THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Douglas F. Campbell teaches Sociology at Erindale College, University of Toronto

Brian Prideaux is engaged in ecumenical work for the Anglican Church in Canada and is a doctoral candidate at the Toronto School of Theology

John Webster Grant is retired Professor of Church History, Emmanuel College, Toronto School of Theology

John A. Vissers teaches at the Ontario Theological Seminary, Toronto

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

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The Rev. Ernest Nix
4112 Pheasant Run
Mississauga ON
L5L 2C1

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PRESBYTERIANS AND THE CANADIAN CHURCH UNION : A STUDY IN SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

DOUGLAS F. CAMPBELL

ERINDALE COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Introduction: While the Canadian church union of 1925 received considerable attention over the years from historians (Silcox, 1933; Grant, 1967; Clifford, 1985 for example), it has received comparatively little attention from sociologists (Mann, 1963 is an exception). Given the different emphases in the two disciplines, one might expect the interested sociologist to concentrate on some dimensions of the church union experience which would be of less interest to the historian, particularly the church historian. One such interest for the sociologist would be social class. It isn't that the historian was not aware of the social class factor; on the contrary, Silcox, under the caption "A Superiority Complex" in his perceptive work, wrote:

> The Presbyterians, with the Anglicans, considered themselves in most communities to be "the social leaders," although in Toronto -- which was the exception to the rule -- the wealthiest families were Methodist. In a comparatively new country, especially in one where all British traditions, aristocratic and otherwise, are cherished, the peculiar role of "social position" cannot be ignored. Some part of the opposition [to church union] was undoubtedly due to "class consciousness" (Silcox, 1933:199-200; see also Grant, 1967:50-56).

As with many of Silcox's insights he made the point in passing without providing any evidence to support his assertations. This paper then will be given over to testing -- as far as the data will allow -- his position. Before doing that, however, the paper should be placed within the context of the literature on social stratification in Canadian society.

Literature on Social Stratification: Given that sociology is still considered one of the newer disciplines on the Canadian academic scene, it is surprising to find how robust the literature on social stratification (or social inequality as some prefer to call it) is (see Forcese, 1975; Tepperman, 1975; Resnick, 1977; Curtis and Scott, 1979; Hunter, 1986; Clement, 1988 for summaries of the literature). In fact, as early as 1940 Leonard Marsh published a work on the Canadian class structure called Canadians In And Out of Work. A perusal of the bibliographies available on the subject, however, revealed only one unpublished title on the relationship of religion and stratification. This study of Torontonians which controlled for religious affiliation and socio-economic status found, as American studies did earlier, that religious organizations were stratified by class composition. In a manner very similar to the United States, larger percentages of Jewish, Anglican, Presbyterian and United congregations were characteristically upper class (Teevan, Jr. and Jackson, 1972:5; Gockel, 1969; Pope, 1948). Through Canadian studies of elites as well it has been demonstrated repeatedly that Anglicans and Presbyterians have been disproportionately represented in the highest levels of society but Roman Catholics have been disproportionately under-represented (Acheson, 1972; Porter, 1965; Clement, 1975; Makie, 1974; Olsen, 1980, to name a few). To cite Porter:

> Of the Protestant groups the Anglican Church has the greatest representation. One hundred and ninety-four members of the economic elite, 25.5 per cent belonged to the faith while only 14.7 per cent of the general population did. The Presbyterian Church was also over-represented with 86 of the elite (11.3 per cent) against 8.6 per cent of the general population. All other Protestant churches were under-represented (Porter, 1965:290).

Clement (1975), in his re-study after twenty years, found little change in the representation by religious affiliation in the Canadian economic elite.

> The 12.7 per cent Catholic of the total 775 Canadian resident members of the elite in 1972 is slightly more than the 10.3 per cent in 1951 but still well below their 46.2 per cent of the total population in Canada. .... Anglicans remain the dominant religious affiliation with 25.5 per cent in 1951 and 25.3 per cent in 1972, despite a drop in the total population over the same period from 14.7 per cent to 11.8 per cent. .... The United Church representation is substantial with 17.3 per cent currently and 17.6 per cent two decades ago, about equal to the present Canadian population with 17.5 per cent. Although Presbyterians have declined from 11.3 to 7.1 per cent, they are still over-represented compared to their four per cent of the population. Baptists and "Other" Protestants are all under-represented; with only 2.6 per cent of the present elite and 2.5 per cent in 1951, they make up almost eight per cent of the population (Clement, 1975:239-40).

It is possible that in the U.S. the Episcopal Church maintained its high standing because of its success in attracting upwardly mobile families from other denominations.

Digby Baltzell, for example, in his socio-historical study of Philadelphians, demonstrated a pronounced tendency by families with substantially improved socio-economic standing to switch their religious affiliation from Methodist, Baptist and Quaker to a Presbyterian and particularly an Episcopalian one (Baltzell, 1962:253-93). A similar study has not been carried out in Canada but Reginald Bibby has argued that Canadians tend not to be switchers (1987:51), although his focus was not on upwardly mobile Canadians (see however, Acheson, 1973:200).

Despite the paucity of literature on religion and social class, it can be safely concluded that Anglicans and Presbyterians have enjoyed high social standing in Canada over a long period of time.[1] Yet, for our purposes, an important category is yet to be accounted for -- the Methodists (and to a considerable extent, the Congregationalists as well). As with other religious denominations, outstanding members of the Methodist Church were well known and in a few cases, such as the Eatons and the Masseys, became household names. But, at the time of church union, what would have been the class-standing of the Methodists (and Congregationalists) as compared to the Anglicans and Presbyterians? In other words, how close was Silcox to the mark in 1933? Did the Presbyterians enjoy a superior social position to that of the Methodists? Did the Presbyterians at the upper levels of the society react differently to church union when compared to the Methodists? Were their decisions the result of class consciousness?

The Methodology of the Study: The literature was not very helpful in addressing these questions; the answers had to be found elsewhere. To that purpose, first, it was determined that if a sense of "social position" and "class consciousness," to use Silcox's terminology, were to be found, they would be most clearly discernible in the upper class. While the criteria for establishing class membership varies considerably in the literature, for purposes of this study, every entry in Who's Who in Canada was defined as a member of the upper class.[2] The 1921 Who's Who in Canada was chosen to establish the structure of the Canadian upper class, controlled for religious affiliation, because the church union movement by that time had not had any significant impact on religious affiliation.[3] Additional data were also gathered from each entry that would provide a profile of the Canadian upper class. Since there can be substantial variation between the status of one entry as compared to another in Who's Who, the elite of the Canadian upper class was isolated for study. Anyone in the 1921 Who's Who with a knighthood was by definition made a member of the upper class elite.[4] In order to determine whether members of the upper class (and their elite) in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches reacted differently to the 1925 church union, volumes of Who's Who that were published several years subsequent to the union (i.e. 1927-1930) were studied. In other words, the religious affiliation of those entries that appeared in the 1930 Who's Who was compared with the religious affiliation of the same entries in the 1921 Who's Who. Armed with these data, the assertations made by Silcox can be addressed. But first what was the social standing of the Methodists as compared to Presbyterians in 1921 Canadian society? The answer can be found in Table 1.

Social Standing: Of those who gave their religious affiliation in their biographical sketches found in the 1921 Who's Who (almost 85% of all entries), Anglicans proved to be the most numerous, followed by Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, then Methodists, who in turn were followed by Baptists, Congregationalists, Unitarians, Jews and Lutherans. Except for the "General Protestant" category, all the remaining religious categories had fewer than ten representatives. When percentages of the Upper Class Canadians were compared with percentages of the corresponding religious categories in the general Canadian population for 1921, then it became evident that the Anglicans, Presbyterians and Congregationalists had substantial over-representation among Upper Class Canadians, while the Methodists were somewhat under-represented and the Roman Catholics were dramatically under-represented. It can be concluded from Table 1 that, among Upper Class Canadians, Methodists as a category did not have the representative standing of the Anglicans, Congregationalists and Presbyterians.

As already stated, there is a considerable literature on elites. Since elites are found at the apex of the class structure, a person might belong to the upper class but this class position in itself would not gain him entry into the elite. Baltzell (1962) demonstrated this fact in his study of the Philadelphia upper classes (see Table 2). By comparing entries in the Who's Who with those in the Social Register, he found that fifty-six per cent of Episcopalians in Who's Who were also in the Social Register, but only twenty-two per cent of Presbyterians and none of the Methodists who were in Who's Who were in the Social Register as well.

The Social Register was not available for this research but a somewhat comparable measure of elite status was at hand. Up until the mid-1930's Canadians could accept a knighthood in recognition of their outstanding contribution to Canadian society. Inasmuch as the candidates' names were submitted by the government in power and the honour appeared to favour certain professions such as politics and the judiciary, the instrument has some bias. The instrument had another weakness as well: a large number of the eighty-nine members of the elite in Who's Who (1921) did not indicate their religious affiliation (29.2% as compared to 17.5% for all entries in Who's Who).

Nonetheless, despite its weaknesses, the instrument provided support for Baltzell's finding (see Table 3). Of the Protestant denominations, only the Anglicans had a higher percentage for their elite (29.2%) than for their Upper Class (25.2%). The Presbyterian percentage of the elite (12.4%) was down substantially from that for their proportion of the Upper Class (22.8%) and the Methodist elite had a somewhat lower percentage (7.8%) than for the Upper Class (11.1%).[5] Incidentally, the proportion of Roman Catholics in the elite category was somewhat higher (16.9%) than it was for their Upper Class (13.8%) but that difference no doubt was due to the bias of the instrument towards certain professions.

If the proportion of Anglicans in the Upper Class was not sufficient evidence of their primary position in the social stratification system, then these data on their elite should confirm the fact. Anglicans were at the top of the class structure, Presbyterians came in second but according to the data at some distance, and the Methodists were a more distant third. (Apparently there were no Congregationalists at that time who had been honoured with a knighthood.)

