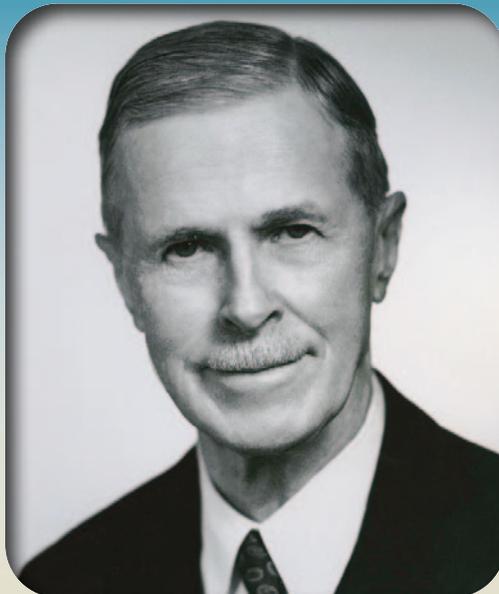


Mahlon Ellsworth Olsen



PIONEER ADVENTIST EDUCATOR

Seventh-day Adventist education has been shaped by its early advocates and pioneers. Within this group we find James and Ellen White, Martha Byington, Goodloe Harper Bell, J. N. Andrews, W. W. Prescott, Frederick Griggs, E. A. Sutherland, and Percy T. Magan—familiar names, even today, to many Adventist educators. Although perhaps less known, other individuals also made significant contributions. Among these was Mahlon Ellsworth (M. E.) Olsen.

Early Years (1873-1899)

M. E. Olsen was born in 1873 to Ole (O. A.) and Jennie Olsen, who had sep-

arately emigrated early in life from Norway to the United States. O. A. Olsen's parents, having settled in southern Wisconsin, were among the first Scandinavians to join the Adventist denomination. James White, one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, took a special interest in Ole and often referred to him as "my boy."¹

As a child, Mahlon Olsen was personally acquainted with James and Ellen White. He heard them speak at camp meetings, and they were guests at the Olsen home. Mahlon recalled: "On their first visit they looked over our small collection of books, somewhat the worse for wear, and before leaving they enriched our little library with four volumes of stories bearing the title *Sabbath Readings*. Mrs. White

had herself selected the stories in these very readable books."²

Mahlon and his older brother, Alfred Berthier Olsen, felt at home with Mrs. White as she did not seem to mind their play. She wrote personal messages in the brothers' autograph albums. Mahlon Olsen would later write, "We children had favorite aunts and uncles, but even near relatives did not more completely win our hearts and affections than did James and Ellen White."³

In 1886, O. A. Olsen was asked to serve as a missionary, and the family moved to Christiania (Oslo), Norway. In the summer of the next year, Mrs. White visited the Olsen family. Together, they held the first Adventist

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camp meeting in Europe, with Ellen White as the guest speaker.⁴

O. A. Olsen was called to be president of the General Conference in 1888, and the family returned to America. There in Battle Creek, Michigan, Mahlon encountered an individual who would significantly influence his life. Goodlow Harper Bell had recently returned to Michigan following his term as principal of South Lancaster Academy in Massachusetts. Olsen wished to study literature, and early one morning found the professor sitting on the edge of his porch, clad in blue jeans and wearing a dilapidated straw hat. “The whole bearing of the man impressed me at once with a sense of dignity and simplicity,” Olsen later recalled.⁵

After making sure that Olsen had a genuine interest in the study of literature, Bell agreed to tutor him. Thus began, in Olsen’s words, “the most satisfying and fruitful part of my education.”⁶ Olsen especially came to admire Wordsworth, Bell’s favorite poet. Throughout Olsen’s life, Bell would



O. A. Olsen’s sons (left to right): Alfred Berthier, Mahlon Ellsworth, and Clarence (who died in childhood).

continue to be his inspiration; and although it directly occupied only a dozen years of his life, the teaching of English, and especially literature, was to be Olsen’s best-loved work.

