

August 31, 1912

Route 1
Mt. Vernon, Ohio

Dear Brother Corder:

Your letter written August 25, addressed to Elder H. H. Votaw, has been handed to me by him with the request that I give you the information which you ask for. You seek information in regard to the committee which had to do with the revision of "Great Controversy" in 1911, and you ask also who was chairman of that committee.

The work which was done on "Great Controversy" in 1911 was not done by any regularly appointed committee authorized by the General Conference or by our publishing houses. Rather it was the group of workers comprising Mrs. Ellen G. White's office staff. She herself initiated the work of revision. Note her statement made in a letter written July 25, 1911:

"When I learned that 'Great Controversy' must be reset, I determined that we would have everything closely examined to see if the truths it contained were stated in the very best manner to convince those not of our faith that the Lord had guided and sustained me in the writing of its pages."--E. G. White Letter 56, 1911.

With this decision made by Sister White the attention of her office staff was directed to the task, with Elder Clarence C. Crisler taking the leading, active part in the work. Elders W. C. White and D. E. Robinson, Miss Mary Steward, and possibly others of the office staff assisted. As far as committee organization is concerned, I suppose Elder W. C. White served as chairman, Brother Crisler taking the leading part in the work. This group of workers did solicit the aid of certain individuals in Washington, Mountain View, Boston, and even in Europe, in securing verification of historical data and historical references for quoted matter. Individuals or groups outside of Mrs. White's office, however, were not responsible for the work which was done. On this point, Elder W. C. White wrote on July 24, 1911:

"With reference to the statement that the people at Washington, or the General Conference Committee men, have been doing this or that, right or wrong, in connection with this book, it is important that you should have a clear statement of facts regarding the matter.

"Our brethren at Washington and at Mountain View have done only that which we requested them to do. As stated in the beginning, we took counsel with the men of the Publishing Department, with State canvassing agents, and with members of the publishing committees, not only in Washington, but in California, and I asked them to kindly call our attention to any passages that needed to be considered in connection with the resetting of the book."

You will be interested to know that final decision as to just what should be done was made by Mrs. E. G. White. Elder W. C. White continues his statement:

"All decisions as to what should be changed, and what should be printed word for word as in the old edition, were made in Mother's office, by persons in her employ and working under her direction. Therefore there is no occasion for any one to say a word against the General Conference Committee men or the literary men at Washington, or against the book, because of anything done by the brethren in Washington or elsewhere in connection with this work."

In confirmation of this point, Sister White has written:

"As a result of the thorough examination by our most experienced workers, some changing in the wording has been proposed. These changes I have carefully examined, and approved. I am thankful that my life has been spared, and that I have strength and clearness of mind for this and other literary work."--E. G. White Letter 56, 1911.

Sister White was delighted when the new edition of the book appeared. Of this Elder W. C. White wrote on July 24, 1911:

"Since the printing of this new edition, Mother has taken great pleasure in looking over and rereading the book. Day after day, as I visited her in the morning, she spoke of it, saying that she enjoyed reading it again, and that she was glad that the work we have done to make this edition as perfect as possible, was completed while she was living and could direct in what was done."

Please note that Ellen White was pleased that the work could be done while she was living and "could direct in what was done." You may rest assured, Brother Corder, that Mrs. E. G. White, the author of "Great Controversy," was responsible for the 1911 revision of the book, and that in its revised form it expressed the truths as she wished to see them presented.

If you have further questions in regard to this matter of which you have written to Elder Votaw, you may feel free to write to me, and I shall do what I can to provide the answers.

With all good wishes, I am

Sincerely your brother,

Arthur L. White, Secretary
ELLEN G. WHITE PUBLICATIONS