A Profile of Upper Class Canadians: Now that the upper class structure of Canadian society has been determined, data from the biographical sketches in the 1921 Who's Who in Canada can be employed to draw up a profile of selected religious categories in the Upper Class. This profile will be a composite picture based on occupation, political preference, size of (or location of) place of birth and the 1921 place of residence.

Table 4 provides data on Upper Class Anglicans, Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians in various occupational categories. The first and overall impression gained from a glance at this table is the similarity the four denominations have in the occupational categories.

On close scrutiny, however, some differences become marked. The most impressive was the percentage of the Congregationalists in business (56.7%). While Anglicans had the lowest percentage in business (40.7%), they had the highest one in finance (15.4%). Congregationalists and Presbyterians were in between (13.5% and 12.6%) while the Methodists had the lowest percentage in the finance category (8.9%). Anglicans had a lower percentage in law when compared to the Methodists and Presbyterians but a substantially higher one in the judiciary, a considerably lower percentage in politics but a significantly higher one in government. Anglicans had a markedly lower percentage in medicine and a considerably lower one in education, particularly when compared with the Congregationalists. The Congregationalists and Anglican percentages in religion were decidedly higher than those for the other two denominations, but notably lower for Publishers and Editors. Anglicans and Methodists had identical percentages for Authors and Journalists with the Presbyterians lower and nil for Congregationalists. The percentages

for Community Service were low or non-existent for the four denominations. Finally, Anglicans had a comparatively high percentage in the "Other" category; eleven of them gave the military as their occupation.

The conclusions to be drawn from Table 4 are that Anglicans leaned towards money and banking, the courts rather than the practice of law, working in the higher levels of government, the church and the military rather than in the halls of politics. A considerable number of these positions would be obtained by appointment. Methodists and Presbyterians had in common the fact that their positions tended to be achieved rather than received ones. The same conclusion held for Congregationalists; in fact, slightly over seventy per cent of them were in business or finance.

Further evidence of Anglican appointed positions and Presbyterian achieved ones can be found in the Parliament that passed the church Union Bill. While Anglicans and Presbyterians respectively made up 16 per cent of the Canadian population, Anglicans held 18 seats in the Senate as compared to 14 for Presbyterians but, while Anglicans occupied 29 seats in the House of Commons, Presbyterians held 65, a number only exceeded by Roman Catholics (see Campbell, 1991:87).

As to the data on the political preferences of Upper Class Canadians, they labour under a liability; approximately forty per cent of the entries in the 1921 Who's Who did not provide this information (see Table 5). Despite this weakness, it was clear from the data that Anglicans were notable for the differences between them and the Methodists and Presbyterians. While Anglicans were strongly Conservative, Methodists gave only a small majority to the Conservative Party over the Liberal Party and the Presbyterians gave even

a smaller edge to the Liberals over the Conservatives. Congregationalists were notable inasmuch as while they gave their largest percentage to the Conservative Party, they, like the Anglicans were less inclined to favour the Liberal Party. In short, the Methodists and Presbyterians were quite similar to one another in their political preferences and differed from the Anglicans.

With few exceptions, 1921 Upper Class Canadians lived in urban settings but of those who were born in Canada, the largest percentages of Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians came from rural and small town places of origin (see Table 6). In fact, 58 per cent of Methodists, 52 per cent of Presbyterians but only 38 per cent of the Congregationalists were born in small communities. Much smaller percentages of all three religious categories were born in urban settings. There were significant differences found in the foreign-born category. While 51 per cent of the Congregationalists and 21 per cent of the Presbyterians were in that category, only 12 per cent of the Methodists were foreign born. Upper Class Methodists clearly were the most Canadian of the three categories. Incidentally, thirteen of the nineteen foreign-born Congregationalists were from the U.S.A.

What can be said of the 1921 residence patterns of these Upper Class Canadians? Does Baltzell's work have something to say to this question? Baltzell (1979) took two cities, Philadelphia and Boston, and tested the following thesis:

> .... my central thesis in this volume is that the egalitarian and anti-authoritarian principles of Quakerism produced a confusion in class authority from the very beginning in Philadelphia. At the same time, the hierarchical and authoritarian principle of Puritanism insured in Boston, from its founding to the close of the nineteenth century at least, a tradition of class authority and leadership not only in the local community but throughout the state and the nation as a whole (Baltzell, 1979:20).

Through an interesting mix of historical, biographical and statistical data Baltzell was able to defend his thesis.

What can be said of Upper Class Canadians and their cities? Did these Canadians so cluster that one city was Presbyterian-dominated, another Methodist and yet another Anglican? The major finding was that no one religious category appeared to predominate in any one Canadian city (see Table 7). While Anglicans had the largest numerical concentration of Upper Class Canadians in Toronto, their proportion of the Upper Class in all the cities was comparatively high as well. Presbyterians and Anglicans had identical concentrations in Vancouver (24.9%) and similar ones in Greater Montreal (22.3%; 22.1%), but in addition Presbyterians had the largest concentrations in Halifax, Hamilton, Winnipeg and Edmonton. Upper Class Methodists on the other hand had their largest number in Toronto but compared to the other denominational clusters, it was relatively small (16.6%). In fact, except for St. John's, Upper Class Methodists were scattered in relatively small numbers throughout the Canadian cities.[6] Finally, the pattern within Greater Montreal was worthy of attention. The city of Montreal was shared almost equally among Anglicans, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics while Westmount was strongly Presbyterian and Outremont was predominantly Roman Catholic. The Methodists had relatively small concentrations in the cities of Greater Montreal.

In summary, from the profile of Upper Class Canadians, it appears that Presbyterians and Methodists, unlike Anglicans, pursued similar careers, had similar political preferences but whereas Methodists were highly concentrated in Toronto, Presbyterians, like Anglicans, were found in competitive numbers in all the major cities.[7]

Now that the structure and a profile of the 1921 Upper Class have been determined, the reaction of the major actors to church union can be investigated.

Upper Class Canadians and the Union: When June 10, 1925, arrived the Methodists, who had given a majority vote in 1912 for union, apparently went into the union with their church. The Congregationalists, who had voted twice (1910, 1923 and several of its congregations voted a third time in 1925) went into the union in substantial numbers. The Presbyterians who had voted three times (1912, 1915, 1924-25), split; approximately two-thirds joined the United Church and the remaining one-third continued the Presbyterian Church. But how did the involved Upper Class Canadians react to the union? The answer can be given by comparing the entries in the 1930-31 Who's Who with those in the 1921 Who's Who.

As for the Presbyterians, as Table 8 indicates, 369 (49%) of the 1921 entries were no longer in Who's Who by 1930. But of those who were present, 86 (11.7%) had joined the United Church, 12 (1.6%) did not give their religious affiliation, four had become Anglicans and one used the generic term "Protestant." The remaining 268 (36.5%) were Presbyterian.[8] In other words, of those 1921 Presbyterians whose entries also appeared in the 1930-31 Who's Who, 23 per cent were members of the United Church but 72 per cent remained members of the continuing Presbyterian Church. Quite obviously, Presbyterians in the Upper Class reacted to church union in a distinctive manner.

In an attempt to uncover the distinguishing characteristics of the Continuing Presbyterians as compared with the United Church Presbyterians, the profile of Upper Class Presbyterians was re-examined. As can be seen in Table 9 (particularly the percentages in parenthesis), there was a strong tendency for Presbyterians in Business, Law, the Judiciary, Politics, Medicine, Publishing and the "Other" category to continue as Presbyterians and a tendency for those in Government, Education, Religion, Community Service and, to a considerably lesser extent, Finance, to join the United Church. As for political preferences, Upper Class continuing Presbyterians tended to have the highest percentage with the Conservative Party but also high percentages with the Liberal and Independent parties (see Table 10). Upper Class United Church Presbyterians had their highest percentage associated with the Union Party and lowest with the Conservative Party. Slightly over one quarter of the Liberals and Independents joined the United Church. Finally the data on communities of origins did not produce significant differences even for the foreign-born. Closer analysis indicated, however, that almost without exception, foreign-born United Presbyterians were from England and the United States.

How did Upper Class Methodists react to church union? In a word, they joined the United Church (see Table 11). In the 1930-31 Who's Who, 188 (52.3%) of the 1921 Methodists were absent, but of those whose biographical sketches were present, 148 (40.8%) had become members of the United Church, five had become Anglicans, two gave "Protestant" for their religion and seventeen did not give their religious affiliation. In other words, if only the number of 1921 Methodists who were present in the 1930-31 Who's Who was used, then 85.5 per cent had joined the United Church.

To revert to the elite subset of the Upper Class for a moment, of the eleven knighted Presbyterians, six did not appear in the 1930 Who's Who but of the other five who did, four remained Presbyterian and one, Sir Robert Falconer, entered the United Church.[9] All of the four continuing Presbyterians were in business or finance. The Methodists in the elite, it would seem, entered the United Church.

A word should be said about the Congregationalists. Congregationalist church leaders appeared to have been eager for church union because their church was clearly in decline. According to census data, membership in the Congregational Church climbed slowly from 21,829 in 1871 to a peak of 34,054 in 1911 but then declined to 30,730 in 1921. Approximately 55 per cent of this number were located in Ontario and Quebec. Over approximately the same period as well, the number of viable congregations declined from 184 to 83.

