

Sunday, July 5, 2015—Grace Life School of Theology—*Grace History Project*—Supplemental Lesson #3: Bullinger, Welch, Coles, and the Acts 28:28 Dispensational Frontier

Introduction

- In the original Grace History Project (GHP), five lessons were devoted to discussing “Rightly Dividing E.W. Bullinger: The Emergence of Acts 28ism” (Lessons 76 through 80). The goal of these lessons was to chronicle E.W. Bullinger’s (EWB) journey from an Acts 13 dispensational position in the 1890’s (see *The Mystery: Secret Truth Revealed* from 1895 and *The Church Epistles* from 1902) to the Acts 28 dispensational position toward the end of his life (1907 through 1913).
 - Since Lessons 76 through 80, I also wrote an article for *The Journal of Grace Theology* titled “[Rightly Dividing E.W. Bullinger: The Most Intriguing Story Never Told](#)”
- In Lessons 76 through 80 we identified the following factors as having contributed to EWB changing his dispensational position.
 - 1897—the publication of Sir Robert Anderson’s (SRA) *The Silence of God*. Sir Robert makes reference to what he calls the “Pentecostal Dispensation,” i.e., he viewed the Acts period as its own dispensation. This is one of the hallmarks of the Acts 28 position, the idea that Israel could have repented for their part in the death of Christ all the way up until Acts 28. While this is subtle in *The Silence of God*, it introduces into the dispensational conversation the notion that the book of Acts is its own dispensation and that the dispensational boundary should be drawn in Acts 28:28. (See [Lesson 76](#) for more details.)
 - 1907—EWB writes *How to Enjoy the Bible* and carries forward many of the ideas first expressed by SRA in *The Silence of God* ten years earlier. The dispensationalism presented in *How to Enjoy the Bible* (1907) shares the following key points with *The Silence of God* (1897):
 - The book of Acts comprises its own transitional dispensation. In other words, no new dispensation begins during the Acts chronology.
 - Israel is able to repent according to Acts 3:19-20 at any point within the Acts period until Acts 28.
 - When Paul quotes Isaiah 6:9-10 to the Jewish leadership in Rome in Acts 28, Israel is here rendered in unbelief and it is here that the dispensational boundary should be drawn.
 - As of 1907, Acts 28 dispensationalism was in an embryonic state. Many of the ingredients were present but they had not yet fully germinated. Neither Dr. Bullinger nor

Sir Robert Anderson, as of 1907, had formally suggested that Paul's epistles need to be divided into two distinct groups. (See [Lesson 77](#) for more details.)

- 1908— according to Charles Welch's [Autobiography](#) (see pages 92-93) it was during a conversation in late 1908 between EWB and Mr. Charles Welch (CHW), that the embryo of Acts 28ism was fully fertilized by Welch's suggestion that Paul's epistles need to be divided between those written before and after Acts 28.

- “Toward the end of 1908 I felt moved to write to Dr. Bullinger. I had seen a copy of *Things to Come* while still acting as Secretary to the Bible Training College, and although I had been warned against the Doctor's 'heretical' teaching, much that I read struck a familiar chord. After an interval, I again saw an issue of *Things to Come* and was amazed to see an article which I could have duplicated from my own notes. Evidently, I thought, whoever wrote that article had moved along similar lines to myself, and so, with some trepidation I plucked up courage to write to the Doctor, asking him for an opportunity to see him and talk over one or two important points in which I felt bound to differ from his findings. . .

After some delay, the Doctor granted me an interview at the offices of the Trinitarian Bible Society, Bury Street, London, and that hour's interview proved to be the most critical turning point in my life and ministry. The Doctor invited me to say what was troubling me, and I feared that, after all, he would smile indulgently, pat me on the shoulder and tell me to go home and forget all about it. Again I plucked up courage and here is a transcript of our conversation.

- Welch—From your writings Doctor, I believe I am right in saying that you do not believe 'The Church' began at Pentecost, but rather, that the Dispensational Boundary must be drawn at Acts 28?
- Bullinger—That is so. I have made that quite clear.
- Welch—Well, what seems to me to stultify the position you have taken regarding Acts 28 is that you nevertheless treat the whole of Paul's epistles as one group, starting with Romans, ending with Thessalonians, with Ephesians somewhere in the centre.

