

Brunson, John Alexander (1862–1943) and Sophia (Boatwright) (1864–1953)

DOUGLAS MORGAN

Douglas Morgan is a graduate of Union College (B.A., theology, 1978) in Lincoln, Nebraska and the University of Chicago (Ph.D., history of Christianity, 1992). He has served on the faculties of Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Maryland and Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee. His publications include *Adventism and the American Republic* (University of Tennessee Press, 2001) and *Lewis C. Sheafe: Apostle to Black America* (Review and Herald, 2010). He is the ESDA assistant editor for North America.

John A. Brunson was a prominent Southern Baptist minister who accepted Seventh-day Adventism in 1894, rapidly garnered wide acclaim in Adventist circles as a gospel revivalist and Bible teacher, but then returned to the Baptist ministry in 1904.

Sophia Brunson preceded her husband in making a public commitment to Adventism and helped influence him to do the same. She became a physician who gained recognition throughout the American South for her speaking and writing on health and temperance.

A Rising Southern Baptist Star

John Alexander Brunson, born April 17, 1862, was named after his father, who was killed four months later, August 31, 1862, fighting for the Confederacy at the Second Battle of Manassas (Virginia) in the American Civil War. He graduated from Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina and then trained for ministry at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.¹ He married Sophia Boatright in Ridge Spring, South Carolina, on June 2, 1889.²

Soon after their marriage the Brunsons, along with another couple, became the first Southern Baptist missionaries to Japan, arriving in Yokohama in November 1889. Their daughter, also named Sophia, was born in Japan on April 20, 1890.³ She would be their only child. After their return to the United States in the summer of 1892, attributed to health concerns, John became pastor of the Cheraw Baptist Church in South Carolina and a year later moved to the French Broad Baptist church in Asheville, North Carolina.⁴

A Turn to Adventism

The Brunsons encountered Seventh-day Adventism when George I. Butler conducted evangelistic meetings in Asheville during the spring and summer of 1894.⁵ Prior to his contact with Adventists, John Brunson had

developed a strong interest in biblical teaching about the second coming of Christ and had rejected conventional teachings about the eternal torment of unbelievers and the sanctity of Sunday.⁶ Sophia's influence was critical in encouraging her husband to take a stand on the Sabbath question and finally cast his lot with Adventism.⁷ In an editorial titled "Brunson Swallowed by the Adventists," the *Western North Carolina Baptist* expressed both disdain for the "jackasses" who had "come down to North Carolina" to teach their doctrine and surprise "that such a man as John A. Brunson has been charmed by their braying."⁸

The 1895 General Conference session that opened February 1 in Battle Creek, Michigan, issued Brunson a ministerial license and assigned him to work with Butler in District No. 2 (the South).⁹ However, he and Sophia remained in Battle Creek for the next several months, seeking better health at the Sanitarium while he did some preaching and she some lecturing on health and temperance and on Japanese culture.¹⁰ Before heading South, John was ordained as a Seventh-day Adventist minister at the Michigan camp meeting that concluded on September 30, 1895.¹¹

Sought-After Preacher

Brunson rapidly became one of Adventism's most sought-after preachers. He was also in high demand as a Bible teacher at the church's proliferating educational institutions. His first faculty appointment was at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, from 1897-1899.¹² During the summers he had a full itinerary of camp meeting preaching, especially 1898-1902.¹³

For much of 1900, he taught Bible and history at the Southern Industrial School in Graysville, Tennessee, along with his evangelistic and revival preaching at various points in the South. In April 1901, he preached at the landmark General Conference session in Battle Creek and in June and July for an evangelistic effort organized by the Washington, D.C. church. From there, it was back to the Midwest, where the General Conference Committee had requested him to preach at "as many camp-meetings as possible" in the newly-formed Lake Union Conference (comprising Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio). In September, Brunson headed east, first to the New York Conference camp meeting in Oswego and then to New York City to work with Stephen and Hetty Haskell until December when he returned to Battle Creek to join Dr. David Paulson in leading a Week of Prayer for the Review and Herald Publishing Association employees.¹⁴

"Clear views for the hour"

As 1901 drew to a close, A. G. Daniells, recently elected to lead the General Conference, informed readers of the *Review*, "The Lord is greatly blessing Brother Brunson with clear views of the demands of the hour, and with the power of the Holy Spirit to set forth these demands."¹⁵ The "clear views" Brunson was setting forth by this time reflected his own distinctive stamp on the Adventist message, something that he undertaken a serious quest to develop in 1900. His summary of the messages he had just preached at the 1901 New York Conference camp

meeting reflected a deepening dedication to the centrality of righteousness by faith.

