Day) moved its printing facilities and changed its paper's name several times, probably due to instability caused in part by financial difficulties and defections by editorial staff members.

In the first years of these organizational activities, the Civil War posed a special problem. Although not a church-wide policy, in general, members were unwilling to serve in combat roles, but still had to face the draft. The November 15, 1863, issue of The Hope of Israel contained this lament: "The draft for the second time, has laid its heavy and relentless hand upon the little Church in Hartford. Brother Eli Wilsey has lain for months in bondage for refusing to fight with carnal weapons. . . ."[21] During this war it was possible to purchase freedom from the draft. At least one local church attempted to ". . . clear all the brethren who may be drafted by paying $300."[22]

Throughout this period, Cranmer remained active in the church until his death on December 17, 1903.[23] During that time he worked with a number of ministers, including Erastus G. Branch, who died in 1873. In 1879, Cranmer, for the second time a widower, married Sophia Branch, Erastus'

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[21]Kiesz, History of the Church of God (Seventh Day), p. 36.

[22]Ibid., p. 80.

[23]Cranmer, Autobiography of Gilbert Cranmer, 1814-1903, p.16.

widow, and her sons became influential in the church in Michigan over the next few years.[24]

In Iowa, H.E. Carver (1820-1895), B.F. Snook (fl. 1870), William H. Brinkerhoff (fl. 1870) and his younger brother, Jacob (1841-1916), became leading members in the Marion church. Snook had been a Methodist minister and W.H. Brinkerhoff was a lawyer and teacher. James White ordained both men into the ministry in the spring of 1862, and they became prominent leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But by 1865, they began to question the visions of Ellen G. White and withdrew their membership in November of that year. They then joined the Marion church in 1866.[25]

William Brinkerhoff became the editor of The Hope of Israel when it moved from Michigan to Marion, Iowa, in 1866. In May of 1868, B.F. Snook replaced him, and Brinkerhoff moved to Laporte City, Iowa, where he established another local church. Then Brinkerhoff joined the Universalists and the church in Laporte dissolved. Within a few years, Snook followed his friend into the Universalist Church.[26]

William Brinkerhoff's brother, Jacob, remained with the church and contributed articles to the paper. He also served as its printer and editor. Sometime after Snook

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[24]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), p. 21.

[25]Ibid., pp. 21-3.

[26]Ibid., 23-6.

left, the Christian Publishing Association (the church's publishing arm) defaulted on loans for the equipment and Brinkerhoff purchased it with his own money at public auction so the paper could continue, this time under the name of Advent and Sabbath Advocate. He retired in 1887, and in 1888 the paper was moved to Stanberry, Missouri, with A.F. Dugger (1844-1910) as the new editor. In 1909, Brinkerhoff resumed the editorship until poor health forced him to retire once again. He died at the age of 75 in 1916.[27]

Meanwhile, in Cincinnati, Ohio, Henry E. Carver took up the advent cause in 1843 after attending a series of lectures by Joshua Himes.[28] Carver left the Methodist Church when he was told the doctrine of the second advent was the "doctrine of the devil." He moved to a farm in Iowa, where he first heard of the seventh day Sabbath in 1848, and later joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In 1866, he followed Brinkerhoff and Snook out of that organization and helped to form the Christian Publishing Association, writing regularly for The Hope of Israel.[29]

During the next several years, the Church experienced a measure of growth, and in 1874 a Sabbatarian Adventist

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[27]Ibid., 26-8.

[28]Loughborough, The Second Great Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress, p. 128.

[29]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), p. 28-9.

Conference was held and elected S.C.B. Williams (fl. 1875) as president and A.C. Long (d. 1900) as vice president. In August of the following year, the church held another conference and officially adopted the name "Church of God." The church in Iowa had changed its name from the Church of Jesus Christ to the Church of God in 1865, and at a conference in 1884 the churches in Michigan also adopted this name. At the same time, they established a new set of bylaws[30] that permitted local churches autonomy in finances and theology and instituted the exchange of delegates between state conferences.[31]

Reluctance to have a formal centralized church government appears to have been widespread among adventists. William Miller certainly had none, his followers coming from many denominations, and James and Ellen White had great difficulty in centralizing authority among Seventh-day Adventists. Nevertheless, in 1884, at a meeting in Stanberry, Missouri, members agreed to press for a general conference to include delegates from other states. Earlier attempts to do this in Iowa had all met with failure. But

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[30]"Conference of the Church of God in Iowa," Advent and Sabbath Advocate, vol. 19 (Sept. 16, 1884, Marion, Iowa: Church of God) p. 189.

[31]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), p. 29-34.

on October 5, 1884, a general conference was established to unite the various state organizations.[32]

In 1888, the general conference adopted the first recorded "Articles of Faith,"[33] rejecting the concept of a Trinity, but advocating baptism by immersion, the ordination of ministers by the laying on of hands, and obedience to the Ten Commandments. They also said there is no consciousness in death, but that Christ would return to resurrect the righteous and set up God's Kingdom on earth. In 1892, these articles were amended to include the statement that "the Bible and the Bible alone" is the only rule of faith, and then remained unchanged for twenty-nine years.[34]

In 1898, publishing operations were officially named the Church of God Publishing House. The following year, the general conference incorporated in the state of Missouri, and by the first two decades of the twentieth century many more states had joined. In 1900, A.C. Long died, followed in 1903 by the death of Gilbert Cranmer. A.F. Dugger died in 1910 and Jacob Brinkerhoff in 1916. As the first generation of ministers passed on, Andrew N. Dugger (d. 1975?), A.F. Dugger's son, assumed a leadership role. A.F. Dugger had been a minister in the Advent Christian Church

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[32]Ibid., pp. 29-37.

[33]"Fifth Annual Conference," Advent and Sabbath Advocate, November 27, 1888 (Stanberry, Missouri: Church of God), p. 246.

