

The Experiences of Elder J.H.N. Tindall

a Medical Evangelist for more than fifty years

(The following was requested from him.)

Elder Tindall was born into a Methodist home, but the teaching of Hell drove him from religion. He became an atheist. While a student in a law school in San Diego, California, a gold strike was made near the Mexican border. It was there he met a man—"a man of mystery" as he called him, who led him from the rocks in the gold field to the Rock of Ages and to an unwavering faith in God. His conversion took place

when this man was reading to him from the writings of Mrs. E.G. White on the love of Christ. He said: "The Spirit of God came upon me and I was lost in the glorious vision."

A little later he was directed to attend Loma Linda where he studied for the Gospel-Medical-Evangelistic ministry. A number of years later he returned to Loma Linda and took Chemistry and finished the Medical Dietetics course for lecture purposes.

A Call for a Change of Past Methods of Working the Cities:

The Medical Evangelism vision came to Mrs. White in 1910. The following is an excerpt referring to God's counsel in that vision: "During the night of February 27, 1910 a representation was given me in which the unworked cities were presented before me as a living reality, and I was plainly instructed that there should be a decided change from past methods of working. For months the situation has been impressed upon my mind, and I urged that companies be organized and diligently trained to labor in our important cities." *A Call to Medical Evangelism*, 14

The same year the vision came (in 1910), Elder Burden, business manager of the Medical School, and Elder R.S. Owen, Bible teacher of the College, came to Elder Tindall and asked him if he would answer the challenge of Mrs. White's vision. The school had decided to send him in answer to God's requests to make the first demonstration from that school in San

Bernardino, California. This was the beginning of his promoting this work for years in the large cities.

It is because of this unique mission that Elder Tindall was led of God to respond to, and which he held true to throughout his ministry, that we have spent more time in presenting his program in this syllabus. Elder Tindall is one of the very few ministers who have had this type of ministry. He is still very active today, and is still a great believer and advocate of this program. So let us study the blessings that God gave to him to show that this call to be a medical-evangelist is a real challenge that still faces us today, and that has wonderful results, just as God stated in the Spirit of Prophecy. As we study these stories and methods, may we keep in mind that in a singular way this man of God was used to demonstrate the truthfulness of the statements on this subject.

The first campaign—San Bernardino

Elder Tindall's wife was not yet an Adventist. They had a little baby. What should Elder Tindall do? Should he accept this invitation of Elder Burden and the brethren at the College? One day out on the hills near the College, a voice spoke audibly saying, "If you give up this call, you can have your wife and baby, but if you

don't you'll lose them." That was a terrible struggle. But the decision to answer God's call and leave the wife and child to God's care led Elder Tindall to begin plans for the campaign.

A male nurse (teacher in the college) and wife (an R.N.) joined the company, and San Bernardino, a place where failure had before

come to Evangelism projects, including a campaign in which health talks were given, was chosen as the area to demonstrate the vision that Mrs. White had received.

Pitching a tent next to a two-story building in which a ladies club met, the six-week campaign began. The president of the club heard the

What kind of converts

One man accepted the Sabbath, the Spirit of Prophecy, the State of the Dead, etc., but could not give up his tobacco. He stopped coming to the meetings. Elder Tindall visited him. He said that he could never give up tobacco. Elder Tindall plead with him, but the only response was, "Well, I'm afraid it will kill me, for I have heart trouble." So the Elder replied that he would place his nurse there with him to give him treatments and watch his heart, and would stay with him until he had received the victory. Through prayer and ministry, even though the man passed through a very severe time, he finally

The Hartford City Campaign

Elder Tindall was asked to go to Los Angeles to hold a campaign with Elder Owen, the Loma Linda Bible teacher, but the medical part would not be included in this campaign; and as he felt called to demonstrate this vision of 1910, he declined and went rather to Indiana.

He arrived with two fully trained nurses, and all the Conference could do at that time was to take him on and give the nurses \$3.00 each for six weeks. Elder Tindall told the nurses not to worry. What he had he would share with them, and he in full faith said that in six weeks time the Conference would be really interested in their program. This was a real test. If they failed, the nurses would be dropped, and the idea of this type of medical evangelism could well finish. What happened?

In Hartford City there was an Adventist church. There was no church service held in this building, only the Sabbath school meeting. After

health talk one day, and asked Elder Tindall to visit the club. Through the influence of the club he gained contact with the better class of the city and eventually the editor of the city newspaper. He opened his columns to the campaign without charge; and as a result of all these contacts 16 souls were won in that short time.

broke through with full victory. He was so glad. He placed his old pipe on a post in the back yard to remind him of the idol that almost took his life, and his eternal life.

Later that man made a loan to Loma Linda, without interest, of \$10,000 at a time when the institution needed it.

