

AN ADVENTIST GENTLEMAN IN BATTLE CREEK: THE LEADERSHIP OF JOTHAM M. ALDRICH, 1866-1868

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1. Introduction

On August 16, 1865, James White experienced a “shock of paralysis” that marked the beginning point of his “prolonged sickness.”¹ As Adventist historian Harry H. Leonard observes, “White had been at the center of things ever since the late 1840s.”² At the time of his stroke, J. White was president of the two most important denominational entities: the General Conference and the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association. Though J. White concurrently filled both offices, two men took over after his stroke. The first person was John N. Andrews, who served as General Conference president beginning in 1867 shortly after J. White’s official res-

¹ “Sickness of Bro. White,” *Review and Herald*, August 22, 1865, 96; Ellen G. White, “Our Late Experience,” *Review and Herald*, February 20, 1866, 90. J. White first began to labor after his stroke in January 1867, but recovered more fully in the summer. Ellen G. White, *Testimony for the Church no. 13* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press, 1867), 2-5; James White, “Report from Bro. White,” *Review and Herald*, June 25, 1867, 28; Ellen G. White, “Account of James White’s Sickness/Recovery,” 1867, MS 001, Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Michigan (hereafter cited as CAR). Though J. White did not officially fill the presidential offices of the General Conference or Publishing Association until 1869, he was very active in denominational affairs between the fall of 1867 and the spring of 1869.

² Harry H. Leonard, “The Adventist Rubicon: John N. Andrews and the Mission to Europe,” in *Parochialism, Pluralism, and Contextualization: Challenges to Adventist Mission in Europe (19th-21st Centuries)*, eds. David J. B. Trim and Daniel Heinz, *Adventistica* 9 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2010), 41.

ignation.³ Since Andrews remained a prominent leader in the church, his life and work has been well documented in recent scholarship.⁴

Jotham M. Aldrich was the second individual who assumed J. White's former responsibilities. Like Andrews, Aldrich was officially elected president of the Publishing Association in 1867 shortly after J. White officially resigned his position.⁵ Although Aldrich was a prominent leader in the denomination, he is far less visible in Adventist historiography than Andrews, or many other early church pioneers, such as Joseph Bates, Uriah Smith, or J. N. Loughborough. This oversight⁶ is especially noticeable in

³ J. M. Aldrich and U. Smith, "Business Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," *Review and Herald*, May 28, 1867, 284; c.f. "[Editorial Note]," *Review and Herald*, March 19, 1867, 180. Though J. White had been re-elected to the presidency in 1866, this year was an "agonizing year of captivity" for him and he spent most of his time trying to recover from his stroke. C.f. Arthur L. White, *The Progressive Years: 1862-1876*, vol. 2 of *Ellen G. White* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1986), 128-144. Arthur L. White's treatment of 1866 is somewhat misleading as it gives the impression that J. and E. White were more active than they truly were. In reality, the Whites were just trying to survive and did very little labor for the church at all. An analysis of three primary documents will provide a more accurate picture of the White's situation in this difficult year: Harriet N. Smith, 1866 diary, Uriah Smith/Mark Bovee Collection (Collection 146), Box 1, Envelope 42, CAR; J. N. Andrews, G. H. Bell, and U. Smith, *Defense of Eld. James White and Wife: The Battle Creek Church to the Churches and Brethren Scattered Abroad* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press, 1870), 23-28; and E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church no. 13*, 2-5, 8-9. As the Battle Creek church stated, "It was in August, 1865, that Bro. White was stricken down with a paralytic shock . . . rendering him for a considerable period unable to take responsibility or to perform labor in the cause. . . . The great affliction of Bro. White [also] made it nearly impossible that Sr. W. should bear much responsibility in anything but the case of her husband." Andrews, Bell, and Smith, *Defense of Eld. James White and Wife*, 23-24.

⁴ For example, see Virgil Robinson, *John Nevins Andrews: Flame for the Lord* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1975); the entire issue of *Adventist Heritage* 9.1 (Spring 1984); Harry Leonard, ed., *J. N. Andrews: The Man and the Mission* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1985).

⁵ G. W. Amadon and J. M. Aldrich, "Seventh Annual Meeting of the Seventh-Day [sic] Adventist Pub. Association," *Review and Herald*, May 28, 1867, 281; c.f. "[Editorial Note]," 180.

⁶ Prior to this publication, only one short article is known to focus on Aldrich exclusively. Michael W. Campbell, "Aldrich, Jotham M. and Jerusha B. (Mandiville)," in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, ed. Denis Fortin and Jerry Moon (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2014), 290. In addition, only a few scholars have commented on Aldrich in relation to events in 1866-1868. A. L. White, *The Progressive Years*, 173, 267-268; Gerald Wheeler, *James White: Innovator and Overcomer*, Adventist Pioneer Series (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2003), 167, 175-177; Leonard, "The Ad-

the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, which contains no entry for Aldrich. Though this inattention to Aldrich is unfortunate, it is understandable for the following reasons: First, Aldrich was only involved in leadership in Battle Creek from late 1865 to the fall of 1868; second, Aldrich's life was cut short when he died at the age of 43 in 1870; third, Aldrich was not a traveling preacher or prolific writer; and fourth, sources relating to Aldrich can be difficult to locate for researchers. Very few letters and no extant diaries have left very little primary source documentation.

Despite the sparse documentation, Aldrich made a tremendous impact upon the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His peers highly regarded him and earnestly sought his counsel. Ellen White in particular had much to say about him and the amount of respect he maintained with other members in the church. Based on evidence from E. White, it appears that some leaders in Battle Creek may have considered Aldrich to be the new "James White" in some ways. Like J. White, Aldrich was very involved in the management of denominational affairs and had a position in *all* of the church's major entities. In fact, no other leader held as many different offices as Aldrich did from 1866 to 1868, though Loughborough and Andrews did rival his influence.⁷ He was treasurer of the Michigan Confer-

ventist Rubicon," 41-43. It is also important to note that several volumes of Adventist history that could have included information about Aldrich, either do not mention him or only give his name in passing. Milton Raymond Hook, *Flames Over Battle Creek* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1977), 62; Eugene F. Durand, *Yours in the Blessed Hope, Uriah Smith* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1980); Gary Land, ed., *Adventism in America*, rev. ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998); Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, rev. and upd. ed. (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2000); George R. Knight, *A Brief History of Seventh-day Adventists*, 2nd ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2004); George R. Knight, *Organizing for Mission and Growth: The Development of Adventist Church Structure* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2006); Brian E. Strayer, *J. N. Loughborough: The Last of the Adventist Pioneers* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2014), 151, 153, 154, 166; Gary Land, *Uriah Smith: Apologist and Biblical Commentator* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2014), 65, 76, 78, 87.

⁷ Aldrich held a total of eight different offices within the church between 1866-1868. Loughborough held five different offices during this period: a member of the General Conference Executive Committee (1866-1867); Michigan Conference president, which also placed him on its Executive Committee (1866-1867); president of the Health Institute (1867); a director of the Health Institute ([1866]-1868); and a member of the Committee on Publications, which placed him on the Board of Trustees for the Publishing Association (1867). Andrews also held five different offices in 1866-1868: a member of the New York and Pennsylvania Conference Executive Committee (1866-1868); a member of the General Conference Executive Committee (1866); president of the General Conference, which also placed him on its Executive Committee (1867-1868); a director of the Health Institute ([1866]-1868); and a mem-

ence (1868), a member of the Michigan Conference executive committee (1866-1867),⁸ a member of the board of directors of the Health Reform Institute ([1866]-1868), treasurer of the Health Institute (1868),⁹ a member of the General Conference Executive Committee (1867), and secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association (1865-1866) and later its president (1867-1868).