[34]Ibid., pp. 38-9.

for several years before becoming a Sabbath-keeper. He began his association with the Church of God (Seventh Day) in 1874, and in 1903 became editor of the Bible Advocate.[35]

At the turn of the century, William C. Long (1844-1920) edited the paper and was accused of misappropriating funds from church publications for use in The Owl, a community paper he owned. Long asked for a show of support, but the Branch brothers (stepsons of Gilbert Cranmer) opposed him, seriously dividing the general conference. The Branches boycotted the meetings and eventually joined the Seventh Day Baptists. In July, 1906, the Stanberry church revoked Long's credentials and dismissed him as pastor. During this strife, A.F. Dugger took over the reins of the Bible Advocate and became a primary leader in the church.[36]

During this turmoil, A.F. Dugger's son, Andrew, entered the ministry in 1906 and became editor of the Advocate when Jacob Brinkerhoff retired in 1914. That year he also became president of the general conference, and under his leadership the church extended its efforts into Mexico, Latin America, Western Europe, Africa, and the West Indies. In 1923 the term "Seventh Day" was added to the church's name to distinguish it from other organizations bearing the name "Church of God." Dugger also took steps to centralize church finances by advising members not to give tithes and

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[35]Ibid., 38-40.

[36]Ibid., pp. 40-1.

offerings to local ministers, but to the general conference or to state treasurers. This made more funds available to support activity directed to increase membership.[37]

In 1927 doctrinal policy was centralized through a rule forbidding the teaching of any doctrine in public not endorsed by the conference body.[38] Rather than uniting the church, however, this served to bring to the surface long-held distrust of centralized authority. Many members preferred local autonomy and refused to put their support behind Dugger's efforts to bring local churches under the direction of the general conference. This discontent would eventually split the church.[39]

With disunion threatening, Church leaders looked for ways to unify the membership and expand the Church's influence. In the fall of 1931, the general conference decided to send a mission to Palestine. The following year they printed one hundred and fifty thousand "gospel tracts" in the Hebrew language and that August Dugger and several other ministers travelled to ". . . Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, systematically distributing these gospel messengers

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[37]Ibid., pp. 41-2.

[38]"General Conference Report," The Bible Advocate, Vol. 61, number 33, September 6, 1927 (Stanberry, Missouri: Church of God), p. 558.

[39]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), pp. 42-4.

among all the Jewish cities and towns."[40] They supposedly gained a number of converts among the Jews, but established no lasting operations.

A second trip to what is now Israel was taken in 1936. The converts there turned out to be not Jews, but Arabs, and the "representatives" of the church (who remained in Palestine after Dugger left) were actually men who drew money from several Protestant denominations by setting up tents, giving a short two or three minute talk and offering free tea and cookies to all who would raise their hands and say they accepted Christ. These "converts" would then move on to the next tent and be converted all over again.[41]

By 1933, Dugger was losing influence in the Church. At the general conference held that August, he, C.O. Dodd (d. 1955?), and W.W. McMicken (d. 1985?) issued a pamphlet entitled "Declaration for the Restoration of the Primitive Organization of the Church of God," claiming the conference did not adequately represent the entire church. He charged that certain men were attempting to gain control of the church by gathering ". . . every delegate possible, bringing them to the general conference trying in vain to elect their own men as officers that the publications might be opened to

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[40]Dugger and Dodd, A History of the True Religion, pp. 297-8.

[41]Herbert W. Armstrong, Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong (Pasadena: Worldwide Church of God, 1986), vol. 1, pp. 628-9.

the teaching of their heresies. . . ." Dugger and his followers lost their offices when tie votes in the general conference were broken by the chairman's vote against them.[42]

Dugger took issue with several areas of doctrine, including setting the wrong date for the annual observance of the Lord's Supper; rejecting the practice of paying tithes; permitting the use of tobacco; and allowing the use of unclean meats for food.[43] Some of these concerns appeared earlier among Sabbath-keepers, such as the use of what the Bible defines as unclean meats and the date for the Lord's Supper, or Eucharist.

As we saw in the previous chapter, the tobacco question had come up among Seventh-day Adventists in their claim that Gilbert Cranmer led the "Smoke and Chew Party" out of the church. But while Cranmer apparently did use tobacco, this does not appear to be the reason he and his followers left, for many who went with him also appear to have been against its use. One wrote to the Hope in 1865, " I stopped smoking the 5th day of last April. . . and my health is much better. I see, by the 'Review' [a Seventh Day Adventist publication]

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[42]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), pp. 44-6.

[43]Ibid., p. 46.

that our beloved Editor, Bro. Cranmer, uses tobacco; (I have used it for 30 years) but I love him. . . ."[44]

Rather than attempt to effect his reforms from within, Dugger left to establish a church based on what he called "Bible organization," governed spiritually by twelve "apostles" and financially by seven "deacons." In addition, seventy members were assigned to go out by twos to give the "warning message of the hour." He also insisted that the headquarters of the church should be in Jerusalem, although he established his American offices in Salem, West Virginia, where Sabbath-observers were found a hundred and twenty years earlier.[45] This structural reorganization abandoned the time-honored tradition among American Sabbath-observers of maintaining a congregational system of church government.

By November 4, 1933, the Church of God (Seventh Day) found itself divided into two camps: one at Stanberry, Missouri, and the other in Salem, West Virginia. The two organizations launched frequent attacks against each other, causing ministers to switch affiliation and an overall decrease in membership. This situation continued until 1942, when leaders from both groups attempted to bring about a reunion. When this effort failed, a second attempt began in 1947 and met with limited success in 1949, with the

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[44]Niel A. Perry, letter, The Hope of Israel, (Waverly, Michigan, April 9, 1865), p. 2.

[45]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), pp. 47-54.

understanding that neither Stanberry nor Salem would serve as headquarters of the church. In 1950, Denver, Colorado, became the site for church operations.[46]

Not everyone accepted this union, however, for members in Salem challenged the reunification in court and won the right to continue their headquarters in Salem. So there remain two separate organizations, but doctrines of the two are similar, reflecting their common origins.[47]

Doctrines of the Denver church include holding Communion on the fourteenth day of the Hebrew month, Abib, at which time a footwashing service is held and unleavened bread and grape juice are used as emblems of Christ's body and blood. In addition, the church prohibits the eating of meats designated by the Bible as being "unclean." They believe the resurrection of Christ occurred on Saturday, rather than Sunday, and reject the concept of the immortality of the soul. They do not celebrate such traditional Christian holidays as Christmas, Lent, or Easter--and of course they reject Sunday observance.[48] All

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[46]Ibid., pp. 54-8.