One of the sixteen converts that were baptized was Elder Tindall's wife.

This short campaign with its good results electrified Loma Linda; and truly showed that God had proven that this was the way to work the cities.

cleaning up the building, and painting a sign on the front of the church "Gospel Medical Missionary Evangelists," some announcements indicating a strong medical program were sent out to invite the people to attend.

The building was filled. Eventually even the editor of the local newspaper came to one of the health talks, and was so impressed with the work that he offered to open his paper to the campaign. C.E. Garnsey, nurse and medical evangelist, wrote some health articles for the papers and Elder Tindall was requested to write some columns concerning religion. So he wrote on our Adventist doctrines.

About ten to twelve miles away there was a Church of God that didn't have a resident pastor. They took these articles of Elder Tindall appearing in the paper and read them for their Sunday services. They didn't realize what they were getting into and eventually half of that

church accepted the truth and the Sabbath and were baptized. The treasurer of that church became the treasurer of our church.

So in a few months there were 48 people baptized. Tithe on all possessions was faithfully paid

The Indianapolis campaign

Tent pitched, a singer, and young observer minister added to the working force, and the meetings began. Nightly a tall stately gentleman would pass by on his way home from work. He stopped to listen, and before many nights had passed was coming into the tent and sitting on the back row. Every time he managed to get away before Elder Tindall could see him to talk with him, Then one afternoon a telephone call from that man invited Elder Tindall to come to this man's office.

Ushered into a beautiful mahogany office, Elder Tindall now faced the man. He was a real Christian, and God was impressing Elder Tindall with the fact that here was a man who was being touched by the Holy Spirit. The man said, "You ought to be in the public auditorium with all of the city churches behind you. I can't understand why you are in that tent." Elder Tindall replied, "You are a Christian?" "Yes," he said, "I'm first Elder of the Memorial Presbyterian church." Then Elder Tindall suggested, "You get your church board to vote for me to come to your church to hold these meetings, and then when they are behind me we shall go to the public auditorium with all of the other churches behind me." This he said he would do.

Taking the idea to his church board, he ran into trouble and the result was no invitation to speak in the Presbyterian church. So he telephoned Elder Tindall to come and see him again. Again the two were in the office and the tall man said that he was surprised at his minister's reaction; but that he knew another minister who would respond favorably. This man was a Baptist preacher. If ever there was an angel in human form, he is the one.

and members loaned money to the Conference which they needed. So successful was the campaign that the Conference President and his committee came down to see what was going on, and later they brought the company to Indianapolis.

The next day they went to see this clergyman. They entered his office and the tall man introduced our brother as Evangelist Tindall, who is preaching a wonderful message in the tent down town. Immediately the Baptist minister retorted, "You're a Seventh-day Adventist, aren't you?" "Yes," replied brother Tindall. "Well, I'm not subject to that old law," said the Baptist. Elder Tindall calmly replied, "Aren't you?" and he again said "No!" Then Elder Tindall asked him to read Rom.8:7. So he opened his Bible and read, "The carnal mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Then he displayed his angelic nature. The tall man was so astonished that he got up and left, and Elder Tindall bade him good-bye and also departed.

On the way out the tall man turned to Elder Tindall and said, "How can I keep the Sabbath? I'm a director of this corporation and that corporation, I have hundreds of men in my factory. I send men all over the world to get fine timber to come here for my veneer work. How can I keep the Sabbath?" Elder Tindall offered a prayer and then replied, "Friend, which is more important, your business or your soul?" He looked at him, and then turned and walked toward his car. He went only a few paces, and then turning said "You've answered my question. I'm going down to the factory to tell those men that from henceforth this factory is going to be a Sabbath-keeping factory." Arrangements were made and it was voted to so be by the men.

Eventually this tall man came into the truth. Who was this man? It was Mr. Talge! He gave over \$100,000 to the cause besides his regular tithes and offerings. He gave \$5,000 to South-

western Junior College, and thousands of dollars

to Southern Missionary College toward the boys' dormitory, which bears his name.

The call to Virginia

A new President came to Indiana. He was a good man but didn't see the reason for the medical being combined with the ministry of the word. He planned for Elder Tindall to teach young men to be evangelists, but did not want to include the medical phase.

Elder Tindall felt called to demonstrate the vision of 1910. Already he had seen God's blessing; and so when the President of the Virginia Conference said that he wanted to make the Gospel-Medical program a Conference policy and asked if there were two men that Elder Tindall knew who would come to his Conference to demonstrate this program, Elder Tindall responded, "We'll come." And this is how the work came to Virginia.

The President of Indiana wanted to keep Elder Tindall. After studying the Spirit of Prophecy

counsel he realized that this was God's program. But it was too late by this time for the call had already been accepted. Nevertheless, to show their confidence and blessing, the Indiana Conference voted \$1,000 of their tithe money to help him in his work in Virginia.