A major controversy that involved many denominational leaders transpired between 1866 and 1873. While scholars note some of the issues with which other leaders were involved, Aldrich's involvement has essentially been overlooked.¹⁰ He was absorbed in the conflict, and many, if not

ber of the Committee on Publications, which placed him on the Board of Trustees for the Publishing Association (1866 and 1868). John Byington and U. Smith, "Fourth Annual Session of General Conference," *Review and Herald*, May 22, 1866, 196; Aldrich and Smith, "Business Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Session," 284; J. N. Andrews and U. Smith, "Business Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," *Review and Herald*, May 26, 1868, 356; J. N. Loughborough and I. D. Van Horn, "Sixth Annual Meeting of the Michigan State Conference," *Review and Herald*, May 22, 1866, 197; J. N. Loughborough and I. D. Van Horn, "The Michigan State Conference: Its Seventh Annual Session," *Review and Herald*, May 28, 1867, 285; G. W. Amadon and J. M. Aldrich, "Sixth Annual Meeting of the S. D. A. Publishing Association," *Review and Herald*, May 22, 1866, 198; Amadon and Aldrich, "Seventh Annual Meeting," 281; J. M. Aldrich and E. S. Walker, "S. D. A. Publishing Association: Its Eighth Annual Meeting," *Review and Herald*, May 26, 1868, 357; N. Fuller and R. F. Cottrell, "Fifth Annual Session of the N. Y. and Pa. Conference," *Review and Herald*, October 16, 1866, 158; C. O. Taylor and S. B. Whitney, "Sixth Annual Meeting of the N. Y. and Pa. Conference," *Review and Herald*, October 29, 1867, 308; Western Health Reform Institute, "Records of the Board of Directors of the Health Reform Institute at Battle Creek, Mich., April 25, 1867-October 8, 1876," 20, 40, 43 (printed). At this time, the Center for Adventist Research does not have a copy of this document. The author has a photocopy of these records in his possession, courtesy of Stan Hickerson.

⁸ Loughborough and Van Horn, "Sixth Annual Meeting of the Michigan State Conference," 197; Loughborough and Van Horn, "The Michigan State Conference: Its Seventh Annual Session," 285; J. N. Loughborough and I. D. Van Horn, "The Michigan State Conference: Its Eighth Annual Session," *Review and Herald*, May 26, 1868, 357.

⁹ Aldrich was one of the leaders that helped establish the Health Institute even though directors were not officially elected until the spring of 1867. Western Health Reform Institute, "Records of the Board," 20, 40, 43 (printed).

¹⁰ Hook, *Flames Over Battle Creek*, 57-65; Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Rugged Heart: The Story of George I. Butler* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1979), 38-43; Durand, *Yours in the Blessed Hope*, 271-280; A. L. White, *The Progressive Years*, 168-175, 201-210, 266-272, 275-285, 393-400; Wheeler, *James White*, 174-182; Leonard,

most, of the problems that arose in Battle Creek from 1866 to 1868 involved him directly. A significant event in the controversy was when Aldrich was asked to resign from the Publishing Association in September 1868.¹¹ This decision only created more problems, however, and the ill effects of his “new administration” at headquarters persisted for several more years.¹² Due to his prominence and the scholarly oversight of this man, this article focuses on J. M. Aldrich and his management in Battle Creek during this crucial time. Such focus will help bring clarity to the specific details of the controversy between these leaders that continued into the 1870s. In order to achieve this goal, two primary points relative to Aldrich’s prominence in Battle Creek must be established as background information for this study: first, Aldrich was considered to be of a higher social standing than the general Adventist church members of his time; and second, many early Seventh-day Adventists believed that God had “especially selected” him to do a great work in the church.

2. The Gentleman from New York

Jotham M. Aldrich was born in New York on July 15, 1827, to Johnson Aldrich¹³ and Rachel Pease. On May 9, 1849, he married Jerusha B. Man-

“The Adventist Rubicon,” 41-47; Strayer, J. N. *Loughborough*, 160-162, 180-183; Land, *Uriah Smith*, 68-73, 76-85.

¹¹ Andrews, Bell, and Smith, *Defense of Eld. James White and Wife*, 28-29.

¹² U. Smith, G. Amadon, and other leaders continued to sympathize with Aldrich even after his death. For U. Smith, the issue was particularly dicey in the spring of 1873; see Ellen G. White to Uriah Smith, May 14, 1873, Letter 10, CAR. E. White also referred back to Aldrich’s poor leadership example many times after his death; see Ellen G. White to James E. White, [cir. June 1876], Letter 030a, CAR; Ellen G. White to Whom It May Concern in the Review Office, October 8, 1890, Letter 069, CAR. E. White’s most tragic comment came as a warning to her son Edson when she wrote, “You see you rob your employer in order to serve self. For this unfaithful scheming, Aldrich lost not only his position in the office but he lost his life.” Ellen G. White to James E. and Emma White, November 6, 1874, Letter 059, CAR.

¹³ Johnson Aldrich was a respected citizen in Somerset, NY and served as Justice of the Peace for many years, as well Town Supervisor. “Memory of Events: Pages from a Well-Kept Local Diary—Things That Have Happened During the Past Half Century,” *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal*, October 31, 1889, p. 3, col. 2, <http://www.fultonhistory.com>, (hereafter cited as Fulton History); William Pool, ed., *Landmarks of Niagara County, New York* ([Syracuse, NY]: Mason, 1897), 316. Johnson Aldrich also seemingly managed a fairly sizable estate. A few years after his death, it was announced that “a large number of most desirable articles, including household furniture, horses, cows, hogs, hay, farm produce and scores of other articles”

diville and the couple made Somerset, NY their home.¹⁴ Aldrich was a highly respected citizen within this community.¹⁵ The 1855 New York state census reveals that Aldrich was a "Gentleman" by profession.¹⁶ In the mid-nineteenth century, gentlemen were favorably regarded within society. Occupationally speaking, a gentleman was usually able to support his family from the income he received from his properties. Though the extent of Aldrich's property holdings in New York is currently unknown, he did own a general store¹⁷ and a hall.¹⁸ He was also actively involved in civic affairs, holding a seat on the Town Committee for Somerset.¹⁹ Oftentimes the Town Committee would meet in Aldrich's hall to

would be sold at auction. "Local Notices: An Opportunity to Buy Cheap," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal*, February 1, 1873, p. 3, col. 4, Fulton History.

- ¹⁴ Homer M. Aldrich, "Obituaries: Aldrich," *Review and Herald*, May 20, 1915, 21.
- ¹⁵ Aldrich traveled around in a fairly nice carriage (valued at \$100) in Somerset, NY and Battle Creek, MI. Internal Revenue Assessment Lists for New York, 1864, Division 7, Collection District 29, p. 76 (penned), J. M. Aldrich, town of Somerset, online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed May 19, 2014); Internal Revenue Assessment Lists for New York, 1865, Division 7, Collection District 29, p. 125 (penned), J. M. Aldrich, town of Somerset, online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed May 19, 2014); Internal Revenue Assessment Lists for Michigan, 1866, Division 5, Collection District 9, p. 55 (penned), Jotham M. Aldrich, town of Battle Creek, online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed May 19, 2014).
- ¹⁶ 1855 New York State Census, Niagara County, New York, town of Somerset, p. 34 (supplied), line 7, Jotham Aldrich, online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed May 19, 2014).
- ¹⁷ 1860 U. S. Census, Niagara County, New York, town of Somerset, p. 10 (penned), line 4, Jotham M. Aldrich, online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed May 19, 2014); Internal Revenue Assessment Lists for New York, 1865, Division 7, Collection District 29, p. 19 (penned), J. M. Aldrich, town of Somerset, online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed March 13, 2015); Pool, *Landmarks of Niagara County*, 319.
- ¹⁸ Adventists used this hall fairly often as a meeting location in the early 1860s. E. B. Saunders and J. M. Aldrich, "Business Report of the N. Y. Conference," *Review and Herald*, September 24, 1861, 135; "Appointments," *Review and Herald*, July 22, 1862, 64; "Appointments," *Review and Herald*, October 21, 1862, 168; R. F. Cottrell, "Monthly and Quarterly Meetings in N. Y.," *Review and Herald*, November 25, 1862, 208. This hall was also used by other religious groups. "Donation Visits," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal & Courier*, January 16, 1861, p. 3, col. 2, Fulton History.
- ¹⁹ Asa B. Brown and Samuel Kittinger Jr., "Second Assembly District Convention," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal & Courier*, September 30, 1859, p. 2, cols. 2-3, Fulton History.

conduct municipal related business, hold elections for officers, or rally support for the Union during the Civil War.²⁰

Jotham and Jerusha Aldrich were probably Quakers,²¹ but by the summer of 1860 they were contemplating the validity of the seventh-day Sabbath.²² About one year later, in late-May 1861, the family accepted this

²⁰ Town Committee, "Republican Town Caucus," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal & Courier*, September 18, 1859, p. 2, col. 1, Fulton History; Town Committee, "Somerset Town Caucus," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal & Courier*, March 31, 1860, p. 3, col. 2, Fulton History; Town Committee, "Somerset Town Caucus," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal & Courier*, April 2, 1860, p. 3, col. 2, Fulton History; Town Committee, "Notice," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal & Courier*, April 3, 1863, p. 2, col. 4, Fulton History; Town Committee, "Notice," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal & Courier*, September 23, 1863, p. 2, col. 1, Fulton History; Town Committee, "Union Caucus," *Lockport (NY) Daily Journal & Courier*, March 30, 1864, p. 2, col. 1, Fulton History.