[47]Arthur Carl Piepkorn, Profiles in Belief (Carl Piepkorn, vol. IV, p. 137. Piepkorn is a Lutheran minister and a member of the board of directors of the Foundation for Reformation Research. He has written extensively on religious subjects and for the Encyclopaedia Britanica.

[48]Kiesz, History of the Church of God (seventh Day), pp. 204-208.

of these practices have appeared among earlier Sabbath-observers, even before the discovery of America.

Like Seventh Day Baptists and Seventh-day Adventists, the Church of God (Seventh Day) found the lack of a central authority a dividing factor. Because of this traditional concept of each man answering to his own conscience, and each local church responsible only to itself, doctrinal disputes frequently erupted, climaxing in the divisive meeting that ended with the church being split into several divisions.

Chapter V

Herbert W. Armstrong and the Worldwide Church of God

Herbert W. Armstrong (1892-1986) was born July 31, 1892, in Des Moines, Iowa. His father had developed a furnace with an air-circulating jacket and when Herbert was eleven years old, he began working summers in his father's factory. He had been reared among the Quakers, but by the time he was 18, he no longer had much interest in religion.[1]

Armstrong determined in his late teens to enter the advertizing profession, and began working at The Merchants Trade Journal, where he learned to write ads and pioneered in taking public opinion polls.[2] After leaving the Journal for an unsuccessful stint working for the South Bend, Indiana, Chamber of Commerce, he returned to the advertizing business, putting together a special issue of The Northwestern Banker, a sectional bank journal. From this temporary position, he moved to Chicago to develop a business of his own as a Publisher's Representative.[3]

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[1]Armstrong, Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, vol. 1, pp. 11, 18, 19.

[2]Ibid., pp. 24, 52-65, 105-109.

[3]Ibid., pp. 161, 174. In this enterprise, Armstrong acted as an advertizing agent, representing several publications in a single field.

In January, 1917, while visiting his aunt in Des Moines, Armstrong met the woman who would become his wife, his third cousin, Loma Dillon. On July 30 of that year, Loma travelled to Chicago and the next day she and Herbert were married by the pastor of a Baptist Church there. Their first daughter, Beverly, was born about eleven months later, and on July 7, 1920, the Armstrongs had their second daughter, Dorothy Jane.[4]

By the end of 1920, a flash depression struck and most of Armstrong's clients failed, wiping out his livelihood. Unable to rejuvenate his business, he took his family to Oregon in June, 1924, and started a new enterprise writing ads for laundries in two states. However, the Laundryowners National Association contracted to place their ads through another agency, and once again the Armstrongs found themselves without income.[5]

In the Autumn of 1926, Mrs. Ora Runcorn, a member of the Church of God (Seventh Day), met Loma Armstrong and convinced her that the seventh day Sabbath should be observed. When Mrs. Armstrong returned home and told her husband, he at first indignantly rejected the idea, but later came to accept it.[6]

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[4]Ibid., pp. 210-214, 226.

[5]Ibid., pp. 236-287.

[6]Ibid., pp. 288-309. Armstrong claims he entered into a day and night study of the Bible to disprove the obligation to observe the Sabbath. In the end, however, he

On October 13, 1928, the Armstrongs had their first son, Richard David, and a second son, Garner Ted, a year and four months later.[7] During the years between 1928 and 1930, the Armstrongs had been reduced to poverty, forced to accept charity from family and friends and to work at the most menial jobs. At the same time, Armstrong became increasingly active in the Church of God (Seventh Day).

Until 1929, the Church permitted various points of view to be published in its literature. This was sometimes of a controversial nature, and debates over doctrinal points occasionally occurred in print. But the general conference of that year determined to adopt a more unified doctrinal policy and told ministers they had to preach against the use of "unclean meats" and tobacco. In addition, from that time on controversial subjects seldom appeared in Church publications. These and other policy changes created a contentious atmosphere within the organization, and some members began printing their views in privately published "bulletins."[8]

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says he was forced to admit the necessity of Sabbath observance and began to keep it himself. During this time, he was also drawn by the sincerity of members of the Church of God (Seventh Day), and began to take part in various activities of the church.

[7]Ibid., p. 369.

[8]Kiesz, History of the Church of God (Seventh Day), p. 172.

In November, 1930, leaders in the church in Oregon held a meeting to form a state conference to manage Church funds, and to address the growing controversy. The meeting soon found itself caught up in this dispute and degenerated to the point of nearly breaking up. The Runcorns had asked Armstrong to attend to take the minutes, and although not a member, he intervened to restore order, and the state conference was formed, with G.A. Hobbs as president. After this meeting, the newly elected officers asked him to conduct an evangelistic campaign in Harrisburg, which he did. Because Armstrong was not a minister, or even a member, church authorities in Stanberry criticized the Oregon Conference for paying his expenses. This criticism continued even after his ordination in June, 1931, but he brought four new members into the church in this first campaign, including his brother, Dwight.[9]

In September, 1933, Armstrong had the opportunity to speak on the small 100 watt radio station, KORE, in Eugene, Oregon. The station aired a morning devotional program but had trouble finding ministers to speak, even though offering the time free of charge. On October 9, he began his first broadcast on this station, speaking fifteen minutes each day for a week.[10] Before the week ended, the station's owner,

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[9]Armstrong, Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, vol. 1, pp. 409-17, 426.

[10]Ibid., pp. 529-30.

Frank Hill, told him he had received several letters from listeners requesting copies of the broadcasts, and offered him regular air time for the cost of operation.[11] On the first Sunday of 1934, the first regular broadcast of The Radio Church of God program began, and the following month, the Armstrongs began publication of The Plain Truth magazine.[12]

Earlier in 1933, the church split, with one faction in Stanberry, Missouri, and the other, headed by Andrew N. Dugger, in Salem, West Virginia. Dugger set up what he called "The Board of the Seventy," consisting, theoretically, of seventy leading ministers, including Herbert W. Armstrong.[13] The Oregon Conference, cooperated with the Salem faction until August, 1937, when they separated from them because some ministers there attempted to "discredit" the radio broadcast.[14] Some in Oregon remained with the Dugger faction, but later split into

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[11]Ibid., p. 532

[12]Ibid., p. 541, 565.

