

HIRAM EDSON

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Birth: 1806

Death: 1882

Family:

Accomplishments: Layman who shared his concept of the heavenly sanctuary and the role of Christ there

HIRAM EDSON

ADVOCATE OF THE SANCTUARY TRUTH

December 1802 - January 1882

Hiram Edson was the instrument whom God used to reveal to the early Sabbath-keeping Adventists the meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary. With Bates and White, he was one of the deep-thinking students who developed the Seventh-day Adventist faith, a self-sacrificing servant of God, an ardent evangelist, and faithful all of his long life in his devotion to Christ. He was at one time a Methodist.

In the 1840's he lived on a farm near Port Gibson, New York, a little town on the Erie Canal almost midway between Albany and Buffalo. A small company of Advent believers, mostly farmers, lived in this area, and they looked to Edson as their leader. His farm was about a mile south of town. At that place the Adventists gathered on October 22, 1844, to await the coming of the King. But Christ did not come as they expected.

The following day, in answer to their prayers for light, God opened to Edson--as if in a vision--a scene of wonderment: Christ, our High Priest, entering into the Most Holy place of the Heavenly Sanctuary to begin a special work of judgment prior to His return. Edson shared this light with his friends, Owen Crosier and Dr. F. B. Hahn of nearby Canandaigua. They determined to study the sanctuary and its cleansing from the Biblical viewpoint. The results of their research appeared in their own little Advent paper published in Canandaigua, the *Day Dawn*; later also in the *Day Star*, Cincinnati. From this point on, light came to the disappointed Adventists; and the "why" of their pain and disappointment began to dawn upon them.

It was Edson who advanced funds to purchase the first Seventh-day Adventist press. It was at Edson's home in Port Gibson that the third Sabbath Conference of 1848 was held. Edson sold his farm, turned to preaching, and became a successful evangelist. In his later life he labored near Roosevelt, New York. For years he was leader of our work there. He lies buried in the Roosevelt cemetery.

See: *Footprints of the Pioneers*, pp. 73-82; *Captains of the Host*, pp. 91-105; *Pioneer Stories Retold*, pp. 25-31.

A Story About Hiram Edson

This is a story about the dawning of new light!

Early on the morning following the October 22 disappointment, Edson said to a few friends who remained at his house, "Let us go out to the barn and pray."

They entered the barn, shut the door and waited in earnest prayer for light to dawn upon their minds. The answer came, too. Not while they were in the barn, though they did have the witness of the Spirit that their prayers were heard; but less than an hour later, as Edson and his friend were crossing the corn field to visit a neighbor. Arthur Spalding tells what happened:

"About midway of the field Hiram Edson was stopped as with a hand upon his shoulder. He turned his face to the gray skies, and there seemed to open a view into the third heaven He saw Christ as the great high priest going from the Holy Place of the sanctuary into the Most Holy. 'And I saw,' writes Edson, 'that instead of our High Priest coming out of the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary to come to this earth on the tenth day of the seventh month, at the end of the 2300 days, He for the first time entered on that day the second apartment of that sanctuary; and that He had a work to perform in the Most Holy before coming to this earth.'

"His companion . . . had reached the other side of the field. At the fence he turned, and . . . he called, 'Brother Edson, what are you stopping for?' Edson replied, 'The Lord was answering our morning prayer.' Then, rejoining his friend, he told him of the vision. They went on their way, discussing the subject, recalling what little study they had made of the sanctuary, and shaping up the Bible evidence of the revelation."--*Captains of the Host*, p.94

