

MEMORIES AND RECORDS OF THE NEW BEDFORD
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH

by

Harold N. Williams

N O T E:

New Bedford was the famous seaport and gave its name to the surrounding area. Some records speak of New Bedford being the first to covenant together to form a church. Literally, - DARTMOUTH. IT WAS DARTMOUTH, very close to New Bedford. The earliest Sabbath-keeping Adventists lived around Dartmouth and North Dartmouth, the latter adjoining New Bedford. That early company is spoken of sometimes as Dartmouth or North Dartmouth because of the mind picture of where Sabbath-keepers lived. H. N. W.

MRS. E. G. WHITE, CAPTAIN JOSEPH BATES, AND
HISTORICAL RECORDS OF EARLY DAYS OF
OF ADVENTISM IN AND AROUND
NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

When the writer, Elder Harold N. Williams, served as pastor of the New Bedford district of churches in the years 1924-1928, he found the old record books of the North Dartmouth and New Bedford churches. Several of the old original church members were still living. They gave the pastor much information about those early days of Adventism. He copied much of the old records into the legally formed reorganized church known as The North Dartmouth and New Bedford Church of Seventh-day Adventists. He still has in his possession many papers and documents. Having heard that the oldest records have been lost, he is herein carefully copying records he has of those early days, as follows.

Mrs. E. G. White became acquainted with Captain Joseph Bates on a visit to New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1846. See also Experience and Teachings of E. G. White, p. 85; Pioneer Stories p. 180, and The Great Second Advent Movement, pp. 240-242.

I regret now that I failed to copy many many facts, figures, and dates of the early records. In the rush of evangelism and raising up new churches and pastoring the District, time was limited.

The early "believers" near Dartmouth met in the home of Richard Ashley which was the farm just south of Jarvis Ashley's place on the Assonet Road.

Richard Ashley was 15 years old and Jarvis was 12 when the "stars fell." They were sleeping together at the time. Richard got up and watched through the window. Jarvis T. Ashley was the father of Merton B. Ashley who had served as head deacon in New Bedford for 38 years consecutively before I rebuilt the church in 1926. I shall have more to say about Merton B. Ashley later.

While the "believers" were meeting in the home of Richard Ashley about 1880, a young man by the name of Gilbert Collins and his mother were living in one end of the Jarvis Ashley house. Gilbert Collins married and bought a house on the same road after which the "believers" met in his home for religious services.

Gilbert Collins' father and mother lived on the Henry Ashley place about a mile south of Jarvis Ashley.

Richard Ashley, a half brother to Jarvis Ashley was one of the first SABBATH-KEEPERS. This was before Rachel Preston made her visit to Washington, N. H.

NORTH DARTMOUTH AND
NEW BEDFORD ADVENTISTS

Richard Ashley got up one morning very early, walked to the next house which was on the Jarvis Ashley farm, knocked on a window and told those inside, "TODAY IS THE SABBATH AND I AM GOING TO KEEP IT." Several in the group of "believers" were keeping the SABBATH. Those who would not keep it left but others came in and took their places. The mother of Jarvis Ashley soon accepted the Sabbath after he did.

AN INTERESTING LETTER

C O P Y

August 24, 1943

Eld. William Butler,
Takoma Park,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Brother Butler: Your letter was received some time ago, and as I have been somewhat incapacitated, it has been neglected.

As I remember hearing the discussion in reference to the organization of the Dartmouth, Mass. and the Washington, N. H. churches, it was the general agreement that the Dartmouth, Mass. people signed a covenant to bind themselves together until they could get more light; but the Washington, N. H. people completed their organization shortly or contemporaneously with the action in the Dartmouth, Mass. people.

I heard the subject discussed many times. Asa and Doris Robinson came from Washington, N. H. church, the former to work for my father, and he attended the Dartmouth church with us, thus we had some argument between the representatives of the two churches; each contending their organization was the first.

Trusting this will give you the desired information, I am sincerely,
(Signed) Joel P. Bradford.