[13]Dugger and Dodd, A History of the True Religion, p. 304.

[14]Armstrong publicly taught at least two doctrines the Church of God (Seventh Day) did not teach: the Christian's obligation to observe the Holy Days of Leviticus 23, and the descendancy of Britain and the United States from the Biblical patriarch, Joseph. These issues eventually divided the two groups and are probably the cause of the ministers attempting to "discredit" the radio broadcast.

several small groups, many of which have probably dissolved.[15]

When the Oregon Conference broke its association with the Salem faction, established themselves as a separate church, and maintained a regular radio program, they adopted the name "Radio Church of God." Later, when they gained members in a number of different countries, the name was changed to "Worldwide Church of God." Among its doctrines, in addition to keeping the seventh day Sabbath, is the observance of the Holy Days of the Old Testament.[16]

This last doctrine, and Armstrong's belief that the English-speaking peoples are descendants of Joseph,[17] one of

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[15]Armstrong, Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, vol. 1, p. 632-35.

[16]Herbert W. Armstrong, God's Festivals and Holy Days (Pasadena: Worldwide Church of God, 1986). These festivals include Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread (pp. 11-16), Pentecost (pp. 17-25), the Feast of Trumpets and the day of Atonement (pp. 26-31), and the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day (pp. 32-5).

[17]Herbert W. Armstrong, The United States and Britain in Prophecy, (New York: Everest House Publishers, 1980). Armstrong outlines his belief that these two countries are descended from Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of the Biblical patriarch, Joseph, the son of Jacob or Israel. Under kings David and Solomon, Israel was united, but later they separated into two nations--Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Inhabitants of the southern kingdom became known as Jews, while those in the north were called Israelites or Samarians (after their capital city, Samaria). In 721-718 B.C. the northern kingdom was taken into captivity to the southern shores of the Caspian Sea and disappeared from sight. Later, he claims, they migrated across and settled throughout Europe. The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh went on into the British Isles, and Manasseh later removed to what would become the United States. He does not maintain, however, that all the people in these

the sons of the Biblical patriarch, Jacob (Israel), appear to have played a major role in bringing about his break with the Salem group. The church at Salem, then revoked his ministerial credentials in 1937.[18] But that group had not issued his license to preach, the state conference had ordained him. As a result, Armstrong maintained he had never been a part of the church at Stanberry (or at Salem), and his ordination rested on the authority of the Oregon Conference, not the general conference.

These events took place during the 1930s, in the depths of the Great Depression. People were looking for answers to the economic chaos that had engulfed the nation, and in such trying times it was not unusual for them to turn to religion. In the years that followed, the church grew rapidly, and soon moved to Pasadena, where Armstrong established Ambassador College in 1947.[19] Earlier, in 1942, The Radio Church of God program was renamed The World

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countries descended from these two tribes, but only that they became the dominant peoples of those regions. He bases this theory on local customs and traditions as well as many Biblical references, and maintains that officials in the Church of God (Seventh Day) accepted the doctrine but refused to teach it.

[18]Coulter, The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day), p. 55.

[19]Armstrong, Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, (Pasadena, California: Worldwide Church of God, 1987), vol 2, p. 231. Armstrong never intended Ambassador College to be a school for ministers, but a co-educational liberal arts institution associated closely with the church. It began classes in Pasadena on October 8, 1947, with four students.

Tomorrow, a title that reflects the expectation of the return of Christ, a long-held belief of Sabbatarians.[20]

In 1955, Armstrong aired The World Tomorrow on KLOR television in Portland, Oregon, for 27 weeks, but it met with limited success and so returned exclusively to radio.[21] It would not be for about twenty years that the program would go back on television.

Having experienced the disunity local autonomy caused the Church of God (Seventh Day), Armstrong looked for a better way to run the church. When A.N. Dugger broke away from the parent church, he formed what he called "the Scriptural organization" of the church,[22] but Armstrong had "grave misgivings" about it and felt no better about the general conference system used by the group at Stanberry.[23] As a result, he and some of the members of the Oregon Conference--which later became the Worldwide Church of God--decided to "cooperate" with Dugger's group, but events soon led to a total split with the church at Salem.

Gradually Armstrong moved his organization toward a more hierarchical system. Oran Telford and Charles Whetson,

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[20]Ibid., p. 48.

[21]Ibid., 292, 324.

[22]Dugger and Dodd, A History of the True Church, p.300.

[23]Armstrong, Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, vol. 1, pp. 556-8.

Local Church Elders (ministers), explained the governmental structure of the church:

> The head of the church, "under Christ," is the Pastor General, also called an Apostle, assisted by a Council of Elders who are prominent ministers in the organization.
>
> Evangelists.
>
> Pastors of local churches.
>
> Local Elders, also ministers, but not in the pay of the church.
>
> Deacons and Deaconesses.

Each if these positions is an ordained office, established not by election, but by appointment by one or more ministers who receive their authority "from the top down." Even the present Pastor General, Joseph W. Tkach, was selected for this office by his predecessor, Herbert W. Armstrong. In addition there are numerous other positions in the church which are held by both ordained and non-ordained people to conduct the everyday workings of the organization.

During the formative years of the church, both of Armstrong's sons, Richard and Garner Ted, became leading ministers in the church. Then, in 1958, Richard was killed

in an automobile accident,[24] and in 1967, Loma Armstrong died.[25]

In the 1950s, Armstrong began travelling throughout the world. By the late 1970s, he had many personal meetings with world leaders, such as Golda Meir of Israel, King Hussein of Jordan, Jomo Kenyata of Kenya, Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, and many others. As a result, he spent a great deal of time outside the United States, away from the day-to-day management of the church.