Many of the distinctive features of the message were clearly expounded, while the grand central truth, Righteousness by Faith, that truth without which no man can enter the kingdom, was not neglected. . . . The effort was appreciated, and many gained a more intelligent apprehension of the facts of faith upon which to build their hope of ultimate success. Christ, dying in the sinner's stead as the only ground of acceptance with God, became more precious than before to disquieted, timid souls.¹⁶

These sermons were preached at Kingsford Park in Oswego to congregations numbering approximately 2,000. More than 20 were baptized.

The *Review and Herald* published several sermons and articles by Brunson during 1901 and 1902 in which he sought to place righteousness by faith at the center of Adventist eschatology and mission.¹⁷ He also made clear his conviction that the focal point of "righteousness by faith" was God's act of free grace *for* us rather than what God does *within* us:

What is the ground of our acceptance? And we reply that it is not our righteousness, nor our humility, nor contrition, nor tears, nor repentance, nor anything that the Holy Spirit has wrought in us, but what Christ has done for us. *The blood of Jesus alone constitutes the ground of our hope, peace, and joy.* Salvation is *all* of grace, not partly by works and partly by grace.¹⁸

For Brunson, righteousness by faith was not a doctrine that must be upheld alongside others, it needed to be seen at the heart of every Seventh-day Adventist teaching: "The truths of the sanctuary, the Sabbath, the second advent, all find a common center in this great, cardinal truth, and can never be proclaimed in their fullness until their relation thereto is recognized and properly appreciated."¹⁹

The Indispensable Brunson

In the Fall of 1901, Brunson's services were at such a premium that leaders responsible for more than one fledgling endeavor saw his presence as key, even essential to their success. Daniells wanted Brunson to return to Washington, D.C. as part of a major, General Conference supported effort to build up a strong Adventist work among both races in the nation's capital. However, he agreed for Brunson to work with the Haskells in another great metropolis where Adventists had just begun to establish a footing: New York City.²⁰

Brunson's work with the Haskells had just begun when pressing needs on other fronts emerged. Battle Creek College had just been moved and was beginning its first year of operation as Emmanuel Missionary College (EMC) in rural Berrien Springs, Michigan. It was a risky and somewhat controversial move and the school's president, E. A. Sutherland, was counting on Homer R. Salisbury as the main Bible teacher. But just before the schoolyear got underway, Salisbury was called to England to meet an urgent need for leadership of another

educational start-up, Duncombe Hall Missionary College (predecessor to present-day Newbold College). To fill the need created at EMC, Sutherland's thoughts "turned at once" to Brunson, confident that "he would be an excellent teacher, and would do good work for our young ministers."²¹

Haskell vehemently protested on the grounds that if Brunson were to depart at that critical moment, the entire New York project would be in jeopardy.²² With the help of Ellen White's intervention, Brunson remained in New York until December, when he left for Michigan and EMC, where the need for his services had become even more critical. The short-term intensive teaching from General Conference leaders A. G. Daniells, W. A. Spicer, and W. W. Prescott promised for the first semester at EMC to compensate for the loss of Salisbury failed to materialize. This caused "sore disappointment to the young ministers and other young people who came to the school for the special purpose of getting good help in the study of the Scriptures," Daniells acknowledged. "Had we not secured the services of Brother Brunson," he added, "our work would have fallen very flat, and the reputation of the school would have been ruined."²³ Brunson also generated favorable sentiment for the new school in the Berrien Springs community through a well-received series of public Bible lectures.²⁴