²¹ Jotham and Jerusha Aldrich had three known children: Sarah Eliza Aldrich (1851-1851), Homer M. Aldrich (1851-1932), and Huldah Elizabeth Aldrich (1860-1889). Sarah, presumably a twin sister of Homer, only lived about five weeks and is buried in Quaker Cemetery (established in 1824 by the Society of Friends) in Somerset, NY. Find A Grave, *Quaker Cemetery*, digital images, gravestone for Sarah Eliza Aldrich (1851-1851), Somerset, New York, online: <http://www.findagrave.com> (accessed May 19, 2014). Likewise, J. M. Aldrich's parents, Johnson and Rachel Aldrich, are buried in Quaker Cemetery in Somerset (these records are also located on <http://www.findagrave.com>). Though burial in a Quaker Cemetery may not guarantee affiliation with this religious group, it is a strong clue. Since at least the late seventeenth-century, many American Quakers held strict rules regarding funerals and the burying of the dead. For example, in October 1694 the Philadelphian Quakers agreed to keep their "intire [sic] burying Place to themselves only." Jon Butler, *Power, Authority, and the Origins of American Denominational Order: The English Churches in the Delaware Valley, 1680-1730* (1978; repr., Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2009), 67. Another source that may allude to a Quaker influence is Aldrich's article in the *Review* titled, "The War." Within this article, Aldrich takes a traditional "Quaker" (i.e. pacifist) position by remaining on the "no-fight side of the question." J. M. Aldrich, "The War," *Review and Herald*, December 23, 1862, 30. As a result, it seems likely that Jotham and Jerusha Aldrich were Quakers before becoming Adventists.

²² According to J. M. Aldrich's obituary, he "first heard the truth at the tent-meeting held in Somerset, N. Y., by Brn. Andrews and Cottrell, in 1860." "Death of Brother Aldrich," *Review and Herald*, September 27, 1870, 120. In his mother's obituary, Homer M. Aldrich reiterated this claim, stating, "In 1860 Elder J. N. Andrews and R. F. Cottrell first brought the advent and Sabbath truth to their knowledge." H. M. Aldrich, "Obituaries: Aldrich," 21. Andrews and Cottrell held tent meetings in Somerset between August 31 and September 23, 1860. R. F. Cottrell and J. N. Andrews, "Tent Meetings in N. Y.," *Review and Herald*, October 2, 1860, 156-157. According to the obituaries, the Aldrichs would have heard about Adventism at this time. However, there is information that calls this notion into question. First, J. M.

new view of the Sabbath and became “fully identified” with the Sabbatarian Adventist movement.²³

Shortly after his conversion, Aldrich began to contribute some articles to the *Review*²⁴ and published a tract by July 1862.²⁵ Given his social status, it is not surprising that he also became an active church leader in New York fairly quickly. He served as secretary for the state conferences held

Aldrich began to receive the *Review and Herald* in May 1860. “Business Department: Receipts for Review and Herald,” *Review and Herald*, May 29, 1860, 16. Second, Aldrich wrote to the *World’s Crisis* on July 15, 1860, “I am not by practice what is termed a Sabbatarian, yet from recent investigations I am strongly inclined to the opinion that the seventh day is the only true Sabbath.” Emphasis is in original. J. M. Aldrich, “Is Sunday a Sabbath,” *Review and Herald*, October 9, 1860, 165. (The *Crisis* refused to publish Aldrich’s article, which is why it was published in the *Review* at a later date. In February 1861, this series of events was repeated two more times: Aldrich wrote an article for the *Crisis* on the Sabbath, which was rejected, and the *Review* published it at a later date. J. M. Aldrich, “The Sabbath,” *Review and Herald*, June 25, 1861, 33-34; J. M. Aldrich, “The Sabbath,” *Review and Herald*, July 2, 1861, 41-42). These two facts indicate that the Aldrichs were actually familiar with Adventism before Cottrell and Andrews held tent meetings in Somerset in the early-fall of 1860. Since this is the case, it is necessary to look for another time when they could have heard “the truth” for the first time. While no definitive answer can be given, it is possible that Jotham and Jerusha Aldrich first heard about the seventh-day Sabbath in March 1860 when Andrews held some meetings in Somerset, NY. J. N. Andrews, “Letter from Bro. Andrews,” *Review and Herald*, April 12, 1860, 165. If this is the case, it fits well with Aldrich’s subscription to the *Review* and his rejected article for the *Crisis*. However, Cottrell was not present at these meetings (although he was supposed to be there) and the tent was not used. Therefore, this suggestion only fits part of the data found in the obituaries. Since the information in the obituaries seems to be inaccurate to some degree, no suggestion could ever fit all of the details perfectly.

²³ R. F. Cottrell, “Conference in Western N. Y.,” *Review and Herald*, June 11, 1861, 22; R. F. Cottrell, “Appointments: [Western New York],” *Review and Herald*, May 14, 1861, 208; R. F. Cottrell, “Appointments: [Western New York],” *Review and Herald*, May 21, 1861, 8.

²⁴ J. M. Aldrich, “Discussion in the N. Y. Tent—Truth Victorious!” *Review and Herald*, August 20, 1861, 92; J. M. Aldrich, “Reply,” *Review and Herald*, October 8, 1861, 149-150 (c.f. P. A. Smith, “Eagle Harbor Discussion,” *Review and Herald*, October 8, 1861, 149; E. B. Saunders, “Eagle Harbor Discussion,” *Review and Herald*, October 8, 1861, 150); J. M. Aldrich, “The Cause in Western N. Y.,” *Review and Herald*, June 24, 1862, 29.

²⁵ J. M. Aldrich, *Review of Seymour’s Tract: His Fifty Questions Answered* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press, 1862), 85; c.f. “Publications: Review of Seymour,” *Review and Herald*, July 1, 1862, 40; “Review of Seymour,” *Review and Herald*, June 3, 1862, 8.

in 1861 and 1862²⁶ and when the New York State Conference was officially organized on October 25, 1862, Aldrich took the secretarial office.²⁷

On May 20, 1863, J. M. Aldrich chaired the first meeting of the General Conference as it was being organized and established.²⁸ Two years later he was elected secretary of the Publishing Association,²⁹ which prompted him to uproot his family and move to Michigan.³⁰ Distinguished men of Aldrich's class were uncommon at this early stage of Adventist history and those in Battle Creek eagerly awaited his arrival. Some even fretted that he may change his mind and remain in New York. After informing Lucinda Hall that Aldrich had been delayed, Cornelia Cornell stated with concern, "I am afraid he will not come at all. I know he does not want to."³¹

In spite of his possible reluctance, Aldrich arrived in late October 1865³² shortly after J. White's first stroke and "felt an earnest desire

²⁶ Saunders and Aldrich, "Business Report," 135; R. F. Cottrell and J. M. Aldrich, "Conference Doings in N. Y.," *Review and Herald*, May 27, 1862, 205-206; J. M. Lindsay and J. M. Aldrich, "Doings of the Brethren in Western N. Y.," *Review and Herald*, September 23, 1862, 136.

²⁷ J. N. Andrews and J. M. Aldrich, "Doings of the N. Y. Conference," *Review and Herald*, November 4, 1862, 182.

²⁸ John Byington and U. Smith, "Report of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," *Review and Herald*, May 26, 1863, 204.

²⁹ James White and E. S. Walker, "Fifth Annual Meeting of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association," *Review and Herald*, May 23, 1865, 198.

³⁰ J. M. Aldrich, "Announcement," *Review and Herald*, October 31, 1865, 176.

³¹ Cornelia A. Cornell to Lucinda Hall, August 13, 1865, Lucinda Hall Collection, Folder 12, Ellen G. White Estate main office, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland (hereafter referred to as EGWE-GC).