In August, 1977, the eighty-five year old Armstrong suffered congestive heart failure, his heart and breathing stopped. Because of his advanced age, he had a nurse with him and she immediately began mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and heart massage. After several minutes, he started breathing on his own,[26] but suffered poor health for the rest of his life. Because of his partial incapacitation, his son, Garner Ted, assumed many of his father's responsibilities, but began to openly oppose him on a number of administrative and doctrinal matters, and was disfellowshipped (excommunicated) in June, 1978. He then

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[24]Ibid., vol 2, pp. 413-421.

[25]Ibid., p. 460.

[26]Ibid., pp. 590-591.

established his own church, The Church of God International, in Tyler Texas.[27] Others followed him out of the church.

On January 2, 1979, several former members made an attempt to oust Armstrong from his position as Pastor General. They met privately with Judge Jerry Pacht in the Superior Court of the State of California in Los Angeles County and asked for the court to place the church in receivership and appoint a trustee. They did not file a formal complaint until they had the judge's assurance he would act favorably on the matter.[28] In the end, after

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[27]Stanley R. Rader, Against the Gates of Hell (New York: Everest House, 1980), p. 110-111. Rader, a close advisor of Armstrong at the time, and an attorney who figured prominently in a 1979-80 court battle between the Worldwide Church of God and the State of California claims that Garner Ted attempted to "seize control" of the church and had begun running it as a ". . . strictly secular and worldly organization." He says Armstrong accused his son of ". . . emphasizing secularism and the expense of theology." When the younger Armstrong said the church was "'shot through with fear,' and in financial distress because of what he termed as lavish spending," his father disfellowshipped him for "personal and emotional reasons."

[28]Patricia A. Kupferer, the court stenographer, recorded the minutes of this meeting, listed as Case Number C 267 607. Hillel Chodos, attorney for the former members, said he ". . . did not want to make a public filing before coming to see you [Judge Pacht]" (p. 1). Claims that church officials had been misappropriating funds and planned to sell property in Big Sandy, Texas, prompted Judge Pacht to remark, "I am concerned about the ex parte nature of the proceedings, and the rather majestic order which would follow from these proceedings without a hearing. I am not unmindful there are charges that dissipation of the properties may occur, and I am also not unmindful of the one cruncher, if you will, which is the proposed sale of the Big Sandy property. . . " (p. 2). Chodos maintained that the Worldwide Church of God and its affiliates were California corporations and ". . . their property always and ultimately rests in the Court's custody. . . [and its trustees] may be

months of legal battles, the charges could not be supported and Armstrong remained in control of the church until his death in 1986, when he was succeeded by Joseph W. Tkach.[29]

During this time, however, a number of ministers either left the church or were disfellowshipped. Some formed their own churches, prompting one minister to remark that on a list of Sabbatarian churches, most were "spin-offs" from the Worldwide Church of God.

In September, 1992, two of the church's ministers travelled to Ukraine to meet with some groups who observe the Sabbath. They found about 3,000 Sabbatarians attending thirty-two congregations in Transcarpathia, the largest non-Catholic, non-Orthodox group in that area, and another twenty-six congregations in Romania, with others also living in Moldova. The majority of these organizations observe not only the Sabbath, but also Passover and practice the dietary laws of Leviticus 11. A few also keep the other Holy Days of Leviticus 23.[30]

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replaced whenever the court so determined" (pp. 3-4). Pacht appointed former judge Stephen Weisman as trustee, but added, "I will tell you on the record that I am a little queasy about putting somebody in charge. . ." (pp. 9-10). Then he told Chodos that if he expected any action on his requests he had ". . . better get it filed" (p. 14).

[29]Armstrong, Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, vol. 2, 644-6.

[30]Victor Kubic, "Two Ministers Learn from Living with Sabbath-keepers in Ukraine," The Worldwide News (Pasadena: Worldwide Church of God, October 6, 1992), p. 1.

It is possible these churches have ties with Sabbatarian Anabaptists or other similar non-conformists which were active during the Reformation. But this cannot be established with certainty because the East European churches were illegal under Communism, so membership or other records were either destroyed or not kept at all. To avoid detection, they met secretly in different homes each Sabbath. Most believe in speaking in tongues (glossolalia) but neither the Seventh-day Adventists (who have also been in contact with them) nor the Worldwide Church of God follow this practice.[31]

In summary, a schism within the Church of God (Seventh Day) caused the Oregon Conference of that church to eventually form the Radio Church of God, which later became the Worldwide Church of God, under the leadership of Herbert W. Armstrong. Preference for local autonomy, personality conflicts, and a number of doctrinal and administrative disputes caused some to leave the church, a few going on to form their own churches. However, the Worldwide Church of God has managed to continue a fairly steady rate of growth, with only occasional exceptions.

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[31] Ibid.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

Why are these four churches so important in the study of Christian Sabbath observers? Because each can show a direct line to Stephen Mumford and the first Sabbatarians on the American continent, and because of the contrast between the two which abandoned local autonomy and the two which retained it. It is interesting to note that Seventh Day Adventists and the Worldwide Church of God, both of which adopted a more centralized administration, had a greater impact than either the Seventh Day Baptists or the Church of God (Seventh Day), which favored local autonomy--Seventh-day Adventists by virtue of size (more than four million members worldwide), and the Worldwide Church of God by its media visibility.

Stephen Mumford, coming from the Anabaptist movement in England, left a legacy of controversy among Sabbatarians, yet he does not appear to have been a particularly controversial man. Even in the dispute with the "first day" Baptists at Newport, he did not play an especially significant role--the letter of correction from church officials was addressed to William Hiscox. Nevertheless, Mumford began a tradition of independent-mindedness that has been with the Sabbatarian movement in America ever since.

Mumford's legacy comes not from the man himself, but from the Anabaptist movement of which he was a part. Anabaptists were regarded as Protestant radicals and often unfairly identified with the "Fifth Monarchy" movement in England, and the 1535 rebellion in Münster, Germany. Mumford associated himself with Baptists, who did not consider their doctrines and practices to be based on Fifth Monarchist or any teaching other than the Bible.[1] Yet these movements were often lumped together and all suffered persecution.