I, Harold N. Williams, often privately and at Workers' Meetings, heard Elder Doris Robinson tell about these early events exactly as related above. He said time and again that there were SABBATH-KEEPERS in North Dartmouth before Rachel Preston's visit to Washington, N. H.

The "believers" in North Dartmouth, New Bedford, and Washington, New Hampshire were in close touch with each other. Contrary to much credit that has been given Rachel Preston and the Seventh-day Baptists, a number of the "Old Timers" who went through the experiences and were still living, staunchly contended that there were several Adventists already keeping the SABBATH in the North Dartmouth-New Bedford area before Rachel Preston ever made that visit to Washington, New Hampshire.

NORTH DARTMOUTH AND
NEW BEDFORD ADVENTISTS

O R G A N I Z A T I O N

Having been "put out of" or having "Come out of" the formal churches because they believed in the soon second coming of Christ, the early Adventists were much opposed to organization. They considered themselves "believers" in a "MOVEMENT" and not members of a church.

However, as time went on, for many practical reasons, they knew that organization was a necessity. The Adventists in Washington, North Dartmouth, and New Bedford discussed this subject very seriously and prayerfully. The congregations in North Dartmouth and New Bedford were small and met in private homes. Mrs. E. G. White and Captain Joseph Bates had held meetings and done personal work in raising up the company in New Bedford. (We shall say more about this later.)

The members of the Dartmouth company of Adventists met in a special meeting with "leaders" to organize a church in 1887. They "signed a COVENANT" to become a church but being inexperienced and desiring "more light" they adjourned while the "brethren" went to Washington, N. H. to organize there. After organizing the church in Washington the "brethren" returned to New Bedford and completed the organization. Elders J. B. Goodrich and D. A. Robinson served as chairmen when seventeen charter members became the Dartmouth Seventh-day Adventist Church, April 10, 1887. M. O. Brauord served as Church Clerk and signed the papers as such.

There was a spirit of rivalry between the two churches. Members of the company in Dartmouth were FIRST to "SIGN A COVENANT TO BECOME A CHURCH." The members of the company in Washington were the FIRST to complete organization. The rivalry was in love and good will.

Those early "believers" were not much interested in recording their activities. They were expecting the Lord to come very soon so why bother with earthly records? The true records are kept in heaven.

FRAGMENTS OF
NORTH DARTMOUTH RECORDS

There was no formal record of organization as a church but they did organize. There was no record of church building. They met in private homes. No full record of membership was found but in church papers I found that

Assuba B. Ashley joined the North Dartmouth Church in
May, 1887.

William J. Ashley and Miranda B. Ashley joined the
church, evidently
in May, 1887.

Merton B. Ashley joined that church
January 24, 1887.

Deaths, members moving away, and apostacies caused the remaining members to unite with the New Bedford church. From then on for years the church was known as The North Dartmouth and New Bedford Church of Seventh-day Adventists.

NORTH DARTMOUTH AND
NEW BEDFORD ADVENTISTS

Twelve members of the declining North Dartmouth Church united with thirty eight members of the New Bedford Church, records being as follows:-

FROM NORTH DARTMOUTH

- 1. Jarvis T. Ashley- father of Merton - Born Oct. 12, 1821.
Died Sept. 23, 1904.
- 2. Mary A. Ashley - mother of Merton - Born Dec. 1830.
Died Oct. 7, 1916.
- 3. Rachel C. Ashley.
- 4. Prudence Briggs, Died Jan. 5, 1912.
- 5. Gilbert N. Collins. Died May 22, 1905. (See Life Sketches, p.121.)
- 6. Arlene F. Collins.
- 7. Merton B. Ashley. Born June 26, 1856, Died Nov. 4, 1932.
- 8. Lydia A. Ashley -wife of Mer on- Born Aug. 19, 1861.
Died in July 1940.
- 9. Lizzie G. Ashley.
- 10. George F. Merry.
- 11. Lizzie T. Merry.
- 12. Hannah A. Chase.

