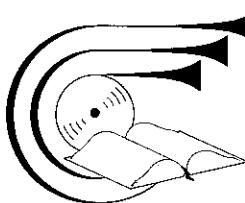


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Lest We Forget

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." LS 196

FAITHFUL EYEWITNESS

John Norton Loughborough was a Seventh-day Adventist pioneer whose final contribution in life is best described as "faithful eyewitness." His verbal and written testimony as to God's leading in the establishment of the SDA Church is invaluable. The witness of Scripture attests to the critical importance of retelling the stories of old, especially how God worked.

The first indication of Loughborough's specific commission as a faithful eyewitness was a message from Ellen White to him in 1878, when he was 46 years old, referring to his 25 years of experience, traveling and working with the Whites, and observing the role of the visions: "*You have an experience valuable to the cause of God. It must be made to tell for its full value.*" Loughborough explained, "I supposed that to mean that, in my labors I

by Dr. Fred Bischoff

should show what I had seen and known in connection with my labors, of the Lord's dealings and special leading in the work. At that time I had not thought that it meant that I should write out such experiences for publication, but that I should speak of these things in connection with my public labors. . . . So I went on in my preaching, trying to show that the Lord was surely leading in this Advent movement; and had by direct instruction through the gift of prophecy, as I had often witnessed, guided in this work those who would humbly accept His teachings."¹

Some twelve years later, the need was stated again. 1890 was in the shadow of the rebellion of 1888.² Ellen White had stood since the Minneapolis meetings solidly by the light God had sent through A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner, and had extended her influence to support the work God was doing through them.

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JOHN NORTON LOUGHBOROUGH

Those who refused the light were logically led to question Ellen White's inspiration. Faith in the gift of prophecy given her was seriously undermined. Even her long-standing associate, Elder Uriah Smith, refused the light and the testimonies that had been sent to him to counsel and correct him.

Ellen White sensed the need for someone with "living experience in the rise and progress of the work" who also "stood firmly for the testimonies", whose influence would be "to overcome this unsettled state of unbelief." On October 7, 1890, she wrote to the General Conference president, Elder O. A. Olsen:

"The influence of Elder Loughborough is valuable in our churches. Just such a man is needed, one who has stood unwaveringly for the light that God has given to His people, while many have been changing their attitude toward this work of God. I say let Elder Loughborough do a work that is suffering to be done in the churches. The Lord would have his voice heard as was John's, telling the things he has seen, and that which he has heard, which he himself has experienced in the rise and progress of the third angel's message...."

"Let Elder Loughborough stand in his right place, as a Caleb, coming to the front and bearing a decided testimony in the face of unbelief and doubts and skepticism. We are well able to go up and possess the goodly land...."

*"Do not fasten Elder Loughborough in a corner anywhere; do not bind him down to any one special conference.... What we need now is to cherish Elder Loughborough to make as far as possible his experience serve the cause of God in a wider sphere."*³

Brother Loughborough explained: "Elder Cornell gave me to understand that she also said to the committee that, I 'should write these things out'. Be that as it may, I do know that shortly after this I was asked by the General Conference committee to write the *Rise and Progress of the Third Angel's Message*. It seemed to me that I was getting some light on what was meant by the words, 'its full value'. So that winter...my wife, who was just as anxious as I that the book should be as efficient as possible, took hold with me in...selecting matter for the book...."⁴ The book was published two years later, in 1892.

Some eleven years later, not long after the 1903 General Conference session, when she was 75 and Loughborough was 71, Ellen White still felt the need had not been met as it should have been. The unsettling results of unbelief were bearing fruit in heresies, apostasies, and fires. A generation had been born who

had not seen the beginning of the work. She wrote to G. I. Butler:

"I feel deeply over our present situation. We must now do a work that should have been done long ago. We must do as the Lord directed Moses to do when the children of Israel, having crossed the desert, were encamped on the borders of Jordan. Moses was bidden to rehearse to them all the dealings of the Lord to them during their journeyings through the wilderness...."