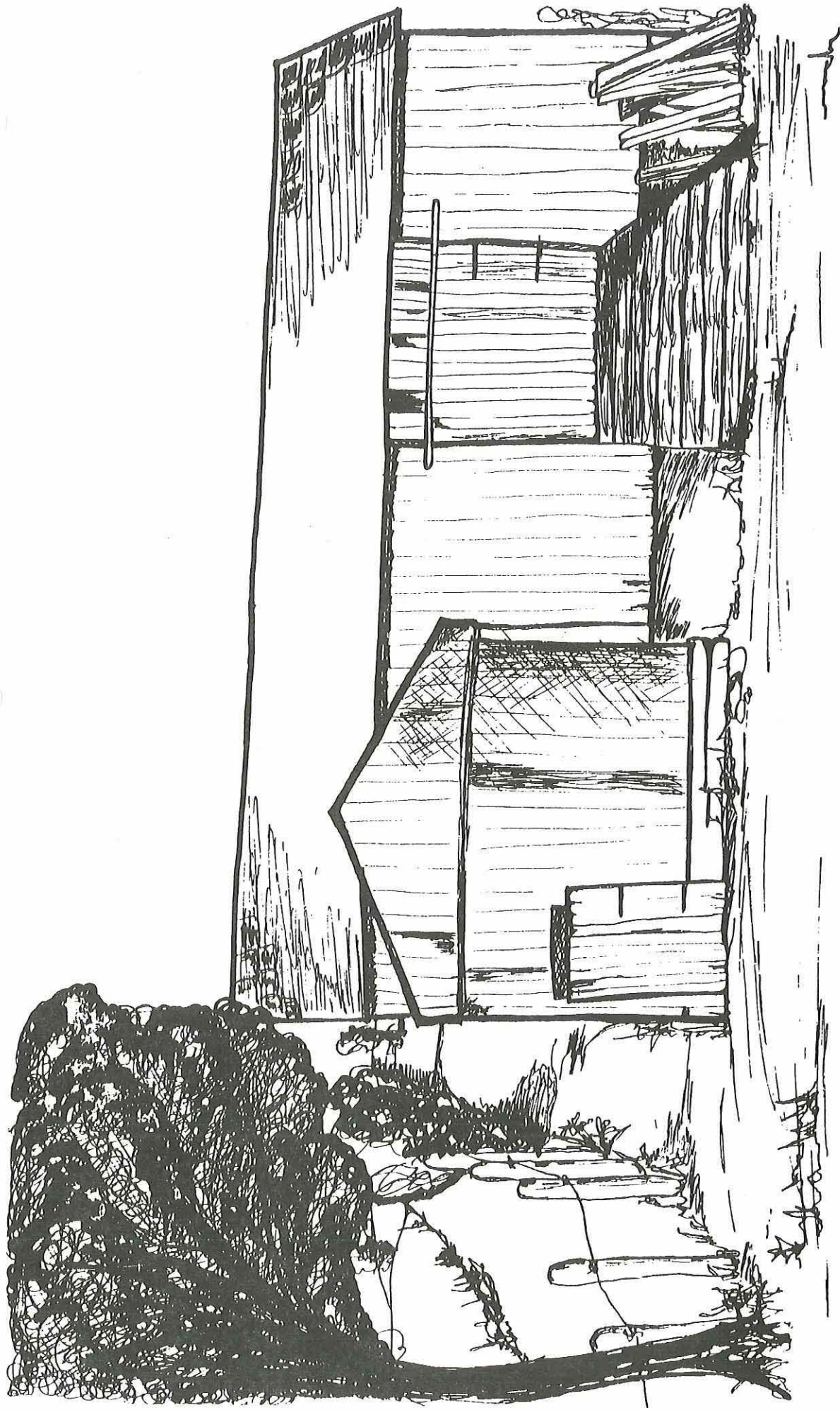
The Adventists could now understand that Jesus could not come till His work as our Priest was finished in heaven. When this important truth was shared, good news spread and the disappointment was seen for the first time in its true light.

The following year more precious light dawned upon the Port Gibson Adventists. Joseph Bates--apostle of the Sabbath--journeyed there with his Sabbath message.

"Edson . . . now hailed Bates' message with joy, and kept the next Sabbath. Dr. Hahn joined him in this. But Crosier said, 'Better go slowly, brethren, better go slowly. Don't step upon any plank before you know it will hold you up.'

"I have tried the plank already,' replied Edson, 'and I know it will hold.'"--*Ibid*, 104.

"It would appear," wrote Arthur Spalding, "that the Port Gibson company was the primary Adventist group to step out on the first two planks of the platform being built into the Seventh-day Adventist faith--the sanctuary and the Sabbath."



HIRAM EDSON'S BARN
PORT GIBSON, NEW YORK