To my amazement and joy, the Doctor looked at me for a moment, then slapping his thigh with his hand said:

- Bullinger—That scraps half the books I have written. But we want the Truth, and the Truth is there in what you have said.
- I felt that here was indeed 'grace'. Dr. Bullinger was a man of world repute, a scholar and an elder. I was a young man of twenty-eight years and unknown. We

spent the remainder of our brief interview in considering the dispensational implications that arise from observing the relation of Paul's epistles to the boundary line of Acts 28 thus:

Epistles Before	Acts 28	Epistles After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galatians • Ephesians • 1 Thessalonians • 2 Thessalonians • Hebrews • 1 Corinthians • 2 Corinthians • Romans 	Dispensational Boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ephesians • Philippians • Colossians • Philemon • 1 Timothy • Titus • 2 Timothy (Welch, 93)

- In summation of this 1908 conversation between EWB and CHW, I stated the following in November 2012 when I taught lesson 78:
 - “Before proceeding further with this conversation it is important to notice the following points: first, Bullinger acknowledges that Welch had understood him properly that the dispensational boundary should be drawn in Acts 28; second, prior to this exchange, Bullinger had not considered dividing Paul's Epistles written before Acts 28 with those written after. The *Grace History Project* believes that at this exact moment the Acts 28 position is born. What makes Acts 28ism is its division of Paul's epistles into two different groups. . .

The *Grace History Project* believes that at this point EWB made a critical mistake. Bullinger went along with Welch's division of the Epistles rather than choose to rethink and redraw his dispensational boundary line. All Bullinger would have had to do is retreat back to his earlier dispensational teachings in *The Mystery: Secret Truth Revealed* (1895) or *The Church Epistles* (1898). By embracing Welch's suggested division of Paul's Epistles, more problems were created than solved. Being the elder statesmen in this case, Bullinger should have exercised more caution. It seems that Bullinger may have been overwhelmed in trying to juggle *The Companion Bible*, *Things to Come*, his secretary duties for the Trinitarian Bible Society, and his domestic responsibilities. In essence, what EWB did is turn over his editor duties for *Things to Come* to a man he hardly knew.” (See [Lesson 78](#) for more details.)

- That Welch's account, presented in his *Autobiography* has been widely accepted as the truth with respect to the origin of the Acts 28 dispensational position is evidenced by Juanita S. Carey's reproduction of it in her book length work *E.W. Bullinger: A Biography* (see pages 179 through 182) published in 2000. In addition, the [Wikipedia entry on Charles H. Welch](#) contains a section titled “Meeting With Dr. E.W. Bullinger” in which Welch's telling of the events is put forth in an uncritical manner.

- Like most of his book length works CHW's *Autobiography* (1960) originally appeared in *The Berean Expositor* in serial form. The portion containing CHW's account of the 1908 conversation with EWB first occurred in the [November 1949](#) issue of the *The Berean Expositor* some 41 years after the fact (see pages 103 to 104 of the link provided above).

J.J.B. Coles and the Acts 28:28 Dispensational Frontier (Feb., 1907)