Under the circumstances, and despite the tradition of congregational independence, it might be expected that the proposed church union would be readily accepted at all class levels. But how did the Congregationalists who appeared in the 1921 Who's Who respond to union? In fact, they responded very much like the Presbyterians did (see Table 12). Only four of the 18 Congregationalists in both the 1921 and 1927/28 Who's Who chose the United Church, three did not give their religion, one had become Presbyterian and ten remained Congregational; in other words, sixty-two per cent either remained Congregational or became Presbyterian. It might be of some significance that all of the eleven definite anti-unionists gave business as their occupation while of the four who joined the United Church, two were in education, one was in religion and the fourth was in business.

"Class Consciousness": To this point, it has been demonstrated that Presbyterians as a category enjoyed higher status than the Methodists at the time of church union. It has also been shown that whereas upper class Methodists almost unanimously accepted church union, Presbyterians in the same class (and Congregationalists as well) strongly rejected it. Was this rejection of church union the result of "Class Consciousness" as Silcox asserted? The archival data revealed an antipathy towards the Methodist Church but this attitude was not peculiar to upper class Presbyterians. Similarly an Ethnic (Scottish) sentiment was found in some Presbyterians but again at all class levels. While, on the one hand, Presbyterians could not enhance their class standing through union because the Anglicans were not involved in the union negotiations, on the other hand, upper class Presbyterians (and even more particularly Congregationalists) were uncertain what the condition of their church would be after union.[10] Perhaps it would be nothing more than a "rump sect" as one anti-unionist feared. Upper class Congregationalists exemplified this problem: all but a remnant of the Congregational Church went into the union but that did not deter the majority of their upper class representatives from rejecting it. Class consciousness played its part but not class consciousness as Karl Marx employed the term.

Greeley made the interesting observation that in Western Societies at least, the higher the socio-economic status of a person the more likely that person is to be committed to religion (Greeley, 1972:93-4). There is additional evidence closer to home. The anti-unionist, the Rev. R.G. MacBeth revised his 1912 work, Our Task in Canada, and published it in 1926 under the title, The Burning Bush and Canada. In this revised version, he gave eight reasons for the unique value of the Presbyterian Church, the first of which read as follows:

> The [Presbyterian] Church has a tremendous economic value which even a man who is personally careless in his attitude toward religious work can understand and appreciate. . . . The Church, I repeat, makes business more stable, and human life more safe, and even an irreligious man can appreciate that fact (MacBeth, 1926:15-6).

One interpretation of this paragraph is that Presbyterianism was a religion business people would favour. Hugh MacLennan, in his well-known Two Solitudes, wrote that all the business leaders in Montreal were Presbyterian, they went to church regularly and Sir Rupert Irons, one of them, was known to believe quite literally in predestination (1945:92). Perhaps therein resides the answer to the upper class Presbyterians' distain for church union.

The United Church could not provide them what the Presbyterian Church had. Whether it be unadulterated Calvinism or the pastoral Puritanism of good works, the Presbyterian Church reinforced the upper class standing of self-made men (Reid, 1976:132; Baltzell, 1979:99-100; McNeill, 1954:221).[11] The fact of the matter was that very few of these upper class Presbyterians had been actively involved in attempts to save their church.[12] They stayed Presbyterian not because of the organization but because of the psychological appeal it held for them. To restructure Greeley's position: Those who gained most from society were most likely to be committed to the religion that reinforced their social standing. In this sense, class consciousness was a factor in church union.

Professor Michael Bliss in his work Living Profit (1974) appeared to challenge the above interpretation. In his study of Canadian businessmen (1883-1911) he claimed to have found no relationship between particular religious orientations and businessmen. "The

relationship of religious background to business practice [was non-existant]" (p. 10). Bliss' generalization does not in and of itself challenge this paper's interpretation of why Presbyterian businessmen were unwilling to join the United Church except for the fact that in a footnote Bliss suggested that the reader consult Acheson's work for a contrary opinion. In Acheson's study of late nineteenth century Canadian industrialists, he clearly concluded that there were differences by religion. This difference in interpretation perhaps provides an opportunity to sharpen the perspective put forth in this paper. Following Bliss, in matters of practice, a businessman is a businessman but in agreement with Acheson, certain religious traditions had been more supportive of the businessmen's activity than were others.

Silcox, in the quotation at the beginning of this paper, restricted his comments to the continuing Presbyterians. Under the circumstances, he did not have to explain why upper class Methodists entered the United Church. However, given the findings of this study, his references to social standing and class consciousness might in fact be as applicable, if not more applicable, to the Methodists. Acheson (1973) gave evidence of some drift by prominent Methodist families to the Anglican Church (four in this study chose the Anglican Church over the United Church). Arthur Lower, in his autobiography (1967) noted that upon his arrival Oxford and was asked his religion, he concealed the fact that he was Methodist by claiming to be Anglican. During the thirty years (1891-1921) of Canada's rapid growth through immigration, many emigrated from England as Methodists but apparently arrived in Canada espousing something else. General Superintendent Chown admitted that only one in eight Methodist immigrants of that period became members of the Methodist Church in Canada (File 202, Box 9, Chown Papers, United Church of Canada

Archives). From these sources at least, it might be argued that Methodists had a clear understanding of social class as well as a desire to enhance their class position through church union.

In Conclusion: Silcox (1933) was empirically correct in placing the Presbyterians along with the Anglicans in positions of social leadership. He was reflecting empirical reality as well when he implied that Methodists as a category did not enjoy the same social standing. But was the all-but-total rejection of church union by the Presbyterian upper class a result of class consciousness as Silcox suggested? It seems a safe assumption that class consciousness played some part (as Silcox wrote) but the results seem to demand a more robust explanation. As the sociologist Wallace Clement noted: "More important than 'consciousness' per se is idealogy which provides an account or explanation for people's practices" (1988:28). It has been this paper's contention that the greater the success achieved, particularly by the so-called self-made men, the more satisfying Presbyterianism proved to be for those experiencing the success. Therefore, church union had the least attraction for the upper class Presbyterian.

TABLE 1 : WHO'S WHO IN CANADA (1921) BY RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Denomination	Number	Percentage	% Of Canadian Population (1921)
Anglican	819	25.2	16.0
Presbyterian	739	22.8	16.0
Roman Catholic	448	13.8	38.6
Methodist	361	11.1	13.2
Baptist	108	3.3	4.8
Congregational	37	1.2	0.4
Unitarian	20	0.6	---
Jewish	13	0.4	1.4
Lutheran	12	0.4	3.3
Quaker	7	0.2	---
Christian Scientist	7	0.2	---
Church of Christ	2	0.6	---
Swedenburg Church	2	0.6	---
Other*	9	0.3	---
General Protestant	91	2.8	---
Religion Not Given	569	17.5	---
TOTAL	3,244	99.8	---

* Included a Free Thinker, Rutherian Greek Catholic, Salvation Army, Universalist, Christian Church, Theosophist, Orthodox, Non-Conformist and "Church of the Free Air."

TABLE 2 : PHILADELPHIANS IN WHO'S WHO IN 1940
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AS RELATED TO SOCIAL CLASS

Religious Affiliation	Social Register		Non-Social Register		Who's Who Total		% in Social Register
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Episcopalian	95	42	75	14	179	22	56
Presbyterian	30	13	107	20	137	18	22
Quaker	7	3	15	3	22	3	32
Baptist	2	1	22	4	24	3	8
Methodist	0	---	26	5	26	10	---
Other Protestant	10	5	70	12	80	10	13
Catholic	2	1	25	5	27	4	7
Jewish	1	---	26	5	27	4	3
No Information	79	35	178	32	257	33	31
TOTAL	226	100	544	100	770	100	29

Source: E. Digby Baltzell, An American Business Aristocracy (1962), Table 21, page 267.

TABLE 3 : NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF CANADIANS IN
THE UPPER CLASS AND THEIR ELITE BY RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION (1921)

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	UPPER CLASS		ELITE		% OF GEN. POPULATION
	N	%	N	%	
Anglican	819	25.2	26	29.2	16.0
Baptist	108	3.3	2	2.2	4.8
Methodist	361	11.1	7	7.8	13.2
Presbyterian	739	22.8	11	12.4	16.0
Protestant	91	2.8	2	2.2	---
Roman Catholic	448	13.8	15	16.7	38.6
Religion Not Given	568	17.5	26	29.2	---

TABLE 4 : OCCUPATIONS OF UPPER CLASS CANADIANS BY SELECTED RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS (1921)

Occupation	Anglican		Methodist		Presbyterian		Congregationalist	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Business	333	40.7	165	45.7	343	46.4	21	56.7
Finance	126	15.4	32	8.9	93	12.6	5	13.5
Law	79	9.6	44	12.2	81	11.0	---	---
Judiciary	53	6.5	12	3.3	24	3.0	1	2.7
Politics	42	5.1	29	8.0	53	7.2	1	2.7
Government	50	6.1	12	3.3	32	4.3	---	---
Medicine	15	1.8	14	3.9	30	4.1	1	2.7
Education	37	4.5	30	8.3	41	5.5	4	10.8
Religion	27	3.3	1	0.2	5	0.6	3	8.1
Publishers and Editors	7	0.9	8	2.2	19	2.6	1	2.7
Authors and Journalists	9	1.1	4	1.1	2	0.3	---	---
Community Service	6	0.7	3	0.8	1	0.1	---	---
Other*	42	5.1	4	1.1	15	2.0	---	---
Unaccounted For	11	1.3	3	0.8	---	---	---	---

* Included Farmer, Military, Artist, etc; Anglicans has 11 in military.