Mahlon E. Olsen attended Battle Creek College from 1890 to 1894, where he would graduate from the Classical

Course with a Bachelor of Arts degree.⁷ After graduation, Mahlon became secretary to his father, who was still president of the General Conference. He also began to take advanced studies in English at the University of Michigan, where his brother, Alfred, was studying medicine.⁸ During these years, Olsen would write his first articles for *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*,⁹ an activity that would yield nearly 300 articles in Adventist journals over the course of his life.

In 1899, for example, Olsen reported on the Battle Creek Sanitarium Training School, which had a newly developed correspondence program: “There is yet another large class of young people, as well as those of more advanced age, who desire to engage in medical missionary work, but cannot spend the time and money to take a course at one of our sanitariums. It is to meet the wants of such that the Correspondence Department of the Training-School was started.”¹⁰ Correspondence study would become a dominant theme later in Olsen’s life.



Moss camp meeting in Norway (1887): O. A. Olsen and Jennie Olsen (seated left), with son Alfred Berthier (standing behind); J. H. Waggoner (center) with Clarence and Mahlon Ellsworth (seated on the ground); W. C. White and Jennie Ings with Ellen G. White (third from right, seated).

Speaking Out on Health and Education (1900-1909)

In 1900, Mahlon was requested to assist his brother, Alfred, in the Adventist health work in England. The following year, the brothers launched a monthly magazine, *Good Health*, with Mahlon writing an article titled “Juvenile Smoking” for the first issue. When the subscriptions reached 50,000 in the 10th month of publication, the size of the magazine was increased. This first enlarged issue would carry a history of Battle Creek Sanitarium written by M. E. Olsen.

In 1903, M. E. Olsen became managing editor of *Good Health*.¹¹ Three years later, there were 75,000 subscriptions to the magazine, with free copies placed in all the major British public libraries. *Good Health* was now the health journal with the largest circulation in Britain.¹²

In 1906, the Olsen brothers jointly published a book *The School of Health*, which was intended to be a layman’s manual, a “School for Adults.”¹³ That year, M. E. Olsen also published his own book, *Out-of-Doors*.¹⁴ It was dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt, the outdoor president whom Olsen greatly admired. The book included references to walking and jogging for health—remarkable at a time when these concepts were largely in the future.

In the book, Olsen also began to delineate his educational ideas. He noted that educators focused almost entirely on mental and moral development to the exclusion of physical culture. “They seem to forget,” he wrote, “that little boys and girls have bodies as well as minds.”¹⁵ Olsen viewed play as educational and advised that children 5 years old needed a playground more than they needed books. He then declared, “If half the time spent by children in brain work were given to physical development, the actual mental progress would be greater.”¹⁶

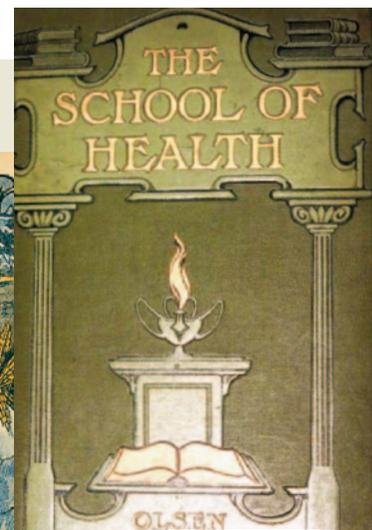
While in England, Olsen was a delegate to the 1906 education convention held by the Adventist Church. An important action taken at these meetings was the decision that the denomination should endorse a 16-year



In 1901, the two Olsen brothers launched in England a magazine called *Good Health*.

In 1906, the Olsen brothers jointly published *The School of Health*.

In 1906, M. E. Olsen published his first book, *Out-of-Doors*.



course of study. An abstract of Olsen’s address before the convention appeared in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*: “Our schools should not only be equal, but surpass, the best schools of the world in the amount of thorough intellectual work required.”¹⁷ He advised teachers not to neglect intellectual progress and suggested that a part of the summer vacations should be spent in taking advanced training. The well-educated person, he observed, “thinks not so much of where he is, as whether he is going.”¹⁸

In the March 1909 issue of the *Good Health* journal, Olsen, now editor, broached the topic of sex education. Addressing the temptations to immorality faced by young people, he stated, “The remedy is education.