- In February 1907, more than a year before the conversation between EWB and CHW in late 1908, *Things to Come* published an article titled "The Acts of the Apostles Considered Historically and Dispensationally" by John Jefferis Bartlett (J.J.B.) Coles.
- According to Otis Q. Sellers, Coles was a Baptist minister who first marked "a dispensational boundary line" in Acts 28:28. Sellers, who came to accept the Acts 28 position in 1934, gives Coles, not EWB or CHW, the credit for being the first to suggest that Acts 28 served as a significant dispensational frontier. Sellers even claims, that Mrs. Coles wrote him "letters of commendation and encouragement" from very early on his ministry for taking up the position. (Sellers, 36-37)
- In his articles from February 1907, Coles states the following regarding the nature of the Acts period.
 - "Just as Christ was offered to Israel and was deliberately refused, being a stone of stumbling to "both the houses of Israel," so too, was the offer made by the Holy Spirit through St. Peter, that if there was a national repentance on the part of the Jews in Judea and Israel in Dispersion, those "times of refreshing" would come, and GOD would send back the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21) . . . The sentence of National blindness, foretold in Isaiah 6, seven hundred years before this critical point in Israelitish history, was impending over the favored nation. . . .When at Rome, as recorded in Acts 28, he (Paul) addressed the Jews for the last time as a corporate body at the close of his ministry, as far as going to them in their synagogues was concerned; he quoted that "one word"—that dreadful sentence of blindness which now for nearly two thousand years has darkened the eyes and hardened the hearts of the still rebellious and unbelieving People." (Coles in *Things to Come*, 16)
- Coles also makes a distinction between the Pauline epistles written before and after Acts 28. Coles teaches that the revelation of the mystery was not made to Paul until after Acts 28.
 - ". . . after he (Paul) had pronounced the sentence of blindness of Isaiah 6, he was sustained in his prison at Rome; and he was soon afterward inspired to write the most profound of all the sacred writings—the Epistles to the Ephesians, the Philippians and Colossians, oracles of GOD which contain far deeper truth concerning Christ and the Church, the Mystery hidden during and from "the age-times," to which there is no allusion in the Acts of the Apostles. . . . And we must also bear in mind that the revelation of the mystery "hid in GOD" was not set forth until "the age-times" were over, and the

period covered by the Acts formed the closing epoch of those age-times before the present interval of grace began—Christ, “the hope of glory.” This mystery among the Gentiles contains a deeper and fuller revelation of “the Gospel of the glory” than is revealed in the chapters of the Acts. . . . Again, this recognition of the peculiar and unique of the thirty-three year history recorded in the Acts leads to a very important question as to the Dispensation teaching of the *Chronological* order of the Pauline Epistles.” (Coles, in *Things to Come*, 16-17)

- Coles clearly suggests that I and II Thessalonians and I Corinthians were written before the close of the Acts period and therefore are speaking about the return of Christ to establish his kingdom on earth.
 - “The earlier Epistles, especially I and II Thessalonians and I Corinthians, were written before the close of the historical period covered by the Acts, when the Parousia, or return of the Kingdom of Christ, was still being offered to Israel and the nations. . . . So as long as the offer was being made within those thirty years covered by the Acts of the possible immediate return of Christ, it is not natural to suppose that those early Epistles of Paul, written before that offer was definitely and hopelessly refused by Israel (both in Judea and in the Dispersion), and which contain special allusions to the Parousia, would be, *in their scope, in accordance with the then distinct offer and dispensational dealing of God?*” (Coles, in *Things to Come*, 17)
- Coles makes a distinction between the coming of Christ mentioned in I and II Thessalonians and I Corinthians and the “translation of the Church” mentioned in Philippians 3. Such a distinction is one of the hallmark doctrines of the Acts 28 dispensational position.
 - “It is remarkable that it is only in these earlier Epistles, written before his imprisonment at Rome, and during the course of those thirty-three years covered by the Acts, that the Parousia is mentioned. The word “Parousia” does not once occur in Ephesians and Colossians, and the translation referred to in Philippians 3 is in connection with the “On-High Calling” and the Prize which was connected with the great mystery of Christ and the Church, and which mystery, or secret purpose of GOD, was not fully declared when the Parousia, which would more immediately precede the kingdom, was the goal then offered to faith.