TABLE 5 : POLITICAL PREFERENCES OF UPPER CLASS CANADIANS BY SELECTED RELIGIOUS CATEGORIES (1921)

POLITICS	ANGLICAN		METHODIST		PRESBYTERIAN		CONGREGATIONAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Conservative	283	34.6	108	29.9	182	24.6	9	24.4
Liberal	75	9.2	88	24.4	186	25.2	5	13.7
Independent	77	9.4	37	10.2	66	8.9	5	13.7
Union	24	2.9	6	1.7	12	1.6	1	2.7
Liberal - Conservative	9	1.1	4	1.1	---	---	---	---
United Farmer	---	---	1	---	---	---	1	2.7
Other	1	---	---	---	4	---	1	2.7
Not Given	350	42.7	117	32.4	289	39.1	15	40.5

TABLE 6: LOCATION OF BIRTH OF UPPER CLASS CANADIANS BY SELECTED DENOMINATIONS (1921)

NATIVE BORN

RURAL OR SMALL TOWN						LARGE TOWN OR CITY					
Congregation.		Methodist		Presbyterian		Congregation.		Methodist		Presbyteri	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
14	38	209	58	382	52	4	11	100	28	179	25

FOREIGN BORN						DATA INSUFFICIENT					
Congregation.		Methodist		Presbyterian		Congregation.		Methodist		Presbyteri	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
19	51	44	12	153	21	---	---	8	2	15	2

TABLE 7 : CONCENTRATIONS OF UPPER CLASS CANADIANS IN MAJOR CITIES BY SELECTED RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS 1921

City		Anglican	Congregational.	Methodist	Presbyterian	Rom. Cath
St. John's	N	18	1	15	6	20
	%	25.7	1.4	21.4	8.6	28.6
Halifax	N	19	1	8	21	2
	%	27.5	1.4	11.6	30.4	2.9
Montreal	N	104	10	11	92	97
	%	23.6	2.3	2.5	21.0	22.1
Westmount	N	29	1	11	49	22
	%	19.3	0.7	7.3	32.7	14.7
Outremont	N	2	---	3	17	---
	%	7.7	---	11.5	65.4	---
Greater Montreal	N	135	11	25	158	121
	%	22.3	1.8	3.6	22.1	21.5
Toronto	N	166	4	82	101	20
	%	33.7	0.8	16.6	20.5	4.1
Hamilton	N	15	---	6	18	2
	%	34.1	---	13.6	40.9	4.5
Winnipeg	N	68	9	45	90	12
	%	21.9	2.9	14.5	29.0	3.9
Edmonton	N	8	1	8	11	9
	%	14.8	1.9	14.8	20.4	16.7
Vancouver	N	45	---	19	45	3
	%	24.9	---	10.5	24.9	1.7

* Percentages do not add up to one hundred because of the religious categories that were left out of the
Greater Montreal includes Montreal, Westmount and Outremont.

TABLE 8 : RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF THE 1921 UPPER CLASS PRESBYTERIANS IN THE 1930-31 WHO'S WHO IN CANADA

United Church		Anglican		Protestant		Religion Not Given		Presbyterian		Not in 1930-31 Who's Who	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
86	11.7	4	0.5	1	0.2	12	1.6	268	36.5	368	49.8
	(23.7%)								(72%)		

TABLE 9 : OCCUPATIONS OF 1921 UPPER CLASS PRESBYTERIANS, CONTINUING AND UNITED CHURCH PRESBYTERIANS (1930)

Occupation	Presbyterians (1921)		Continuing Presbyterians (1930)			United Church Presbyterians (1930)			Total N & % (1930)	
	N	%	N	%		N	%		N	%
Business	343	46.4	121	45.0	(79%)	33	40.7	(21%)	154	(100%)
Finance	93	12.6	28	10.5	(74%)	10	12.3	(26%)	38	(100%)
Law	81	11.0	36	13.5	(78%)	10	12.3	(22%)	46	(100%)
Judiciary	24	3.0	11	4.1	(85%)	2	2.5	(15%)	13	(100%)
Politics	53	7.2	23	8.6	(82%)	5	6.1	(18%)	28	(100%)
Government	32	4.3	6	2.2	(60%)	4	4.9	(40%)	10	(100%)
Medicine	30	4.1	16	7.1	(80%)	4	4.9	(20%)	20	(100%)
Education	41	5.5	14	5.3	(61%)	9	11.1	(39%)	23	(100%)
Religion	5	0.6	1	0.2	(50%)	1	1.2	(50%)	2	(100%)
Publishing & Editors	19	2.6	7	2.6	(78%)	2	2.5	(22%)	9	(100%)
Authors & Journalists	2	0.3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Community Services	1	0.1	---	---	---	1	1.2	(100%)	1	(100%)
Other*	15	2.0	5	1.9	(100%)	---	---	---	5	(100%)
TOTAL	739	99.7	258	101.0		81	99.7			

* Farmer, Military, Artist, etc.

TABLE 10 : POLITICAL PREFERENCES OF 1921 UPPER CLASS PRESBYTERIANS, AND OF THE CONTINUING AND UNITED CHURCH PRESBYTERIANS (1930)

Political Party	Presbyterians (1921)		Continuing Presbyterians (1930)		United Church Presbyterians (1930)		Total N & % (1930)
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Conservative	182	24.6	71	27.0 (81%)	16	19.0 (19%)	87 (100%)
Liberal	186	25.2	72	27.0 (74%)	26	31.0 (26%)	98 (100%)
Independent	66	8.9	25	9.0 (73%)	9	11.0 (27%)	34 (100%)
Union	12	1.6	1	--- (20%)	4	5.0 (80%)	5 (100%)
Liberal/Conservative	---	---	1	--- ---	---	--- ---	1 (100%)
United Farmer	---	---	---	--- ---	---	--- ---	--- -- -
Other	4	---	2	--- ---	---	--- ---	2 (100%)
Not Given	289	39.1	91	34.0 (82%)	29	35.0 (28%)	120 (100%)

TABLE 11 : RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF THE 1921 UPPER CLASS METHODISTS IN THE 1930-31 WHO'S WHO IN CANADA

United Church		Anglican		Protestant		Religion Not Given		Methodist		Not in 193 Who's W	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
148	40.8	5	1.4	2	0.5	17	4.7	1	0.3	188	5
	(85.5%)										

TABLE 12 : RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF THE 1921 UPPER CLASS CONGREGATIONALISTS IN THE 1927/1928 WHO'S WHO IN CANADA

United Church		Presbyterian		Congregational.		Religion Not Given		Not in 1927/28 Who's Who	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
4	10.8	1	2.7	10	27.0	3	8.1	19	51.4
	(22.2%)		(6.7%)		(55.6%)		(16.7%)		

Notes

1. Burton (1952) provided one of the most amusing studies of stratification while controlling for religious affiliation.

> One of my friends in Vancouver was the representative of Ward Lock & Co., the English publishers. His name was Clarke. . . .One Sunday, my friend Clarke turned to me with an odd query, 'Did you ever contemplate the subject of hair pins?' He was a cockney, and gave these words all the accent for which those born within the sound of Bow Bells are famous. When I found he was serious, he went on with his odd dissertation. Walking west on Georgia Street, he pointed out first one, then another hair pin on the sidewalk. Clarke went on: 'Now we are approaching a Methodist Church, and you will see numerous hair pins.' On the sidewalk outside the edifice we found a dozen or more. How did he account for this mystery? He proceeded to elaborate his research in respect to churches and hair pins. The reason for so many outside the Methodist Church was that the members of that body used a goodly supply of hair pins. Further, the Methodist service, appealing to the emotions rather than the reason, the nature of their restless bodily movements was such as to loosen their hair pins; hence, outside the Methodist Church, many hair pins.
>
> Having attended the Presbyterian service previously on rainy Sundays, I asked about the Presbyterian Church. He answered at once - very few hair pins.

It appeared that most Presbyterians, being Scots, used hair pins like everything else, sparingly. The nature of their service being sedate and quiet, the few hair pins the ladies used were seldom disturbed, any more than their emotions or consciences were. So upon their leaving the service, few hair pins, very few, indeed, could be found.

The Baptist Churches, too, yielded comparatively few and for many of the same reasons as in the case of the Presbyterians. My curiosity was aroused. What about the Anglicans? He, of course, was himself an Anglican. It seemed the Anglicans are better class people. They, because of worldly prosperity, used more hair pins and those of better quality and of greater ornamental value (in a quiet way). Moreover the Anglican service, with its standing and kneeling, bowing and sitting, had a tendency to loosen the pins. Consequently, in the vicinity of the Anglican edifice more and better hair pins were to be found (pp. 111-12).

2. "The term 'class' refers to any group of people ... [who have the same] typical chance for a supply of goods, external living conditions, and personal life experiences, insofar as this chance is determined by the power ... power... to dispose of goods or skills for the sake of income in a given economic order" (quoted in Reinhard Bendix, Max Weber : An Intellectual Portrait (Garden City, N.J. : Anchor Books, 1962), pp. 85-86).

3. The author used the Who's Who for a previous research on Presbyterians and Presbyterians from Pictou County, Nova Scotia, in particular (see Campbell and Bouma, 1978). Who's Who as a data source has its strengths and weaknesses. There is no obvious reason, however, why both would not be distributed randomly so that no religious denomination would have an undue advantage or disadvantage.

4. The practice of conferring knighthoods was discontinued in the 1930's. In more recent years, the Order of Canada has filled the gap.

5. Acheson, in his study of the social origins of the Canadian industrial elite of the 1880's, found a somewhat different ranking.

UNITED STATES ELITE 1%	RELIGION	CANADA ELITE (%)	CANADA GEN. POP. (%)
14	Presbyterian	36	16
25	Anglican	19	15
6	Methodist	19	18
---	Roman Catholic	12	42
4	Baptist	6	6
22	Congregational	4	1
11	Protestant	4	2
100	Total	100	100
144	Total Cases	138	4,234,000

(Source: Macmillan, 1972:158)

6. In this study, although Newfoundland was an independent dominion at the time of church union, it is treated as if it were a part of Canada. Both Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Newfoundland were affiliated with these churches in

Canada. Interestingly enough, although the Newfoundland Conference of the Methodist Church voted against union in 1912, it joined the United Church in 1925. The few Presbyterian and Congregational churches that were in Newfoundland, one should note, stayed out of the union.