In this old aristocratic southern dominion a campaign was launched and resulted in fifty baptisms. The Conference committee was very impressed, and asked Elder Tindall to come to the Union Conference meetings to present the program. At that meeting the General Conference President, Elder Daniels, was likewise impressed with the program, and was convinced that this was truly God's program. So a little later a meeting of all the evangelists, union presidents, and local presidents east of the Mississippi River was called to convene in Washington.

Meeting of North American Evangelists, and Union and local Presidents

The program was studied, and then it was voted to unite Washington Sanitarium and College to work on a training program to attempt to combine the medical with the evangelistical world. The burden was expressed:—where can we get medically-trained personnel to join with

the ministry? But Elder Tindall replied, "Where can we get them ministers that are trained to lead out in this program? " This truly was the problem, and it has always thus remained, so that little came of the meeting held in Washington.

Farmersburg, Indiana

Back to Indiana for a rest and to attend to some past business dating back to the days when Elder Tindall was an atheist, he went. Upon arrival, the church was full and then wanted meetings. Elder Tindall didn't stop until thirty were baptized.

During that successful short campaign, a nurse from Wabash valley was a part of the

team. Catherine Voth, a German nurse, went into the homes of people and gave them massage and hydrotherapy treatments. Word of this ministry spread throughout the community and people came to the meetings. Truly the medical was a good entering wedge.

Combination of Conference and self-supporting workers form a company

In Terre Haute, Indiana, Elder Tindall had a burden to organize a self-supporting company

to go with him in his work. Three salaries, one for the Elder, the others for the medical helper

and Bible worker, were all that this company of twenty-two received from the Conference.

Who were these nineteen volunteers that had joined the team? It included a business man, a singer, and six nurses.

Now organized, the next step was to get a place to pitch the tent. The mayor was the notorious Don Roberts who later went to the penitentiary. He didn't want to give permission, but finally consented that they could use some property if they gained the approval of the neighbors.

This consent was obtained from all that could be seen, but some of the neighbors could never be contacted; but after the tent was up these same people showed up and complained so that the tent had to be moved away. This was a real test to the group. It was important that this be a success, for this was the first time such a group had joined together in evangelism in this way. They were desirous of demonstrating the effectiveness of such a program. But their troubles were not over. In this town the Adventist church had a bad name because the former elder of the church used to play cards in the rear of a saloon whilst drinking his beer. So in many ways this was not a desirable place to choose to demonstrate a new thing.

Finally a brewer offered the company a vacant lot that was in an obscure place. Here they pitched tent. Nearby a house in litigation came to the company. This became their headquarters. The nurses began to go out into the community to bring a blessing to the people there.

One night Elder Tindall had a dream. In it came the promise, "Thy light shall arise in obscurity." Over and over this was repeated. The tent was certainly pitched in an obscure place. This dream gave courage to them.

Shortly after this a lady came to the headquarters. "I have heard of your work," she said. "I am an editoress of a society paper that covers three states, and I would like to inquire further

about your work." She was given freedom to see every detail of the organization and talk freely with the workers. She left and wrote up her impressions in the paper. She stated that "we have heard of Adventists, but we have never seen Adventists like these. This is the most beautiful representation of the life of Jesus in His loving ministry that we have ever seen."

A little while later Elder Tindall was out on the front lawn in his work clothes doing his part to help in the upkeep of the grounds. Whilst bending over his work, he had a visitor. A gentleman came along and seeing him, introduced himself as a U.S. District Judge. Introductions being made, the judge asked the question, "Is it true that you have trained medical personnel that go into the homes of people and treat them without cost?" "Yes," Elder Tindall responded. The judge then pointed to his gray hairs and retorted, "You see these gray hairs? I have lived quite a few years. I know that you are not doing this for nothing, I know there is a bug under the chip somewhere." "Your honor," Elder Tindall replied, "you're right, there is a bug under the chip. It isn't the selfish bug you think it is, however. It's an unselfish bug and it will move that chip." "Well," he said, "I'm going to keep my eye on that chip." Elder Tindall answered, "This is just what we want you to do."

He was not the only one. Many in that place were doing the same. Time proved that this work was genuine, and prejudice was broken down and then hearts were broken with the message of salvation. The close of that campaign saw 60 people ready for baptism. But this was not all. A church was bought in that city, and even Mayor Don Roberts and a Jewish rabbi gave substantial donations to help pay for it. A business man built modern treatment rooms and so a wonderful center for Medical-Evangelism and 60 souls resulted from that campaign. Truly their light had risen in obscurity.