To his faithful and beloved servant when in prison in Rome, GOD would yet more fully reveal this wondrous glory of Christ as the future head of the Universe, with the Church as His fullness (pleroma); which, deeper and more exalted truth, followed that rejection of the Parousia and the Kingdom of I Thessalonians 4, which was now postponed indefinitely; and possibly to be taken up again as a distinct offer only when the Mystery, hid in GOD, (to which there is no allusion in Thessalonians) should have been consummated, or received up in glory.” (Coles, in *Things to Come*, 17)

- In a footnote, Coles even makes use of the Romans 16:25-27 Postscript Theory, later popularized by EWB in *Foundations of Dispensational Truth* to explain away Paul's having known the mystery during the Acts period when he wrote Romans.
 - “The Epistle to the Romans was written in A.D. 58, but the postscript (Cp. 16:25-27) in which the Mystery is mentioned was written later. Compare this postscript with the very similar words in Ephesians 3:20-21. This postscript has long puzzled transcribers and textual critics; and, not being understood, has led to the putting out of verse 24, as in the R.V.” (Coles, in *Things to Come*, 16-17)
- The following facts are clear from Coles' February 1907 article in *Things to Come*: 1) Coles taught that Acts 28:28 served as the dispensational boundary, 2) Paul's epistles written before Acts 28:28 should be separated from those written after his imprisonment in Rome, 3) Coles did not view the catching up described in I Thessalonians 4 as pertaining to the church of this dispensation and therefore makes a distinction between the Parousia and “out calling” or “calling on high” of Philipians 3, and 4) Coles uses the Postscript theory to bolster his argument that Paul did not know the mystery during the Acts period.

Dr. Bullinger Fully Endorses and Expands Upon Coles' Article (April, 1907)

- In the April 1907 issue of *Things to Come*, two months after Coles' from February 1907, and still well over a year before the conversation spoken of by Welch, EWB wrote an article titled, “The Pauline Epistles: The Dispensational Teaching of Their Chronological Order.”
- In this article, not only does EWB support the dispensational finding of Coles, but he also presents for the first time a chart dividing Paul's epistles into two different groups with respect to Acts 28 being the dispensation boundary.
- In fact, it would not be an understatement to view the February article by Coles as the impetus for the April article by EWB. Regarding the *chronological* order of Paul's epistles (EWB had already previously written extensively on their *canonical* order) Dr. Bullinger stated the following:
 - “And here we must refer our readers to the articles by a beloved brother in the February *Number of Things to Come* (1907), on “The Acts of the Apostles: Considered Historically and Dispensationally.”

The truth flowing from this is so important that, if it should compel us to revise our own views in some particulars, or even to re-write certain matters, let us together thank God for the light that reveals further truth, and for the grace which enables us to receive, believe, and use it.” (EWB in *Things to Come*, 38)

- EWB fully embraced Coles' notion that Acts 28:28 was the dispensational boundary.
 - “But we cannot say that it was fulfilled and put into force until Acts 28:25-26, when Paul for the third and last time, pronounced it once more, as the special mouthpiece of the Holy Ghost, changing the future words of the prophecy into a present declaration of its fulfillment: “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers, saying Go unto this people and say, (quotes Isaiah 6). This declaration as to Israel was immediately followed by the proclamation—“Be it known, therefore, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it” (v. 28).” (EWB in *Things to Come*, 39)
- After having fully embraced Coles' position, EWB set forth the following chart dividing Paul's epistles into two groups with respect to Acts 28.

- “Now we come to the Dispensational lessons from the *Chronological* order of the Pauline Epistles. Up to the great demarcation of time in Acts 28:25-26, we have them thus, chronologically, according to the generally received dates:

I Thess., A.D. 52, from Corinth.

II Thess., A.D. 53, from Corinth.

I Cor., A.D. 57, from Ephesus (Spring).

II Cor., A.D. 57, from Ephesus (Autumn).

Gal., A.D. 57, from Corinth (Winter, or Early Spring, 58)

Rom., A.D. 58, from Corinth (Spring).

-----Acts 28:25-26 –A.D. 62 -----

Eph., A.D. 62 from Prison in Rome (Spring).

Col., A.D. 62 from Prison in Rome (Spring).

Phil. AD. 62 from Prison in Rome (Autumn).

I Tim. A.D. 67, from Corinth.

Titus, A.D. 67 from Corinth.

