

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

ELLEN WHITE'S LAST FOUR BOOKS

ARTHUR L. WHITE

Ellen White's Last Four Books

Ellen G. White

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Overview

This eBook is provided by the [Ellen G. White Estate](#). It is included in the larger free [Online Books](#) collection on the Ellen G. White Estate Web site.

About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

Further Links

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By Arthur L. White

Arthur L. White was secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate for 41 Years. Now in active retirement [1981], he is writing a comprehensive biography of Ellen White.

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Part 1—The story behind the writing *The Acts of the Apostles*

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As I have been writing chapters for the biography of Ellen White, my research has been most rewarding in revealing the degree of her active participation in literary work during the last four years of her life. The years involved are 1911 through 1914, as well as the first six weeks of 1915. During this period she was able to mark her eighty-fourth to eighty-seventh birthdays. *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, prepared hastily for the press and which appeared within a few weeks of her death in mid-July, 1915, devotes a few sentences to the preparation of the manuscripts for *The Acts of the Apostles*; *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*; *Gospel Workers*; and *Prophets and Kings*. On pages 434 and 436 the reader is correctly informed that she supervised this work and read the manuscripts for the chapters.

But the full extent of what was involved in developing these volumes has been dug out of the records and prepared for publication only within the past two months as I have been writing for what will be the last of the biography series. *Ellen G. White—the Elmshaven Years*. [Editors note: The author, for several reasons, chose to begin his writing with Ellen White's return to the United States from Australia in 1900, and has prepared the manuscripts for the last two of the six volumes of the biography. The first of these will be published in September of this year.] It has been a thrilling and most reassuring experience to me. Since it will be months before the volume containing this account will reach the reading public, I feel

constrained to share it now with readers of the REVIEW. In this book Ellen White's active participation in literary work is portrayed right up to the time of the accident that terminated her work five months before her death.

At the outset it should be made clear that her four books noted above did not emerge as totally new literary productions. *The Acts of the Apostles*, published in 1911, is described in *Life Sketches* as "the revision of 'Sketches from the Life of Paul,'" a book that appeared originally in 1883. *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, coming from the press in 1913, represented the organization and enlargement of materials first published mainly in the 1890s in *Christian Education* and *Special Testimonies on Education*. *Gospel Workers*, which came from the press in 1915, presented important counsels published in 1892 in a volume titled *Gospel Workers*, with a great deal of material added, representing her counsels to ministers. *Prophets and Kings*, published in 1917, was originally titled *The Captivity and Restoration of Israel*. It was a book Ellen White was looking forward to preparing for several decades. In doing so she wrote a number of articles, on Daniel, Nehemiah, Ezra, and [2] other Old Testament personalities, that were published in the *Review and Herald*, *The Signs of the Times*, *The Youth's Instructor*, and *Watchman Magazine*. These, with chapters from *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 3, could provide much of the material that fills in the great controversy story from the time of David to the birth of Christ.

So there was a reservoir of materials in her periodical articles, reports of her sermons, and her manuscript files that would form the basis of these new books. But there was much to do in assembling and coordinating the materials before the book manuscripts would be ready for publication.

And there were gaps that had to be filled, with Ellen White providing new materials. It was to this end that she and her assistants turned their attention during the closing years of her life. I was familiar with this in broad outline, but was not fully aware of the extent to which those who worked with her looked to her for responsible participation during her sunset years until I dug into the correspondence files of W. C. White and C. C. Crisler as I wrote chapters for the biography. When I speak of the W. C. White correspondence files, I am talking about more than 30,000 letters.

The C. C. Crisler correspondence is confined to a much smaller compass.

Because W. C. White was called upon to travel extensively in the general interests of the cause during the last four years of his mother's life, we have a detailed record of Ellen White's life during this time. Crisler, who headed the secretarial staff at Elmshaven, kept W. C. White informed on almost a day-to-day basis as to his mother's health and activities and the activities in the office during these periods of absence. When W. C. White was at home and in the office, there is no such record except when he or D. E. Robinson might be writing to fellow workers or to J. Edson White.

With this background, I shall now draw some paragraphs from chapters in the biography I am writing. To conserve space in giving credit to the writers from whom I quote, initials are used—EGW for Ellen G. White, WCW for W. C. White, CCC for C. C. Crisler, DER for D. E. Robinson, AGD for A. G. Daniells, and SNH for S. N. Haskell. In the office records before titles were affixed to the books in preparation, "New Testament History" refers to *The Acts of the Apostles*, and "Old Testament History" refers to *Prophets and Kings*.

In a letter written in 1911 to L. R. Conradi, who headed the work of the church in Europe, W. C. White, immediately after *The Acts of the Apostles* came from the press, presented a sketchy outline of how the book was prepared:

"We are truly thankful that we have been enabled to gather together the principal parts of what Mother has written regarding the life and labors of the apostles

"You may be interested to know how we labored together in the preparation of the manuscript for the printer, and what part Mother was able to take in the work.