In NEW BEDFORD

- 13. Amy A. Howard.
- 14. Mary J. Slocum.
- 15. Anna H. Bradford. Died Jan. 23, 1914.
- 16. Margarite Thompson. Born June 28, 1838. Died 19, 1928.
- 17. Levina Jones.
- 18. Elizabeth C. Hathaway (Pollitt).
- 19. M. B. Patterson. Died July 24, 1906.
- 20. Caroline E. Wright. Born June 22, 1837. Died Dec. 27, 1905.
- 21. Hattie M. Reid. Died May 28, 1900.
- 22. Emma L. Lawson.
- 23. Abigail Hull. Died Jan. 7, 1902.
- 24. William Howard.
- 25. Harriet E. Colson.
- 26. Phoebe E. Packard. Died Nov. 26, 1911.
- 27. Francis H. Tripp. (Minister) Died May 10, 1923.
- 28. Isabella P. Tripp. Died April 3, 1903.
- 29. Anna M. Poole.
- 30. Nellie M. Whittakee.
- 31. Patience Simmons. Died May 20, 1912.
- 32. Ellen Wixon. Died March 20, 1909.
- 33. Mary Benjamin Killburn. Born Feb. 15, 1873. Died Sept. 11, 1935.
- 34. Charles A. Tripp. Died April 8, 1910.
- 35. Sarah Dunn. Died March 30, 1915.
- 36. Anna Carter.
- 37. Hattie Keating Holt. Died Feb. 8, 1907.
- 38. Melvin O. Bradford.
- 39. E. Warren Fraits.
- 40. Martha Fraits. Died Dec. 15, 1900.
- 41. Anna Fraits Case.
- 42. Mary Fraits.
- 43. William K. Kingsley.
- 44. Agnes A. Ryder.

NORTH DARTHPUGH AND
NEW BEDFORD CHURCH OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

45. Henry Manton.
46. Emma Wilbur.
47. Harriet B. Bradford.
48. Evelyn S. Wood. Born May 31, 1861. Died July 1, 1951.
49. Albert H. King.
50. Merton B. Ashley.

Merton B. Ashley recorded a vision and others remembered it clearly, confirming his record. Merton gave the pastor, Harold N. Williams, a copy of the vision, as follows. This record of the vision had been completely fulfilled,

A V I S I O N

While Mrs. E. G. White and Captain Joseph Bates were raising up the New Bedford Church, she had been the guest in the home of Jarvis T. and Mary A. Ashley, the parents of Merton B. Ashley in North Dartmouth. Merton, a young man, was still living with his parents. One morning at the breakfast table, Mrs. White said she could not eat until she told them about a vision she had just had that night. Merton recorded the vision and others present told me about it later.

She had been shown that the church would prosper and become strong and be the largest per capita paying church for years. That made her happy but then she saw that people would move away, others grow cold and apostatize and scandals would rock the church. The church would almost cease to exist. The few remaining members in debt and discouragement would sell the church property to a furniture dealer and he would turn it into a furniture warehouse. Then he would sue the church for selling him the property illegally. The few members remaining would be meeting in a filthy hall. They would have no money to pay the dealer and would be terribly discouraged. Several ministers would try to hold evangelistic meetings and revive the church but no one would come to the meetings. All this made her feel very sad. Then the scene changed.

She saw a young minister come to New Bedford while raising up other churches. He would hold public meetings with good attendance, baptize new members, pay off the furniture dealer, buy additional land next to the church, enlarge the building and modernize it, build a church school building, start off with many children, fill the church with members, and all of it would be free from debt.

Then she saw something that rejoiced her heart but amazed her. The church would become something like a LIGHT HOUSE. Flashes like lightning she saw going out from the church carrying the MESSAGE far distances in all directions, but the flashes would be invisible. How could she see something invisible ?