II Tim. A.D. 68, from Prison in Rome.” (EWB in *Things to Come*, 39)

- Regarding this breakdown, EWB puts forth for the first time the notion that the church of the Acts period was a different church than the one spoken of in the prison Epistles.
 - “We have the important epoch and date in the center: the pivot on which the whole turns. There are six Epistles on either side of it. It will be noted that after the Epistle to the Romans in A.D. 58 we have a gap of four or five years of silence, in which no Epistles were written.

Then, out of the silence came the final quotation of Isa. 6, and the formal pronouncement of the sentence of judicial blindness on the nation of Israel.

These churches, formed before Acts 28, were composed, as we have said, chiefly of the “elect remnant,” the “heavenly calling” with some Gentiles. And we may ask, may not these believing Hebrews be “the church of the firstborn ones” mentioned in the next chapter (Heb. 12:23)? If they were not, then we may ask: Where are we to look for the Church?

It is not that they had a different standing to the Church of God in our own day. They were the firstborn ones, and we are the later-born. To the later-born a precious secret was unfolded, which could not have been revealed to those who were earlier born. For, as long as the offer of the Kingdom to the earthly portion of Israel was open, the mystery could not be made known. Not until the sentence of judicial blindness has been finally pronounced, and the prophecy of Isaiah 6 fulfilled, could Paul be commissioned to reveal the great secret and publish it abroad.

It had doubtless been already previously revealed to Paul himself; but he had not yet received authority to make it known by “prophetic writings” for the obedience of faith.

How was Paul to have known that the nation would not repent and turn to the Lord, and that God would not send Jesus Christ and fulfill all the Old Testament prophecies? How was Paul to know that he would not actually himself be among those who would be “alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord?”

This is the blessed hope revealed in the very first Epistle (I Thess. 4:15), to “the election of grace.” But the nation did not repent, and that blessed hope, and more, is now ours, for it is still in abeyance. We have all that, and we have the wondrous secret of the Mystery besides.

It is not that, before Acts 28, the Church of God had one standing and hope, and that we have another; but that they had great things and we have greater.” (EWB in *Things to Come*, 39-40)

- In order to buttress these claims, EWB states the following regarding the mystery in the Acts period epistles.
 - “This will be evident if we remember the fact that there was not a word about the Mystery in Thessalonians, or in the six earlier Epistles. There was nothing in God’s dealing in grace with the elect remnant that would be incompatible with God’s then Dispensational dealings with Israel as a nation.” (EWB in *Things to Come*, 40)
- In order to defend this assertion, EWB then resorts to the Postscript Theory to explain away the mention of the mystery in Romans 16 during the Acts period (see pages 40 and 41). Meanwhile, just as in *Foundations of Dispensational Truth*, the occurrence of the word “mystery” in

I Corinthians 2:7 is completely ignored other than to say that Paul did not make it known at that time.

- Much more could be said about the dispensational teachings set forth by Dr. Bullinger in his April 1907 article but for the purposes of this lesson we have seen enough. It is beyond historical doubt that nothing CHW presented in his late 1908 conversation with EWB was new to the good Doctor. Bullinger had already embraced the position first articulated by Coles not Welch and written about in *Things to Come* well over a year before Bullinger even knew who Welch was.

Evaluating the Options

- Given the clearly documentable nature of these facts, it seems to me that there are only two options regarding how one should view this situation.
 - Option 1: EWB was disingenuous with Welch regarding the novelty of the ideas Welch presented.
 - Option 2: Welch fabricated the story years later to bolster the perception that he was the founder of the Acts 28 position.

Option 1

- Regarding option 1, R.B. Withers, a long time antagonist of CHW's, stated the following:
 - "If so, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it was hardly ethical for the Doctor to greet with enthusiasm a "discovery" by Mr. Welch which he himself had published less than two years before, even though with the laudable intention of encouraging a young man. We can only wonder what sort of reception Mr. Welch would have had, if instead, he had pointed out the many defects in the diagram." (Withers [Dispensational Truth](#))
 - "This was not clear to me, so I asked Mr. Welch for an elucidation. He wrote: "If you will read again the account of the interview with Dr. Bullinger it was not that the Dr. had not endorsed Acts 28 as a boundary, but that he was illogical, in still persisting that the Canonical order also was binding. My attitude was that the Canonical order was uninspired, and to end up with Thessalonian epistles after admitting Acts 28 stultified the whole concept. "All this seems clear enough but for the circumstances that, well over a year before, in "Things to Come" for April, 1907, p. 39, Dr. Bullinger had published a similar table to the one quoted above, in an article unsigned and separate from the section "Contributed Articles." Why, then, did he pretend to Mr. Welch that all this was a fresh idea to him? Why was he so enthusiastic over being told something that he had himself set out in his own magazine long before?" (Withers, [The Differentiator](#). Vol. 21 New Series April, 1959 No. 2)