"At the beginning, Mother took a very lively interest in planning about the new book. She instructed us to search through her manuscripts and her published articles in the *Review*, *The Signs*, and other periodicals, and to gather together what she had written on the work and teachings of the apostles. The preliminary work

took about five months of reading and research: then followed the work of selecting those articles and portions of articles and manuscripts which most clearly represented what she desired to say to all the people, both Adventists and members of other churches

“The burden of this work fell upon Brother C. C. Crisler, Mrs. Maggie Hare-Bree, and Miss Minnie Hawkins.

“Day-by-day manuscripts were submitted to Mother for reading. To these she gave her first attention early in the morning when she was rested and her mind was fresh, and she marked the manuscripts freely, interlining and adding words, phrases, and sentences to make the statements more clear and forceful, and these were passed back for a second copying.

[3] “As the work progressed, Mother would frequently give us instructions regarding points of importance and which she knew she had written and which she wished us to take special pains to search for in her writings. Sometimes this instruction was given to those who brought her the manuscripts in her room, and oftentimes after reading a few chapters, or early in the forenoon after some important feature had been impressed upon her mind in night visions, she would come over to the office and talk the matter over with Brother Crisler.

“One day when she was talking with him and me together, she said, ‘This book will be read by heathen in America and in other lands. Take pains to search out that which I have written regarding the work and teachings of Saint Paul that will appeal to the heathen.’

“At another time she said, ‘This book will be read by the Jews. Take pains to use what I have written that will appeal to the Jews, and also that will appeal to our people as encouragement to work for the Jews.’

“And thus from time to time, she called our attention to the objects and aims that must be remembered in gathering from her writings that which would be most useful.”—WCW to L. R. Conradi, December 8, 1911.

Throughout the year 1910, Ellen White and her assistants were giving a good deal of their time to the forthcoming printing of *The Great Controversy*. With that work largely out of the way, a choice must be made between the two projected *Conflict of the Ages* books, the one on Old Testament history and the other on New Testament history. When it became known that the Sabbath school lessons for 1911 were to cover the topic of the early Christian church and fully aware of the help the proposed E. G. White book would be, the decision was made in favor of the New Testament book which would serve as a most useful Sabbath school help. While it was too late to get out the finished volume, the materials as prepared could be published in the *Review and Herald*, as well as in *The Signs of the Times* and *The Youth's Instructor*.

Selecting and assembling the materials from these articles, sermons, general manuscripts, and other similar sources, was now the work of Maggie Hare-Bree, an assistant of long experience in Ellen White's work. With emphasis to be given to New Testament history, Maggie was instructed, first of all, to make an exhaustive study of the E. G. White sources to provide articles to parallel the 1911 Sabbath school lessons. The plan was that as soon as the work on *The Great Controversy* was completed. Clarence Crisler would assemble materials on the life of Paul. He would take the 1883 E. G. White book, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, as the foundation of this work. This book had been out of print for some time, but Ellen White for many years had been looking forward to expanding its presentation. Now Crisler would draw from this, as well as from other Ellen White sources of the past 25 or more years.

Because Maggie, hard at work on the experiences of the early Christian church, became sick, the work was delayed. The deadline for copy for the January 5 issue of the *Review*, the time for the beginning of the new series, was missed (WCW to F. M. Wilcox, January 17, 1911). But four weeks later the *Review and Herald* carried two articles in time to parallel current Sabbath school lessons.

From time to time Ellen White called the attention of her workers to the objectives and aims that needed to be remembered in gathering from her writings that which would be most useful.

The records indicate that Ellen White was much involved in the task, going over the materials as they were assembled, doing some editing and writing to fill in gaps. All of this was done with an eye on the full manuscript for the forthcoming book to be known as *The Acts of the Apostles*. On February 15 she wrote:

[4] “I am thankful that I can remain at home for a time, where I can be close to my helpers I have been very fully employed in the preparation of matter for the ‘Life of Paul.’ We are trying to bring out scriptural evidence of truth, and these, we believe, will be appreciated by our people.”—[Letter 4, 1911](#).

The work of article preparation and shaping up of chapters for the book manuscript proceeded well as Ellen White devoted much of her writing potential to this task. Although April was consumed in a trip to Loma Linda, in May she was back working on *Acts* (WCW to J. H. Behrens, May 21, 1911). On June 6 she reported that since her long trip in 1909 she had “written but few letters.” and stated: “What strength I have is mostly given to the completion of my book on the work of the apostles.”—[Letter 30, 1911](#).

On July 25, in writing to F. M. Wilcox, editor of the *Review and Herald*, she said:

“While preparing the book on the *Acts of the Apostles*, the Lord has kept my mind in perfect peace. This book will soon be ready for publication. When this book is ready for publication, if the Lord sees fit to let me rest, I shall say Amen, and Amen.