THE NEW BEDFORD CHURCH

July 11, 1890 a lot was bought on the corner of Willow and Bullock Streets in New Bedford and a church building erected. The church prospered and for many years paid the largest per capita of tithe in the denomination. Then members moved away, several died, and others apostatized. Several scandals rocked the church. With only 23 left in the church membership record book, ten of those had not stepped inside a church service in 17 years. The thirteen remaining could not support a church and became so discouraged that they sold the church to a furniture dealer for only one thousand dollars which they used to pay off financial obligations.

While Elder E. E. Osborne served as their pastor they rented the Universalist Church for their Sabbath Services. From there they went to a dirty room on the second floor of the I.O.O.F.M. Cigarette butts were all over the floor and there was not even a broom to sweep them up with other trash left by those who met in the room before they did.

A teacher in the high schools of Brockton had raised up two churches and a company self supporting and was organizing a church on Martha's Vineyard when he was licensed as a minister and held a Tent Effort in Brockton in 1923. He then raised up a church in the mostly Roman Catholic city of Fall River.

July 19, 1924, he with his family moved to Fair Haven across the river from New Bedford which was the practical center of the district of churches in Brockton, Fall River, Foxboro, Taunton, and Oak Bluffs. He left a salary of one hundred dollars per week which was very good indeed in those days, to enter the ministry with a salary of \$15.00 per week and no subsidies. He was soon relieved of the churches in Brockton and Taunton.

He was barely half settled in Fair Haven when he received a legal notice that Mr. Smith, the furniture dealer, was suing the New Bedford church for immediate return of the \$1000.00 he had paid them for the church property plus a sizable sum for extra expenses in using the church as a warehouse. It had been discovered that the church had sold him the property without legal title.

In former times, church properties were held legally by a board of trustees elected by the congregation. The trustees of the New Bedford church were all dead. The congregation being ignorant of legal matters had neglected to elect new trustees.

Those thirteen members were about the most discouraged people one could imagine. They were shocked. They were all poor. They could not pay Victor W. Smith what the law demanded.

Meeting with the members and discussing the matter, they voted to give the pastor authority to do what he could. He went to the New Bedford Five Cents Saving Bank and procured a loan of \$1,500.00 for the church, - interest at 6 per cent. The note was signed by Harold N. Williams, Manual Nobrega, Wilbur B. Armstrong, Mary B. Kilburn, John A. Gomes, as elected agents for the church. With that money the pastor paid Mr. Smith, made him friendly, and the members had a church again, but it was in badly run down condition, dirty and damaged from being used as a warehouse. With a quick clean-up-job, the members met in their own church again.

THE NEW BEDFORD CHURCH

The New Bedford church had no local elder but a Leader, Wilbur B. Armstrong. The pastor took brother Armstrong with him and visited all members who had not attended church for 17 years. They were all friendly but did not want to be members of any church. They gladly wrote letters of legal withdrawal from church membership. That left 13 members but two of those left the church so there were only eleven. The eleven were surely consecrated and pulled together. They cleaned the church inside so they could use it again.

THE THIEF

One day the pastor was on a high scaffold painting the ceiling when a voice called out, - "Come down here preacher. I AM A THIEF and I want to tell you about it." Wondering what was coming next, the pastor climbed down and met an old white haired gentleman. He asked the pastor to sit down with him. This is the story he told, - "I attended every meeting held by Mrs. E. G. White and Capin Bates. They were real Christians. I loved both of em. Every thing they taught was the truth. I accepted it all but one thing and only one thing kept me from being a member. I never quit this chewin tobaccy. When the congregation sold the church and Mr. Smith turned it into a furniture warehouse, it jest broke me old heart. Somewhere in that church was the old pulpit Mrs. White and the Capn used in their meetins when they raised up the church. I waited until there was a very dark night. THEN IT WAS THAT I BECUM A THIEF. I snuck oer there, broke the lock on the front doors, felt aroun in the dark, found the old pulpit, STOLE IT, took it home, wrapped it up in canvas and kept it safe. Would you like to have it back agin?" The pastor cleaned and revarnished it and gladly but humbly used the pulpit that Sister White and Elder Bates had used in raising up that church many years before.