Daniells very much wanted to see Brunson remain at EMC, but conceded the validity of the travel-weary preacher's desire to return to the South and re-establish a more stable domestic life. Sophia had just completed a medical degree at the Ohio State University Medical School in Cleveland, where she transferred for her final year after beginning studies at the American Medical Missionary College in Battle Creek. The Berrien Springs area would offer little opportunity to open a successful practice compared to a large city.²⁵

George I. Butler, elected president of the Southern Union Conference in 1902, was eager to have Brunson back in the South again. He, too, characterized Brunson as indispensable for a missional goal, that of reaching the "higher classes in the South." Brunson, in Butler's estimation, was not only "one of the ablest preachers" in Adventism, but the church's "one able Southern preacher." As "the very pink of Southern high breeding" Brunson could be far more effective in gaining a hearing among white southerners than northerners who had to contend with barriers of suspicion ingrained by the traumatic history of Civil War and Reconstruction.²⁶ Butler's hopes were high for what Brunson could accomplish under his "generalship." His esteem for the man had, if anything, grown since they met in 1894: "There is not a hair of meanness in him. He is pure gold, true, honorable, devoted, earnest, truly pious and an imitator of Jesus."²⁷

The Rift Surfaces

Very soon though, a serious theological rift between the two became apparent as they preached for the Florida camp meeting in Bartow during October 1902. It took Butler by surprise. In his observation, Brunson had fully embraced and preached the full range of Adventist doctrine, including "the visions"—the prophetic authority of Ellen G. White.²⁸

Now, they seemed to be preaching at cross-purposes during the same series of meetings. As Butler saw it, Brunson was entirely preoccupied with justification by faith and gave insufficient attention to the distinctive doctrines of Adventism. Most disturbingly, Butler believed Brunson was veering toward the Calvinist doctrine of perseverance of the saints (or “once-saved always-saved”).²⁹ Nevertheless, Butler was still hopeful that as “a sort of spiritual father” to Brunson, his counsel on these matters would help his star convert and preacher make a great success in evangelizing cities such as Atlanta and New Orleans.³⁰

Brunson too felt the increasing dissonance between what he and Butler were preaching. During the next few months of apparent calm he was filled with inner turmoil, exacerbated by overtures from Baptist former associates seeking to win him back to their communion. Butler, upon returning to Nashville in May 1903 following the General Conference session, was stunned to find Brunson in “a very perturbed state of mind” and on the verge of leaving Nashville and separating from Adventism altogether.³¹

Butler convinced the distraught preacher to remain in Nashville and had him appointed associate editor of the union paper, then titled the *Southern Watchman*. Butler hoped that an extended respite from travel with physical exercise and preparation of articles for the *Watchman* to occupy his mind would help Brunson restore his health and bring his theology into balance.³²

For a time Brunson seem to be re-stabilizing in the Adventist work,³³ but serious issues remained unresolved, and Brunson’s editorial assignment ended up leading to new conflicts. Butler, who was editor of the *Southern Watchman* as well as union president, refused to print an article that Brunson wrote for the paper. Butler’s objection was that the article took the position that “the act of justification embraces all the sins of the past in a man’s life, and all the sins he will ever commit in his future life; that there is only one act of justification” and that those who are justified “have really a through ticket to the better world.”³⁴ The heart of the difficulty, in Butler’s view was that Brunson “runs back to the writings and teachings of the great Protestant reformers,” dwelling “in that latitude more than he does in the special characteristics of the last message.”³⁵

Brunson, once again “in a state of mental and spiritual disquietude—sore and perplexed,” poured out his soul to Daniells in a letter dated October 3, 1903.³⁶ Brunson still believed that Adventists were preaching much biblical truth but to him it seemed “imbued with a spirit of legalism that is entirely incompatible with the gospel of salvation by grace” and “the real soul-saving, heart-enlarging, spirit-elevating truths of righteousness by faith are neglected, and in consequence darkness has fallen upon the people.” Brunson longed to “preach this gospel of free grace to the world” but felt it no longer possible for him to do so while working along side another Adventist minister presenting the standard series of topics, many of which he regarded as “entirely secondary.”