"The record of the experience through which the people of God passed in the early history of our work

must be republished. Many of those who have since come into the truth are ignorant of the way in which the Lord wrought. The experience of William Miller and his

*associates, of Captain Joseph Bates, and of other pioneers in the Advent message, should be kept before our people. Elder Loughborough's book should receive attention. Our leading men should see what can be done for the circulation of this book."*⁵

It is clear that Loughborough was relating what he knew, but the church was not encouraging, expanding, and supporting this necessary work of retelling the early stories.

Loughborough remained faithful to his commission. He did his best to confirm the faith of God's remnant people in His leading. As with any human, his ministry was not without flaws, and his stories have their occasional slips. But the greater question still remains. Has the body of believers been as faithful as Loughborough in doing "*a work that should have been done long ago*"? By voice and pen, he did what he could. Has the church done what it could? 72 years since he died the work still remains undone to a large extent. Let us arise and again tell how God has led in the past. ♦

Footnotes:

1. *Great Second Advent Movement*, by J. N. Loughborouth, pp. 484,485 (1992 edition).
2. PC 154, *1888 Materials*, pp. 323, 846, 1057, 1169, 1344, 1345, 1666.
3. 1888, 714-719. We recommend that you read the entire letter.
4. *GSAM*, p. 485 (1992 edition).
5. *Manuscript Releases*, 17: 344-345, "The Need to Review Sacred History; the Importance of the Sabbath; The Nearness of the End" (Letter 105, June 1, 1903).

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH & HIS FAMILY



Mary was tested and tried in 1852, when her husband could not earn enough for their upkeep. At that time, even though he only had three cents in his pocket, he told Mary he felt impressed to give himself wholly to preaching the truth. She wept upon hearing this, wondering how they would survive. While she was in town spending two of their last three cents, a stranger came by their house and ordered \$80 worth of the patent sash locks from John from which he earned a commission of \$26. When Mary returned, John was rejoicing. He explained how the Lord had sent the order for the locks. Again she had tears in her eyes, but this time, it was with a prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord for showing He would provide for them. John then began full-time preaching of the advent message.

By the summer of 1856, John was again discouraged regarding how to support himself and Mary and decided to move to Waukon, Iowa, with J. N. Andrews and others. James and Ellen White made a surprise winter visit, to call Loughborough and Andrews back into the ministry. Mary Loughborough confessed her lack of consecration and her need of conversion and pleaded with her husband, "Go forth in the name of the Lord to do His work." Loughborough returned with the group to labor in Illinois, but Mary remained behind, freeing her husband to do the work to which she knew the Lord had called him. From that time on, Mary courageously and lovingly shared her husband's labors and many times accompanied him on his travels. When she did not accompany him, she prayed for him in his ministry. Her warm testimonies and prayers at prayer meeting were an encouragement to others.

In the fall of 1857, Mary moved from Iowa to Battle Creek, where they would live for ten years. They were happy to be together again and in their own home. Elder White helped raise money to buy their home for them. John always considered this a loan which he repaid by investing it in the Lord's work. Mary took in boarders to help supplement their meager income while nearby farmers helped supply food for their table.

THE CHILDREN

In March, 1858, Mary gave birth to a daughter,

continued from page eight

Teresa. In her diary of February 28, 1859, Ellen White says Mary Loughborough came to their home, had dinner with them, and her baby was sick in the afternoon. (*Welfare Ministry*, p. 323.) Illness and early death was a part of the lives of many in those days. Early in 1860, little Teresa died. They lost two other babies, but were finally comforted in 1864, when their son, Delmer, was born and lived.

Sorrow filled John's heart when, on June 24, 1867, after 16 1/2 years of marriage, his beloved Mary died one hour after giving birth to twin daughters. One twin was born dead, probably the result of a fall Mary had two weeks before. The second twin lived and was named Mary. Mary's obituary in the *Review*, July 2, 1867 read as follows, "We left her in Oak Hill cemetery, a new treasure committed to the tomb, there to slumber with her little one sweetly pillow'd on her arm, till the Lifegiver shall return to rescue His jewels from the dominion of the enemy." John's friends, Brother and Sister Myron Cornell, cared for little Mary for a year, and his brother and family came from New York, lived in his home, and cared for little three-year old Delmer.

