

# Greek Manuscript Research Center at the James White Library

## History of the Center

The Andrews University Greek Manuscript Research Center was begun in 1994 by Dr. W. Larry Richards. It was established with two goals in mind:

- ◆ Examine the primary Greek sources of Christianity and classify them according to the criteria used by textual criticism
- ◆ Provide a center for graduate students who are interested in the discipline of New Testament textual criticism

## Andrews gaining fame for collection

By MARJORIE SNYDER  
Berrien Springs Correspondent

BERRIEN SPRINGS — North America's largest microfilm collection of New Testament Greek manuscripts is putting Andrews University on the map.

A recently acquired set of 155 microfilm manuscripts will be added to the present collection and housed in the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary building when a new addition is completed.

Manuscripts have been collected from all over the world, according to Larry Richards, New Testament professor and director of the newly established Greek research center. Richards is planning a trip to England soon to examine other manuscripts to add to the collection.

Biblical manuscripts are ancient handwritten copies of the books of the Bible.

Monks and scribes carefully copied the words and letters of the original Bible authors. The manuscripts are in the original language, which is Greek for the New Testament.

Old manuscripts are not handled by many people, since they are fragile and would deteriorate, Richards said. The first ones were written on papyrus.

During the time of Constantine, around 300 A.D., people began using leather, which lasts longer, Richards said.

Over time, copies of these manuscripts numbered in the thousands. But due to human error, time, distance and culture, the manuscripts contain myriad variations. In spite of these differences,

there are no theological differences in the manuscripts.

"We are busy now with textual criticism of the manuscripts, which is to differentiate and classify the manuscripts based on reading patterns that show up," Richards said.

"For example, you may have five different patterns in the writings for the love of God, or love of the Lord. The specialists study the variations in the ancient texts to arrive at the original readings of the manuscripts."

Andrews University President Nels-Erik Anderson is very pleased with the establishment of the Greek research center.

"We want the world to know that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is dedicated to the highest-quality biblical research," Anderson said. "We are proud that this research will be so richly associated with Andrews University."

The seminary at Andrews first made a name for itself in the world of textual criticism by being a participant in the International Greek New Testament project in 1994. This ongoing American-British venture is creating an exhaustive multi-volume reference tool that will provide a record of the readings of these ancient New Testament manuscripts, according to Jack Stenger, Andrews University information officer.