Feeling that his “utterances both spoken and written, are under strict censorship,” Brunson resigned from employment with the Southern Union. He made his way to Battle Creek to meet with Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, hoping to find employment at the Sanitarium.³⁷

“I have a message for Brother Brunson”

Ellen White, then living at Elmshaven in northern California, wrote to Brunson in early January 1904 with counsel preserved in two documents: Letter 267, 1903, dated December 16, 1903 and Manuscript 2, 1904, “A Message of Warning,” dated December 15, 1903. In Manuscript 2, she warned: “The theories that you have been presenting are not in harmony with the Word of God and will lead you away from the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.”

By all accounts, John Brunson was receptive to the message that Ellen White had for him. Butler was encouraged by the “very kind and good spirit” in which Brunson had responded.³⁸ Though Brunson’s letter of reply has not been preserved, Ellen White apparently also found it positive because her February 8 reply to him contains no serious warnings or rebukes. Expressing concern about the preacher’s health, she recommended an extended visit to nearby St. Helena as an advantageous locale for reinvigorating it.³⁹

Butler, however, believed more work needed to be done to get the independent-minded preacher back on track doctrinally. He followed up swiftly in late January with a lengthy letter attempting to get his “son in the faith” finally to recognize that he could not be a power in the Adventist cause without fully embracing the “old landmarks” of its teaching.⁴⁰ But he failed to elicit any of the affirmation that he hoped Brunson would give on such subjects as “the Sanctuary, the [Three Angels] Messages, and the Testimonies [authority of Ellen White’s writings].” Butler reluctantly concluded that Brunson’s was thus “placing himself where he is *unusable*.”⁴¹ In this letter of February 12, Butler sought further counsel from Ellen White, but she had no response for him on the matter.

John A. Brunson, the man who, little more than two years before seemed to be needed everywhere at once, now saw no clear path forward in Adventist ministry. At some point in late February or March, he made his decision. He returned to South Carolina and sought restoration to Baptist fellowship and ministry without compromising the deeply-held convictions he held as an Adventist, though no longer one who could meet the criteria that G. I. Butler articulated.

“I am more in harmony with Baptists than Adventists”

In an open letter published in the May 31, 1904 issue of the *Southern Watchman*, Brunson said farewell to the Adventist community.⁴² “You will perhaps be more pained than surprised when I say that I have been restored to Baptist fellowship,” he began. He explained that “mature deliberation disclosed to me that I am more in harmony with Baptists than Adventists.” At a hearing before a committee of Baptist clergy and laity, Brunson made clear that he still held convictions regarding eternal punishment and the seventh-day Sabbath that were not in harmony with “prevailing Baptist views.” Nonetheless the committee unanimously recommended his readmission to membership in his former home church, Ebenezer Baptist in Florence, South Carolina. He gave

closure to his experience in Adventism with these words:

I have kindly feelings towards Adventists and bid them God speed in any work that elevates humanity and wins souls to Christ. Much of their teaching I indorse; some I condemn. Many of their principles are correct and must prevail. What truth I have learned from them I love and will proclaim from Baptist pulpits as I did from Adventist.

Brunson's return to the Baptist ministry proceeded swiftly. The October 6 issue of the Nashville-based *Baptist and Reflector* reported that Brunson had "accepted the care of the church at Elloree, S. C."⁴³ Brunson's interaction with Adventists was not entirely over, though. The *Charlotte News* reported in September 1908 that "Rev. Dr. John A. Brunson, of Battle Creek, Mich., . . . one of the strongest preachers in the Baptist denomination in America" would preach for the opening session of the South Carolina State Baptist Convention.⁴⁴ Brunson had left Elloree for Battle Creek in July 1908 for health reasons but also served as "pastor of the Sanitarium" for the next several months. He remained at the Sanitarium, preaching for services on both Sabbaths and Sundays, until April 1909.⁴⁵ He then returned to the South to become pastor of the Baptist church in St. Matthews, South Carolina. Six years later, Brunson accepted a call to the pastorate of Grace Baptist Church in Sumter, South Carolina, where he served from 1916 to 1941 when he retired from full-time ministry and became emeritus pastor. He died in Sumter from heart disease on November 22, 1943.⁴⁶