A Roman Catholic Portuguese priest had been converted through God's use of John F. Knipschild. He served as Tent Master and helped Harold N. Williams raise up the Fall River church. Sponsored by Williams, Nobrega raised up a church in East Falmouth, Williams baptizing Nobrega's converts in the ocean. Nobrega soon had a strong interest and a crop of converts in New Bedford which the two organized into a church. Where could they meet for church services? After both congregations deliberated and legally voted to do so, the two churches merged and was known as the English and Portuguese Seventh-day Adventist Church of New Bedford. The two branches agreed to go 50/50 on all church expenses. The English used the Church forenoons and the Portuguese afternoons.

Several lawyers told Pastor Williams that no one could ever dispossess the church of its property, but they would NEVER be able to sell the property. It was then that he began searching real-estate law. The church property should be held in trust by the Conference legal association but how could the church deed it to the Conference?

The English and Portuguese churches united June 7, 1926.

Manual Nobrega had a near relative practicing law in New Bedford. His name was Avaristo Nobrega. He was a friendly man and willing to help without a large fee. It was found that there were exactly enough original members of the church to call a legal meeting.

THE NEW BEDFORD CHURCH

They had to meet legally and adopt a "CONSTITUTION" to satisfy the Massachusetts Land Court, which they did. They elected a legal board of TRUSTEES. When that was accomplished and \$100.00 paid to the Land Court, the TRUSTEES deeded the church property to the Southern New England Conference Association in September, 1927 to hold in trust.

Avaristo Nobrega, one of the new Portuguese members, loaned the church another \$1,500.00 at 6 per cent interest and a few incidental expenses. Another lot was bought next to the church. The pastor hired Doland R. White, William Drew, and David Gardner to help him. They enlarged the church, put a new roof on, excavated a basement and finished class rooms under the church, put in modern plumbing, and electricity. All work was done by the church members with the pastor. A new heating plant was also installed.

The bank loan and the loan from Brother Avaristo Nobrega, totaling \$3,000.00 was covered by pledges from the English congregation. The Portuguese branch of the church, though having the most members, only agreed to pay half of the operating expenses of the church; nothing on the church property.

Many things were going on at the same time. Even before the church property was redeemed, the pastor went to see the business manager of the Odd Fellows Hall near the center of the city. He said, - "Sure, I will rent the Hall to you but you will get no one to come. Has no one told you that this Catholic City broke the heart of the great Evangelist Dwight L. Moody and ended his great career? What do you think you can do? Has'nt any one told you that eight of your Advent preachers have hired this hall but could get no one to come? What do you think you can do?" And he sneered. The young pastor knew he could do very little but God can do what we can not do. The agent would rent him the Hall for just one meeting to see how things would go. The pastor paid for that meeting out of his own pocket and then asked where chairs or benches were. The man said with another sneer, - "O down in the basement, of course. Help yourself, but you will not get enough people to fill that one bench that seats five people." (The week before, the Hall had been used for a dance.)

Returning home, the pastor found two pictures, one of Adam and Eve in the Garden and the other, monkeys in a cage. He cut them diagonally and made a composite picture with the words in large letters, "DOES EVOLUTION MONKEY WITH THE BIBLE?" He went to the city news paper office and had a four inch square advertisement put in the news paper and had some cards printed as you see below. The cards were to be given out by church members.

With that done, he went off to Martha's Vineyard for the Sabbath evening and morning meetings, trusting the LORD to bring people to Odd Fellows' Hall for the Sunday night meeting.

THE NEW BEDFORD CHURCH



**"DOES EVOLUTION
MONKEY WITH THE BIBLE?"**

PERSUASIVE AND ASTONISHING REVELATIONS

A Lecture on Evolutionary Geology in the Light of the Biblical Account of Noah and the Flood.

COME!