Every child should be taught the basic principles of hygiene and physiology . . . and when the proper time comes such a knowledge of sexual truths should be given, by pure-minded instructors (preferably the parents) as will satisfy legitimate curiosity and guard against impure habits.”¹⁹

During his years in England, Olsen had decided to work toward a doctorate in English. He had already spent much of 1908 in the United States to that end, and now he felt that he must dedicate himself full time to completing his program.

Work at Various Colleges (1909-1923)

In 1909, Olsen completed, at his own expense, a PhD in English Literature at the University of Michigan.²⁰ He was the first Seventh-day Adventist to earn a



Stanborough Park, England (circa 1908): M. E. Olsen is standing sixth from the right (back row).

doctorate in English and only the second to receive a PhD.²¹ Olsen's dissertation, *Evolution of Biblical Prose*, would later be condensed and published by the denomination as a book.

At denominational headquarters, leadership faced a problem. The world church was calling for missionaries faster than they could be supplied. In response to this need, the Washington Foreign Mission Seminary was organized in Takoma Park, Maryland, in 1907, its purpose to give a practical training for mission service. Two years later, its president, J. L. Shaw, would request the newly minted Dr. Olsen to come and teach English at the institution.

During his first year of teaching, Olsen met Lydia Christensen, daughter of a Danish minister. She had traveled to the seminary to learn English and was living in the home of the General Conference president, A. G. Daniels, a close friend of Olsen. Lydia enrolled in one of Olsen's English classes, and soon Olsen was giving her private English lessons. By the end of the school year, Mahlon and Lydia became engaged and married later that summer in Denmark, and then returning to Takoma Park.²² In

the space of five years, four children—Louise, Alice, Olan, and Yvonne—made the Olsen family complete.

During his tenure as English professor at the seminary, Olsen was intensely involved writing *A History of the Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists*. His purpose was to reproduce "the life of the early times" and follow the pioneer developments of the Adventist Church as it moved around the globe.²³ Articles from *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, firsthand experiences, and interviews and correspondence with missionaries were his principal sources.

The project, first suggested by General Conference president A. G. Daniels, began in the latter part of 1909 and continued throughout this entire period. Chapters were submitted to W. C. White and A. G. Daniels for critique.²⁴ W. A. Spicer, S. N. Haskell, J. N. Loughborough, Frederick Griggs, and others helped with ideas and materials.

Olsen, however, began to encounter difficulties as he wrote the history. The work was taking much longer to complete than he had envisioned.²⁵ One of the difficulties was that Olsen was still teaching English four to five days each week at the seminary. Another problem

was that Edson White would not cooperate in providing materials regarding the Adventist work in the southern United States. A White family feud had developed, and not even W. C. White could help resolve the situation.²⁶

By 1923, however, *Signs of the Times* would publish a series of 13 articles summarizing Olsen's history as it was nearing completion. The book, the first formal history of the denomination, would finally be published in 1925, 16 years after it was begun. "Had I at the onset realized to the full the difficulties that would confront me," Olsen would write, "I am afraid I should have declined the task."²⁷ Olsen's perseverance, however, prevailed.

Three chapters of the book were devoted to tracing the development of an educational philosophy and of educational institutions. This was a significant emphasis at a time when the publishing work still employed the largest number of trained workers in the denomination. In a commentary devoted to his beloved Professor Bell, Olsen noted that before becoming "the real founder of the school at Battle Creek," Bell held "positions in some of

the best schools of the state.”²⁸

Olsen believed that Adventist schools were evangelizing agencies and existed for the express purpose of preparing the young people of the church for life and for eternity. The outstanding characteristics of these schools were that the Bible was taught in all years of schooling, that manual labor and correct physical habits were emphasized, and that missionary activities were promoted. “Adventist schools were born of a spiritual necessity,” he wrote, “to serve the needs of a spiritual movement.”²⁹