What of Brunson's assurance in 1904 that he would proclaim the truth he learned from Adventists in Baptist pulpits? The fact that he thrived in Baptist pulpits for more than 35 years after leaving Adventism suggests that he could not have preached such points as essentials for all claiming to follow Jesus Christ. Yet, scattered hints of a lasting impact from Adventism in his ministry occasionally surface in newspaper reports. For example, Brunson seems to have been an outspoken opponent of Sunday laws in the southern "Bible Belt" – the region of the country in which they were most strongly supported.⁴⁷

After his retirement, a little over a year before his death, Brunson accepted a guest preaching appointment at First Presbyterian Church in Sumter on July 26, 1942. At a time when Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime controlled most of continental Europe, Brunson's subject was, "The Prophecy of Daniel as it is found in the second chapter."⁴⁸

The Race Question

Apart from passing references to positive experiences preaching to Black and mixed-race congregations as an Adventist,⁴⁹ research for this article did not discover any documents directly revealing Brunson's views on race relations. To thrive for decades as a Southern Baptist minister, as he did, would have necessitated, at minimum, acquiescence to segregation. Still, it seems worthwhile to note that Brunson's death prompted an extraordinary tribute from the Trustee Board of Morris College, an historically-black school in Sumter. It read in part:

. . . We have found him to be a humanitarian and a friend to Morris College and the colored people as a whole.

. . . His heart overflowed with a concern for human happiness and he had an abiding consideration for the rights and feelings of others. . . .

. . . Above all he was a man of God, teaching and living the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in simplicity and in truth.⁵⁰

John Brunson's death came a few months after the 54th anniversary of his marriage to Dr. Sophia Brunson. She practiced medicine for 50 years, published a syndicated newspaper column, "Health and Beauty," and became recognized as "a pioneer woman physician of the South." She died on March 10, 1953, at age 89.⁵¹ The Brunsons daughter, Sophia, did not marry and continued living in Sumter until she passed away in 1972.

Legacy

Despite all the accolades and superlatives accorded John Brunson during his brief sojourn in Adventism, his departure elicited little stir or even public remark. He was rapidly and thoroughly forgotten. Yet, recovery of the long-lost and poignant, even painful memory of the Brunsons' entry into, journey through, and exit from the Adventist community could be the basis for therapeutic reflection on a wide range of questions about Adventist identity, teaching and mission.

SOURCES

Articles

Allee, N. W. "The Southern Field." *ARH*, December 26, 1899.

Brunson, John A. "The Oswego (N. Y.) Camp-Meeting." *ARH*, October 1, 1901.

Brunson, John A. "Tennessee," *ARH*, May 1, 1900.

Brunson, Sophia B. "Through the South." *ARH*, October 3, 1899.

B[utler], G. I. "Closing Labors in North Carolina." *ARH*, October 30, 1894.

B[utler], G. I. "Later From Asheville, North Carolina." *ARH*, July 31, 1894.

Butler, Geo. I. "A Personal Statement." *ARH*, August 27, 1901.

Daniells, A. G. "Preparing for Field Work." *ARH*, December 24, 1901.

DeGaw, M. Bessie. "Closing Exercises of Emmanuel Missionary College." *ARH*, July 1, 1902.

"A Dissenting Baptist Brother." *Daily Charlotte Observer*, July 15, 1894.

"Dr. Sophia Brunson, Sumter Physician, Dies; Rites Tomorrow." *Charleston News and Courier*, March 10, 1953.

"Gospel Meeting By Elder Brunson, Seventh Day Adventist Evangelist." *Lexington Daily Leader*, May 10, 1900.

"Great Platform Meeting." *Sumter Daily Item*, February 22, 1924.

"In Rev. Brunson's Case." *Asheville Weekly Citizen*, July 26, 1894.

"Rev. Brunson Buried in Sumter." *Charleston News and Courier*, November 24, 1943.

"S.C. Baptists to Meet in Union." *Charlotte News*, September 22, 1908.

"Resolutions—Dr. John A. Brunson." *Sumter Daily Item*, December 11, 1943.