7. Acheson suggested that while Anglican and Presbyterian members of his industrial elite were highly involved in exclusive private clubs, Methodists were among the least involved (1973:214-15).

8. Robertson Davies wrote the following about church union in his novel, Fifth Business (1970):

> In a movement that reached its climax in 1924, the Presbyterians and Methodists had consummated a Mysterium coniunctionis that resulted in the United Church of Canada, with a doctrine (smoother than the creamy curd) in which the harshness of Presbyterianism and the hick piety of Methodism had little part. A few brass-bowelled Presbyterians and some truly zealous Methodists held out, but a majority regarded this union as a great victory for Christ's Kingdom on earth. Unfortunately it also involved some haggling between the rich Presbyterians and the poor Methodists, which roused the mocking spirit of the rest of the country; the Catholics in particular had some Irish jokes about the biggest land-and-property-grab in Canadian history.
>
> During this uproar a few sensitive souls fled to the embrace of Anglicanism; the envious and disaffected said they did it because the Anglican Church was in some way more high-toned than the evangelical faiths, and thus they were improving their social standing (p. 128).

9. Such distinguished Presbyterians as Sir William Mortimer Clark spoke publically against union before his death. Sir Oliver Mowat and Sir Thomas Taylor made it clear that they were unsympathetic before their death. On one occasion at least, while visiting eastern Canada, Lord Beaverbrook refused to give any money to Presbyterian churches sympathetic to union. Sir James Woods, something of an exception, became actively pro-union in the last years of the movement (1923-25). However, he was brought up an Anglican and remained one until he married a Presbyterian.

10. Anglicans had been invited in 1904 to join the union talks but they declined the offer. In 1921-22, the Anglicans tried to become involved in the union negotiations but this time their offer was declined. It should be noted as well that a number of both union and anti-union Presbyterian ministers in Montreal were active in their relationship with Anglican clergy to the point that some type of plan was drawn up whereby Anglican and Presbyterian clergy could officiate in each other's churches. The plan was abandoned.

11. I would like to note with appreciation Professor Malcolm MacKinnon's articles and papers on the writings and interpretations of Max Weber.

> "A convinced believer [i.e. Andrew Carnegie] in the 'natural' laws of competition and the survival of the fittest, this economic Darwinist attributed his success to his adherence to Christian values and the workings of a higher providence. In his view the man of wealth was 'chosen', and special responsibilities accompanied that selection" (Kolbenschlag 1984:153).

12. Acheson found that while 43% of the Methodist industrial elite held offices in their Church, only 21% of the Presbyterians held similar positions (1973:213).

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"CALL ME AN ANTI-DISUNIONIST"

D.R. Drummond and the Federalist Option in the 1925 Church Union Debate

Brian Prideaux

INTRODUCTION

There was a sense of anticipation in the lakehead city of Port Arthur as commissioners gathered there in June 1923 for the 49th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Legislation had been prepared to give legal effect to the decision of the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches to form the United Church of Canada, and the draft bills would be brought to the Assembly for discussion and approval. It was clear, however, that anti-Union commissioners would do their utmost to prevent the General Assembly from doing what they considered beyond its powers, "blotting out" the Presbyterian Church of Canada and taking it into another denomination.

The press fuelled speculation that a compromise proposed by Hamilton minister, the Rev. Daniel R. Drummond, might provide a "way out" of the looming impasse. The proposal had been widely published in both church and secular papers and copies were distributed to every commissioner.

For three and a half days there was eloquent and sometimes heated debate over the merits of proceeding toward organic union or pausing to explore other options, including Drummond's plan for a federal union. In the end, however, Drummond's call for delay was

defeated and General Assembly set the Presbyterian Church on a course which would separate those who heard God calling them to combine forces with the Congregationalists and Methodists, from those who felt that God's purposes were better served by keeping the Presbyterian Church with its proud heritage intact.

Was Drummond's proposal a delaying tactic, a "red herring", as some critics labelled it, or was it an alternative which might have prevented heartbreak in many communities as congregations and even families divided over the question of Church Union in 1925? The "federalist option" proposed by Drummond, who considered himself a moderate unionist, merits re-examination because ecumenists have become more aware than ever of the need for models of unity that take deeply-rooted traditions and loyalties into account.

THE FOSSILIZED BIRD TRACKS OF DENOMINATIONALISM

Two approaches to Christian unity predominated at the beginning of the twentieth century. There was the model of corporate or organic union in which two or more denominations merged to form a single body and there was cooperative or federal unity in which churches retained their denominational identity and autonomy but worked together in mutually agreed areas.

Both Presbyterians and Methodists in Canada had experienced successful mergers within their respective confessional families. Some were now advocating the further step of merger across confessional lines. Imaginations were fired by proposals like that

of American Episcopalian, William Reed Huntington, who called for a national protestant church in the United States in his book The Church-Idea: An Essay Towards Unity (1870). The four points he advocated as the basis of a reunited church (the Scriptures, the Creeds, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the Historic Episcopate) became the core of the Anglican position. While Canadian Unionists had trouble with some aspects of this proposal, the idea of a national protestant church found its way into the preamble of the Basis of Union.[1]

Some critics of organic union called for consideration of the alternative approach offered by the formation of Federal Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America (1908) and the Federal Council of Evangelical Free Churches in England (1919). The former was frequently referred to. It was a considerable accomplishment to bring twenty-nine very diverse denominations together and there were high hopes for what this meant for Christian unity. James L. Barton, chairman of the Council's Committee on Foreign Missions, was moved to compare denominational labels to "fossilized bird tracks" found in museums, and predicted that such distinctions would likewise become relics of the past.[2]

Keith Clifford makes a compelling case for Unionists being so

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[1]John Webster Grant, The Canadian Experience of Church Union (London, 1967), p. 30.

[2]Elias B. Sanford, Ed., Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America: Report of the First Meeting (New York, 1909), pp. 30f.

attracted to the model of organic union that they were not prepared to consider other alternatives.[3] An exchange of views at the General Assembly of 1906 may serve as an illustration. When William Patrick, on behalf of the Committee on Union, presented the first draft of the "Basis of Union" to General Assembly the senior clerk, Robert Campbell, delivered a tirade against union and urged federation or cooperation as a more appropriate way of bringing together such very different churches. Although this outburst caused some commissioners to label Campbell a "religious snob"[4] he was supported by John Mackay, principal of Westminster Hall in Vancouver. Mackay moved an amendment to the Union Committee's resolution, asking General Assembly to

> declare that the proposed union would not in their judgement be in the best interest of the Presbyterian Church in particular, or of Christian life and work in Canada in general, and therefore request that any further negotiations may be in the line of Federal or cooperative Union.[5]

Patrick replied with a scathing personal attack on Mackay, questioning the honesty of someone who had accepted a position on the Union Committee but then challenged its report. Mackay's speech, he said, "breathed a spirit of separatism at variance with the New Testament and all ideals of Church union."[6] He declared that "union was an absolute duty unless conscience constrained to

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[3]N. Keith Clifford, The Resistance to Church Union in Canada, 1909-1939 (Vancouver, 1985), pp. 5-8.

[4]Toronto Daily Star (13 June 1906), p. 2.

[5]Acts and Proceedings (1906), p. 36.

[6]Toronto Globe (13 June 1906), p. 9.

the contrary." In the face of this counteroffensive Mackay's resolution was defeated by a margin of 179 to 22.

The federalist cause suffered from a lack of unanimity among its advocates. One can distinguish two distinct groups: (a) those who saw federation as the best that could be done, enabling churches to act together as far as possible while leaving denominational identity intact; and (b) those who used federation as a weapon with which to attack the Basis of Union, until it became obvious that it was easier to sell a clear-cut "no" than a compromise which seemed to take back with one hand what it gave with the other.

In 1911 there was an attempt to include on the ballot sent to the members of the church in that year, the question: "If not in favour of the proposed union are you in favour of the federation of the churches?" However it was eventually withdrawn in deference to the argument that it was similar to another question on the same ballot: "Have you any suggestions or alternatives to offer?"[7] After this, little more was heard about federation as an alternative to organic union until the Rev. Daniel R. Drummond revived the proposition in 1923 with the publication of his pamphlet, Is There Not A Way Out?.

WAY OUT OR RED HERRING?

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[7] Acts and Proceedings (1911), pp. 61-2. Ultimately even this question was relegated to a footnote on the ballot, and in effect congregations were offered no alternative to organic union. See Clifford, p. 55.

Drummond was the Minister of St. Paul's, the "Mother Kirk" of Presbyterianism in Hamilton, where he had been called in 1905 after serving in Russelltown, Quebec (1894-7) and St. Thomas, Ontario (1897-1905). In many respects he was typical of those for whom Presbyterianism and its Scottish heritage were treasures which must not be lost in any ecclesiastical union.

Born in 1868 near Almonte, in eastern Ontario, he could claim Scottish descent on both his mother's and father's side. His father was a cousin of revivalist and theological writer, Henry Drummond.[8] The youthful Drummond attended Queen's University, earning an M.A. in 1889 with a gold medal in Classics, and a B.D. three years later. In 1893 he spent a year in Edinburgh pursuing further theological studies on a travelling scholarship before returning to Canada to take up his first pastorate. The promising young student had already served an apprenticeship under the Rev. D.J. Macdonnell at New St. Andrew's, Toronto in 1892 and at varying intervals thereafter. Macdonnell is reported to have said of him, that he had "never before known pulpit and pastoral qualifications so strongly united in one man."[9]

Initially Drummond gave cautious support to Church Union, with the proviso that congregations should be able to enter on a voluntary basis. His support seems to have been shaken by what is described

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[8]"Rev. D.R. Drummond, M.A., D.D.," Presbyterian Record (November 1931): 323.