An educational convention, to which Olsen was a delegate, was held in Berrien Springs in June 1910. The convention discussed textbooks and college teacher qualifications among other matters. During a discussion on higher education, Olsen, who held one of the few doctoral degrees in the denomination at that time, arose and declared: “I myself have never felt free to encourage our young people to look to the university for an education, nor even for special advanced work, except under circumstances that seemed to make it advisable. . . . The fact, however, that it is not wise for our young people to go to the universities of the land, is a most powerful argument in favor of raising the standard in our own colleges. . . . In order to make this possible we need better libraries, better laboratories, and other facilities, and a highly trained force of teachers. Thus we might be able to do a little graduate work in our own leading colleges, which would further reduce the necessity of seeking help from outside institutions.”³⁰

Later in the convention, Olsen emphasized that strong teacher-training departments should be established at the leading colleges in order that church schoolteachers might be prepared in Adventist institutions. As the convention closed, Olsen recommended that the General Conference Department of Education support the publication of an educational journal.

In 1917, South Lancaster Academy, the school that Bell had established in 1882 in Massachusetts, called Olsen to serve as principal. Olsen found, how-

ever, that his role as educational administrator was more challenging than he had imagined. This was due in part to the multiple responsibilities he carried as principal, business manager, English teacher, and superintendent of the industrial faculty.³¹ In addition, Olsen was endeavoring to keep up his work on the book about Adventist history.

Under Olsen’s leadership, the institution changed its name to Lancaster Junior College. In 1919, Olsen reported that LJC was overflowing with the largest enrollment it had ever attained. He announced that the emphasis in schoolwork was being laid on the more practical subjects such as hydrotherapy, carpentry, sewing, physical culture, cooking, and farming. The purpose of LJC, he declared, was to train Christian workers. By 1920, Olsen observed that 138 missionaries had gone out from its doors. This occasion was celebrated at a special ceremony that involved a dedicatory address by J. L. Shaw.³²

In 1920, Olsen accepted an offer to head the English Department at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska. While at



M. E. Olsen as English professor at Union College.

Union, under the strong leadership of President Harvey Arch Morrison, the college was accredited as a junior college, and the enrollment climbed to a peak level. Morrison was called to Washington Missionary College in Ta-

koma Park, Maryland, in 1922, however; and a new leader, O. M. John, was selected for Union College. The Adventist educational climate was also changing. The progressive direction previously felt in the Department of Education of the General Conference under Frederick Griggs was giving way to a more traditional perspective. This shift would exert an influence in the events soon to occur at Union.

Under Olsen’s guidance, a progressive program had been set up in the English Department. Problems, however, that had been rumbling in the department surfaced abruptly in 1923. Olsen was summarily called before the board and dismissed after 29 years of denominational service. The board justified its action by stating that it was anxious to cut expenses. Part of this sudden move, however, was due to political factors. The other English teacher apparently desired to run the department and had sympathizers on the board. A deeper cause, perhaps, lay in certain questions concerning the books that Olsen required as reading for his English classes.³³

Although he thought that his brethren had made a mistake, Olsen was not bitter. His problem was to decide what he should do next. On March 30, 1923, Olsen wrote to his old friend, J. L. Shaw, who by now was treasurer of the General Conference.³⁴ He explained his predicament and expressed his desire to continue in denominational employment if needed. Olsen also noted that someone had inquired regarding his willingness to work at Fireside Correspondence School, which was operated by the Adventist Church. “If there were a desire to enlarge that work, to do some aggressive field work, and put it on a more paying basis as well as to strengthen standards; if there were a real vacancy, I believe I should thoroughly enjoy it.” Olsen closed his letter by courageously placing the blame of the situation at Union on himself. “Perhaps there is something very wrong with me. Anyway, I want to learn the lesson and learn it quickly.”



M. E. Olsen with wife, Lydia, and children: Louise, Alice, Olan, and Yvonne.

Shaw replied on April 18. Olsen's case had been considered at the Spring Council, but no appointment had yet been made.³⁵ Unknown to Olsen, however, Shaw had already been appointed to a committee to locate a job for Olsen within the denomination and had suggested that Olsen head up Fireside.