For Anabaptists, religion was personal, not institutional. Members risked their lives to cling to their beliefs. Churches, like the Baptist Church at Tewkesbury where Mumford was a member, had to keep their records in code for protection against the authorities. Mumford, then, was not the originator of controversy among Sabbatarians, but merely a carrier of it to the American continent, for he not only came from among the despised Anabaptists, but he observed the seventh day Sabbath as well, making him a radical among radicals.

Roger Williams, who was considered an Anabaptist by the standards of his day, established the church in Newport where Mumford would bring the still more radical belief of a Saturday Sabbath. Those who followed inherited this legacy

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[1]Sanford, A Choosing People: the History of Seventh Day Baptists, p. 56.

of controversy, and the churches that sprang from this small beginning must still deal with it today.

Among the four churches studied in this thesis, the Seventh-Day Baptist Church, with less than 6,000 members in the United States, is unique. Although it was the first, it is also one of the smallest, and many, if not most of the others sprang from it, either directly or indirectly. Local autonomy served to encourage individuals to remain in the church because each congregation could teach whatever it wanted, with the exception of the Sabbath doctrine. However, it still did not grow much in numbers, and is smaller now than it was in the early 1800s.[2] The reason for this appears to be that a lack of central authority prevented the sustaining of any effective program that might increase its membership. This is a logical consequence of the Mumford legacy, which places personal faith ahead of institutional religion.

Seventh-day Adventists, by far the largest of Sabbatarian groups, with 4.5 million members worldwide, has had the fewest defections after its establishment, although during its formative period there were many. It may be more than coincidence that this church left Mumford's legacy

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[2]Seventh Day Baptists today have less than 6,000 members according to the Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups, (Fairview, Oklahoma: The Bible Sabbath Association, 1986), sixth edition, pp. 25-6. Yet it has been estimated that there were more than seven thousand members of that church in 1811. Clarke, A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists, in America, pp. 59-60.

behind and established a firm central control, forming a more cohesive organization. Still, some have broken away. Best known among them are the Branch Davidians, which became well-known for their tragic stand-off against government agents in Waco, Texas, where they were all killed.[3]

Stephen Mumford's legacy of personal conviction has left its mark of controversy and division most recognizably on the Church of God (Seventh Day). Curiously, many groups bear this name in addition to the ones in Salem, West Virginia, and Denver, Colorado. There is one in Columbus, Ohio, which also claims to have been founded by A.N. Dugger,[4] another in Meridian, Idaho, formerly associated with the General Conference in Stanberry, Missouri, and from which A.N. Dugger broke away,[5] and several others. Most of these churches emphasize local autonomy in their church government.

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[3]David Briggs, "Koresh saw fiery death as fulfillment of prophecy," Tribune Chronicle, Warren, Ohio, (September 25, 1993), p. 39A. On February 28, 1993, federal agents conducted a raid on the Branch Davidian complex in Waco, Texas. Some of the agents were killed and the government then began a 56-day siege that ended with the burning of the compound and the death of all the members of the sect, including the group's leader, David Koresh.

[4]The Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups, p. 46. This work, in its 1986 sixth edition and its 1989 supplement, provides the most recent listing of these organizations, but is by no means exhaustive. In addition, many in this publication are affiliated with other groups which are also listed separately.

[5]Ibid., p. 59.

It will also be remembered that when A.N. Dugger separated from the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day), he established his American headquarters in Salem, West Virginia, but insisted his "world headquarters" were in Jerusalem, Israel. As a result, there is a Church of God, Jerusalem (World Headquarters) that claims this origin. The church in Columbus, Ohio, listed above, is associated with this organization.[6]

Numerous others are affiliated with the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day), with headquarters in Denver, Colorado, but also choose to be at least nominally separate and distinct from them. In addition, the General Council of the Churches of God (Seventh Day) in Meridian, Idaho, also claims the same origins and similar beliefs as the Denver group, but remains a separate organization. The same holds true for the Independent Church of God (Seventh Day) of Mt. Vernon, Illinois. Still others appear to be nothing more than local organizations associated with the larger groups.[7]

Mumford's indelible mark can easily be seen on the Worldwide Church of God, founded by Herbert W. Armstrong. More Sabbatarian groups have sprung from this church than any other. The Biblical Church of God, of Santa Cruz, California (which in turn spun off The Biblical Church of

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[6]Ibid., pp. 46, 52.

[7]Ibid., pp. 57-63.

God, Canada), The Christian Biblical Church of God, the Christian Church of God,[8] and many others all came from this church. Most notable, however, is the Church of God, International,[9] begun by Armstrong's son, Garner Ted, when he was disfellowshipped by his father in 1978. More recently, a former minister, Roderick Meredith left the church to form his own organization, claiming the present leader of the church, Joseph Tkach, has left the principles laid down by the church's founder.[10]

It is revealing to note some of the comments given for leaving one or another of these Sabbatarian churches. For example, Glen Palmer, of the Remnant Church of God, Seventh Day, writes that this church, "organized itself as an autonomous church in 1961. Its founders were Church of God 7th Day members who believed in autonomous government."[11] Perhaps best expressing Sabbatarian desire for local autonomy is the statement from the Independent Church of God (7th Day): "Doctrines are the same as those of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day), Denver

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[8]Ibid., 36, 37, 39, 40.

[9]Ibid., p. 52.

[10]Sidney Cleveland, "HWA's Legacy or Biblical Pursuit?", The Sabbath Sentinel (Fairview, Oklahoma: The Bible Sabbath Association, 1993), vol. 45, No. 6, p.5.

[11]Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups, p. 65.

Colorado."[12] They have the same doctrines, but still wish to remain separate.

Not all Sabbatarians have sprung from these common origins, however. Best known among them are the various Jewish groups which have converted to Christianity, but choose to retain their Jewish heritage. Most of these appear to have begun during the 1970s,[13] and are not a part of this study.

In summary, then, the Seventh Day Baptist Church, numbering only about 6,000 members, failed to grow in the United States, hindered by a local autonomy which prevented adequate support for their evangelistic efforts. Nevertheless, after the 1860s this church did not suffer the many defections the others did.