Brunson Sermons and Articles

Brunson, J. A. "Christianity as a Promoter of Health." *Battle Creek Idea*, December 24, 1908.

Brunson, J. A. "Salvation and How to Attain It." *Battle Creek Idea*, February 4, 1909.

Brunson, J. A. "Sermon." *General Conference Bulletin*, April 21, 1901.

Brunson, J. A. "The Test and Result of Discipleship." *Battle Creek Idea*, February 11, 1909.

Brunson, John A. "Babylon and the Loud Cry." *ARH*, December 10, 1901.

Brunson, John A. "Farewell Sermon by Pastor Brunson." *Battle Creek Idea*, April 23, 1909.

Brunson, John A. "The Grace of Giving." *ARH*, November 24, 1901.

Brunson, John A. "The Ground of Our Peace." *ARH*, August 12, 1902.

Brunson, John A. "Jesus and the World Problem." *Battle Creek Idea*, March 11, 1909.

Brunson, John A. "The Laodicean Message, the Sifting, and the Loud Cry." *ARH*, February 4, 1902.

Brunson, John A. "The Oswego (N. Y.) Camp-Meeting." *ARH*, October 1, 1901.

Brunson, John A. "Rise and Progress of the Missionary Movement." *Battle Creek Idea*, March 19, 1909

Brunson, John A. "Righteousness by Faith." *ARH*, April 1, 1902.

Brunson, John A. "The Saving Power of the Gospel." *ARH*, March 18, 1902.

"Elder John A. Brunson's Withdrawal From Our Church." *Southern Watchman*, May 31, 1904.

Correspondence

Brunson, J. A. to A.G. Daniells. October 3, 1903. Ellen G. White Estate Incoming Correspondence, <https://ellenwhite.org/correspondence/> (hereafter cited as EGWIC).

Brunson, J. A. to A.G. Daniells, January 1, 1904. EGWIC.

Butler, G. I. to A. G. Daniells, January 31, 1904. Presidential Incoming Correspondence, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland (hereafter cited as GCA).

Butler, G. I. to A. G. Daniells, February 23, 1904. GCA.

Butler, G. I. to J.H. Kellogg, January 31, 1904. John Harvey Kellogg Papers John Harvey Kellogg Papers. G.I. Butler-J.H. Kellogg correspondence, January-June, 1904. Center for Adventist Research. Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI (hereafter cited as CAR).

Butler, G.I. to J. H. Kellogg, May 27, 1904. CAR.

Butler, G. I. to J.H. Kellogg, June 9, 1904. CAR.

Butler, G. I. to E. G. White, November 15, 1902. EGWIC.

Butler, G. I. to E. G. White, May 22, 1903. EGWIC.

Butler, G. I. to E. G. White, July 8, 1903. EGWIC.

Butler, G. I. to E. G. White, December 7, 1903. EGWIC.

Butler, G. I. to E. G. White, January 1, 1904. EGWIC.

Butler, G. I. to E. G. White, February 12, 1904. EGWIC.

Butler, G. I. to W.C. White, June 11, 1902. EGWIC.

Butler, G. I. to W. C. White, February 22, 1913. EGWIC.

Daniells, A. G. to W. C. White, July 21, 1901. EGWIC.

Daniells, A. G. to W. C. White, May 15, 1902, EGWIC.

Daniells, A. G. to W. C. White and A.T. Jones, September 23, 1901. EGWIC.

Daniells, A. G. to E. G. White, October 16, 1901. EGWIC.

Haskell, S. N. to E. G.. White, October 10, 1901. EGWIC.

Haskell, S. N. to W.C. White, October 29, 1901. EGWIC.

Haskell, S. N. to W.C. White, January 1, 1902. EGWIC.

Kellogg, J. H. to G. I. Butler, January 18, 1904. CAR.

Kellogg, J. H. to G. I. Butler, June 4, 1904. CAR.

Kellogg, J. H. to G. I. Butler, January 24, 1904. CAR.

Kellogg, J. H. to W. C. White, January 24, 1904. CAR.