MAGGIE

Just before beginning another adventure for God—pioneering the third angel's message in California—Elder Loughborough and Mr. & Mrs. D. T. Bourdeau, who had also decided to help in the West, left Battle Creek June 8, 1868, and spent two weeks in New York. There Elder Bourdeau performed the marriage ceremony for Elder Loughborough and Margaret A. Newman (Maggie). The two families sailed from New York, went by train across the Isthmus of Panama, and then sailed on up to San Francisco. Little Delmer was about the only one who did not get sea-sick. He was too busy looking around at all the new things!

The Loughborough's were delighted with a visit from James and Ellen White in September of 1872, at their home in Santa Rosa. The Whites stayed in their home while helping at campmeeting. Ellen White described their home, "It is very convenient; has large bedrooms and good chambers for a story-and-a-half house. We are heartily welcome here . . . The two seem very happy together." Letter 17, 1872. (Quoted in *E.G. White: The Progressive Years*.)

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J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH

HOW A DREAM CHANGED HIS LIFE

1832-1924

By Dr. Ray Foster

After painting houses all day, the young advent preacher couldn't sleep. He tossed and turned. As he dreamed, the face of an earnest preacher was indelibly impressed upon his mind. What did he dream? Why? How would this dream prepare the way for an experience that would completely change his life and redirect him into years of devoted labor in the Seventh-day Adventist Church? How would this young preacher impact the spread of the third angel's message?

The dreamer was John Norton Loughborough. He had been born January 26, 1832 in Victor, New York. His father was a local Methodist preacher who died seven years after John was born, leaving the family in poverty. John was then cared for by his godly grandfather who always had morning and evening worship. A vivid childhood impression left on young Loughborough's mind was seeing his grandfather on numerous occasions rising from prayer, his face bathed with tears, under a sense of God's presence. His grandfather spent an hour in private Bible study and prayer morning and evening. "Johnny," as he was called as a boy, often heard his grandfather praying for him by name. The faithfulness of this man of God gave influence to his prayers and Bible reading in worship. The family responded to the Advent message when it was preached the winter of 1843-1844. Young Loughborough was 12 years old at the time of the great disappointment.

John attended a good district school while living with his grandfather. At age 15 he went to live with his brother to learn the carriage-making business. After seven months his brother closed

the shop, which ended his apprenticeship and allowed him to attend a local, advanced school.

In May, 1848, Loughborough heard a stirring Advent sermon and was convinced that he was a sinner. After a fearful struggle in his mind to decide between following God all the way, and pursuing worldly ambitions, he gave his heart to the Lord. He left the advanced school and hired himself out as an apprentice in a blacksmith shop to learn carriage ironing. In his spare time young Loughborough studied the Bible and prayed. Blacksmithing and shoeing canal horses was taxing work for someone as small of stature as he. These difficulties combined with malaria to force him to stop blacksmithing and go to preaching.

With a dollar in his pocket, donated clothing that did not fit, and a prayer in his heart, John set off to preach about the soon-coming Saviour who meant so much to him. His brother gave him five dollars worth of tracts to sell, and an Adventist friend gave him three dollars to help him on his way. In a community about 18 miles away, he found a room with a friendly family, secured the use of a Baptist church for a series of lectures and on the evening of January 2, 1849, gave his first discourse. He was not quite 17 years old. The house was well filled and John handled his subject with ease and clarity. The second evening, at the end of the meeting, the pastor announced before a crowded house that this would be the last meeting. A singing school would be starting the following evening. A man in the audience quickly stood up, and intimating that the minister had arranged the singing school for the purpose of shutting out the Adventist meeting, he invited the boy preacher to come and preach in the schoolhouse in his district. Loughborough held five lectures in that school-

TIME LINE

house. This is how he began a preaching career that lasted seventy years.

For a time John worked with an older minister to get experience. During the summer of 1849 he worked in his brother's carriage shop, and the next winter returned to preaching. For three and a half years he painted houses five or six days a week in order to support himself and preached on Sunday. Later, he sold patent sash locks and on Sundays preached wherever his business took him. He was married to his first wife, Mary, in 1851.

