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A Mystery Resolved

Denis Kaiser

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A Mystery Resolved



▲ DENIS KAISER

SOMETIMES WE EXPERIENCE ODD THINGS, AND WE WONDER WHY GOD PERMITTED THEM TO HAPPEN. WE MAY TRY TO FIND AN EXPLANATION, YET ULTIMATELY WE REALIZE THAT MANY THINGS IN THIS BROKEN WORLD DO NOT MAKE ANY SENSE AND MANY THINGS OCCUR WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR DIVINE PURPOSE. ALL THE MORE JOYOUS IT IS THEN WHEN WE DISCOVER THAT SOMETHING GOOD CAME OUT OF IT.

Maybe Ellen White felt this way when one of the great mysteries of her life was solved while she attended the Michigan camp meeting in the fall of 1876¹ At the end of the meeting, a sister approached her and asked her if Ellen recognized her. Twenty-three years earlier, in June 1853, Ellen and James had been on their way to hold meetings in Vergennes, Michigan, when they called at a log cabin in the middle of the woods. The woman of the house gave them refreshments and Ellen “talked to her of Jesus and the beauties of Heaven.” “The words

were spoken with such fervor that she was charmed and had never forgotten them.” Ellen gave her the only book she had written up to that time, i.e., “A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White” (1851; now part of “Early Writings”). The woman was intrigued by its content, and as new families settled around her, she lent the book to them until, after performing its silent work, it had become completely worn out.

Meanwhile, Seventh-day Adventist

ministers arrived in the area and preached the present truth to them so that quite a company of people embraced the Sabbath. The woman was overjoyed to meet Ellen White again and desired to obtain another copy of the book.

This encounter brought some closure for Ellen White concerning the circumstances of that seemingly chance encounter in June 1853. Although their driver had known the way to Vergennes well, somehow, traveling “through the woods, over logs and fallen trees, where there was scarcely a trace of road,” he “was compelled to acknowledge that he had lost the way.” They had no food and nothing to drink, and any attempts to find anything to drink turned out to be futile, drawing them further away from their actual destination. As Ellen “was fainting with thirst,” James White prayed for her that she “might be sustained on that dreary journey.” They “could not understand why [they] should be left to this singular wandering in the wilderness.” Finally, they reached a little clearing with a log cabin where this woman lived.

At the camp meeting in 1876, Ellen noted, “Our wanderings on this journey have seemed indeed mysterious to us, but here we met quite a company who are now believers in the truth, and who date their first experience from the influence of that little book.” The resolution of mysteries may not come in our lifetime, but we may be thrilled when we do experience it here. ■



1. James White, “Western Tour,” *Review and Herald*, July 7, 1853, 28; Ellen White, “Incidents of the Michigan Camp-Meeting,” *Signs of the Times*, Oct. 19, 1876, 340.

Denis Kaiser is an associate professor of church history at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.