[9]Ibid.

as a "straw vote" at St. Paul's in 1915 which showed that many of his congregation would be reluctant to join the proposed United Church.[10] Subsequently St. Paul's voted against union by a substantial majority.[11]

In a letter written in December 1923 Drummond gives a sense of the struggle which many pastors must have felt as the moment of decision drew near, threatening to rupture relationships between and within congregations:

> I was convinced a year ago that the opposition was of such stiffness and extent as to make it unwise to press for Legislation, hence my effort for a "Way Out",
>
> The evidence since, makes me still more convinced. Perhaps college men and church officials do not realize how almost impossible the position of hundreds of ministers is all over the Church. I have not met in a year a single happy-hearted, free-minded minister or minister's wife. ...
>
> Would God the Church and her ministers were free of this incubus, so that of one mind, they might give themselves to their work! ...[12]

Early in 1923 Drummond had given voice to his misgivings, and to a possible alternative to the organic union which he was convinced would be so disruptive to the Presbyterian Church, in a pamphlet

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[10]Thomas Melville Bailey, Wee Kirks and Stately Steeples (Burlington, 1990), p. 49.

[11]The sources disagree over the size of the vote. Bailey says the results were 411 against and 159 for but I.G. Fischer, A History of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Hamilton (Hamilton, 1982) gives 534 against and 63 for.

[12]D.R. Drummond to Editors, Presbyterian Witness, 31 December 1923, P.C.A. Papers, Presbyterian Church Archives.

entitled "Is There Not a Way Out?"[13]

Drummond's plan had, as its "organizing idea", a federal union to be achieved by the consent of the three negotiating churches, and the Council of Independent Union Churches, without reference to Parliament or the provincial legislatures or affecting the property holdings of the participants. He proposed a federation in which the participating "units" would retain their various boards and departments, but would bring their work more closely together and, where possible, merge it in the interests of efficiency and economy. The letterhead used by the church could, he suggested, carry the general heading "The Federal Church of Canada" with the name of the participating denomination underneath.

As to the name of the church Drummond was flexible. He proposed the "Federal Church of Canada" but, he said, it might equally have been called the "Free Church of Canada" or even the "United Church of Canada". In an article in the Toronto Globe he later put forward a different title, saying he favoured the "Federal Council of Churches" or "A Canadian Churches' Federal Council."[14] These changes of mind suggest some confusion in his thinking. A council

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[13]Several versions of Drummond's proposal are extant, e.g.: a leaflet published by the Federal Church Committee, an article in Presbyterian Witness (26 April 1923), and a summary in the Toronto Globe (7 April 1923). Unless otherwise indicated I shall refer to that published in E. Lloyd Morrow, Church Union in Canada: Its History, Motives, Doctrine, and Government (Toronto, 1923) pp. 435-44, and dated April 1923.

[14]"A Way Out of the Church Union Impasse", Toronto Globe (7 April 1923).

like those in the United States or Britain would not have been a church but an instrument whereby otherwise autonomous churches could co-operate with each other. However, in the same article he suggested a strong linkage among the churches involved, using the analogy of the Canadian political structure:

> We would have, so to speak, our Federal House (the Federal Church of Canada) and our Provincial Legislatures (the Congregational Union, etc.).[15]

The proposed Federal Church would have had a supreme court called, "The General Council", a name borrowed from the Basis of Union. It would be responsible for church life and work or religion and life, missionary education, questionnaires, and other duties which the units might approve in the light of experience. More consultative than legislative, this court would provide

> an area for the expression and cultivation of the spirit of Christian unity and become an instrument, which, through the Units represented therein, might liberate forces that would make for the firmer establishment of religion in the life of the nation.[16]

The Basis of Union would live on in two ways. It already formed the basis of the Council of Independent Union Churches, which he would welcome as full partners in his Federal Church. Its doctrinal statement could also be affirmed by the units as "setting forth the Christian Faith as commonly held among us" without, however, touching the foundational teachings of the participating churches, and its polity "might be regarded as suggestive of that

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[15]Ibid.

[16]Morrow, p. 439.

toward which all the Units might seek to approximate."

Drummond's initiative quickly attracted supporters. In Toronto a short-lived group calling itself the Federal Church Committee passed a resolution of support, and Dr. Clarence Mackinnon of Pine Hill Divinity Hall in Halifax gathered a group of ministers from Halifax and Dartmouth on 13 April 1923 to discuss the proposal. They expressed guarded appreciation and suggested that he

> take immediate steps to find out the attitude of the Presbyterian Church Association toward the proposal, so that the information may be laid before the approaching meeting of the Union Committee.[17]

Drummond also received encouragement from "strong, capable Ministers in medium-sized congregations" in several Ontario communities and arranged for his memorandum to be printed and distributed to "every Minister and representative elder in the Church." "We think it will be", he reported to J.W. McNamara of the Presbyterian Church Association, "good propaganda at the Assembly."[18]

E. Lloyd Morrow, in Church Union in Canada: Its History, Motives, Doctrine, and Government, a book which earned him a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, was lyrical in his praise for Drummond's proposal. "This plan of federal union," he wrote

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[17]Resolution moved by Prof. J.W. Shaw, seconded by Dr. R.W. Ross and carried unanimously at Halifax, 13 April 1923. P.C.A. Papers, Presbyterian Church Archives.

[18]Drummond to McNamara, 20 April 1923, P.C.A. Papers, Presbyterian Church Archives.

> is as the sun of hope bursting through the dark clouds of strife, - clouds that for years have been hiding the face of God from the church.[19]

He put his finger, however, on the lack of clarity in Drummond's ecclesiology, and asked whether Drummond desired a Federal Church or a "Confederation of Churches under a Federal Council." That ambiguity being cleared up, Morrow contended, the proposal could form the basis for a resolution of the Church Union debate.

Alas for one's supporters! Morrow, later a controversial Professor of Systematic Theology at Knox College, was roundly taken to task by John T. McNeill, then Professor of Church History at Knox. Morrow's book, McNeill pointed out, contained several "freaks of historical research" and lopsidedly devoted only twenty pages to the case for union while awarding fifty-three to the opposing view. He dismissed Drummond's plan as a "red herring" and listed a number of discrepancies between Morrow and Drummond.[20]

There were other critiques of Drummond's proposal. Perhaps the most noteworthy is that of J.H. Turnbull, Minister of High Park Presbyterian Church in Toronto and President of the Presbyterian Church Union Movement, who wrote an article in the Presbyterian Witness on 26 April 1923 as a companion to Drummond's memorandum

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[19] Morrow, p. 212.

[20] John T. McNeill, Church Union in Canada: An Estimate of Dr. Morrow's Book (Toronto, 1924), p. 4.

printed in the same edition.[21] This eventually formed the basis of a pro-Union pamphlet entitled "Has Dr. Drummond Found the Way?"

Turnbull pointed out that federation had already been considered by General Assembly and turned down, and that while at an earlier date it might have represented an advance, at this point it would only be a "retrograde step." Commitments had been made to other churches and to 1,245 co-operating pastoral charges and there could be no turning back. He listed three adverse effects of the federation plan: (a) to stress denominationalism, since each "unit" would have to "safeguard its own interests", (b) to give union an "effective hoist", since it would be impossible to regain the momentum for union after the ten to fifteen year trial period proposed by Drummond, and (c) to imperil even co-operation.

> Co-operation with the prospect of Union at the end, is one thing, but co-operation for ten or fifteen years, with only a vague uncertainty at the end of it, is quite another thing.[22]

He concluded by chiding Drummond for trying to "play safe" and appealed to him to "follow the gleam" of the "great vision" and "upward call" of Church Union.

Drummond issued a sharp rejoinder in a letter published in the Presbyterian Witness on 10 May 1923. He reacted strongly to Turnbull's accusation that he was "playing safe." "When such

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[21] J.H. Turnbull, "Dr. Drummond's Way Out," Presbyterian Witness (26 April 1923): 10-11. See also Drummond's article on pp. 7-9 of the same issue, and Has Dr. Drummond Found the Way?, published by the Presbyterian Church-Union Movement Committee (Toronto, 1923).

[22] Ibid., p. 8.

language is employed," he charged, "the presumption is that the 'courage and faith' are on one side, and that the 'fear' and 'hesitation' and 'playing safe' are on the other ..."[23]

Analyzing the numbers behind Turnbull's 1,245 co-operating congregations, representing some 3,000 preaching points, Drummond warned that the casual reader might be misled into seeing this as half of the Presbyterian Church's communicant membership. In reality these were small congregations in the home mission fields comprising no more than one seventh of the church's communicant members. Since they were often shared on a 50-50 basis with the Methodists only about 20,000 people, or one eighteenth of the church's communicant members, had been "handed over" to the care of another church. "Is it wise or necessary," he asked

> for the sake of this relatively small portion of the Church, much of it rightly receiving help for the establishment and maintenance of the ordinances, to disturb the larger portion of the Church without whose generous aid services in these portions of our land would be impossible?[24]

He went on to express confidence that

> if the negotiating Churches should decide that, let us say, some form of Federal Union must now take the place of Organic Union all the churches would quickly adjust themselves to the new decision and work out the necessary arrangements and amalgamation.[25]

He then turned to the three points raised by Turnbull. About the

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[23]D.R. Drummond, "Dr. Drummond Replies", Presbyterian Witness (10 May 1923): 16.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid., p. 17.

stress on denominationalism, he responded

> I know that it has become the thoughtless fashion to decry denominationalism and forget that the Christian work of the world has been done in the past and is being done today by denominations. If the United Church of Canada were founded it would also be a denomination. Denominational vitality which yet respects others and, by agreement with them, avoids waste while preserving the battle against the common foe, is still the hope of the Kingdom's progress.[26]

As to effectively "hoisting" union by calling for a delay in the proceedings, Drummond pointed out that even the current course involved delay. The necessary legislation would have to be sought, which might take until 1925 or 1926, and if there were litigation the process could be delayed indefinitely. Can anyone, he asked

> think with easy mind of the interval with its humiliation and bitterness and lobbying and litigation and sneering and injury to the work?[27]

The charge of endangering co-operation with the other churches involved was "no compliment to the Christian character of our sister communions."[28] Because of the cooperation and goodwill built up among the negotiating churches it was unthinkable that they would go back to their old competitive ways. Since

> the conditions that created co-operation remain, co-operation in even fuller measure is not only "not imperilled" but assured, even though the hope of immediate Organic Union may have to be definitely given up meantime.[29]

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[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

LOST IN THE FOG AT PORT ARTHUR

Participants in the Church Union debate were aware that the 1923 General Assembly in Port Arthur would be an important turning point. Enabling legislation had been drafted for presentation to the Federal Parliament and the provincial legislatures and once the Assembly had decided to proceed there could be no turning back.