³² While the exact date of Aldrich's arrival in Battle Creek is unknown, it is known that he arrived in late October 1865. At first, Aldrich was expected to arrive in Battle Creek at the beginning of September. Cornelia A. Cornell to Lucinda Hall, July 2, 1865, Lucinda Hall Collection, Folder 12, EGWE-GC; Cornelia A. Cornell to Lucinda Hall, August 13, 1865, Lucinda Hall Collection, Folder 12, EGWE-GC. The move was delayed, and on September 9, 1865, Cornell stated, "We heard from Bro. Aldrich. He sold his place [and] will be here the first of next month." Cornelia A. Cornell to Lucinda Hall, September 9, [1865], Lucinda Hall Collection, Folder 11, EGWE-GC. Aldrich did not make it to Battle Creek according to this second plan either. He remained in New York until after the New York State Conference was concluded on October 13. A. Lanphear and R. F. Cottrell, "Fourth Annual Report of the N. Y. State Conference," *Review and Herald*, October 31, 1865, 172-173. After these meetings, but before the end of October, Aldrich had arrived in Battle Creek. Al-

... to be faithful" in his work.³³ The timing of his move was very convenient since J. White was no longer able to work in the *Review* Office. In fact, Aldrich's relocation to Battle Creek likely seemed more than coincidental to some Adventists.³⁴ If there was any uncertainty in God's providential leading in regard to his timely arrival, a vision from E. White likely removed all doubt.

3. God's Special Selection

Shortly after he came to Battle Creek, E. White saw in vision on December 25, 1865 "that God had especially selected Bro. Aldrich, to engage in a great and exalted work."³⁵ Adventists were pleased with this report and the news apparently spread quickly. Shortly after this vision, Martha Amadon commented, "It was very opportune for Bro. Aldrich to come [to Battle Creek] as he did and when he did. The office needed his labors . . . We all like him ever so much. He goes into the work in earnest and does well."³⁶ M. Amadon's comment highlights a point that should not be overlooked. When Aldrich first arrived in Battle Creek he did do much good. He helped to fill a void in the *Review* Office and keep the work moving forward from week to week while J. White was unable to labor. As the Battle Creek church stated, "When Bro. Aldrich came to Battle Creek to be connected with the Office of publication, we believe that he came with a sincere purpose to do his whole duty faithfully."³⁷ Though he did make mistakes, he must be commended for his good achievements.

drich, "Announcement," 176; c.f. R. F. Cottrell, "Obituaries: Aldrich," *Review and Herald*, March 16, 1933, 21.

³³ Ellen G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press, 1868), 7.

³⁴ Shortly before his departure from New York, the New York State Conference unanimously adopted a resolution in regard to Aldrich. It stated, "Resolved, That while we deeply regret to lose the labor and influence of Bro. J. M. Aldrich in our Conference, we feel cheerfully to submit to the order of Providence by which he is taken from us; and that with heartfelt gratitude for his faithful labors in the past, we follow him with our prayers, that in the new relation he is called to sustain to the cause, he may be eminently successful, and an instrument of much good." Lanphear and Cottrell, "Fourth Annual Report of the N. Y. State Conference," 173.

³⁵ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church* no. 13, 27.

³⁶ Martha D. Amadon to Lucinda Hall, February 25, 1866, Lucinda Hall Collection, Folder 13, EGWE-GC.

³⁷ Andrews, Bell, and Smith, *Defense of Eld. James White and Wife*, 24.

In spite of an earnest beginning, by the end of 1866 Aldrich had seemingly risen in prominence above the other leaders. E. White explained, "I have stated that Bro. Aldrich was idolized by some in Battle Creek. Cornelia [Cornell] has denied she was one, but she has been blinded; she has worshipped Aldrich. She has idolized him in her heart. So also has Harriett [Smith] . . . [who has] set the example for *very many* to worship this man whose life has been marked with selfishness, pride, and love of the world." George Amadon and Uriah Smith were no different from their wives and apparently "worshipped" Aldrich as well. E. White had written several *Testimonies* for Aldrich in 1868-1869 and U. Smith and G. Amadon did not see the need for them. They apparently challenged E. White by asking, "Why all this exactness about J. M. Aldrich? He is right after all. These testimonies are uncalled for."³⁸

Andrews, the General Conference president, also greatly admired Aldrich. E. White stated, "Bro. Andrews has never felt the sinfulness of J. M. Aldrich's course. He has been too ready to excuse wrongs." "He walked around before . . . [Aldrich], light and jovial, sanctioning virtually by his influence the course of *the man* who was leading the Israel of God back to Egypt. Here Bro. Andrews sinned against God."³⁹ The Battle Creek church affirmed that "[Andrews] did not take responsibility to give reproof in the Office, or to attempt to set things in order there, as he should. He also did not always set a proper example of serious watchful deportment in his conversation in the Office and elsewhere." In a similar fashion, Loughborough also neglected his duty of reproof. He was apparently "in no suitable condition to act as a counselor to the church and to those in the

³⁸ Emphasis is mine. Ellen G. White to Harriet [N. Smith], Cornelia [A. Cornell], and Martha [D. Amadon], September 24, 1869, Letter 013, 1869, CAR; c.f. Campbell, "Aldrich, Jotham M. and Jerusha B. (Mandiville)," 290.

³⁹ Emphasis is mine. While E. White does not explicitly state that this comment refers to Aldrich, it is clear from the immediate context. The full quote reads, "There was not a corresponding zeal, a corresponding burden for decided wrongs committed in that office and in the institute. There was an unconsecrated inexperienced man that his [i.e. J. N. Andrews] influence placed in that position, yet he felt no special burden, he walked around before this man, light and jovial, sanctioning virtually by his influence the course of the man who was leading the Israel of God back to Egypt. Here Bro. Andrews sinned against God." Ellen G. White to Harriet [N. Smith], Cornelia [A. Cornell], and Martha [D. Amadon], September 24, 1869, Letter 013, 1869, CAR. First of all, E. White indicated in several places within this letter that Aldrich was the main one behind the problems in Battle Creek (e.g. "A new administration had commenced. J. M. Aldrich, in his selfishness and unconsecration, suited the minds better."). Secondly, Aldrich is the only man that fits E. White's description of "an unconsecrated inexperienced man" in the Office and Institute, which is explicitly stated in E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 28.

Office."⁴⁰ Rather than reprimand Aldrich for some of his "serious mistakes," Loughborough, Andrews, U. Smith, G. Amadon, and others seemingly supported *the man* E. White believed was leading the church into a state of backsliding and spiritual "darkness."⁴¹

After her June 12, 1868, vision, E. White commented,

I was shown that when Bro. Aldrich came to Battle Creek, a mistake was made in regard to him by those connected with the Office. Because it was known that it had been shown that he had a work to do in connection with the cause of God, great confidence was placed in him. After my husband's sickness, it seemed to come natural for those in the Office to feel that Bro. Aldrich should take the place made vacant by Bro. White's removal because of sickness. God saw fit to connect Bro. Aldrich with his work, and because of this, those of long experience in the work, who had been for years connected with the Office, stepped back, and left the responsibility of managing and deciding matters upon him, as they had left it with Bro. White. They ought not to have done this.⁴²

Though Aldrich was elected president of the Publishing Association in May 1867, he probably filled this position in an unofficial capacity even earlier. Either U. Smith or G. Amadon was better qualified for this responsibility and "Bro. Aldrich should have deferred to their judgment rather than they to his." Furthermore, when U. Smith and G. Amadon placed Aldrich in the position that J. White had occupied, they overlooked an important difference between the two men. "Bro. White had years of experience in this work," but Aldrich "had no experience in the printing department, and did not know the wants of the cause." E. White also pointed out that her husband had been led by God "through privations, trials, and perils," which enhanced his experience and qualified him for the humble position he had occupied. Aldrich was still a relatively new Adventist and did not have such a history himself. He did have business experience, but *church* business was still somewhat foreign. Therefore, when leaders placed great confidence in Aldrich, they were "expecting too much" and "trusting too much to *one man* of but little experience."⁴³

Though Aldrich would have naturally received great respect in light of his social standing and E. White's vision, such a high view of him seem-

⁴⁰ Andrews, Bell, and Smith, *Defense of Eld. James White and Wife*, 25.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 24-25.

⁴² E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 27-28.

⁴³ Emphasis is mine. *Ibid.*, 28-29.

ingly fostered pride and self-exaltation within his character. E. White warned Aldrich, "Your love of approbation is great. You love office, love promotion, love to be engaged in a large enterprise, which makes considerable show. You love to be considered a man of business, a manager; and you have not maintained humility, but have got above the simplicity of the work. . . . You possess pride, with a large share of selfishness. This shuts you away from doing your duty."⁴⁴ According to E. White, Aldrich was weakened by pride, which led him to make numerous mistakes that were, as the Battle Creek church claimed, "productive of great evils."⁴⁵ This deeply affected the Office, Institute, and church in Battle Creek.