- “In conclusion, I would emphasize that I am not attacking Dr. Bullinger in any way. All I am concerned here to point out is that Mr. Welch's assertions exhibit Dr. Bullinger in a very curious light. As to whether these assertions are or are not true, I have no means at all of forming an opinion. I am simply drawing attention to such documentary evidence as is available to me. It is very regrettable that Dr. Bullinger should have been led astray in his ministry by the false doctrine started by Mr. Coles; but apart from that, his memory is still revered by me and will continue to be.” (Withers, [The Differentiator](#). Vol. 21 New Series April, 1959 No. 2)
- Acts 28 proponent Otis Q. Sellers, in the January 1958 issue of *The Word of Truth*, acknowledges that J.J.B. Coles was the first to suggest that Acts 28:28 was a “dispensational boundary line.” Sellers views CHW as carrying forward the findings of Coles. In the end, Sellers does not view CHW as the originator of the position. (Sellers, 36-37)
- Option 1 is not a very charitable view of EWB.

Option 2

- This option suggests that CHW deliberately misrepresented the facts some 41 years later to bolster the perception that he was the point of origin of the Acts 28 dispensational position and that he was the one who convinced EWB to embrace the position.
- Why did Welch wait until 1949 to give an account of something that happened in 1908? One reason might be that by 1949 anyone who might have known differently had passed away or was infirmed thereby leaving no one to challenge his story.
 - Mr. & Mrs. Coles—(Sellers claims to have received “letters of commendation and encouragement from Mrs. Coles after he embraced the Acts 28 position in 1934. It is reasonable to assume that 15 years later in 1949 Mrs. Coles had passed away.)
 - Elizabeth Dodson (EWB’s niece)
- Bullinger’s niece, Elizabeth Dodson, who had refused to turn over editorship of the *Companion Bible* to CHW after the death of her uncle, was eighty-five years old and a semi-invalid by 1949, according to EWB’s chief biographer, Juanita S. Carey. Dodson died on December 27, 1950 at the age of eighty-six, a little more than a year after CHW wrote his November 1949 article recounting his 1908 conversation with EWB.
- In 1956, CHW wrote a book titled [The Grapes of Eschol](#). Twice in this book CHW mentions a series of articles written by Coles in *Things to Come* in 1907 and 1908 on Israel’s experience at Kadesh Barnea.