Leading the Correspondence School (1923-1946)

The Seventh-day Adventist Church had attempted several correspondence schools around the turn of the century. In the 1880s, Goodloe Harper Bell had started a correspondence course in English.³⁶ Although well prepared, it did not last long due to financial constraints. The early 1890s saw E. A. Sutherland commence correspondence courses at Walla Walla College. Keene Academy followed suit and developed its own correspondence school.³⁷

Within a few years, however, Keene Academy, Walla Walla College, and the Battle Creek Sanitarium institute on which Olsen had reported had all closed their correspondence programs. The correspondence-school idea, however, did not die out in the mind of one of the foremost educational leaders of the church, Frederick Griggs. Under

his guidance, the Fireside Correspondence School, located in Washington, D. C., was founded in 1909. It was of general understanding that it was established for the primary purpose of helping those who for any reason were prevented from attending the resident schools.³⁸

At the first board meeting, W. E. Howell was designated principal. The Department of Education soon began to absorb more of Howell's time, however, and C. C. Lewis, a former president of Union College, was asked to assume the position in 1913. Ill health, however, forced Lewis to resign in 1922, and Clifton Taylor became acting principal.

It was to this post as principal of Fireside that Olsen was called in 1923. Perhaps church leaders recalled Olsen's prior promotion of the Battle Creek Sanitarium correspondence school. Perhaps this decision was based in part on Olsen's commitment to sound scholarship. It could also be that the position was available at an opportune moment in Olsen's career and that the influence of J. L. Shaw was a significant factor.

At any rate, Olsen soon arrived in Washington and proceeded to vigorously engage in his work at Fireside. By the end of his term of service, Olsen would build the correspondence school into an elementary-through-col-

lege institution that served the entire world field.

During that first year at Fireside, Olsen carried out a general overhaul of courses so that the Adventist boarding colleges could give full credit to the correspondence work. He also began an intensive promotion of Fireside. In a 1930 report to the General Conference, he would note that the number of students enrolled had climbed from 559 in 1923 to 2,711 students representing more than 50 countries. Olsen would emphasize that the purpose of the correspondence school was to do extension work for all the Adventist colleges. He concluded his presentation by stating that "the Advent movement is essentially educational."³⁹

In a front-page article in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Olsen warned that only half of the young people of the Adventist Church were attending denominational schools. The others, he lamented, were attending institutions rampant with atheism. He then observed that correspondence education was becoming increasingly popular and invited the youth to enroll in Fireside. Before closing, however, he entered a disclaimer: "The first choice for our young people should be the resident school."⁴⁰ If that was impossible, however, the correspondence school was available.

By the end of 1927, Olsen observed that Fireside was the largest school in the denomination in terms of enrollment.⁴¹ In 1930, the Fireside board voted to seek recognition by the National Home Study Council,⁴² and on September 24, at Olsen's suggestion, a new name, Home Study Institute (HSI), was adopted.⁴³ HSI was proclaimed to be the extension division of Adventist colleges and academies. Up to half of all college work could now be taken through HSI, and the credits would be accepted at the church's resident colleges.

By 1931, however, the effects of the Great Depression were being felt, and

enrollments at HSI were plummeting. Not to be outdone by circumstances, Olsen began to promote a salesmanship course, which he predicted would keep its students out of the bread lines. In this same year, HSI established a branch in China and voted to seek accreditation with the National University Extension Association.

A report to the General Conference of 1936 noted that HSI had enrolled more than 28,000 students since its inception. Three branches of the Institute—in the Orient, Australia, and southern Europe—were in operation.⁴⁴ A shocking telegram was received, however, from W. A. Scharffenberg in September 1937 that gave notice that the branch of the HSI located in Shanghai, China, had been ransacked, and all was a total loss. This disaster, nevertheless, would be offset as a new branch was soon approved for southern Asia.

The Journal of True Education, whose idea Olsen had heartily endorsed in 1910, finally began publication in 1939. The first issue carried an article “Christian Education With the Help of the Postman,” written by M. E. Olsen.⁴⁵ Throughout the next few years, Olsen would write various articles for the *Journal*, in which he would delineate his philosophy of education.