A second campaign in Indianapolis

Dr. Truman joined Elder Tindall for a series of meetings in Indianapolis. The preliminary meetings were held in a church that Mr. Talge had donated to the denomination. One night the sermon was on God's plan of Gospel-Medical-Evangelism. Mrs. Talge was present at the meeting although not an Adventist as yet. Hearing the thrilling program of love that God has given to our church she was moved, and with tears in her

eyes pulled off her diamonds and said, "Take these to pay for some treatment rooms in the church." They did, and there was enough money from their sale to build beautiful modern treatment rooms.

Free treatment were given to the people of that community and at the end of the campaign 132 people were baptized.

The Milwaukee, Wisconsin campaign

The same program of medical evangelism with treatments for the body as well as messages for the soul were given in this city, and as a result the identical number of people were bap-

tized as in the previous campaign. One hundred and thirty-two well-informed people were baptized into the church.

Did the converts remain in the church?

In 1956 Elder Tindall and his wife journeyed out to the General Conference. They stopped in at the Milwaukee church. Many of the converts have moved away and some have died, but even after forty years, some thirty to forty converts

were still there in the church in good and regular standing. Truly God's method of harvesting souls pays. The approach of love in deed as well as word cannot be bettered.

Tulsa and Oklahoma City campaigns

Again the same approach of the full ministry to man's needs was used and again God richly blessed. At Tulsa, 110 were baptized in the first campaign, and 203 accepted the truth in the second series at Oklahoma City. Dr. Lenore Campbell from the Medical College came to join the Oklahoma City campaign.

The minister of the Christian church said to Elder Tindall: "If I had your plan of evangelism I would turn this city upside down."

Billy Sunday, also was holding a city-wide revival, and some of our people feared this would affect our meetings. It was stated in the newspaper, "Sunday got the crowds, but Tindall got the converts." The editor called the Tindall campaign "A New Evangelism." In the first baptism, seven Seventh-day Adventist ministers baptized seventy-seven converts, seven at a time, into the Seventh-day Adventist church—so said the newspaper.

The Dallas, Texas campaign

Elder Tindall, Union evangelist, prepared to hold a campaign in that city. Dr. Mary McReynolds came from the Medical College to help him. The Union asked that a training school in connection with the campaign be held for delegates from the churches of the Union. This lasted for three months.

Dallas then had only a small Adventist church and it was situated on the edge of the city. So there was a real need to obtain better quarters for a church home to meet the needs of all classes in the city. Then one day word came that two Presbyterian congregations were merging and thus a beautiful church equipped with pews

and pipe organ was up for sale. What was Elder Tindall to do? The church was too poor, and so was the Conference; but in faith Elder Tindall rented the property with an option to buy. Where was the money to come from? For from somewhere \$23,000 was to be found.

One night a dream came to Elder Tindall. He was fishing and his hook went right to the bottom. It must be a great catch, he thought to himself. He tried to pull it up, but it wouldn't budge. Then a voice said, "Hold a tight line, and go on round to the other side and you will be able to pull it up." So, in his dream, he did this and up came a huge fish which he grabbed and ran, and didn't stop until he had reached home with it.

The next day he called his company in and told them that God was going to give them a big fish. Some important person would be won to the truth through this campaign. So the campaign was conducted in two rented halls, one for the evangelism and the other for the health talks and demonstrations.

Health lectures

The Medical College and the Conference jointly put on a campaign in Redlands, California, under Elder Tindall's leadership. Most of the staff of the college was used in a lecture series in this campaign. A book has been published, setting forth the plan, lectures, sermons, etc. Here Elder Glen Calkins first heard the truth preached, and through the influence of the campaign, the sanitarium, and the private studies, came into the truth.

Elder Tindall lectured in various clubs, organizations, schools, and business concerns. In this

The Tuesday night following Elder Tindall's dream, there came a man to the Medical meeting. It was the husband of one of the members. He was a meat packer, and hadn't come to any of the meetings as yet. But this night he came. That night a healthful meal was demonstrated and then each person was served a sample. Then, in walked the big fish... the meat packer, all 300 pounds of him. Elder Tindall sensed that this was to be the catch. Fellowship around the meal followed; and the man came back to other meetings and was finally baptized.

A few weeks before his baptism, into Elder Tindall's office walked this big man with a check for \$6,000 tithe. That campaign finished with 56 people receiving certificates from the training school which were delegates from the churches in the Union, 100 baptisms, \$18,000 in cash and pledges for the new church, and \$10,500 in tithes. The old church was traded in for the \$5,000 needed to have the new church debt free. Truly God had wonderfully blessed!

way he was able to meet the leadership of the various cities in which he would later hold campaigns; a good class of people would come to his meetings, and thus the health lectures aided in advertising the meetings that followed. In this way the entering wedge of the medical was clearly at work.

Thus we see that sometimes the entering wedge was through treatments, sometimes through cooking classes, and sometimes through health lectures given to public and business places.