Three courses of action would be presented to the Assembly: (a) proceeding with the final arrangements for Union - the majority position, (b) taking no further action until virtual unanimity could be ensured - the minority opinion, and (c) halting proceedings while the negotiating churches consulted on an alternative - the mediating proposal of Drummond and his supporters. George C. Pidgeon, Convenor of the Presbyterian Union Committee since the 1921 General Assembly, was urged to hold a meeting of representatives from the parties involved to ensure that the debate would take place with a minimum of conflict.

This meeting took place in the Board Room at Knox College, when Pidgeon and three Unionists met with four anti-Unionists, along with Drummond and three supporters of his proposal. Pidgeon seems to have formed the conviction that Drummond's moderates were, in effect, opposed to Union. Church Union, as he saw it, had been the policy of the church since 1916, and a parting of the ways was inevitable. He found the other two groups obdurate, no union plan was acceptable to them if it meant dividing the Presbyterian Church. At this point, he reports, one of Drummond's party made

the "astounding suggestion" that if the meeting were to recommend to General Assembly that union proceedings be halted it would be guaranteed adoption.[30] Needless to say the proposal was rejected and the meeting broke up with little to show for it.

In the days leading up to the Assembly the press showed considerable interest. The Toronto Globe listed the three proposals and assured its readers, "Union or Drummond 'Way Out' likely to be division line-up."[31] However, R.K. Knowles, correspondent for the Toronto Daily Star was less sanguine:

> Hope of compromise there is now none. Talk of a federal union is dead as hector. Thought of postponement or temporary delay is equally extinct. The issue is sharp, the alternative clear and inevitable.[32]

General Assembly opened on the morning of Friday, 8 June with Dr. Alfred Gandier as Moderator. The debate on Church Union began that afternoon and other business was set aside while the discussion which continued until late Monday, pausing only for the Sabbath, ran its course.

On behalf of the Church Union Committee Dr. George Pidgeon laid before the Assembly the proposed Acts which would give legislative effect to the Basis of Union, then moved the adoption of the first

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[30]George C. Pidgeon, The United Church of Canada: The Story of the Union (Toronto 1950), pp. 51-2.

[31]"Assembly Grapples with Union Issue", Toronto Globe (9 June 1923): 1.

[32]"Deadlock all But Hopeless", Toronto Daily Star (7 June 1923): 1.

recommendation of the Committee:

> That the General Assembly hereby determines to proceed forthwith to the consummation of Union with the Methodist Church and the Congregational Churches of Canada upon the terms of the draft Bills herewith presented ...[33]

After Pidgeon's seconder, Col. C.G. Graham, had spoken, Dr. D.J. Fraser rose to present the report of the minority on the Church Union Committee. However, he simply read his report into the record and made way for Drummond's amendment.

Evidently the anti-Unionists had chosen to throw their weight behind Drummond's more moderate resolution, feeling that his proposal would attract broader support than outright rejection. In his address Fraser alluded to Drummond's "Way Out":

> Those whom I have the honour to represent, Moderator, stand today as we have consistently stood for the largest possible co-operation with our brethren of other communions, or if need be, for a policy of federation of the Protestant churches of Canada, a federation by which each church will retain its identity and autonomy. We believe that practically all the advantages wrought by organic union will thus be achieved without the tragic disadvantage of disunion within our house of faith, and we are prepared to consider any suggestion on these terms as a <u>way out</u> [emphasis added] of this present impasse and that will preserve the unity of our church.[34]

He was followed by Drummond who submitted an amendment to Pidgeon's motion, which would have had Assembly affirm:

> that, under existing conditions, further efforts to consummate organic union by the proposed legislative action would be fraught with such difficulty and with such injury to the interests of religion as to make such

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[33]Acts and Proceedings (1923), p. 28.

[34]Typescript of the Church Union Debate, Port Arthur Assembly 1923, Church Union Papers, United Church Archives, p. 46.

efforts inadvisable at the present time.[35]

The resolution went on to invite the other negotiating churches to further discussion about joint action, to instruct the Church Union Committee to arrange a conference of both sides in the union debate, and to call upon

> all parties in the Church to refrain from all active propaganda, meanwhile, till a report is had, probably at the Assembly of 1924 ...[36]

It is worth remarking that only in the preamble to his amendment did Drummond make any mention of the proposal of a federal union.

C.W. Gordon of Winnipeg, also known by his pseudonym as the author Ralph Connor, charged that Drummond had aligned himself with the anti-Unionist camp. Stung, Drummond asked him to withdraw the statement, to which the Moderator responded that Gordon was only voicing the impression Drummond's speech had left on his mind.[37] Drummond had earlier enunciated his understanding of his own position, saying, "If anyone wants to dub me a name, call me an anti-disunionist."[38]

Discussion ranged freely over the desirability of either delaying or proceeding, to the extent, laments Pidgeon, that the proposed Act was rarely referred to, except to denounce it.[39] Those

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[35]Acts and Proceedings (1923), p. 68.

[36]Ibid.

[37]"Too Late to Recede", Toronto Daily Star (9 June 1923): 14.

[38]Church Union Debate, p. 51.

[39]Pidgeon, p. 61.

supporting Drummond's amendment emphasised three points: concern for the unity of the Presbyterian Church, the value of denominational identity, and the need for a gradual approach.

For many the disruption of the Presbyterian Church was unthinkable. They pointed to the strength of anti-Union sentiment which had grown over the years and argued that were the church to proceed it would not be without a great deal of strife and bitterness. It would be a sad irony if Church Union, which was supposed to bring healing and reconciliation, resulted in schism.

Others questioned the Unionist aversion to "denominationalism." They ranged from those who saw Presbyterianism written on the very pages of the New Testament and believed that no finer instrument had been created to fulfil the will of God than the Presbyterian Church, to those who pointed to the achievements of denominations in bringing the gospel to the farthest reaches of Canada and saw in the plurality of denominations nothing but healthy competition. They hoped that federation would bring the benefits of both worlds, plurality of expression with unity of action.

Finally, there were those who pronounced themselves in favour of union but thought that it could best be achieved by a gradual approach, moving from co-operation to federal unity and, perhaps eventually to organic union as envisioned in the Basis of Union.

The other side of the question was equally strongly argued,

returning often to two key points: (a) the decision to proceed to organic union had already been made, and (b) the magnitude of the task ahead of the churches demanded their unity.

There is nothing new, they insisted, in Drummond's plan. The federal approach had been before the church several times and was rejected each time. If the moderates sincerely wanted unity, they would accept the will of the church and support the current proposal. They pointed to 53 overtures from presbyteries, of which 50 called for immediate action, one opposed union and only two favoured delay.

The moderates thought their plan would eventually bring about unanimity, but conciliation had been tried for years without effect. There was no indication that further delay would produce any better results. Unanimity, however desirable, was impossible. Peace, argued an impassioned C.W. Gordon, could be bought at too high a price. Canada had just come through a costly war but would they have bought peace with Germany at any price?[40]

Many saw Drummond's plan as inadequate for the challenge of evangelizing the west and remote areas of the east, Canadianizing immigrants, and ministering in the great cities of the country. Drummond was proposing little more than a co-operative committee, but co-operation had reached its limit. What was needed was a united church that could address the problems confronting it. The

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[40]"Must Give Reason", Toronto Daily Star (9 June 1923): 14.

Rev. C.S. Donald, a missionary from India, objected to spending money on "useless" churches in small communities while millions in India were "starving for the gospel."[41]

One exchange illustrates the very different perspectives of moderates and Unionists. In moving his amendment Drummond compared the church to the steamship, "Harmonic", that had brought the commissioners to Port Arthur. When the vessel found itself in deep fog the captain came to a halt rather than risk a collision with other ships nearby. "We as a church," Drummond said, "are in such a thick fog that we had better stand to."[42]

He may have regretted the comparison when the Rev. Leslie Pidgeon turned it against him later in the debate. Did Drummond, inquired the Winnipeg pastor, intend the church to remain at anchor indefinitely? At least their captain had not thought of returning to Sarnia, where they had begun the voyage, as Drummond seemed to be suggesting the church should do![43]

Through several days of debate the Assembly had not officially heard Drummond's alternative, although a copy of his memorandum was in the hands of all commissioners. Before debate closed on Monday afternoon he was given an opportunity to expound his proposal. An

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[41]"Voice from Mission Field", Toronto Globe (9 June 1923): 6.

[42]Church Union Debate, p. 49.