One Sunday while he was at home in Rochester, New York, he attended an Advent meeting where J. B. Cook, in speaking on the Sabbath question, engaged in a tirade against Mr. and Mrs. James White. Loughborough had never heard of these people, and was led to inquire as to their beliefs and teachings. In the meantime he became very interested in the sanctuary question that the Sunday-observing Adventist group where he was a member was studying. On learning that two members of this group had begun keeping the seventh-day Sabbath, he became much concerned and prayed over their case. That night he had the dream mentioned earlier.

He dreamed he was at an Advent meeting. His fellow workers were in a dingy room, ill-ventilated, poorly lighted, and dirty. Confusion and discouragement reigned. Their talk was as dark spiritually as the room was dark physically. A door opened into a larger room. The larger room was well ventilated, light, clean, and inviting. A chart hung on the wall, and a tall man stood by it explaining the sanctuary and other questions about which Loughborough had been studying. Loughborough arose, saying: "I am going to get out of this. I am going into that other room." His brethren sought to keep him from entering the larger room of light. When entreaty did not avail, they began to threaten him and heap abuse and ridicule on him. Entering the larger room, he found among others, the members of his congregation who had begun keeping the Sabbath. The people in this large room seemed happy and were rejoicing in the study of their Bibles, which were in their hands. He began to meditate on the difference between the two rooms, and awoke, deeply impressed that he would soon see great light on some of the questions which had troubled him.

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|------|--|
| 1832 | January 26, J.N.L. was born. |
| 1839 | Loughborough's father died |
| 1843 | John went to live with his grandfather. |
| 1844 | October 22, The Great Disappointment. |
| 1847 | He was apprenticed in the carriage making business with his brother. |
| 1848 | J. N. L. converted, worked as blacksmith while studying the Scriptures. |
| 1849 | He began his preaching career at age 17. |
| 1851 | He and Mary Walker were married. |
| 1852 | Dreamed about J. N. Andrews and was converted to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. |
| 1856 | J. N. Lent to Waukon, Iowa. That winter, E.G. White went to call him back to preach. |
| 1858 | Daughter, Teresa was born. |
| 1860 | Daughter, Teresa died. |
| 1864 | Son Delmer was born. |
| 1867 | Wife, Mary, died after childbirth with twins. One twin survived and was named Mary. |
| 1868 | J.N.L. married 2nd wife, Maggie Newman, and pioneered in California with D. T. Bordeau. |
| 1872 | Loughboroughs lived in Santa Rosa, CA. |
| 1875 | Maggie got tuberculosis, died. J. N. L. married third wife, Anna M. Driscoll. |
| 1878 | Called to work in England and to give his faithful witness of God's leading in SDA past. |
| 1881 | Returned to America for G.C. Returned to England to train his own son and daughter to work there when he and his wife would return to USA. |
| 1890 | Again, called to stand "firmly for the testimonies". Began writing <i>Rise and Progress of the Third Angel's Message</i> . |
| 1892 | Book <i>Rise and Progress of the Third Angel's Message</i> published. |
| 1903 | E. G. White recommended republication of the record of God's leading in the past. |
| 1908 | Traveled around the world giving a faithful eyewitness to God's leading in the past. |
| 1924 | Died at St. Helena Sanitarium, April 7. |

continued from page five

Light was not long in coming. On September 25 and 26, 1852, the Sabbath-keepers held a conference in Rochester, and one of Loughborough's group proposed that they attend the meeting. When challenged that he should go to get back his members who had joined the Sabbath keeping group, because "they give chance to speak in their meetings," Loughborough agreed to go. He selected texts with which to prove that the law was abolished, and went to the meeting.

Looking around the room, he saw the same chart that he had seen in his dream. Standing next to the chart was J. N. Andrews, the man in his dream.

Soon, Andrews, in a calm, solemn manner, began examining the Scriptures that supposedly teach the law was abolished. He took up the identical texts Loughborough had selected, and so thoroughly refuted the arguments the latter had in mind that he was left with nothing to say. Instead of speaking against the principles laid down, he left convinced that these people had important truth which he had not yet received.