Kellogg, J. H. to E. G. White, July 4, 1895. EGWIC.

Sutherland, E. A. to E.G. White, November 6, 1901. EGWIC.

White, E. G. to John A. Brunson, December 16, 1903, Letter 267, 1903. Ellen G. White Writings, <https://m.egwwritings.org/> (hereafter cited as EGWW).

White, E. G. to John A. Brunson, February 8, 1904, Letter 75, 1904. EGWW.

White, E. G. to G.I. Butler, January 12, 1904, Letter 17, 1904. EGWW.

White, Ellen G. "A Message of Warning." Manuscript 2, 1904. December 15, 1903. EGWW.

NOTES

1. "Rev. Brunson Buried in Sumter," *Charleston News and Courier*, November 24, 1943, 9; "United States Census, 1880," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M6SH-PHB>; 20 February 2021), John A Brunson in household of Hannah Brunson, Palmetto, Darlington, South Carolina, United States; citing enumeration district ED 40, sheet 256D, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), FHL microfilm 1,255,227.
2. "Dr. Sophia Brunson, Sumter Physician, Dies; Rites Tomorrow," *Charleston News and Courier*, March 10, 1953, 2; "Sophia Boatwright," *FamilySearch*, accessed June 1, 2021, <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/timeline/K4RR-NY6>.
3. *Southern Baptists in Japan* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1940), 4; "Brunson, John Alexander," obituary from unidentified source posted at "John Alexander 'Jack' Brunson II," *FamilySearch*, accessed May 31, 2021, <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/memories/K4BL-23P>.
4. "Rev. John A. Brunson," *Darlington News*, July 26, 1894, 4; "Gospel Meeting By Elder Brunson, Seventh Day Adventist Evangelist," *Lexington Daily Leader*, May 10, 1900, 6.
5. Geo. I. Butler, "A Personal Statement," *ARH*, August 27, 1901, 558-559.
6. G.I. Butler to J.H. Kellogg, June 9, 1904, CAR; "Later From Asheville, North Carolina," *ARH*, July 31, 1894, 490.
7. Butler to Kellogg, June 9, 1904.
8. "In Rev. Brunson's Case," *Asheville Weekly Citizen*, July 26, 1894, 7.
9. "General Conference Proceedings," *General Conference Bulletin*, March 3, 1895, 442; "Distribution of Labor," *General Conference Bulletin*, April 1895, 518.
10. O.A. O[Isen], "Camp-Meetings," *ARH*, October 15, 1895, 664; "Around Town," *Asheville Citizen Times*, March 12, 1895, 4; J.H. Kellogg to E.G. White, July 4, 1895, EGWIC.
11. O[Isen], "Camp-Meetings," 663-664.
12. Geo. A. Irwin, "Union College," *ARH*, May 18, 1897, 314.