**MOTION PICTURES
OF THE DELUGE (true to life)
A POWERFUL PRESENTATION**

Also Many Beautiful Stereoptican Views.

This is the first of a series of public lectures to be given in the "I. O. O. F. Building" by Harold Nathan Williams. Lecturer, Traveler and Evangelist, on Bible Prophecy, Evolution versus the Bible, Vital Christianity, Astronomy and the Bible, ect., all to be illustrated with Motion Pictures and Stereoptican Views that are most beautiful.

SEE SATURDAY NEWSPAPERS (over)



HAROLD NATHAN WILLIAMS

**ODD FELLOW'S BUILDING (I.O.O.F.)
Corner of Foster and Kempton Streets, New Bedford.**

APRIL

18

1926

7:30

P. M.

Doors
open

7

o'clock

WORTH \$1.00

**LECTURE
"DOES EVOLUTION
MONKEY WITH
THE BIBLE?"**

MOTION PICTURES

This is the first of a series of thrilling Bible Lectures to be illustrated with pictures every Sunday Night. (over)

ADMIT BEARER WITH FRIENDS

Coming back to New Bedford Sunday, he went to the Odd Fellows' Hall an hour early, expecting a couple of the brethren to help him get chairs up from the basement, and things ready for meeting. To his happy surprise, he could with difficulty get into the Hall because it was already filled with people standing.

W. C. Moffett, President, and J. E. Edwards, Treasurer, had heard that Sunday night meetings were planned. They supposed they would be cottage meetings. Going to the Pastor's home to make inquiry, they were told to go to Odd Fellow's Hall. They said afterward that it took them a half hour to elbow their way in so they could see who was speaking.