Seventh-day Adventists, with 4.5 million members, established a central authority quite early. This split the church severely as it was forming, but later proved to be beneficial in maintaining unity and preventing dissident groups from forming.

The Church of God (Seventh Day) has almost as many groups that have left the parent organization as the Worldwide Church of God. In addition, others remain associated with the church, but insist on maintaining local autonomy. The church, now numbering about 60,000, most in

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[12]Ibid., p. 60.

[13]Ibid., pp. 101-107.

Latin America, is a loose-knit organization whose member churches sometimes affiliate themselves with other groups.

Worldwide Church of God membership has grown steadily through the years, developing out of the schism that split the Church of God (Seventh Day). Now numbering about 70,000 members, a decision by Herbert W. Armstrong to move the church toward a hierarchical system has served to add cohesiveness, but has not prevented defections.

Born amid controversy, the first Sabbatarian church on American soil fostered a perspective of independent-mindedness that has permeated the movement ever since. Even those organizations which have adopted a system of centralized control have had to endure this desire for local autonomy, produced by a Fundamentalist outlook that makes each individual his own doctrinal authority. Each member answers to his own conscience, and when that conscience no longer agrees with church authorities, schism often results.

Nevertheless, local autonomy in these churches has brought benefits along with the disadvantages. Central control has also produced a similar mixture. Other factors within each of these organizations--their approach to administering their individual systems, doctrinal disputes, and personalities involved--all contributed to the cohesiveness, or lack of it, in each organization. At the same time, however, it is apparent that those who established a more centralized authority appear to be able

to function more effectively, although they have not overcome the Mumford legacy of controversy that has led to so many divisions.

APPENDIX

THE TEWKESBURY TRANSCRIPT AS DECIPHERED BY OSCAR BURDICK[1]

An account of the proceedings of the church at Tewkesbury. The communion continued aforetime till about ye 3 month, 1661, and then in that some of us [own] ye Lds holy sabbath, brother Smith and several others left ye communion of ye church: yet after his death they were more satisfied, and meeting together on ye 29th of May, 1663, and an agreement was made to come into communion together, and that our communion should henceforth flow from union in spirit rather than union in forme [were] all desiring to beget [free] to ye leadings of ye Lds spirit, and not to be [more] laide under [union] by one another, being willing all to be under ye government of Christ in his church each according to his measure. And on the 31 of May, the month aforesaid we waited upon God together in his ordinances, to offer comfort and God's praise. The names of ye members hereafter follow.

John cowell / John Brian / elders.

John Perser / John Mensell / Floaris Furman / 28 of 4th month, 1663, John White was called for ye exercise of his gift / deacons.

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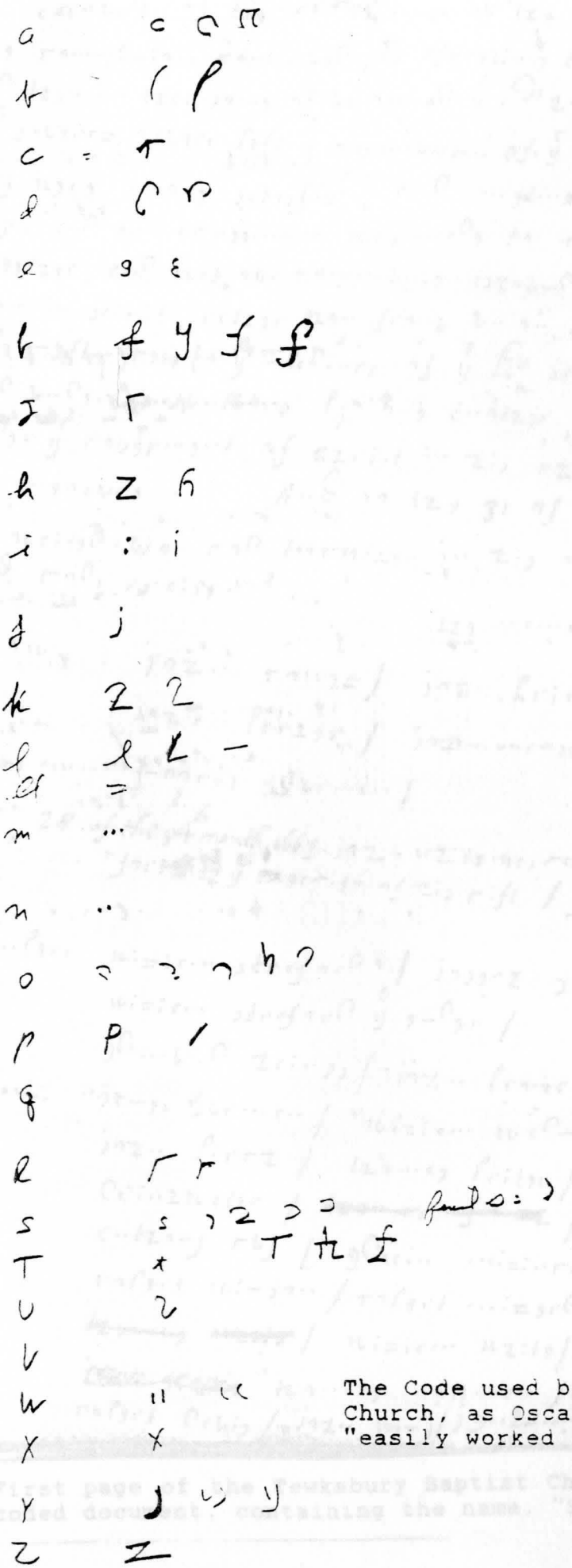
[1]Illegible words appear in brackets [], and when possible a word that appears probable within the context of the document is inserted.