13. Geo. A. Irwin, "Camp-Meetings in Iowa and Minnesota," *ARH*, June 21, 1899, 398; "Seventh Day Adventists Here," *Mitchell Capital*, June 24, 1898, 1; R.M. Kilgore, "Texas Camp-Meeting," *ARH*, August 23, 1898, 54; N.W. Allee, "The Southern Field," *ARH*, December 26, 1899, 841; Sophia B. Brunson, "Through the South," *ARH*, October 3, 1899, 640-641.
14. John A. Brunson, "Tennessee," *ARH*, May 1, 1900, 235; "Southern Industrial School," *General Conference Bulletin*, October 1, 1900, 216; A.G. Daniells to W.C. White, July 21, 1901, EGWIC; "Camp-Meetings," *General Conference Bulletin*, April 1, 1901, 506 (Ohio Conference was part of the Lake Union until it was transferred to the Columbia Union in 1907); "The key note . . .," *New York Indicator*, September 11, 1901, 4; A.G. Daniells, "The Week of Prayer in Battle Creek," *ARH*, December 31, 851.
15. A.G. Daniells, "Preparing for Field Work," *ARH*, December 24, 1901, 839.
16. John A. Brunson, "The Oswego (N. Y.) Camp-Meeting," *ARH*, October 1, 1901, 641, emphasis in the original.
17. John A. Brunson, "Babylon and the Loud Cry," *ARH*, December 10, 1901, 786.
18. John A. Brunson, "The Ground of Our Peace," *ARH*, August 12, 1902, 10.
19. John A. Brunson, "The Saving Power of the Gospel," *ARH*, March 18, 1902, 163.
20. A.G. Daniells to W.C. White, May 25, 1906, EGWIC; Gerald Wheeler, "Haskell, Stephen Nelson (1834–1922)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, accessed June 3, 2021, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=69G2>.
21. E.A. Sutherland to E.G. White, November 6, 1901; A.G. Daniells to W.C. White and A.T. Jones, September 23, 1901, EGWIC.
22. S.N. Haskell to W.C. White, October 29, 1901, and to E.G. White October 10, 1901, EGWIC.
23. A.G. Daniells to W.C. White, May 15, 1902, EGWIC.
24. M. Bessie DeGaw, "Closing Exercises of Emmanuel Missionary College," *ARH*, July 1, 1902, 16.
25. Daniells to W.C. White, May 15, 1902.
26. G.I. Butler to W.C. White, June 11, 1902, EGWIC.
27. *Ibid.* In using the term "generalship" for his administrative acumen in this and other letters, Butler seems to be referring to such qualities strategic thinking and persuasive skill more than sheer authoritarianism.
28. Butler, "A Personal Statement," 558.
29. Butler to Kellogg, June 9, 1904.

30. G.I. Butler to E.G. White, November 15, 1902, EGWIC.
31. G.I. Butler to E.G. White, May 22, 1903, EGWIC; J.H. Kellogg to G.I. Butler, January 24, 1904; G.I. Butler to J.H. Kellogg, June 9, 1904, CAR.
32. Ibid.
33. G.I. Butler to J.H. Kellogg, June 9, 1904, CAR.
34. G.I. Butler to E.G. White, December 7, 1903, EGWIC.
35. G.I. Butler to E.G. White, July 8, 1903, EGWIC.
36. J.A. Brunson to A.G. Daniells, October 3, 1903. EGWIC.
37. J.A. Brunson to A.G. Daniells, January 4, 1904, EGWIC.
38. J.H. Kellogg to W.C. White, January 24, 1904, CAR; Kellogg to Butler, January 24, 1904; G.I. Butler to E.G. White, January 28, 1904, EGWIC.
39. E.G. White to J.A. Brunson, February 8, 1904, Letter 75, 1904, EGWW.
40. G.I. Butler to J.H. Kellogg, January 31, 1904, CAR.
41. G.I. Butler to E.G. White, February 12, 1904, Ellen G. White Estate Incoming Correspondence.
42. "Elder John A. Brunson's Withdrawal From Our Church," *Southern Watchman*, May 31, 1904, 14.
43. "Among the Brethren," *Baptist and Reflector*, October 6, 1904, 9
44. "S.C. Baptists to Meet in Union," *Charlotte News*, September 22, 1908, 1.
45. "Farewell Sermon By Pastor Brunson," *The Battle Creek Idea*, April 23, 1909, 6.
46. "Dr. Brunson Coming Here," *Watchman and Southron* (Sumter, South Carolina), December 15, 1915, 5; "Rev. Brunson Buried in Sumter."
47. "Local News," *Watchman and Southron* (Sumter, South Carolina), March 30, 1927, 4.
48. "Dr. Brunson Will Preach Sunday At Presbyterian Church," *Sumter Daily Item*, July 25, 1942.
49. Butler to E.G. White, June 11, 1902; Andrew Kalstrom, elder of the racially mixed Washington, D.C. church, said that the church was "delighted" with Brunson's preaching there in 1901 and would have been happy for him to remain, in contrast to another pastor who tried to segregate seating in the church; A. Kalstom to A.G. Daniells, July 22, 1901, GCA; "Great Platform Meeting," *Sumter Daily Item*, February 22, 1924, 5.

50. "Resolutions—Dr. John A. Brunson," *Sumter Daily Item*, December 11, 1943, 4.

51. "Dr. Sophia Brunson, Sumter Physician."

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000