Olsen would advocate, for example, that teacher and pupils should embark together on “a voyage of discovery.” They should go beyond the facts of persons and events to the deeper motives and meanings. The principles should not be fully explained but only hinted at, thus leaving the students to form their own conclusions. Teachers were to strive to develop in their students’ patterns of conduct to serve as guideposts throughout life. To do this, they should first put themselves in the place of each student.⁴⁶

Relationships of HSI with the other Adventist colleges, nevertheless, were not without ripples. In 1942, for example, a refund had to be given to George Vandeman “at the request of EMC [Emmanuel Missionary College in Berrien Springs, Michigan] that he give his whole attention to the courses he is taking at the college.”⁴⁷ At this time, it

Quotations From M. E. Olsen

“Adventism, rightly apprehended, is essentially a spirit, an attitude of mind, rather than a set of opinions” (“The Spirit and Aim of Adventism,” *Signs of the Times* 50:44 [November 6, 1923]: 13).

“Aim to prevent. . . ; you are never sure of curing. . . ” (“On Saving the Boys,” *Good Health* 5:5 [October 1906]: 136).

“All worthwhile study is the outgrowth of prayer” (“Among the Churches,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 108:18 [April 30, 1931]: 12).

“An ounce of actual achievement is worth many tons of good intentions” (“Sawing Wood,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 106:8 [February 21, 1929]: 17).

“Before one can be a safe leader, one must have been a faithful follower” (“The Importance of Being Somebody,” *The Youth’s Instructor* 82:39 [September 25, 1934]: 12).

“Example is everything; precept unenforced by example is nothing” (“On Saving the Boys,” *Good Health* 5:5 [October 1906]: 136).

“Fix the whole mind on the real object in life—the glory of God and the good of one’s fellow-men—and live to this one great purpose” (“Living to a Purpose,” *Good Health* 1:2 [December 1901]: 20).

“Happiness is not what we have or do, but what we are” (*The Carpenter of Nazareth* [Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1947], 54).

“It is not numbers that count in the work of the Lord” (“Items From the Summer School,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 74:31 [August 3, 1897]: 487).

“It is not what we hope to accomplish tomorrow or the next day, but what we actually do in the present fleeting moment, that counts in our lives” (*The Carpenter of Nazareth* [Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1947], 123).

“Our colleges must be great missionary and evangelistic centers” (“Response From Professor M. E. Olsen,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 107:52 [October 9, 1930]: 14).

“Prayer is quite as important as work” (“Suggestions to Missionary Workers,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 75:10 [March 8, 1898]: 150).

“Serious books fit one for serious living” (*Much-Loved Books* [Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1952], 154).

“Some of us. . . are not so much living as *going to live*” (“Is It Possible?” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 105:41 [October 11, 1928]: 14).

“Sound foundations are as important in education as in the building trade” (*A History of the Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* [Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1925], 82).

“The Advent movement is essentially educational” (“Fireside Correspondence School,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 107:30 [June 8, 1930]: 138).

“The education of our children and youth is by far the most sacred trust God has committed to us” (“Response From Prof. M. E. Olsen,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 96:16 [April 17, 1919]: 14).

“The literary study of the Bible is not the study of form apart from content” (*Much-Loved Books* [Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1952], 25).

“There are two things of outstanding importance in this life: To train for soulwinning, and to do soulwinning” (“The Duty to Put Oneself Under Training,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 106:15 [April 11, 1929]: 16).

“We cannot teach others unless we are students ourselves” (“A New Kind of Church School,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 110:33 [August 17, 1933]: 20).

“We must be in order to be able to do” (*The Carpenter of Nazareth* [Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1947], 54).

was also considered whether HSI should perhaps become an extension department of one of the colleges. By 1945, this choice was narrowed to Washington Missionary College, and Olsen formed part a committee established to study the proposed plan.

The Later Years [1946-1952]

In 1946, at the age of 73, Olsen requested retirement, having served for nearly 23 years as leader of the correspondence school. After his retirement, Olsen devoted much of his time to writing. One of his first projects was to adapt his dissertation on the King James Bible for publication and promotion by the Adventist Ministerial Association. A recent version of the New Testament, the Revised Standard, had appeared earlier that year and was being promoted as a replacement of the older King James Version. Olsen, however, did not share the popular enthusiasm and stated, "It is hardly likely to replace that much-loved classic."⁴⁸ He noted, nevertheless, that the Revised Standard Version did give evidence of fine scholarship. Tongue-in-cheek, he also praised it "for preserving intact for us so many fine passages from the King James version."⁴⁹ The overall purpose for the book, however, was broader and endeavored to trace the history of the translations of the English Bible from their beginnings.