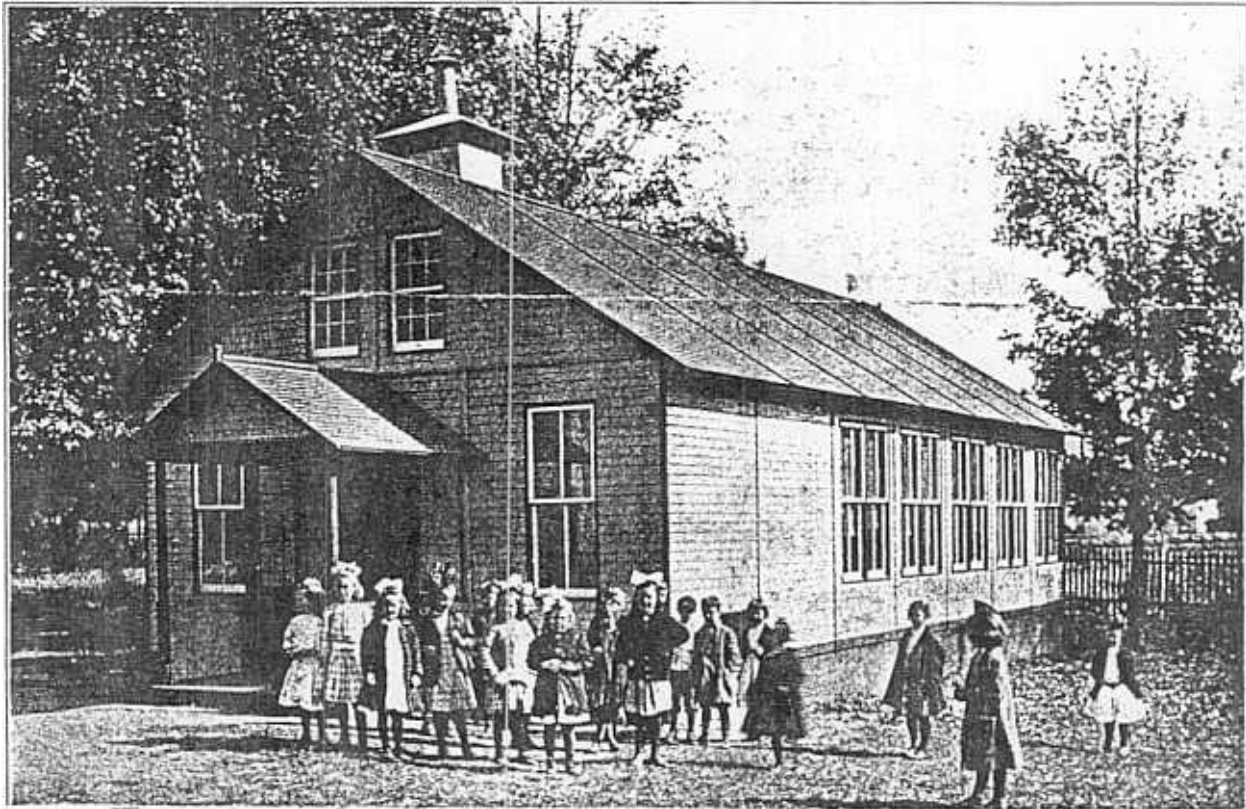
THE NEW BEDFORD CHURCH

THE LORD HAD BROUGHT THE PEOPLE

There was a full house every Sunday night. Then the pastor was told to call off those meetings and hold another Tent Meeting. He did not want that. People could come on the street cars from all directions to the center but to get to another part of the city, they had to pay for another fare. Also, people would not like that long ride. He was over-ruled. The Tent Was pitched on a good lot at 54 Richmond Street on the edge of the city. Soon instead of only eleven members there were 84 adult English speaking members before the Portuguese joined them.

With the Portuguese division joining in, a Church School was needed. A Hodgson Portable Schoolhouse exactly like the picture below was added to the church and 28 children with a teacher and assistant, Verna Miller, were attending our school.

Hodgson Portable Schoolhouses



THE NEW BEDFORD CHURCH

One of the original members was Sister Arlene F. Collins, very old and bed ridden. The pastor went several times to visit her, read to her, and have prayer. She told him that she had signed a WILL and that after some obligations were paid off after her death, the "RESIDUE" would go to the New Bedford Church, which would be more than nine thousand dollars.

For a number of years a former member of the church had handled her business affairs. She failed to appoint an Executor to administer her estate after she died. The pastor watched the legal notices. Her former business agent appointed himself her Executor and the Probate Judge accepted that. The WILL was published but nothing indicated any worth while residue. The pastor took a witness with him and talked with the Probate Judge who advised them to watch things very closely because he did not personally trust the Executor.

The pastor went to see the Executor and found him very unfriendly. He said there would not be any "RESUDUE." There was a real residue. The Pastor keep calling. On one visit he took old Brother Merton Ashley with him. Brother Ashley had been the Deacon of the New Bedford Church for 38 years straight running. The Executor told them that day that there would be a residue of around fifteen thousand dollars. He was getting friendly. He did not like the Conference. He wanted to deal only with the New Bedford Church and its pastor.

The pastor knew that the Conference knew nothing about what was transpiring but feared that if he managed the whole business that he might be censured. So - he told the Conference officials and they took over. They never told the pastor how much the Conference received but after the settlement the Conference gave the New Bedford Church \$7,500.00. With this sum and what members had already contributed, the building program, school, and all improvements were completely paid for so there was no debt. There was great rejoicing.

The last day before leaving with his family for Newfoundland, that Executor came to visit the pastor. In parting, the Executor said, -"You made a mistake in bringing the Conference into this. If you had continued handling this, more than thirty five thousand dollars would have gone into the Cause through the New Bedford Church. Mrs. Collins wanted it that way, being an old charter member."

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

After the Tent Effort, we went back into Odd Fellows' Hall but much interest had been lost. There was good attendance, but never the crowd we had in the beginning.

Every Sunday night a gentleman with outstanding personality got a chair and sat near the exit. He got away every time before the pastor could get to him.

Wednesday night Prayer Meetings were still being held in the home of Tom Potter, the husband of one of our members. It was the former Mayor's Mansion and had a very large parlor. Being in the center of the city it cost only one trolley fare to get there.