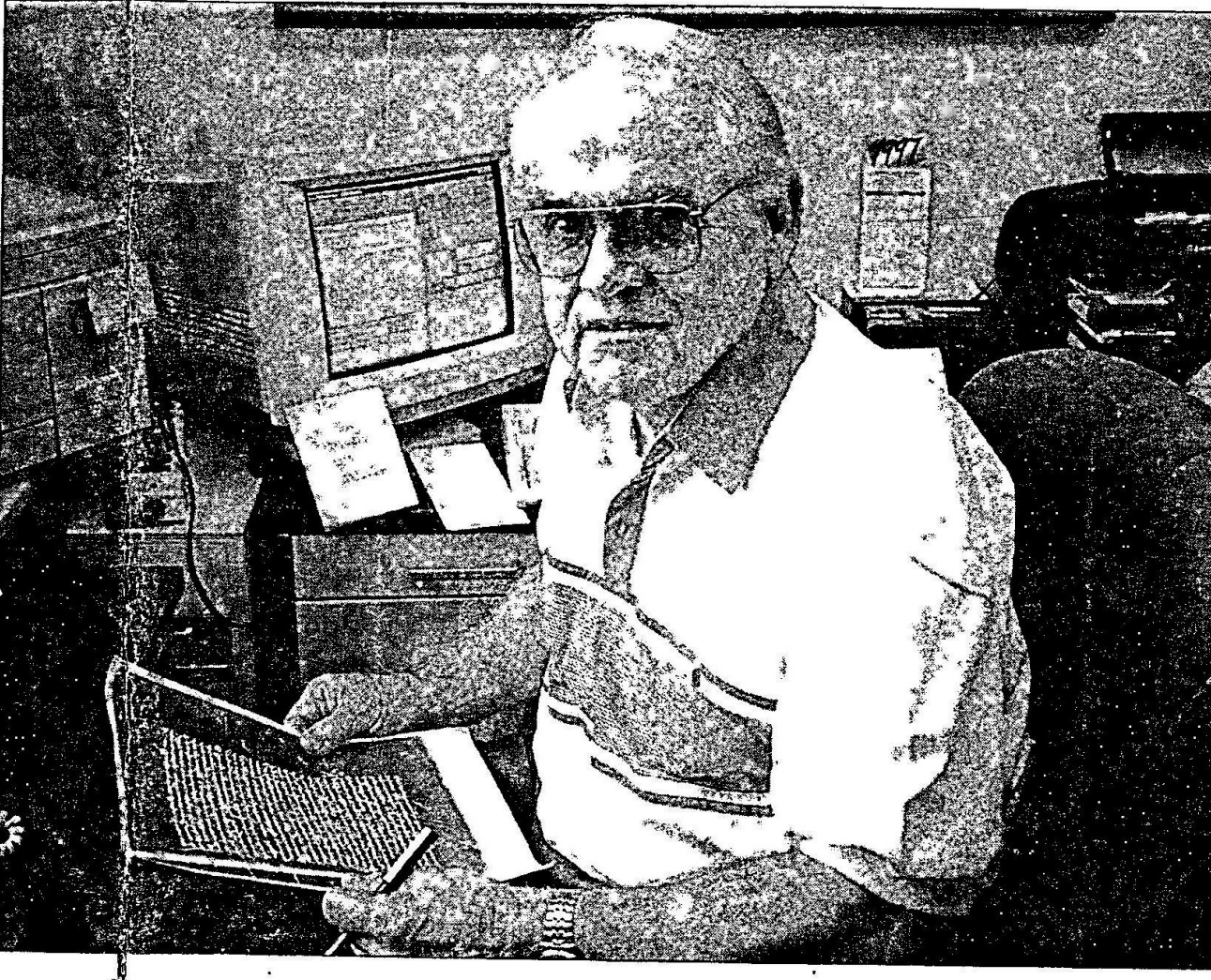
Richards said three graduate students are working with him on the manuscripts, and that number could grow to 10 in the next few months.

The research center, which is now located on the top floor of James White Memorial Hospital, is open to qualified persons who wish to research the manuscripts, Richards said.

"We hope to soon have people from all over North America coming to our center to make use of this New Testament collection," he continued.

The Adventist Theological Seminary is one of six academic schools at Andrews University. With 3,000 students from North America and around the world, Andrews is the largest and oldest Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning in the world.

For information on hours the center is open, call the James White Memorial Library at 471-3282.



Marjorie Snyder photo

**MICROFILMED MANUSCRIPTS:** Larry Richards, New Testament professor and director of the newly-established Greek Research Center at Andrews University, looks over some of the microfilms of New Testament Greek manuscripts recently acquired by Andrews University.