“If the Lord spares my life, I will continue to write, and to bear my testimony in the congregation of the people, as the Lord shall give me strength and guidance.”—[Letter 56, 1911](#).

Her *Review* articles running contemporaneously with the Sabbath school lessons continued, but in mid-August they began to take on the form of finished book chapters, which indeed they were. Up to this point, most of the material in the articles went into *The Acts of*

the Apostles' chapters with some editing, some deletions, and some rearrangement of words. Through the rest of the year the articles and the book ran word for word.

On August 4, Ellen White reported in a letter to her son Edson:

“My workers are busy completing the work to be done on the new book, *The Acts of the Apostles*. This we expect to close up very shortly My workers are continually bringing in chapters for me to read: and I lay aside my other work to do this....This morning I have already read several chapters on the Life of Paul.”—[Letter 60, 1911](#).

Four weeks later she again mentioned the book in a letter to S. N. Haskell:

“My work on the book, *The Acts of the Apostles*, is nearly completed.”—[Letter 64, 1911](#).

It was a joyous day, and one filled with satisfaction, when Ellen White could write as she did on October 6 to Elder and Mrs. Haskell:

“My book, *The Acts of the Apostles*, has gone to the press. Soon it will be printed and ready for circulation.

“I feel more thankful than I can express for the interest my workers have taken in the preparation of this book, that its truths might be presented in the clear and simple language which the Lord has charged me never to depart from in any of my writings.

“The Lord has been good to me in sending me intelligent, understanding workers. I appreciate highly their interest, and the encouragement I have had in preparing this book for the people. I trust that it will have a large circulation. Our people need all the light that the Lord has been pleased to send, that they may be encouraged and strengthened for their labors in proclaiming the message of warning in these last days.”—[Letter 80, 1911](#).

[5]

Clarence Crisler occasionally referred to the former book, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, as he selected materials for *The Acts of the Apostles*. But there is nothing in the record to indicate that, while there had been some talk, particularly in and around Battle Creek a few years earlier, that Ellen White had plagiarized somewhat from *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*, this was of any concern to Crisler and his associates. *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul* was a book jointly authored by W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howsen, British clergymen—a book issued in the United States without copyright by several publishers. W. C. White in his comments on December 8, 1911, noted:

“If you compare those chapters relating to the work of Paul with the old book, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, you will observe that less room has been given to detailed descriptions of places and journeyings and that more room has been given to his teachings and the lessons to be drawn from them.”—WCW to L. R. Conradi, December 8, 1911. *The Acts of the Apostles* was off the press and ready for sale in late November, 1911.

Part 2—More Than “One More Book”

[6]

Originally published in *Adventist Review*, June 18, 1981

Ellen White felt that her waning time and strength should be devoted to producing her books as they would speak to large congregations over and over again.

When the year 1912 dawned, Ellen White was in her eighty-fifth year. The marvel to acquaintances, church leaders, and her family, was her ability to continue to produce. In early January she wrote:

“There will be one more book—that dealing with the Old Testament history from the time of David to the time of Christ. The material for this book is written, and is on file, but is not yet put into shape. When this book is completed, I shall feel that my work is finished. Yet I can hold my pen as firmly today as I have done in years past.”—[Letter 4, 1912](#).

Book production was pressed hard because she and her associates knew well that her years were running out. That her physical strength was declining was clear to those about her, but she kept steadily at her book work. W. C. White wrote to her other son, James Edson White, on May 13, 1912:

“Mother’s health is quite changeable. Some days she reads a little too much, then does not sleep at night and the next day is very feeble. Perhaps the next night she will rest well and feel of good courage and ambitious

the next day.” ... “Instead of writing several letters a day as in the olden time, Mother writes only two or three a month nowadays.”

But the next day he could write to A. G. Daniells, the president of the General Conference:

“We are making excellent progress with the work on Mother’s book We hope that the heaviest part of this work will be completed in July.”—WCW to AGD, May 14, 1912.

A few weeks later, she herself wrote to her old friends the S. N. Haskells:

“I must write you a short letter today. I have begun several letters to you, but have not succeeded in finishing any. I hope you will not cease to write to me, even though I do not write often. I am always interested in your work, and always glad to hear from you.

“We are all very busy, doing our best to prepare the new book for publication. I want the light of truth to go to every place, that it may enlighten those who are now ignorant of the reasons for our faith.”—[Letter 28, June 11, 1912](#).