Thus J. N. Loughborough heard the third angel's message for the first time. His brethren, upon learning that he was determined to investigate the Sabbath question, did just as he had dreamed they would do. They resorted to ridicule, unkind criticism, and abuse. This only increased his faith. From that time forward he did not work on the Sabbath. In October, 1852, after three weeks of careful and prayerful study he publicly took his stand for the Sabbath.

The first Sabbath J. N. Loughborough kept, he was introduced to Ellen and James White. Mrs. White had a vision that Sabbath which lasted one hour and 20 minutes. At the close of the vision, she told Loughborough some things about himself that he had never told anyone. This no doubt had an influence on him. All of the rest of his life Loughborough was a firm believer in the Spirit of Prophecy.



J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH

Prior to accepting the Sabbath, Loughborough had made a good living for himself and his wife selling sash locks. After accepting the Sabbath he felt convicted to go into the ministry of the Word full-time. He tried to evade the conviction instead by throwing himself full-time into his business and supporting the cause with his earnings. Where previously he had good sales, after that decision, he seemed unable to make enough sales to cover his travel expenses. With persistence he soon had used up his savings. As financial failure increased so did the conviction that he

should be preaching the word.

About the middle of December, Loughborough was down to only a three-cent piece. He attended Sabbath meetings much discouraged. Mrs. White was taken off in vision. When she came out of vision, she told Loughborough the reason for his cloud of discouragement was that he was resisting the call of God. After earnest prayer he decided that if the Lord would open the way, he would go and preach. Peace came to him after he made that decision. Immediately, the way was opened financially for John Loughborough to enter full-time into the ministry.

The next Sabbath, a general meeting was held for the Sabbath-keeping Adventists. Mrs. White was taken off in vision and shown that he had made the correct decision. Meanwhile, Hiram Edson, who lived some 40 miles from Rochester, where the Whites and Loughborough were, was impressed that he should go to Rochester. He went to his barn to pray, and the conviction was still stronger that he had to go to Rochester. At the close of the Sabbath, he took a train to Rochester arriving after the evening meeting. He told James White of his impressions asking, "What do you want of me here in Rochester?" James White replied. "We want you to take Brother Loughborough and go with my horse, Old Charley, and the carriage and take him over your field in southwestern New York and

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH & HIS FAMILY

concluded from page three

Loughborough did for the Seventh-day Adventist Church for nearly three quarters of a century.

Loughborough had more dreams that directed him. Just prior to attending the General Conference session in Battle Creek, Michigan in 1868, he had twenty dreams about working in California. James White asked if anyone felt impressed to go to California to work. Loughborough spoke up and offered to go. D. T. Bourdeau also stood up and said that he and Mrs. Bourdeau had sold all of their earthly possessions before coming to the General Conference, being impressed that the Lord was going to send them to some faraway place. They were prepared and would be free to go with Loughborough. Loughborough worked in California for ten years, before accepting a call to Europe in 1878.

His many and varied experiences are left on record for us in several books. He wrote his autobiography entitled, "Miracles in My Life" which cover the highlights of his experiences both in the USA and in Europe working for the Lord.

At the age of 76, in 1908, he travelled around the world, 30,000 miles by water and 60,000 miles on land, visiting the principal centers of work of the Seventh-day Adventist church. This was his last missionary journey in the cause of the Lord he loved so well.

His last years were spent first, at the home of his daughter in Lodi, California until she and her husband were called to Washington, D.C. Because of failing health Elder Loughborough spent his last years in the St. Helena Sanitarium, where he peacefully passed away April 7, 1924 at the age of 92. Proverbs 10:7, "The memory of the just [is] blessed," is a verse that truly describes the life and experiences of John Norton Loughborough. ♦

Sources:

- Founders of the Message*, Dick, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1938
- Ellen White, The Early Years 1826-1862*, A. L. White, RHPA, 1985.

Read about Uriah Smith in the next issue of *Lest We Forget*.

In 1874, Maggie got tuberculosis from a patient she had cared for in her home. Her sister came out from the East to help care for her. Maggie didn't want to miss out on the Yountville meetings, so they pitched a tent for her and her sister at the back of the main tent where they could listen to the services. Her heart rejoiced at the providence of the Lord in forwarding His work. She passed away peacefully on March 24, 1875.