- “In 1907 and 1908, J. J. B. Coles wrote a series of articles in ‘Things to Come’ under the Editorship of Dr. E. W. Bullinger entitled KADESH BARNEA. . .” (Welch, *The Grapes of Eschol*, 4)
- “The question is (says J.J.B. Coles in his opening article in Things to Come, March 1907),” (Welch, *The Grapes of Eschol*, 4)
- Not only does CHW know that Coles wrote for *Things to Come* in 1907 and 1908 but he even references Coles’ article from March 1907. March 1907 is the month between February 1907 when Coles’ article on the Acts 28 dispensational boundary first appeared and EWB’s full endorsement of Coles’ work in April 1907.
- It is beyond my ability to comprehend that someone as familiar with the articles contained in *Things to Come* during 1907 and 1908 as CHW would not have known about the articles by Coles and EWB from that same year.
- Making matters worse for CHW is EWB’s own testimony of when he first knew/wrote about the Acts 28 dispensational boundary and its chronological effect upon Paul’s Epistles written during the Acts period.
- The last series of articles that EWB wrote for *Things to Come* was titled “The Lord Hath Spoken.” After his death this series of articles was collated and published as a standalone volume, *The Foundations of Dispensational Truth*. EWB’s editorial from the January 1913 issue of *Things to Come*, titled “The Lord Hath Spoken IV”, was a continuation from Volume XVIII, p. 135. In the third paragraph we read the following: “The reason for these two different orders (difference between the chronological and canonical order of Paul’s epistles) has already been explained; so that we need not say more about it now.” Attached to this statement is the following footnote, “See Vol. XIII., April, 1907.” What did Dr. Bullinger write in April 1907 but an article which endorses Coles’ suppositions and a diagram dividing Paul’s epistles into two groups with respect to Acts 28 (see notes above). (EWB in *Things to Come* Vol. XIX, 1)
- Making matters worse for CHW is the following citation found at the end of EWB’s January 1913 article: “Under ‘Things New and Old’ (p. 7), we re-insert an article from Vol. XIII. (1907).” An examination of the “Things New and Old” section on page 7 reveals the reprinting of an article titled “The Acts of the Apostles Considered Historically and Dispensationally (Reprinted from Vol. XIII., Feb., 1907).” Who was the author of this article from February 1907? No other than J.J.B. Coles. Who was the editor of *Things to Come* in 1913 but CHW. So not only does CHW know of Coles’ 1907 article in 1913 but when he reprints it in “Things New and Old” he fails to give Coles credit for the article. (EWB in *Things to Come* Vol. XIX, 4 & 7-9)
 - This explains why the entire contents of Coles’ 1907 article found its way into the posthumous publication of EWB’s *The Foundations of Dispensational Truth* without a single citation noting Coles as the author. It was on account of CHW’s poor editorship of the January 1913 issue of *Things to Come* that Coles was never given credit for his work.

By failing to note that Coles was the author, later editors seeking to compile all the stand alone articles in “The Lord Hath Spoken” series into a single volume mistook the material as belonging to the pen of EWB instead of Coles, the rightful author.

- In February 1913, EWB continued his “The Lord Hath Spoken” series in which he states, “As long ago as 1907 (now nearly six years) we wrote on this very subject, so that this is no new subject belonging to 1911-12.” Once again, Dr. Bullinger for a second time identifies 1907 as the time frame in which he came to understand and write about the Acts 28 dispensational boundary and its affect on the chronological order of Paul’s epistles. (EWB in *Things to Come* Vol. XIX, 13-16)

Conclusion

- CHW’s claims from 1949 are at odds with statements originating from EWB’s one pen. It seems to me that the most logical explanation for all of this is that CHW concocted the story years after the fact in an attempt to bolster his own standing as the perceived father of the Acts 28 dispensational position.
- CHW knew enough of Coles’ 1907 article to reprint it without giving him credit as the author and making it seem that it had been written by EWB. He then conceivably waited 41 years, to tell his story until anyone who might have known better had either passed off the scene or was too infirmed to challenge his story.

Works Cited

Bullinger, E.W. “The Pauline Epistles: The Dispensational Teaching of Their Chronological Order: in *Things to Come* Vol. XIII, 38-41.

Bullinger, E.W. “The Lord Hath Spoken” in *Things to Come* Vol. XIX, 1-4 & 7-9.

Bullinger, E.W. “The Lord Hath Spoken” in *Things to Come* Vol. XIX, 13-16.

Coles, J.J.B. “The Acts of the Apostles Considered Historically and Dispensationally” in *Things to Come* Vol. XIII, 15-17.

Ross, Bryan. *Grace History Project*. Lessons 76 through 80.

Sellers, Otis. Q. “The Present Administration” in *The Word of Truth* Vol. 15 No. 2 January, 1958.

Welch, Charles H. “Less Than the Least or Treasure in Earthen Vessels” in *The Berean Expositor* November, 1949.

Welch, Charles H. *The Grapes of Eschol*. 1956.

Welch, Charles H. *Autobiography*. 1960.

Withers R.B. [Dispensational Truth](#).

Withers R.B. [The Differentiator](#). Vol. 21 New Series April, 1959 No. 2.