THE NEW BEDFORD CHURCH

One morning the telephone rang and a strange voice asked the Pastor to please meet him in Tom Potters home immediately but did not identify himself. He was the owner and manager of Radio Station W N B H. After introductions the following dialogue followed:-

Station owner: "I am owner and manager of Radio Station W N B H. I have attended every one of your meetings in Odd Fellows' Hall. I am a Roman Catholic, but you are preaching the truth and I want your lectures broadcast over my Radio Station ."

Pastor: I have considered that and went to your office one day. The rate is \$50.00 for a half hour and we can not afford it at the present time."

Station owner: (Laughing) "You only think you can't afford it."

Pastor: "I know we can't afford it at the present time."

Station owner: "Now listen. I want to put a remote control station here, one in Odd Fellow's Hall, and one in the Church. I shall do that free of charge."

Pastor: "But we still could not afford the service charge for even a one hour program at present. Why ! That would be \$300.00 per week and right now we can's afford \$50.00 for one half hour."

Station owner: (Laughing) I want all of your SERVICES broadcast over my station. The RUSSELITES have been on my station a few times and they want a contract for a year. I will not have it. They have gone on the air, called the Pope a HOG and the priests pigs, and the nuns disrespectful things. Even if I were a Protestant, I could not have such as that going out from my station. I have a contract right here all made out between Radio Station W N B H and Pastor Harold N. Williams. All you need to do is put your 'John Henry' on that dotted line, and you can have the whole thing for just \$9.00 per week instead of \$300.00. When those people come tomorrow morning I shall not be there. I want nothing to do with them. My secretary will simply tell them 'That man Williams got ahead of them! \$9.00 will pay for the electricity."

(The Russelites were first known as Milleneal Dawnists or Russelites after their leader, then International Bible Students, but today Jehovah's Witnesses.)

The pastor not only signed the contract but paid the \$9.00 for the first week out of his own funds. The broadcasts never cost the church anything. We used to receive as many as 150 fan letters Monday mornings. Even the most prominent Roman Catholic priest, the Mother Superior in the Nunnery in Fair Haven and enght trusted nuns listened to the broadcasts secretly. They wrote that they were praying for God to bless the speaker, but their letters must be burned. This must be kepy secret. I would like to tell you more about that.

THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF
ADVENTIST RADIO

THE NEW BEDFORD CHURCH

After we had been broadcasting three weeks, dear old Brother Merton Ashley telephoned, asking the pastor to meet him in the church. They sat in a front seat directly below the pulpit Mrs. E. G. White and Captain Joseph Bates had used in their meetings when they raised up that first company of Sabbath-keeping Adventists in New Bedford. The pastor had never heard of the vision given Mrs. White in North Dartmouth about the New Bedford Church. With tears of joy running down the cheeks of Merton Ashley, he told the pastor and read to him that vision. He said,- "Now that whole vision has been fulfilled in detail. She could not understand and none of us could understand how "invisible" flashes like lightning could go out from the New Bedford church carrying the MESSAGE. How could she see something invisible? IT WAS RADIO ! God revealed it to her in vision."

That dear old saint, Brother Merton Ashley and the young pastor had a real PRAYER MEETING there together.

The Portuguese Division did not live up to their agreement; possibly because they were new in the FAITH. The English group paid nearly every thing. In time the Portuguese left and had a church by themselves.

Much has happened since those days, 1924-1928, and the time this is written, 1981, but all that is recorded here is taken from the documents, notes, and records made back there and still in the pastor's possession.

THOSE OLD NEW BEDFORD DAYS ! How I cherish their memory. Most of the members I knew are now resting, awaiting the resurrection. A flood of memories come back to me. I long for Jesus to come and unite all the faithful again but together with Jesus.

God bless the New Bedford Church
members is my prayer.

Sincerely and humbly,

Harold N. Williams in his
ninety second year, still active
in God's ministry.

Harold N. Williams