A potential of more books

On Sabbath, June 15, 1912, W. C. White found his mother rested. Instead of attending church, he spent much of the morning and a part of the afternoon telling her of the progress of the work, particularly at Loma Linda. In the visit Sabbath afternoon they discussed her often expressed intention to visit Portland, Maine, once more. She had been eager to do this, to bear her testimony again in the city that was her girlhood home. He pointed out to her the loss that could come to the cause by her leaving her book work just then and enumerated some of the enterprises they hoped to undertake as soon as the manuscript for the Old Testament history was completed. [7]

He mentioned to her that among the books being called for was a revision of *Christian Education*. (This should not be confused with the book *Education*, published in 1903, but was a 250-page volume drawn from E. G. White manuscripts and issued ten years earlier.) *Gospel Workers*, published in 1892, was to be revised and enlarged. W. C. White then mentioned “a compilation from the Testimonies for translation into foreign languages. *Experience and Views* revised (*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*), *Story of the Health Reform Movement*, *Story of Labors in Europe*, *Story of Labors in Australia*, *Bible Sanctification* revised,” and so on. It was quite an array of work looming before them.

Ellen White’s response surprised and greatly pleased her son. She said that for about two weeks she had felt no burden to go to Portland in the coming summer, and then she declared:

“I am not able to make such a journey in my present state of health I feel that my time and strength must be devoted to my books. They will speak to large congregations over and over again after my voice is silent.

“Remaining here, I can attend nearby meetings, and if we consent to break our work for anything, it

will be in time of necessity to help the work at Loma Linda.”—WCW to AGD, June 16, 1912.

But the main thrust through 1912, especially the summer and fall months, was in book preparation. In May, Ellen White wrote:

“Just now, what strength I have is given mostly to bringing out in book form what I have written in past years on the Old Testament history from the time of Solomon to the time of Christ. Last year *The Acts of the Apostles* was put in print, and is being widely circulated; and now we are making good progress with this Old Testament history. We are advancing as fast as possible.

“I have faithful and conscientious helpers, who are gathering together what I have written for the *Review, Signs* and *Watchman*, and in manuscripts and letters, and arranging it in chapters for the book. Sometimes I examine several chapters in a day, and at other times I can read but little because my eyes become weary, and I am dizzy. The chapters that I have been reading recently are very precious.”—[Letter 20, 1912](#).

At about the same time, W. C. White, writing of the excellent progress being made with the book, reported that she had read 25 or 30 chapters. There were 60 when the book *Prophets and Kings* was finished.

It was the hope of the office staff, as mentioned earlier, that the book could be ready for sale by the time of the forthcoming General Conference session, to be held in the spring of 1913. In November, W. C. White wrote of the work:

“During the summer much time has been devoted by Brother C. C. Crisler, Sister Minnie Hawkins and Sister Maggie Hare-Bree in diligently searching through Mother’s writings and gathering together what she has written on different phases of Old Testament history from the time of Solomon to Malachi. We have all felt that this long-neglected work ought to be carried

forward as rapidly as possible now while Mother is able to supervise the work.

“Mother is writing very little new matter on the Old Testament history, but as we place before her what she has written in past years and she reads it chapter by chapter, her suggestions regarding matter yet to be sought for lead us to go again to the manuscripts and find that which had been overlooked.”—WCW to Dear Friend. November 5, 1912.

Guidance and direction

As W. C. White, on January 1, 1913, wrote to Elder Haskell, conveying his mother's greetings for the New Year, he commented:

“It is ... perfectly plain that the Lord is working through her in a remarkable manner to give guidance and direction to the work that is being done now in the gathering of her writings and the preparation of them for publication.”—WCW to S. N. Haskell.

Ellen White celebrated the New Year by sending a sizable package of dried fruit to her old friends George and Martha Amadon in Battle Creek. Prunes, peaches, pears, figs, and raisins were included (WCW to George Amadon. Jan. 13, 1913).

Writing of her situation, she stated:

“During the past four years I have written comparatively few letters. What strength I have had has been given mostly to the completion of important book work.

“Occasionally I have attended meetings, and have visited institutions in California, but the greater portion of the time since the last General Conference has been spent in manuscript work at my country home, ‘Elmshaven,’ near St. Helena.

“I am thankful that the Lord is sparing my life to work a little longer on my books. O that I had strength to do all that I see ought to be done! I pray that He may impart to me wisdom, that the truths our people so much need may be presented clearly and acceptably. I am encouraged to believe that God will enable me to do this.”—[Manuscript 4, 1913](#).

But for one who all through her life had been out among the churches, the literary work at Elmshaven did, at times, seem confining. She wrote:

“I long to be personally engaged in earnest work in the field, and I should most assuredly be engaged in more public labor did I not believe that at my age it is not wise to presume on one’s physical strength. I have a work to do in communicating to the church and to the world the light that has been entrusted to me from time to time all through the years during which the third angel’s message has been proclaimed.”—*Ibid.*

So it was book preparation in earnest, Ellen White working closely with her trusted literary helpers. Work on the Old Testament history, pushed so hard in 1912, seems to have slowed down, awaiting Clarence Crisler’s attention.

Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students

As the year 1913 opened, the book they then called *Christian Education* (which we know today as *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*) was receiving first attention. In a letter written to O. A. Olsen on January 2, W. C. White described in some detail the procedures in preparing the manuscript:

“First of all. Professor Salisbury [secretary of the General Conference Department of Education] sat down with Mother’s secretaries and spent two or three hours in pointing out those articles in the old book [*Christian Education*, 1893] which he regarded as essential; also those articles in *Special Testimonies on Education* [1897] which he thought should be used in the new edition.

[9]

“Then Sisters Minnie Hawkins, Maggie Bree, and Mary Steward gave the matter which he has designated a very careful reading, and made notes as to its contents. Then they went to Mother’s files to see what new matter they could find and they made note of its contents.

“Then we made a list of departments which we thought ought to be considered in the compilation, and with these subjects before them, they made a thorough study of printed matter and manuscripts. As they collected matter, the departments developed from ten to fourteen.”—WCW to O. A. Olsen, Jan. 2, 1913.

When the manuscript had been pulled together in its preliminary form and each chapter read by Ellen White, it was submitted to several leading educators for critical reading. To them W. C. White wrote:

“If you find anything in the manuscript to criticize, if you know of important material which should be added, or if you have any suggestions regarding arrangement, please send them along, and we will give your suggestions consideration.”—WCW to M. E. Kern, Jan. 15. 1913.

The procedures in handling this manuscript were quite different from those followed in the preparation of *Prophets and Kings*. In the case of the Old Testament history there was a natural sequence which must be followed. In the case of the book on education some judgment could be exercised in the selection of materials and the most helpful sequence in which these should appear. Quite naturally, dedicated educators, who by nature of their work had given diligent study to the Spirit of Prophecy counsels which had a bearing on their work, would be in the best position to point out any important counsels that might have been overlooked, and to suggest the most effective arrangement of articles.

As work on the manuscript neared completion early in 1913, Ellen White’s attention was called to the fact that it contained no counsel giving clear-cut guidance to school administrators, particularly in our colleges, concerning the association of students in our schools. She had written on the subject as the Avondale school was getting under way and had dealt with general principles in counsels to Battle Creek and Healdsburg colleges. To meet the need in filling out the manuscript on this point, she dictated a statement, and when it was worked into the manuscript, she read and reread it in its context to be certain it conveyed her intent adequately and correctly. The statement is found on page 101.

With the book *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* in the hands of the publishers, work on the manuscript for *Gospel Workers* took a prominent place in the program at Elmshaven. On February 18, 1913, W. C. White reported to Elder Daniells:

“Mother is quite well these days, but not at all strong. Our work in the office is progressing nicely. Minnie and Maggie are at work collecting material for *Gospel Workers*.”

On March 31, he wrote to Mrs. N. H. Druillard, an old friend of the family:

“Mother ... keeps quite cheerful, rides out almost every pleasant day, reads all the manuscripts that we are preparing for the printer, gives us much valuable counsel about the work.”

And Ellen White herself reported on May 7:

“I have a company of faithful workers, who are helping to prepare matter for the press. They are of good courage, and look on the bright side. We are doing our best to gather together the precious instruction that the people need.”—[Letter 9, 1913](#).

Part 3—The Story of Prophets and Kings

[10]

[11]

Originally published in *Adventist Review*, June 25, 1981

During the last two years of her life Ellen White gave her strength to book preparation.

A General Conference was to Ellen White a very important occasion. She had missed few sessions through the 70 years of her active ministry. As the time neared for the thirty-eighth such meeting, to be held in Washington, D. C., in May, 1913, she wished she might attend. Instead, she sent two formal messages to be read to the delegates and asked her son to present orally her words of greeting. He had an opportunity to do so, as A. G. Daniells, after a brief address at the opening meeting, gave an opportunity for words of gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving. As he arose to bear his testimony, W. C. White conveyed the message his mother had given him:

“Tell our brethren to be of good cheer. Tell them to have faith in God and expect great things, to undertake great things, and in His strength to go forward. Tell them not to fear or to look back. My prayers will be with them.

“Tell our brethren I feel perfectly clear that it is God’s will that I shall remain at home and reserve what strength I have to help in the work of bringing my writings into book form, so that they can be published for the people.”—[The General Conference Bulletin, May 16, 1913](#), pp. 5, 6.

Then in giving a report on her state of health and welfare, he stated:

“Mother is eighty-five years old. She feels the infirmities of age, but she is not suffering with sickness. She is comfortably well. Almost every pleasant day she rides out for an hour or two. Usually she devotes an hour or two to reading and writing, from day to day.

“Very frequently, as I visit her in the morning, I find the *Review* in her hands and she says, ‘What a wonderful paper! What an interesting report of our work!’ And in connection with various reports in the *Review*, she often comments on the progress of the work in many lands.