4. Aldrich and the *Review* Office

Since Aldrich was president of the Publishing Association, most examples of his unwise management were connected with the *Review* Office. The first problem relates to raised wages. In 1866, Homer M. Aldrich, Jotham's fifteen-year-old son, started an apprenticeship as a "press feeder" at the office.⁴⁶ Instead of being moderate, "Bro. A[ldrich] allowed his own son liberal wages."⁴⁷ Two of Cyrenius Smith's daughters, Hannah and Mary, were also employed at the Office and may have worked in the folding room. These girls enjoyed a raise in pay after their father pleaded with Aldrich to increase their wages.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 4-6.

⁴⁵ Andrews, Bell, and Smith, *Defense of Eld. James White and Wife*, 24-25.

⁴⁶ Uriah Smith to Ellen G. White, April 28, 1869, Heritage M-Film 52, White Estate Incoming Correspondence 1, CAR; Cottrell, "Obituaries: Aldrich," 21.

⁴⁷ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 24.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 12. The identity of Cyrenius Smith's daughters can be determined by comparing E. White's statements in the *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek* with some genealogical records and subsequent confessions in the *Review*. According to E. White, "Bro. C. Smith awakened the interest of Bro. Aldrich for his daughters. . . . They had a good home, and none were dependent upon them for support." *Ibid.*, 25. The mention of a "good home" and no dependents seems to indicate that these daughters were unmarried. Cyrenius and Louisa Smith had a total of six daughters, but only two of them (Hannah and Mary) were still unmarried in the late 1860s. 1870 U. S. Census, Calhoun County, Michigan, town of Battle Creek, 13-14 (penned), line 38-40; line 1, Cyrenus [*sic*] Smith, et al.; online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed May 22, 2014). The more definitive proof is found in the confessions that Hannah and Mary wrote on June 15, 1868, and published in the *Review*. Asenath M. Kilgore, Hannah L. Smith, and Mary L. Smith, "Confessions," *Review and Herald*, June 30, 1868, 26-27.

The raising of wages in 1867-1868 caused a selfish attitude to arise within the workers and leaders in the Office. E. White stated, "Self and self-interest are too prominent. . . . Some have had a selfish spirit, and worked merely for wages." The work in the Office was considered "sacred" and the fact that some "had no special interest, nor devotion to, the work" was a serious problem.⁴⁹ As president of the Association, it was Aldrich's duty to guard against such pervasive attitudes. However, instead of being vigilant, he inadvertently contributed to the problem.

Aldrich influenced the Publishing Association to raise wages in an unfair manner. E. White explained, "There is not a nice discrimination with regard to the workers. Some have received too liberal wages, while others who have been just as faithful, have had less, though they have been more needy."⁵⁰ This was particularly noticeable when the wages of Aldrich's son and the Smith sisters were raised. These three still lived at home with their parents and had no need of a larger paycheck.⁵¹ At the same time, there were some, such as Charles H. Jones, who were in need. C. H. Jones was "poor, yet a good workman" and was doing his best (at the age of 16 to 17) to support his mother and sisters. This situation particularly upset C. H. Jones' brother-in-law, William C. Gage. Since the Joneses were living with the Gages, W. C. Gage was also doing his best to take care of his in-laws.⁵² Naturally, W. C. Gage was "grieved with Bro. Aldrich ; for he

⁴⁹ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 11-12.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 12. It should be noted that U. Smith strongly disagreed with E. White on this point for a period of time. Uriah Smith to Ellen G. White, April 28, 1869, Heritage M-Film 52, White Estate Incoming Correspondence 1, CAR. He eventually admitted to her, however, "The point which I named as not understanding in the testimony to Bro. Aldrich is now perfectly satisfactory to my mind." Uriah Smith to Ellen G. White, May 22, 1869, Heritage M-Film 52, White Estate Incoming Correspondence 1, CAR.

⁵¹ In regard to Hannah and Mary Smith, E. White explained, "They had a good home, and none were dependent upon them for support." E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 25. In regard to Homer, E. White stated, "He had a good home, a father abundantly able to support him, and no special burdens were resting upon his shoulders; none were depending upon him for support." *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵² The identity of W. C. Gage's brother-in-law is given in Uriah Smith to Ellen G. White, April 28, 1869, Heritage M-Film 52, White Estate Incoming Correspondence 1, CAR. E. White stated, "Bro. G.'s brother-in-law . . . [was] trying to support his mother and [two] sisters." E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 24, 26. According to the 1870 census, Charles, Clara, and Rozora (Harriman) Jones were living with William and Ellen (Jones) Gage. 1870 U. S. Census, Calhoun County, Michigan, town of Battle Creek, p. 32 (penned), lines 27-33, William C. Gage et al., online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed May 27, 2014). The census identifies the brother-in-law (Charles), mother (Rozora), and one sister (Clara). The second sister

could not see justice, fairness, and equality, in his course." In fact, W. C. Gage even considered moving back east with his family to get away from Aldrich.⁵³

A second problem with Aldrich's management at the Office was impartiality. Not only was Aldrich negligent of some in regard to wages, but also in regard to his sympathy and care. He apparently gave more time and support to those working in the folding room than in other departments. E. White stated, "[Aldrich] lacks tender compassion. He lacks love. He lacks that fine sensibility which he should possess, and which if he did possess, he could discriminate and know how to deal justly, impartially, and in such a manner that God could approbate."⁵⁴

A third problem arose when Aldrich accepted the "worldly office" of alderman for the city of Battle Creek. He was elected alderman in 1867 and held this office for two years.⁵⁵ During his tenure he remained a respected and active member of this body.⁵⁶ Aldrich also served as secretary on the Board of Registration⁵⁷ and was on several standing committees, including: Ways and Means, Streets and Bridges, Fire Department, Sanitary,⁵⁸ and Printing.⁵⁹ On occasion, in the Mayor's absence, he would also

that Charles was trying to support was probably his youngest sister, Lillie. In the 1870 census she happened to be living elsewhere, but in 1867-1868 this was probably not the case, especially since she was only about 10-11 years old.

⁵³ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 25.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 26-27.

⁵⁵ Common Council, *Compilation of the Charter and Ordinances of the City of Battle Creek, Michigan* ([Battle Creek, MI]: Gage, 1908), 528-529.

⁵⁶ For a couple of examples, see H. H. Hubbard, "Common Council Proceedings," *Battle Creek (MI) Journal*, November 21, 1867, p. 3, col. 1, Willard Library Newspaper Collection, Battle Creek, MI (hereafter cited as Willard Library Newspaper Collection); H. H. Hubbard, "Common Council Proceedings," *Battle Creek (MI) Journal*, March 26, 1868, p. 3, cols. 1-2, Willard Library Newspaper Collection.

⁵⁷ W. W. Woolnough and J. M. Aldrich, "Special Notices: Registration of Voters," *Battle Creek (MI) Journal*, March 19, 1868, p. 2, col. 5, Willard Library Newspaper Collection.

⁵⁸ H. A. [sic] Hubbard, "Common Council Proceedings," *Battle Creek (MI) Journal*, December 12, 1867, p. 3, col. 1, Willard Library Newspaper Collection.

⁵⁹ H. H. Hubbard, "Common Council Proceedings," *Battle Creek (MI) Journal*, April 23, 1868, p. 3, cols. 1-2, Willard Library Newspaper Collection.

chair the meetings of the Common Council,⁶⁰ which usually met every Monday evening at 7 pm.

Though taking such a position was likely natural for a “highly esteemed”⁶¹ gentleman such as Aldrich, his job at the *Review* Office (not to mention his other duties) was demanding and apparently did not allow the time to manage such responsibilities. E. White stated, “No one connected with the work should hold any worldly office, unless it be one necessary to the transaction of business among our people. The peculiar, holy character of our work is such as to separate us from the world. The acceptance of worldly offices leads to the world, which is displeasing to God.”⁶²

In addition to distractions by civic affairs, Aldrich was also involved in two lucrative sidelines. E. White used the phrases, “worldly commerce,” “worldly interests,” and “worldly business” to describe a fourth problem in Aldrich’s management.⁶³ While these are broad descriptions, E. White had at least two things in mind as she reproved Aldrich—a job printing operation (with E. S. Walker) and a real estate venture.