Members: William Streford / Joseph Streford / Thomas Holder / William Streford, ye elder / William Baylis / John Areen / Edmund Haines / [Nioh] Bromell / Edmund [Iening] / [illegible] [illegible] Furman / Willie Wadly / William [Fouste] / John [Puich] / Gibes [Men] / [Eine] Drinkwater / [illegible] Arther Coe / Anthony [illegible] / Edwin Millington / STEPHEN MUMFORD / Robert Wilson / Robert Millerd / Thomas Stelhens / [illegible] / William White / [illegible] Edwards / Old Sister Streford / William Streford, [&] wife / Joseph Straford, wife / Catherin Streford / William Strefords maid / and Sister Barher / [Porther] Person, wife / [illegible] / Widdow Kent / Sister Brian / Sister Baylis / [Poister] Green / Sister Pallmer of [illegible] / [Honeh] Davis / Old Sister Davis / [Milferow] Surmen / Old Sister Surmen / [Sister] Bostin / Sister Bostins maid / Sister [Nestr] / Sister [illegible] / Sister Tayler / Sister Smith / Sister [Wilking] / Sister Newman / Sister [illegible] / Sister Wily / Sister Harding / Ann Smith / Sister Mansell / Sister Cooke / Ann Haris / Joyce Harris / Periam [Ole] / Sister [Ro] / Sister [illegible] / Sister [Pihely] / Sister Millington / SISTER MUMFORD / Sister [Doney] / [illegible] Powell / [illegible] / Sister Watts / Sister / Sister Bennet / Margaret Wilson / [Ester] Robert / Old Sister [Wauker] / Sister [Faild] / Sister Toney / Sister [illegible] / Sister Lait / [Ardget] Lait / Sister Feild / Sister Pit / Sister [Mo] / Sister Millerd / Mary

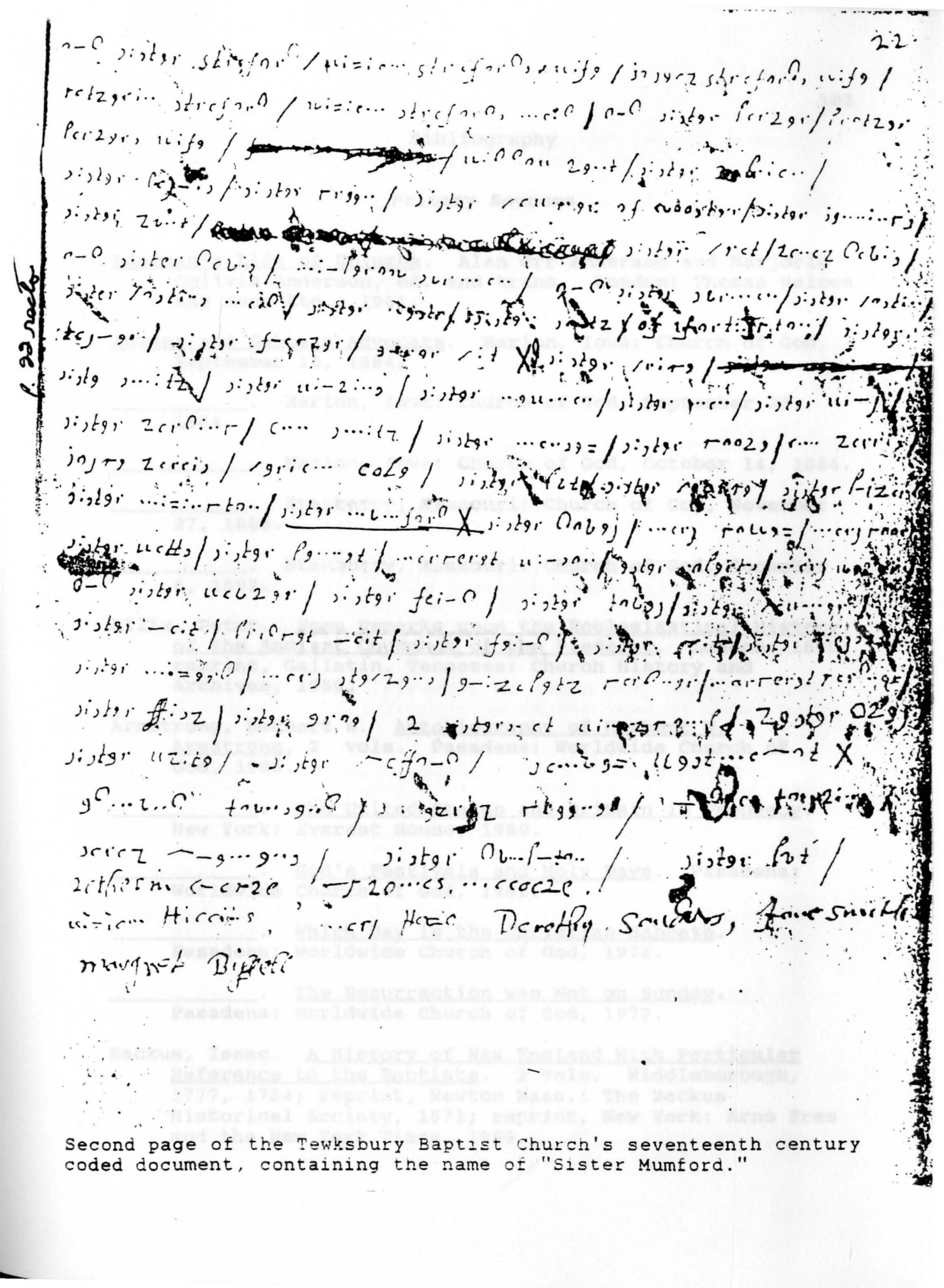
Stephens / Elizabeth [Gardner] / Margaret [Gardner] / Sister [Fish] / Sister [Eroe] / [illegible] / [illegible] / Sister White / Sister Poffold / Samuell Westmalt / Edmund Townsend / [illegible] Green / [illegible] / [Sarah] Glemens / Sister [Dumblton] / Sister [But] / [illegible. . . . .] / William Hissom / Mary [illegible] / Dorothy Sonders / Jane Smith / Mary [illegible] / [Biffell].

TEWKESBURY CODE
as I easily worked



The Code used by the Tewksbury Baptist Church, as Oscar Burdick "easily worked it out."

First page of the Tewksbury Baptist Church's seventeenth century coded document, containing the name, "Stephen Mumford."



Second page of the Tewksbury Baptist Church's seventeenth century coded document, containing the name of "Sister Mumford."

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