“Mother’s courage is good. She has no fear of the future. She expects to rest in the grave a little while before the Lord comes, but she has no dread. Her only anxiety is to use day by day what strength God gives her in a way most acceptable to her Master.”—*Ibid.*

During the Conference session, W. C. White read one of the messages his mother had addressed to the delegates, and a little later A. G. Daniells read the other. The messages brought courage to the workers assembled.

A few weeks after the Conference closed, but before W. C. White was back at Elmshaven, Sara McEnterfer, Ellen White’s private secretary, traveling companion, and nurse, informed him of Ellen White’s state of health:

“Mother’s health has been more than we dared to hope for during your absence. She sings in the night and she sings in the day (even while in the bathtub taking her treatment). She seems to enjoy her food very much, and I believe it is doing her good. We get her out to ride twice nearly every day.”

[12]

Steady, but sometimes seemingly slow, progress was made in the tasks of preparing “Old Testament History” and *Gospel Workers*,

and in meeting the incessant demand for E. G. White articles for the *Review and Signs of the Times*.

On August 28, Ellen White herself reported concerning the progress of her literary work:

“The past few months I have not done much letter writing; for I have wished to keep my strength for the reading of important matter in my book work. I have with me an excellent company of workers, men and women who are as true as steel to principle, and whose entire interests are bound up with this work. My faith has increased as I have tried to do my best to complete my writings.”—[Letter 11, 1913](#).

Through December, she was still much employed in book production. She wrote of this on December 4, 1913:

“I am fairly well health wise, not suffering much pain, but I realize that old age is reminding me that I am mortal. My book work is still taking my time, and I am trying to finish my work with joy and not with grief. I have not lost my courage.”—[Letter 13, 1913](#).

Praying that her life may be prolonged

Two weeks later, W. C. White, in writing to the S. N. Haskells, was happy to report:

“December 19: Mother kept quite well last summer and through the fall. Just now she is not so strong, but we are praying that her life may be prolonged, and her strength sustained that she may direct us in the work of preparing her manuscripts for the printers.”—WCW to SNH, December 19, 1913.

Then on the last day of the year, he wrote to Elder Daniells:

“December 31: Some lines of our work are moving forward well. Sister Bree is making steady progress in the preparation of copy for Gospel Workers. Mother is reading this article by article, and enjoys it very much.”—WCW to AGD, December 31, 1913.

In 1914 W. C. White was at home more of the time working with the staff during the first part of the year. Since Clarence Crisler was not reporting to him almost daily, there is a paucity of detailed records of the kind that has made this series of Review articles possible. Work on the books was pushed forward earnestly.

In May, 1914, James Edson White went west to visit his mother and spent about a month at Elmshaven. Mother and son had an enjoyable time. Then she had an experience which W. C. White later explained to his brother Edson:

“Shortly after your visit, she had trouble with her right hand for two weeks, and with her right foot for a week, and with her whole right side for a day or two. We called Dr. Klingerman, and he gave her a very faithful examination. He said she had had a very light stroke,

and that its effect would be only temporary. Then he told May Walling and Sara what to add to the regular treatment, and said he thought he need not call again.

“After four or five days, Mother was riding out every day as before, but it was nearly four weeks before she cared to read the Review or anything in the books and manuscripts with which she is surrounded. When we had manuscripts that needed her attention, we waited until she was feeling well, and of good courage.”—WCW to JEW, December 15, 1914.

[13]

Ellen White commented that she sensed continually the uplifting presence of the Spirit of God.

Allowing a few weeks for recovery, Ellen White was able again to give attention to the book work. As chapters were brought to her, her son reported that she read some, or asked others to read them to her, and she would comment on them. Her principal contribution to literary work in this her eighty-seventh year was toward her books as she read and approved chapters and at times added a bit here or there. Through June it seemed to those about her that she was somewhat less steady on her feet, and her endurance was waning.

Though she did have lapses of memory and at times lost her orientation, members of her office staff noted one remarkable phenomenon—her grasp of spiritual subjects never faltered. On October 4, W. C. White left home for an extended trip to the South and the East. While his absence slowed the work in the office and left considerable loneliness, it had its benefits in the frequent reports by letter from Crisler. His almost daily reports furnish a very detailed account of Ellen White’s activities and state of health. On Thursday evening, October 8, Crisler, who was working in his office not far from the Elmshaven home, wrote:

“I can hear Sister White praying as I write. She is holding evening worship with the girls. She seems of good cheer today.”—CCC to WCW, October 8. 1914.

Later in the month, Crisler reported that as he called at the home, he found Ellen White had been reading in *The Great Controversy*,

and she rejoiced over the “plain revelations” of truth set forth in the book. Her mind was remarkably clear—a blessing which caused her to rejoice (CCC to WCW, October 28, 1914).