According to the *American Encyclopedia of Printing* (1871), “All kinds of letter-press printing, except the printing of books and . . . newspapers . . . are generally called job printing.”⁶⁴ Therefore, “job work” and “job printing” were technical printing terms that were limited to virtually any small item, such as business, wedding, or announcement cards, bank notices or bonds, railway passes, letterhead stationary, deeds, diplomas, circulars, etc.⁶⁵ The *Review* Office increased its efforts in job printing in 1866⁶⁶ and in

⁶⁰ H. H. Hubbard, “Common Council Proceedings,” *Battle Creek (MI) Journal*, December 5, 1867, p. 3, col. 1, Willard Library Newspaper Collection. The Common Council Proceedings were printed in the *Battle Creek Journal* every week, often on page 3, column 1.

⁶¹ “Obituary,” *Battle Creek (MI) Journal*, September 21, 1870, p. 3, col. 2, Willard Library Newspaper Collection.

⁶² E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 14.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11, 14.

⁶⁴ J. Luther Ringwalt, ed., *American Encyclopedia of Printing* (Philadelphia: Menamin & Ringwalt & J. B. Lippincott, 1871), 257.

⁶⁵ For a rather long list of examples, see *ibid.*, 259.

⁶⁶ “Job Work” became a line item on the auditor’s report in 1866, probably because many things needed to be printed (advertisements, etc.) for the up-and-coming Health Institute. Amadon and Aldrich, “Sixth Annual Meeting of the S. D. A. Publishing Association,” 197. However, the *Review* Office was engaged in job printing

January 1867 the Trustees of the Association purchased a new half-medium Gordon job press, which could "easily run up to fifteen hundred impressions per hour."⁶⁷

for several years prior to this time. C.f. the letterhead in James White to Gentlemen, October 29, 1862, Lucinda Hall Collection, Folder 10, EGWE-GC.

⁶⁷ "New Press," *Review and Herald*, January 29, 1867, 96. Job work was never really a problem at the *Review* Office or any other Adventist publishing house during E. White's lifetime (unless it was operated for personal profit; c.f. Ellen G. White to James E. White, [cir. June 1876], Letter 030a, CAR). It was, however, secondary to denominational periodicals, tracts, and books. In some letters and manuscripts it does appear that E. White did have problems with job work, but careful analysis of these documents demonstrate her balanced view. Job printing was limited to small items, but it still required an experienced manager to properly calculate the cost of labor involved and the price of materials. If one was not careful, this line of work could easily cost more time and money than it was worth. For some warning and advice regarding job printing, see Kelsey Press, *Printers' Dictionary and Guide Book* . . . (Meriden, CN: Kelsey Press, 1892), [ix]. With this background information in mind, the reader will be greatly helped when analyzing E. White's use of the phrases: "job work," "job office," "job room," and "job department." In two letters and one manuscript (Ellen G. White to William C. White, February 27, 1878, Letter 013, 1878, CAR; Ellen G. White to William C. and Mary White, January 16, 1879, Letter 007, 1879, CAR; Ellen G. White, *The Publishing House in California*, Manuscript 007, 1879, CAR), E. White recommends someone (or wishes they were qualified) to manage the job office, so the phrase is used in a positive manner. One letter and two manuscripts seem to refer to job work in a negative way, but the full context highlights E. White's view of job printing. W. N. Glenn was mismanaging the Pacific Press and it was "upon the brink of bankruptcy." As a result, E. White recommended, "Unless there shall be better management in the job office, it should be closed." (Ellen G. White, *Testimony to the Oakland Church*, Manuscript 006, 1878, CAR; c.f. Ellen G. White to W. N. Glenn, [cir. 1879], Letter 044, 1879, CAR; Ellen G. White, *A Dream re. the Pacific Press Office*, Manuscript 008, 1879, CAR). One other manuscript seems to mention job work in a negative manner (Ellen G. White, *Talk/To Board of Directors of Pacific Press*, Manuscript 081, 1901, CAR). Yet, the problem in this document is more directly connected with grasping for money and only doing work that will pay.

While the Adventist publishing houses may have had minor problems with job printing, E. White was seriously concerned with "outside work" and "commercial work" (two phrases that are unrelated to job printing). Job printing was limited to small items, but when E. White referred to outside or commercial work, she had books or tracts in mind. At least two letters and two manuscripts address this problem (Ellen G. White, "I Have Been Instructed by the Lord . . .," Manuscript 014, 1891, CAR; Ellen G. White, *Satanic Literature*, Manuscript 124, 1901; Ellen G. White to Managers of Our Publishing Houses, October 16, 1901, Letter 140, 1901, CAR; Ellen G. White to S. N. Haskell, February 26, 1907, Letter 070, 1907, CAR) and are all related to printing books at the offices that carry a message contrary to the Adventist mission. Some books of this nature are listed in the Michigan imprints list from

This new press facilitated the growing needs at the Health Institute⁶⁸ as well as enabled Aldrich and Walker to operate their own job printing sideline. These men did their best to divide their time properly and only use their "extra hours" on this secondary pursuit,⁶⁹ but as many came to "consult with them, and talk over business matters," this distinction quickly blurred.⁷⁰ The extra work this operation created also wore on Aldrich and Walker, making them physically and mentally sluggish. E. White stated, "The extra hours devoted to their own personal matters taxed their vigor and detracted from their strength so that the work of God was marred."⁷¹ In fact, it was claimed that one dedicated person could have done all of the work that Aldrich and Walker did combined. Since they were distracted, it was also suggested that they had "not earned all the wages they [had] received from the Office."⁷²

This sideline consumed Aldrich and Walker's time, divided their interests, and brought "an influence into the Office which [was] worldly and corrupting." In vision, E. White "viewed . . . the Office, [and] especially the counting room." As she did, it appeared "more like a public place of worldly business, than that . . . quiet [place] necessary . . . to properly conduct the work of God."⁷³ By establishing this private operation in the *Review* Office, "common and sacred were placed upon a level"⁷⁴ and the work of God was threatened.

Aldrich was also consumed with the real estate market.⁷⁵ As a gentleman, owning properties was expected for his social rank. As a result, after

1851-1876. "Imprints Published in Michigan 1851-1876," Library of Michigan, August 28, 2008, accessed June 5, 2014, https://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/0,2351,7-160-50206_54518-149525--,00.html.

⁶⁸ "New Press," 96.

⁶⁹ Ellen G. White to James E. White, [cir. June 1876], Letter 030a, CAR.

⁷⁰ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 14.

⁷¹ Ellen G. White to James E. White, [cir. June 1876], Letter 030a, CAR.

⁷² E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 13-14.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁷⁴ Ellen G. White to James E. White, [cir. June 1876], Letter 030a, CAR.

⁷⁵ It is possible that Walker had a hand in this operation as well. In a supplemental issue of the *Review*, the General Conference Committee stated, "Bro. and Sr. White felt deeply that Dr. Russell had not been rightly used by Brn. Aldrich and Walker, in their selling of land to him, and in his becoming involved in the building of his house." General Conference Committee, "Defense of Our Action in the Case of Dr. Wm. Russell," *Review and Herald-Supplement*, [March 15, 1870, 1]. This sale of land took place on May 1, 1869, but the deed only bears the name of Aldrich, as do all of

establishing his residence, Aldrich purchased three more pieces of property in Battle Creek for himself within 1866-1867. Beginning in the spring of 1868 Aldrich intensified his efforts and by the summer of 1870, he had made more than 40 real estate transactions.⁷⁶ In the summer of 1870 his property was valued at \$21,000⁷⁷ (roughly equivalent to \$400,000 in today's economy⁷⁸) and if this figure provides an accurate glimpse of Aldrich's financial status, then he was not only one of the wealthiest members of the Adventist Church, but one of the wealthiest citizens in Battle Creek⁷⁹ when he died unexpectedly on September 17, 1870.⁸⁰

the other deeds that I have observed. Therefore, if Walker was also involved in this sideline, he must have acted in an unofficial capacity.

⁷⁶ All of these deeds are located in the County Building in Marshall, MI. This calculation excludes property that Aldrich bought on behalf of the Institute and other insignificant transactions (such as transferring property into another person's name or paying a mortgage). Aldrich made much of his money by buying large pieces of property and then subdividing the land to sell as individual lots.