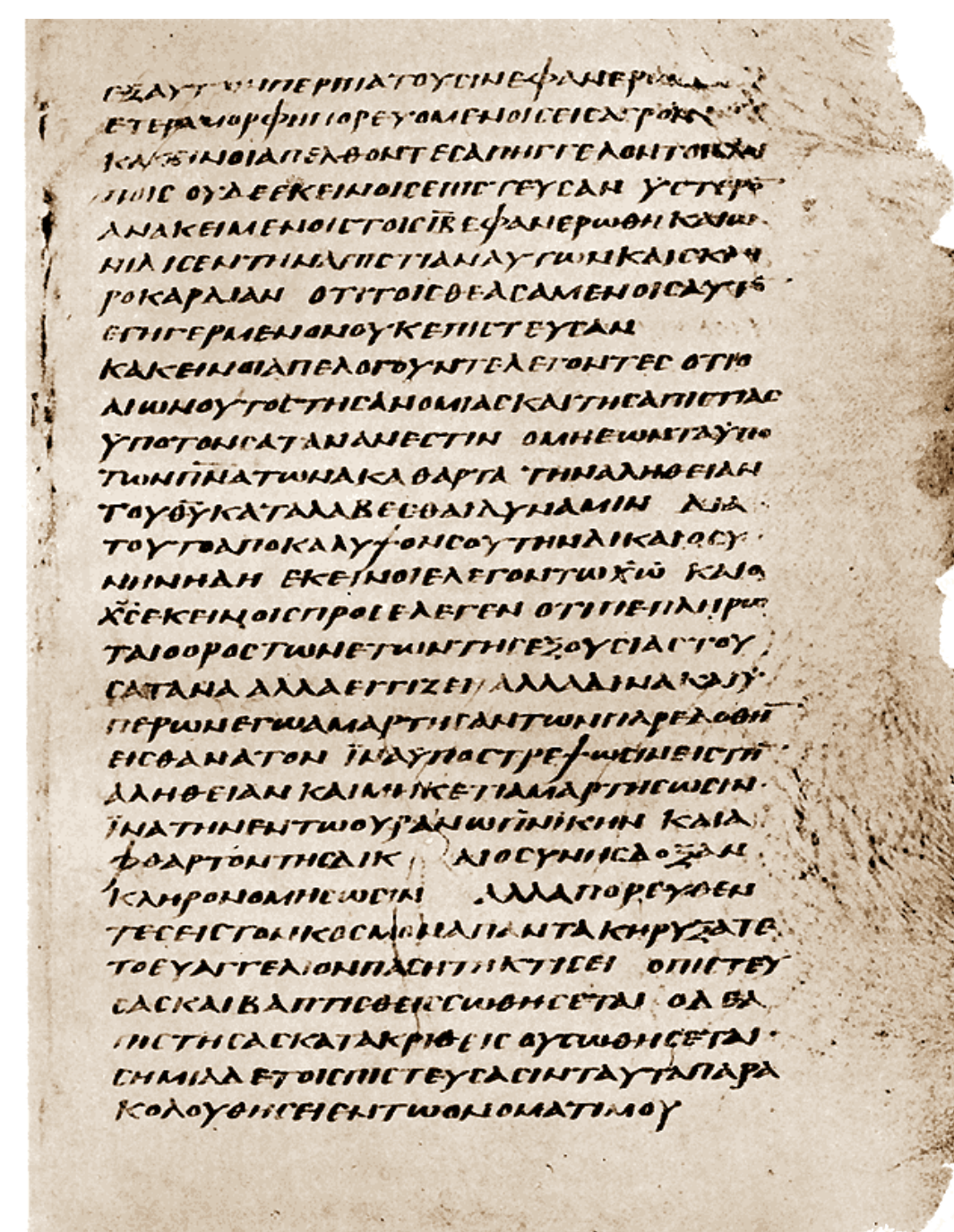
Article in The Herald-Palladium February 22, 1997

The Center's primary academic contribution was to the International Greek New Testament project, which seeks to create a comprehensive apparatus for the Greek New Testament. Collation work at the Center focused on the Catholic Epistles, which had been largely ignored by textual critics.

By Jonathan Campbell

## Current Holdings at the Center

- 449 microfilm rolls
- 431 NT manuscripts
  - 12 Majuscules, including:
    - ◆ Vaticanus
    - ◆ Bezae
    - ◆ Washingtonianus
  - 419 Miniscules
- 10 NT Greek lectionaries
- 1 LXX manuscript
- 7 extra-biblical Greek texts including:
  - Basil
  - Gregory Nazianzus
  - John of Damascus



Page from Codex Washingtonianus containing the Freer Logion, an addition to the Gospel of Mark unique to this codex.

## Possibilities for Research at the Center

- ◆ Resume work with International Greek New Testament Project
- ◆ Include hands-on learning for courses teaching textual criticism
- ◆ Provide research opportunities for MA and PhD students
- ◆ Assist in indexing manuscripts for the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung's New Testament Manuscript Room



Scribal illuminations like this one adorn many ancient New Testament manuscripts

## Current Status of the Center

The Greek Manuscript Research Center will be fully operational by the end of the 2017 Spring semester in the former seminary library workroom off the Seminary Reference Room.

For further information or to request access to the materials, contact:

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