Through the earlier months of 1914, there had been hastening of the work on the Old Testament history, fearful that if there was delay the manuscript could not receive Ellen White’s careful attention and her counsel and approval. Now the task was well along, and Clarence Crisler went back to some of the chapters that came short in richness of the standard set by the rest of the manuscript. With Ellen White’s counsel and help, he was rounding out some of these chapters. This is why the manuscript that earlier had been spoken of as about completed was still in preparation. Crisler wrote:

“As we find new material from the file and add to the chapters that have already been prepared and passed upon, and reread these amplified portions to her, she seems to enjoy going over them anew. This perfecting of the manuscript is slow work, but very interesting; and we are hopeful of the outcome.”—CCC to WCW, January 1, 1915.

On Sunday, November 1, she and C.C. Crisler went over eight pages of manuscript on Old Testament history. He was struggling with the task of finding adequate material to fill out the six remaining chapters. They talked about the forthcoming book and discussed some of Jeremiah’s prophecies. The chapter they had gone over was one of six still unfinished. It was Crisler’s hope that the next evening she would be able to hear and approve another chapter on Jeremiah. That would leave only four to be completed—“one more on Jeremiah, one on the Restoration, one on Malachi, and one of Messianic prophecy.”

And so it went from day to day. On Friday, November 20, Crisler read to Mrs. White a few pages of manuscript for the Old Testament book, then again on Sunday he read a half dozen pages (CCC to WCW, November 22, 1914). He wrote to W. C. White of what never ceased to amaze him as well as others close to Ellen White:

be lifted above confusion. When a Scripture is partially quoted, she very often finishes it. I have tried this over and over again, especially when repeating the promises. And the Jeremiah and other Old Testament Scriptures seem very familiar to her, and she catches them up and comments on them, and goes forward with the quotations, as of old. I regard this as a special providence in our favor just now.”—*Ibid.*

Two weeks later, Crisler reported that Ellen White’s mind seemed quite clear, and they worked together on Old Testament history chapters from day to day. On Wednesday, she became reminiscent—something which was now quite unusual. Crisler reported:

“She tried to recall the name of some brother of long ago who expressed discouragement over the prospect of a very large work that would need to be done before the world had been warned; and she says another brother, one of large faith, turned to him, and his face went white, and with strong emotion, he said, ‘My brother, would you permit such a prospect to bring discouragement? Do you not know that God would have us press the battle to the gate! Do you not know He would have us labor on, and on, and on, knowing that victory lies ahead!’”—CCC to WCW, December, 1914.

Then she commented on the fact that she sensed continually the uplifting presence of the Spirit of God. He added:

“She said she would not speak discouragingly, and yet she would not wish to convey the impression that no disappointments come to her. We are to expect the enemy to bring us disappointments, but these need never bring discouragement. When disappointed, we are to labor on until triumph comes; and this is working by faith.”—*Ibid.*

It was a good week for book preparation, and the two were spending some time each day working together. She made frequent

comments and some helpful suggestions (CCC to WCW, November 30 and December 2, 1914).

“Advance! Advance!”

On December 3 Crisler went over another chapter for the Old Testament history, and in connection with this Ellen White told him of a recent experience. Here is how he reported it:

“Sister White says that during the night session she hears voices saying, ‘Advance! Advance! Advance! Press the battle to the gate!’”—CCC to WCW, December 3, 1914.

Crisler commented,

“She seems to apply this to the completion of the work of the Lord in all parts of the earth, also to the completion of important book work I believe the Lord would have us all take courage, and press forward steadily.”—*Ibid.*

A few days later, he wrote that the word spoken by Sister White kept ringing in his ears, “Advance! Advance! Advance!” This was true also of others who learned of the experience (CCC to WCW, December 4, 1914).

On Monday, December 14, Crisler reported that Ellen White’s day-to-day condition remained about the same, and he said he tried to visit her “as often as she is able to consider matters with zest,” which was, as a rule, sometimes once, sometimes twice, daily. While he had skipped days, he said such was exceptional. On this particular day and the day before, he went over the Daniel portion anew with Sister White, and she seemed to enjoy rehearsing the story. Hearing it read revived old memories on her part. Her comments during the visit gave Crisler an opportunity to do additional work on the manuscript (CCC to WCW, December 14 and 17, 1914). [15]

Mid-December was marked by an encouraging rallying point in Ellen White's physical condition. For several weeks she was able to give more attention than usual to the literary tasks.

Clarence Crisler wrote to Elder S. N. Haskell on Thursday, December 24, and had something to say on the subject in which so many were interested—Ellen White's state of health. "On some days," he said, "she is stronger than on others: but she is not so strong now as when you were last with us." She gives consideration, he said, "to a few questions connected with the advancement of the general work," and goes "over with us manuscripts being prepared from her writings or for publication." He observed: "She is more often brain-weary, and when weary, she is forgetful ... [and] forgets details." Nevertheless she was in possession of remarkably clear concepts of religious and spiritual matters: "Her mind seems to keep unusually clear on scriptural subjects and especially on the precious promises of the Word; and so her meditations are sweet, and she has comfort and joy through the consolation the Bible affords every Christian."—CCC to SNH, December, 1914.