⁷⁷ 1870 U. S. Census, Calhoun County, Michigan, town of Battle Creek, p. 14 (penned), line 2, J. M. Aldrich; online: <http://www.ancestry.com> (accessed May 28, 2014).

⁷⁸ A mere monetary conversion based upon inflation provides only some of the details needed to truly compare the worth of money in different periods of time with the current value. For example, James Hudnut-Beumler explains in regard to wages, "Merely converting wages in one year to their value in a later year adjusted for inflation tells us only part of the story. The conversion does not convey all of what a salary represented in its own time, for one would have either to factor out subsequent real increases to prevailing wages based upon productivity or compare a known wage with other known wages in the original time frame." James Hudnut-Beumler, *In Pursuit of the Almighty's Dollar: A History of Money and American Protestantism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 83.

⁷⁹ This conclusion is reached by making several comparisons of real estate and personal property values listed in the 1870 US federal census. In comparison with Seventh-day Adventists, J. M. Aldrich even had a larger estate than Ira Abbey, a wealthy Adventist from New York. In 1870, Abbey's estate was worth \$6,000 less than that of Aldrich. In fact, the only Adventist that I was able to find (though there could be others) that had a larger estate in 1870 was George T. Lay, whose property amounted to \$25,000. Some other Adventist men worthy of comparison include: J. White (\$6,000), Horatio S. Lay (\$4,500), U. Smith (\$2,000), Charles A. Russell (\$6,300), John P. Kellogg (\$8,000), Harmon Lindsay (\$10,000), Noah N. Lunt (\$3,500), Orrin B. Jones (\$1,500), David Arnold (\$3,800), Worcester Ball (\$5,000), Joseph Bates (\$1,400), and Wolcott H. Littlejohn (\$7,500).

According to the 1870 census there were 7,027 people listed in Battle Creek (and Wards 1-4) and 1,524 heads of households. 62 of these people had a combined property value of \$19,000 or more. 53 of these individuals had their property valued at \$21,000 or more (making their estate equal to or greater than Aldrich). This places J. M. Aldrich within the top 4% of wealthy heads of households in Battle Creek. Since

The majority of Aldrich's real estate transactions occurred in 1868 (almost 30). The problem with these investments is understood vis-à-vis the position that Aldrich held within the church. He was an influential man and was to lead a good example, particularly in the Office. Nevertheless, Aldrich was "decidedly a worldly, business man" and apparently did not always balance his time at work with his personal interests in a judicious manner. E. White stated, "It requires the whole man for the place [i.e. the *Review* Office], and God will not accept the services of those at the Office who divide their interest and efforts between his work and their own speculations and worldly interests."⁸¹

A fifth issue that arose during Aldrich's "new administration" was lax management. The environment at the Office was completely changed and the work standards significantly lowered between 1866-1868. Children regularly ran through the building playing games and making noise. Patients at the Health Institute and members from the Battle Creek church now felt "at liberty to visit the Office and engage in common topics of conversation." E. White had to remind them "that the Office [was] not a reception-room to entertain visitors." These visits were distracting and caused unnecessary delays. She explained,

One will come in and interrupt a workman just a few minutes. Frequently their few minutes lengthen to half an hour. That one passes out, another comes in . . . and thus five to twenty-five calls are heedlessly made in a day . . . and the precious minutes are used up, which are all needed to be devoted to the work. Sum up these minutes and it will be found hours of time are consumed, to no benefit to any one, but a decided injury to the Office.

In E. White's view, these things lessened "the sacredness of the work" and lowered the "dignity of the Office." By stealing "minutes and hours" which belonged to the Lord's work, these visitors were "rob[bing] God."⁸²

statistics do not give the entire picture, it is necessary to also mention that 19 households were valued at \$38,000 or higher, making their worth about double (or more) than that of Aldrich. The four wealthiest citizens in Battle Creek at this time stand out far above the rest (by \$15,000 or more), and include: A. C. Hamblin (\$125,000), E. L. Clark (100,000), Wallace William (\$80,000), and Nelson Eldred (\$77,000).

⁸⁰ Two obituaries agree on this date. "Death of Brother Aldrich," 120; "Obituary," *Battle Creek (MI) Journal*, September 21, 1870, p. 3, col. 2, Willard Library Newspaper Collection. However, the death record for Aldrich bears the date September 18. "Michigan, Deaths, 1867-1897," p. 103 (printed), no. 1066, Jotham M. Aldrich, September 18, 1870; online: <http://familysearch.org> (accessed March 28, 2014).

⁸¹ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 14.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 33-35.

5. Aldrich and the Health Institute

Aldrich was also very influential at the Health Institute and was actively involved as it was established during the summer and fall of 1866. As one of the directors, he was responsible for many of the poor decisions that were made between 1866-1868. Perhaps the most rash decision made during this period was to erect a large new building a few months after the Institute had officially opened. Aldrich was very involved in this project⁸³ and possessed an unrivaled devotion to its success. In the summer of 1867, E. White wrote a letter to Aldrich advising that the elaborate project be put on hold. She stated, "In regard to the large calculations for building at the present time, you are moving faster than God directs. When God raises up men capable of engaging in a large business, as you are preparing to do, then it is time to begin to branch out."⁸⁴ Instead of following this wise counsel, Aldrich apparently drove the project forward until it was finally abandoned on June 2, 1868. When all of the other directors finally agreed to cease construction, Aldrich refused to cooperate by abstaining from the vote.⁸⁵ Shortly after this, E. White lamented, "His management has increased the embarrassment of the Institute without relieving it. If Bro. Aldrich would possess a humble heart, ready to admit his errors, and confess his wrongs, he could then see clearer light."⁸⁶

It was apparently natural for Aldrich to take charge of things. He was president of the Publishing Association, but did not hold this position in the Health Institute. He was one of the directors, but not the president of the Board of Directors⁸⁷ or the Physician-in-Chief. Nevertheless, E. White explained, "Bro. Aldrich took responsibilities upon him[self] in regard to the Institute that he was not warranted to take." It seems that he asserted his own authority by pursuing "a course very much as though all at the Institute were in his employ." Even though he was not officially in charge, Aldrich expected that everyone there would "obey his dictation."⁸⁸

⁸³ For some specific examples, see Western Health Reform Institute, "Records of the Board," 23-24, 26, 29, 34, 40 (printed).

⁸⁴ Ellen G. White to Jotham M. Aldrich, August 20, 1867, Letter 008, 1867, CAR.

⁸⁵ Western Health Reform Institute, "Records of the Board," 46 (printed).

⁸⁶ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 11.

⁸⁷ Loughborough occupied this position until May 1868. At that time, U. Smith was elected president of the Board of Directors. Western Health Reform Institute, "Records of the Board," 1, 21, 43 (printed).

⁸⁸ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 38.

Aldrich established his authority in the Institute by belittling Horatio Lay, the Physician-in-Chief. According to E. White, "Bro. Aldrich thought Dr. Lay should consult him before making any move; and did not exercise the courtesy which was due Dr. Lay." Aldrich was apparently "hard" and "cold-hearted" toward H. Lay, which made matters very difficult for him. E. White explained, "Dr. Lay was sensitive, and such treatment cut him to the heart." He "struggled through discouragements at first," but as H. Lay grew tired of the disrespect he placed "himself upon the defensive" and began to think that he must "stand his ground, take his position, and maintain it, or he might as well give up his office altogether." These reactions led Dr. Lay to also make many mistakes at the Institute, yet this might have been avoided if Aldrich had not been "domineering over Dr. Lay."⁸⁹

6. Aldrich and the Church in Battle Creek

Though the Office, Institute, and church were intricately connected to one another in the Adventist community in Battle Creek, E. White mentioned that Aldrich's influence directly contributed to several more problems in the church.⁹⁰ The first issue also deeply affected Dr. Lay and the Health Institute. The Whites began to actively promote health and dress reform in the mid-1860s, but Aldrich did not like this message and "opposed the change of diet, and the reform dress." When the subject arose in conversation, he "ridiculed and made light of" the reforms. E. White later told Aldrich, "Because it was J. M. Aldrich who ventured to do this, others followed your example, which brought an issue upon the subject of dress reform prematurely."⁹¹

Aldrich's "influence was seriously felt by Dr. Lay," who understood the benefits of the reforms. He was introduced to these methods by Dr. James C. Jackson at Dansville, NY and "was seeking to bring his patients to bear the cross, which was important for their physical improvement." As Aldrich fostered "feelings of contempt" toward "diet and dress re-

⁸⁹ Ibid., 38-39.