ANNA AND THE LATTER YEARS

Later that year, Elder James White performed the marriage ceremony of Elder Loughborough and Anna Driscoll, who was the secretary-treasurer of the Pacific Press. Three years later, he wrote Anna in Oakland advising her to leave the sale of their things to Providence. If sold, it was evidence the Lord wanted them to go to England. Just a day or so later, a man bought everything from them except their books and clothes.

The General Conference in October, 1878, sent Loughborough and his wife to establish a mission in England. They were to sail on the ship "Homer" of the Warren line, but the captain denied them passage. So they sailed on the "Nevada" the next day and had a uneventful voyage. The ship "Homer" was lost at sea and never seen again. God had providentially spared the Loughboroughs to continue laboring in England.

In 1881, Elder Loughborough returned to America to attend the General Conference, and was asked to take a group of workers back to England to train to take his place, so he could again return to the States. His own son and daughter were among those who accompanied him back to England. Leaving them to carry on, he returned to the States in 1883.

Elder Loughborough lived longer than his third wife, Annie, to be 92 years. ♦

Sources:

- Dick, Everett, *Founders of the Message*, 1938, RHPA.
- Loughborough, J. N., *Miracles in My Life*, 1987, Edited by Adriel Chilson, Leaves-Of-Autumn Books, Inc., pp. 67, 69, 92.
- Robinson, Ella M., *Lighter of Gospel Fires: J.N. Loughborough*, 1954, PPPA.
- White, Arthur L., *Ellen G. White: The Early Years: 1827-1862*, 1985, pp. 411, 427, 431 and *The Progressive Years: 1862-1876*, RHPA, 1986, pp. 176, 357.

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH

& HIS FAMILY

by Frances Foster

Lider J. N. Loughborough grew up in a loving and religious home with two older and two younger brothers and sisters. His earliest memories were of the family gathering before breakfast and after supper for worship in their large kitchen. Father would explain the reading of the Scriptures so the little ones could understand. Even the hired workmen were there for family worships. Heaven was made real, and seeds were sown in little John's mind and heart that took root. When John was under two years of age, his father told a friend that John was going to help sound the gospel trumpet.

His grandfather and father were "preachers" in the local Methodist Episcopal Church where they helped raise up a company of believers and erect a church building. The younger members of the family attended church regularly with their parents, except on cold, windy days. Mother Loughborough was not very strong and couldn't take them to church then. Instead, they stayed at home and played "church." John always did the praying and preaching!

When John was seven years old, his father, 36 years of age, died from typhoid fever. John went to

live with his Grandfather on the farm where he found plenty to do helping his aunt and the hired man. The example of true Christianity he saw in his Grandfather—"Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,"—made a keen impression on his young mind.

In 1843, Evangelist James Barry preached the Advent message to them, and they accepted the truth about Christ's soon coming. John helped share with neighbors *The Signs of the Times* and *The Midnight Cry*, to which Grandfather subscribed. Because of their new beliefs, they were disfellowshipped from the Methodist Church. This only increased John's desire to become a deep student of the Bible.

MARY AND EARLY YEARS

In 1851, at age 20, John married Mary Walker. She was a committed Christian woman, an attentive companion, cheerful in distress, and always willing to put her plans aside in order to fit in with her husband's needs and plans. They settled in the city of Rochester, New York, where he painted houses to support themselves. When he learned and accepted the third angel's message, Mary accepted the truth with her husband.

continued on page three

Lest We Forget

Volume 6

Number 4

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ERRATA:

We regret a line was omitted from the final paragraph on page 6 of *Lest We Forget*, Vol.6:4 which featured J. N. Loughborough.

It should have read:

"... At the close of the Sabbath, he took a train to Rochester arriving after the evening meeting. He told James White of his impressions asking, "What do you want of me here in Rochester?" James White replied. "We want you to take Brother Loughborough and go with my horse, Old Charley, and the carriage and take him over your field in southwestern New York and Pennsylvania." **Thus began the work that...**"

The words in bold were omitted. Thank you for correcting this error in your issue of *Lest We Forget*.

The Editorial Staff