Olsen's last major writing project, completed but a few weeks before his death, culminated in the publication of *Much-loved Books*. In this final work, Olsen summed up his philosophy: "Life should be lived joyously."⁵⁰ Well-chosen books would contribute greatly to this joy of living. While Olsen did not believe that the Bible was the only necessary book, he did exalt the Scriptures as the greatest of all literature—the great world drama. He noted, however, that the Bible was more than simply great literature; it had the power to transform the life.

Olsen then proceeded to examine the value of literary works by Luther, Wordsworth, Thoreau, Charles Lamb, Whittier, and others. He also ded-

icated a chapter to James and Ellen White in which he wrote: "I feel that my life has been enriched, not only by personal contacts with Ellen G. White, but also by making myself familiar with her writings. It is my firm belief that a thoughtful reading of her books will deepen one's Christian experience and fit him to give more efficient service to the Master."⁵¹

In 1952, the pages closed on Olsen's life. It was a life well lived as health promoter, church historian, prolific writer, college administrator, and pioneer in Adventist education. ✍

For more about Mahlon Ellsworth Olsen, see the complementary article in the Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists available here: <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=B9WQ>.



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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. M. M. Olsen, *Memories and Experiences* (Copenhagen: circa. 1936, translated by Dyre Dyresen in 1978), 9. Retrieved from Andrews University Heritage Center.

2. M. E. Olsen, *Much-Loved Books* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1952), 55.

3. *Ibid.*, 57.

4. Camp meetings were a new idea for the continent, and although quite a number attended the meetings, there were but two family tents—one for Mrs. White and her secretaries, and one for the Olsens.

5. M. E. Olsen, "Recollections of Prof. G. H. Bell," *The Youth Instructor* 68:20 (May 18, 1920): 4.

6. *Ibid.*, 5.

7. The *Nineteenth Annual Calendar* [1894] presented Uriah Smith as president of the Board of Trustees. Other members of the board included J. H. Kellogg, O. A. Olsen, and W. W. Prescott, its secretary. George W. Caviness served as college president. A listing of the professors included P. T. Magan in history and Frederick Griggs in the English department. The catalog notes that all college students were required to work one hour each day, and chapel services were held each morning.

8. D. F. Neufeld, ed., "Alfred Berthier Olsen," *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1976).

9. The first article, "Christian Growth" in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 73:18 (May 5, 1896): 277, presented the three-phased growth of human beings—spiritual, intellectual, and physical.

10. M. E. Olsen, "Home Training in Medical Missionary Work," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 76:30 (July 25, 1899): 480. This correspondence school was intended to be international, and one of the students resided as far away as Joppa, Palestine. The course consisted of 100 lessons, two of which would be received and completed by the student each week. The lessons would then be corrected at Battle Creek and returned to the student. The Battle Creek Sanitarium correspondence school lasted for several years and achieved a considerable enrollment (M. E. Olsen, "An Education for Everybody Who Wants It," *ibid.* [October 18, 1934]: 20, 21).

11. About this same time, an edition of the journal was launched in India, followed by editions in the West Indies and in South Africa.

12. M. E. Olsen, editorial comment, *Good Health* 5:7 (December 1906): 200, 201.

13. A. B. Olsen and M. E. Olsen, *The School of Health* (London: International Tract Society, 1906), 19. The brothers also prepared a cookbook, *One Hundred Hygienic Food Recipes*, which proved popular.

14. M. E. Olsen, *Out-of-Doors* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1910). This book was first published in England in 1906.

15. *Ibid.*, 17.