"At other times," Crisler went on to say, "she has much to say of former times, and becomes reminiscent concerning her associates of years gone by; and then she seems much as when you were with us."

He added:

"There are many times, too, when her mind is fruitful on Bible themes; and we are endeavoring to take advantage of such times, and to present before her for her careful consideration that which must receive her personal attention prior to publication in book or article form.

"Were it not for the special interposition of God in her behalf. I doubt not but that she would find difficulty in keeping up this line of work; but with Heaven's blessing we have found it possible to advance slowly yet surely. Every advance step taken in the finishing of manuscript work, brings to her real delight; and she rejoices in the privilege of being permitted still to use her talents in binding about the edges, as she says, and in rounding out her work in proper form, that the 'well

done’ may be spoken of her when she rests from her labors.”—*Ibid.*

The final months

January 1, 1915, Crisler wrote of work on the chapters linking the Solomon story with that of Elijah because they were “not bright enough and hopeful enough to suit” Ellen White (CCC to WCW, January 4, 1915). So, following “her counsel in making them more nearly right,” scriptures were introduced which she felt were needed. Crisler was pleased that this satisfied her and he himself was glad they could now include matter they “disliked to see left out of the more hastily prepared volume” (CCC to WCW, January 4 and 5, 1915).

As the year 1915 opened, the *Review and Herald* was setting type for *Gospel Workers*. As the work progressed, the workers at Elmshaven were reading proofs and double checking. More meticulous care was taken with an Ellen White book than with other works.

[16] On Tuesday, January 5, 1915, Crisler had occasion to write to Edson White, and he reported on his mother’s health:

“You will be pleased to learn that Sister White is keeping up fairly well, all things considered She can get about the house unaided and unattended, going freely from room to room and up and down stairs; but her steps are much slower and uncertain than in former years, and even than when you were last with us [May, 1914]

“Often during the past few months she has spent a good portion of the time downstairs, sitting in the sitting room by the fireplace; and Miss May Walling has endeavored to sit much with her, to keep her company There is really more home life for your mother than during the years when her activities led her to isolate herself in her office room most of the time.”

Two days later he wrote to W. C. White:

“I am sending you these few lines to tell you that your mother is about the same, healthwise. She spends part of her time reading the large-print volumes within easy reach, and seems content. Today we went over another long chapter of the Elijah story.”—CCC to WCW, January 7, 1915.

On January 12, 1915, the report was:

“Your mother ... seems to be just about the same from day to day. I find her able to consider manuscripts daily, in harmony with the plan outlined in recent letters. She takes pleasures in this work, and gives us real help when we need her help At times, I find your mother going over the *Signs* and *Review* and other papers; but of late I have not found her reading the newspaper.”—CCC to WCW, January 12, 1915.

Then on Sunday, January 17, he wrote to W. C. White:

“I went to your mother’s sitting room to have a visit with her. We read over some of the Amos and Hosea prophecies, and considered matter that will strengthen the chapter dealing with these.”

February 10 marks the writing of a letter by D. E. Robinson to S. N. Haskell. He wrote:

“You will be glad to know that Sister White’s general health is fairly good. She is still able to dress herself and to get around the house. She takes her meals with the family, and when the weather is good goes out for a drive.

“She takes an interest in the matter that is being prepared from her manuscripts for publication. She constantly expresses her gratitude to God for His care over her. The last three days I have been eating at her table, and she thoroughly enjoys her food. Yet we who are associated with her can see that she is constantly growing weaker.”

By Friday, February 12, W. C. White was home and by letter informed his friends:

“Friday afternoon, February 12, as I was leaving the office for a quick trip to St. Helena, Mother came outdoors, and we spent ten minutes walking about in the bright sunshine and talking about the progress of the message in all the world.”—WCW to “Dear Friend,” February 15, 1915.

- [17] The next day, Sabbath, February 13, 1915, as she entered her writing room Ellen White fell and broke her hip. She lived another five months, but her work was done. Two chapters for the Old Testament history were still not quite finished. Ellen White's death and funeral and the major adjustments made at Elmshaven left the work on the manuscript and the proposition of the publication of the book we know today as *Prophets and Kings* somewhat in limbo. After seeking counsel the White trustees decided to move forward with the publishing of this book which would fill out the complete five-volume series on *The Conflict of the Ages* story. The unfinished chapters were completed with materials available from the manuscript files, and the manuscript for the book was sent to the Pacific Press for publication. In due time it was ready for the market.

Series Concluded