⁹⁰ E. White stated, "I was shown, Brother Aldrich, that you have not exerted a correct influence in the church at Battle Creek and in the cause of God." Ellen G. White, *Testimony re. the Battle Creek Church*, Manuscript 005, 1868, CAR.

⁹¹ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 7.

form," this not only hindered patient's recovery, but further strained the relationship between Aldrich and H. Lay as well.⁹²

E. White clarified to Aldrich how his resistance had deeply affected the church, stating, "Some concluded that you were in so responsible a position you would not venture to oppose the things which came from God. They thought there must be some mistake in the matter, that too much importance was attached to the diet and dress question. If God had called you to fill that position should not they have confidence in your judgment? Thus you stood directly in the way, making my work very taxing."⁹³

By casting doubt on the validity of these reforms, Aldrich stood in direct opposition to the *Testimonies for the Church*. Under Aldrich's "new administration" few in the church worried that "a testimony would be given." Since topics in these *Testimonies*, such as health and dress reform, were disregarded by Aldrich, they "were no longer [considered] reliable" by the people. This second problem was not only damaging to the Adventist movement, but also discredited E. White's prophetic role. Through Aldrich's influence, some leaders began to claim that E. White's *Testimonies* were unwarranted⁹⁴ and boldly reported to others that they do "not have weight with us."⁹⁵

These problems were amplified due to their affect on the youth. According to E. White, "The youth in Battle Creek are, as a general thing, allied to the world." Many squandered their money in various ways, acted selfishly, and were unwilling to support the cause of God with a genuine heart.⁹⁶ As a leader, it was Aldrich's responsibility to disciple the young on their journey with Christ. However, he struggled in this regard and would regularly "jest over" diet and dress reform in his house and in the Office "before the young."⁹⁷ As stated previously, Aldrich also gave partial treatment to some while he neglected others. Like other adults within the church (with the exception of H. Lay and W. C. Gage), the young were attracted to Aldrich and took shelter under his influence.⁹⁸ By leading this

⁹² *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁴ Ellen G. White to Harriet [N. Smith], Cornelia [A. Cornell], and Martha [D. Amadon], September 24, 1869, Letter 013, 1869, CAR.

⁹⁵ Andrews, Bell, and Smith, *Defense of Eld. James White and Wife*, 43.

⁹⁶ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 16-18.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁸ C.f. *ibid.*, 18-19.

kind of example, Aldrich created challenges for new generations of Adventists that were rising to adulthood.

7. Aldrich's Response to Ellen G. White

Aldrich eventually confessed his errors and humbled himself.⁹⁹ On January 20, 1870, he wrote to E. White, "Although it is most painful & humiliating to be reminded of such wrongs as the testimony charges against me; yet I feel that I will try to be thankful for the reproof & not grieve God's Spirit by turning a deaf ear to the same." He then admitted some of his struggles and stated that his hurtful influence in the *Review* Office was "a source of pain & regret" to him continually. He acknowledged that his unconsecration and self-reliance had led him to not "make as good a use of means as [he] should have done." He did admit, however, that there were some things he did not "fully understand." Nevertheless, Aldrich humbly remarked, "I blame & reproach myself for being so heedless. I accept your testimony. I trust I may ever feel grateful for such helps." In closing, Aldrich apologized personally to E. and J. White. He wrote, "I have the kindest feelings toward you & Bro. White. I am sorry that I ever felt otherwise toward Bro. W. I ask forgiveness. I mean to do better in [the] future. I do hope that I may be able to so order my course that I may share the confidence of you both again & have the fellowship of the church, and be at peace with God."¹⁰⁰

Jotham M. Aldrich met an untimely death on September 17, 1870. According to his obituary writer, "From the first of his [last] sickness he had an experience of a very encouraging character. A thorough work seemed to be going on in his own heart. *The grace of Bible humility became especially valuable in his eyes.* He felt like consecrating himself wholly to the Lord,

⁹⁹ This process apparently began on January 13, 1870, as G. Amadon recorded in his diary after an important meeting, "lotham finally submits!" Emphasis is in original. George W. Amadon, diary entry January 13, 1870, Byington-Amadon Diaries Collection (Collection 012), Box 2, Envelope 29, CAR.

¹⁰⁰ Emphasis is in original. Jotham M. Aldrich to Ellen G. White, January 20, 1870, Heritage M-Film 52, White Estate Incoming Correspondence 2, CAR. In July 1870, Aldrich returned to Somerset, NY to take care of his father's estate after his death. In a letter to his family, J. M. Aldrich stated with relief, "When I thought of all the trouble that we were passing through, I felt glad that [my father] knew nothing of it." Jotham M. Aldrich to Jerusha, Homer, and Huldah Aldrich, July 7, 1870. A transcription of this letter is available at the Historian's Office in the Town Hall in Somerset, NY in a folder titled, "Aldrich."

and experienced his blessing and presence in his sickness."¹⁰¹ Three days after his death, J. White officiated at the funeral. During the service, J. White tenderly prayed, "O God, the God of our fathers, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of all grace, before thee we bow. . . . We mourn, O God, that he whom we loved, and with whom we associated, now sleeps, and is to pass away to the grave, we never to meet him again, *unless we* are blessed as to have a part in the first resurrection."¹⁰² Even after all of the difficulties that had transpired in Battle Creek, it is touching that J. White subtly suggested that he believed Aldrich would be saved in the end. In J. White's opinion, the condition of seeing Aldrich in heaven was not based upon Aldrich's part in the first resurrection, but rather if those that remained would persevere until their end as well.

8. Conclusion

Adventist leaders had invested Aldrich with "too much authority,"¹⁰³ and while some likely resented this (such as W. C. Gage and H. Lay), few seemed bothered by Aldrich's conduct. Rather, Aldrich was greatly admired, respected, "idolized," and "worshipped." He was an upstanding gentleman believed to be "especially selected" by God to do a great work. He also managed things differently than J. White by not "faithfully point[ing] out errors and wrongs" at the Office.¹⁰⁴ His leadership style had been a welcome relief to those who claimed that White could be a hard taskmaster. Therefore, Aldrich's social status and high-class demeanor, the timing of his arrival in Battle Creek, E. White's vision that seemingly guaranteed his success, and the pleasing aspects of his "new administration" apparently caused other leaders at Adventist headquarters to give Aldrich great authority and exercise prerogatives J. White was unwilling to claim for himself. In contrast to her husband's leadership, E. White stated, "Bro. White, with his long experience, has not ventured to assume the responsibilities Bro. Aldrich has with his little experience. Bro. White

¹⁰¹ "Death of Brother Aldrich," 120. Emphasis is mine.

¹⁰² James White, *A Discourse Delivered at the Funeral of Jotham M. Aldrich: Battle Creek, Mich., May 20, 1870* (Battle Creek, MI: Review & Herald, 1873), 5. This rare document is available at the Ellen G. White Estate branch office/archives, Loma Linda University, California.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁰⁴ E. G. White, Manuscript 005, 1868, CAR.

counseled with his brethren in regard to every important move made. This was as God would have it."¹⁰⁵

E. White further explained, "Here is the great danger of many in Battle Creek. They have not an experience for themselves. They have not been in the habit of prayerfully considering for themselves, with unprejudiced, unbiased judgment, questions and subjects that are new, which are liable to arise. They wait to see what Bro. Aldrich thinks. If he dissents, that is all that is needed."¹⁰⁶

Although Aldrich eventually confessed, the issues that arose during his "new administration" created problems for Adventists leaders that needed to be resolved. Aldrich had "been set and unyielding" and pursued the "course which he thought best, irrespective of the judgment of those he should [have] regard[ed]." He believed his own "judgment and wisdom were all-sufficient"¹⁰⁷ and took pride in his office. He felt justified in acting on his own authority, as E. White stated, "Bro. Aldrich would not yield to the judgment of any living man."¹⁰⁸ Since many Seventh-day Adventists greatly admired this gentleman in Battle Creek, they were exhorted to shun prideful leadership and remember that "[Aldrich's] office invest[ed] him with no such authority."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Ellen G. White, *Brother Aldrich*, Pamphlet 015, [cir. fall 1868], 3, CAR.

¹⁰⁶ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 19.

¹⁰⁷ Ellen G. White to Jotham M. Aldrich, [cir. 1868], Letter 031, 1868, CAR.

¹⁰⁸ E. G. White, *Brother Aldrich*, 2.

¹⁰⁹ E. G. White, *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, 29.