16. *Ibid.*, 18.
17. _____, "Thoroughness in Preparation for Our Work," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 83:36 (September 6, 1906): 24.
18. *Ibid.*, 25.
19. _____, "Editorial Chat," *Good Health* (March 1909): 67.
20. A few years earlier, M. E. Olsen had obtained his Master's degree from the same institution. In the University of Michigan "President's Report" of September 22, 1904, Mahlon Ellsworth Olsen appears in the list of the 1905 "Candidates for the Degree of Master of Arts," on page 28 with a Major in Rhetoric and Minors in English Literature and Aesthetics. Available online at <http://books.google.com/books?id=UG-fAAAAMAAJ>.
21. The first PhD had been received a year earlier in the area of history by B. J. Wilkenson from George Washington University.
22. Louise Walther to John Wesley Taylor V, correspondence dated October 23, 1984.
23. M. E. Olsen to W. C. White, December 19, 1912. Ellen G. White Research Center.
24. Olsen wrote W. C. White, "Of this you may be sure, I would not think of putting on the press any chapters dealing with the work of your father and mother and other early pioneers without first getting as much help as possible from you." *Ibid.*
25. On December 19, 1912, Olsen wrote a lengthy letter to W. C. White that stated, "I confess some things have taken me longer than I myself expected, but I have been anxious that it should not be necessary to do the work over twice. If the history represents anything less than the very best I am able to do, it will not be satisfactory, and might as well not appear at all." *Ibid.*
26. M. E. Olsen to W. C. White, January 12, 1912. Ellen G. White Research Center. See also letters dated May 27, 1912; June 13, 1912; December 19, 1912; and January 9, 1913.
27. M. E. Olsen to General Conference Council, January 16, 1913. General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Archives, Record Group 11, Box 3106, Folder 1913 - O.
28. M. E. Olsen, *A History of the Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1925), 337, 332.
29. *Ibid.*, 639.
30. General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Convention of the Department of Education* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1910), 57. Retrieved from Andrews University Heritage Center.
31. _____, *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1918).
32. M. E. Olsen, "Raising the Missions Service Flag at Lancaster Junior College," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 97:11 (March 11, 1920): 22, 23.
33. Shortly after his notification of dis-

- charge by the board, Olsen wrote to his friend J. L. Shaw, "The higher English work is not very well understood, and hardly in favor. . . . A good deal of ignorance exists in regard to the nature of English teaching in the higher College classes." M. E. Olsen to J. L. Shaw, correspondence dated March 30, 1923. Retrieved from Andrews University Heritage Center.
34. *Ibid.*
35. J. L. Shaw to M. E. Olsen, correspondence dated April 18, 1923.
36. In May 1885, Goodloe Harper Bell began recruiting students for the correspondence school. Correspondence shows that by February 1887, he was still receiving assignments from students. See Allan G. Lindsay, *Goodloe Harper Bell: Pioneer Seventh-day Adventist Christian Education* (PhD diss., Andrews University, 1982), 346-349.
37. See Floyd Greenleaf, *In Passion for the World: A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2005), 76, 77; Donald Sahly, Stephen Payne, and Alayne Thorpe, "Griggs University," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* (2020): <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=9HW6&highlight=Griggs|University>.
38. R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1979).

39. M. E. Olsen, "Fireside Correspondence School," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 107:30 (June 8, 1930): 138.
40. _____, "Let Us Gather Them In," *ibid.* (September 8, 1927): 4.
41. _____, "The Largest School in the Denomination," *ibid.* (December 22, 1927): 17.
42. Home Study Institute, *Minutes of the H. S. I. Board*. Vol. I [1909-1938], December 24, 1929. Retrieved from Andrews University Heritage Center.
43. M. E. Olsen, "An Education for Everybody Who Wants It," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 111:42 (October 18, 1934): 20.
44. _____, "The Home Study Institute," *ibid.* (June 3, 1936): 125-127.
45. _____, "Christian Education With the Help of the Postman," *The Journal of True Education* (September 1939): 15.
46. _____, "The Teacher's Second Mile," *ibid.* (October 1945): 14, 15.
47. HSI, *Minutes of the H. S. I. Board*. Vol. II [1939-1981], January 8, 1942. Retrieved from Andrews University Heritage Center.
48. M. E. Olsen, *The Prose of Our King James Version* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1947), 9.
49. *Ibid.*, 10.
50. _____, *Much-loved Books* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1952), 11.
51. *Ibid.*, 64.

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