[43]Church Union Debate, pp. 92-3. See also "Dr. Drummond and the Fog," Toronto Daily Star (8 June 1923): 28, and "Clash of Verbal Arms", Toronto Daily Star (9 June 1923): 14.

earlier request to do so had been ruled out of order by the Moderator who maintained that the Church Union Committee had been asked to prepare legislation to implement organic union, and to raise an alternative while organic union was before the house would be to "sidetrack" it. When Drummond appealed, the house supported the Moderator in a vote that a Canadian Press reporter described as "half torrent and half avalanche."[44] Then, having flexed their muscles, the Unionists seemed to decide they could afford to be magnanimous and supported a resolution by President Murray of the University of Saskatchewan that Dr. Drummond be heard. There was, however, nothing in Drummond's speech to swing the Assembly behind him and when the vote was finally taken, his amendment was defeated with 137 votes cast in favour and 415 against. Dr. Pidgeon's original motion was then put and passed by 427 votes to 129.

CONCLUSION

In retrospect it is hard to see how Drummond's last-minute appeal ever had a chance of success. The situation was too polarized and Unionists had waited too long to brook further delay. His vision was not compelling enough to make the church want to bring union proceedings to a halt and move in a new direction. By counselling delay, Drummond was perceived as supporting the anti-Union cause, however sincere he may have been in claiming to be a moderate unionist. D.J. Fraser and the Presbyterian Church Association lent credence to this suspicion by supporting Drummond's amendment.

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[44]"Compromise Plan on Church Union", Toronto Daily Star (11 June 1923): 1.

Where Drummond's own heart lay may be indicated by the fact that after 1925 he cast in his lot with the continuing Presbyterian Church, dying in 1931 while still minister of St. Paul's.

Federation might have been a viable option if more fully explored earlier. It seems clear, however, that it was never taken seriously. As Keith Clifford argues, Unionists seemed to consider denominationalism of any kind as antithetical to ecumenism.[45] From Patrick's outburst at Mackay in 1906 to Gordon's accusation of Drummond in 1923, they took the position that "whoever is not with me is against me," leaving moderate unionists nowhere to go but into the anti-Union camp.

Experience has shown Drummond correct in his assertion that churches have traditions of theology, worship, and polity that are not easily surrendered even for so great a cause as Christian unity. The United Church of Canada itself, over a period of 65 years has, as Drummond predicted, become a denomination with a church life that its members would not lightly sacrifice. On the other hand he may have been premature in appealing to the Federal Council of Churches and similar bodies as an alternative. The councils have not been conspicuously successful in leading the churches into deeper unity, although they have done remarkably well in helping them cooperate in common causes. At the root of the matter is the fact that they are councils of <u>churches</u> and cannot act where is no consensus among their members.

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[45]Clifford, pp. 5-8.

It may be that some of the misapprehension as to Drummond's goal was due to his lack of clarity in his use of the word "federal." He seems not to have been sure whether he wanted a federal council with its connotations of a loose, and possibly nominal, unity or a federal union in which the central body would have real authority. His Unionist critics seem to have understood the former. They also argued, of course, that the term "organic union" had taken on overtones of uniformity that were not originally intended.

The Consultation on Church Union in the United States, which began in the 1960s has recognized that models of church unity have to be revised. After striving unsuccessfully for over a decade for a form of organic union, its nine participating churches set that model aside and are now in the process of "Covenanting toward Unity", whereby they are resolved to grow into a unity, the shape of which cannot be fully discerned until the churches have journeyed together for a time.[46] There are other variations on the same theme - the search for unity in communion between Anglicans and Roman Catholics or the concept of reconciled diversity favoured by Lutherans - but the thrust is the same. As Daniel R. Drummond recognized, the search for Christian unity must respect the unique gifts that have developed within particular Christian communities while providing for a shared life that can be seen and experienced, "so that the world may believe."

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[46]An outline of the COCU covenanting process is found in David W.A. Taylor (ed.), Digest of the Proceedings of the 17th Meeting of the Consultation on Church Union, New Orleans, Louisiana December 5-8, 1988, Vol. XVII Part II (Princeton, N.J., 1989), pp. 7-37.

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BRANDS FROM BLAZING HEATHER: CANADIAN RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN THE HIGHLAND TRADITION

John Webster Grant

Many years ago a college friend of mine spent a summer as the United Church student missionary - they probably called him a "catechist" - at Loch Lomond in Cape Breton. I think that on the whole he enjoyed the summer; he certainly developed a warm regard for the people. He suffered from a thorn in the flesh, however, similar to one with which many others in such circumstances have had to put up. His landlady had formed a particular attachment to a former minister, and day in and day out he had to listen while she sang the praises of this paragon. At some time in the summer, however, a weapon came into his hands. When the paean of praise began again, he put the question, "Did you know that Mr. So-and-so was an alcoholic?" The answer, from a militant teetotaller, squashed him like a fly: "If you had a tenth as much of the Holy Spirit as he had, you could afford to talk." The incident points to an aspect of Presbyterianism that is often missed by those who commonly characterize it as solemn, dour, or even cold. It relates to a tradition of revival that is, I am sure, well known to members of this society but seems to have been kept secret from the bulk of Canadian historians.

Before proceeding further I should make a few elementary distinctions, adopting though also adapting a suggestion from W.G. McLoughlin.[1] In the first place there was evangelism, an appeal to the heart which except in the most Moderate sections of the Auld Kirk of Scotland was expected to have a place in every Presbyterian sermon.[2] Its desired result was personal conversion, evidence of which was considered to be a condition of communion. Then there was revivalism, the seeking of such results through the use of special and increasingly standardized techniques. Scottish Presbyterians at least took a dim view of it, regularly quoting against Methodist disorder the text "God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all of the churches of the saints."[3] Finally there were revivals, perhaps better described as "awakenings", that stirred whole communities and sometimes spread over much wider areas. Obviously it is impossible to make precise distinctions among the three, for evangelism by its nature involves the use of some means and the line between a full-fledged revival and a successful series of evangelistic meetings is not easily drawn. So far as a distinction can be made, however, my present concern is with events that were widespread and sensational enough to be described as genuine revivals or awakenings.

In compiling a list of nineteenth-century events in Canadian Presbyterianism that could be described more or less

plausibly as revivals, I soon discovered that they were particularly common in areas where the supremacy of the Gaelic language was virtually uncontested. To be sure, these were not the only places affected by revival. Areas of American settlement were largely served in early times by missionaries from across the border who were very much in the revivalist tradition, although the number of community-wide awakenings that resulted was not all that great. Then after the great revival of 1857 and especially after the campaigns of Dwight L. Moody, when revivalism had shed some of its vulgarity and when acceptance in Scotland conferred an additional cachet, special evangelistic services became a regular feature of Presbyterian life and enjoyed considerable success.

For anything like a consistent story, however, we must look to areas of Highland tradition and Gaelic speech. Among these Cape Breton and Glengarry were by all odds the most fruitful. A major current spread out from Whycocomagh to neighbouring congregations in 1839-40,[4] and in 1852-3 the greater part of Cape Breton Island was visited. [5] Another awakening, remembered as "the great revival", began in Port Morien in 1870 and affected the whole of Cape Breton County and beyond. [6] There were other local movements around Mabou and Port Hood in 1878 and at West Bay and again Port Morien in 1885-6. [7] Glengarry seems to have been affected sporadically from the 1830s to the 1850s. [8] Great revivals, involving Congregationalists and Baptists as well as Presbyterians, began in 1864 in Lancaster, Indian Lands, and Notfield. [9] If nothing on the same scale took place again, local revivals were reported in 1876-7, 1880, and 1892. [10] Another early centre was what is now Scotstown, Quebec, where revivals took place in 1845 and 1852. [11] A spectacular revival at New Mills, New Brunswick, followed the Irish awakening of 1859, [12] and Prince Edward Island and Pictou County had their turn in 1875 during the Moody era. [13] While these later movements exhibited many of the features of their times, we can also detect in them expressions of the old Highland piety. And we must not forget the constant state of excitement in which Donald McDonald kept his followers in Prince Edward Island for many years after 1829, although I prefer to concentrate on movements untouched by suspicions of heterodoxy. Fortunately extensive accounts of a number of these exist.

If there was a fairly consistent pattern in the places where revivals occurred, the same was not true of their timing. One area might be quiescent while others were active, and even a continent-wide movement could pass over districts that might have been thought unusually susceptible. This unpredictability was often stressed in contemporary reports. The great Cape Breton revival of 1870 began at Port Morien "without any special effort on the part of either the minister, the session, or anyone else". [14] A few meetings planned by the session at Indian Lands in

1864 to mark the opening of a new church developed into nightly services stretching over more than a year. 15 George Monro Grant claimed a similar spontaneity for a presbytery-wide revival in Pictou in 1875, 16 while the catalyst at Georgetown, P.E.I., in the same year was the organization of a temperance society. 17 The most spectacular onset of revival, perhaps, was at New Mills in 1860. A dance was going on in this community when suddenly a young woman was struck by the enormity of her sins, and before the night was out a number of fellow-revellers were on their knees. Meanwhile a pious man who had prayed that the young people might be brought to their senses was awakened by the sound of heavenly music at the very time of the first impulse and summoned to lend his hand at the dance hall. 18

This random quality was only to be expected in a Calvinistic church that attributed salvation not to human effort but to divine choosing. Even writers who expressed a longing for revival deplored the use of "fictitious means" 19 or warned, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." 20 Ralph Connor thus described the 1864 revival at Indian Lands in a barely fictionalized account in The Man from Glengarry: "There were neither special sermons nor revival hymns. The old doctrines were proclaimed, but proclaimed with a fullness and a power unknown at other times. The old psalms were sung, but sung perhaps as they never had been before." 21 Similarly it was reported from River John, N.S., in 1875: "While the sound principle was at the outset adopted, to refuse no instrumentality which God manifestly was blessing, as a matter of fact the means employed were almost exclusively those commonly used in the work of a faithful ministry - the plain, simple, earnest, and pointed preaching of the truth, and personal dealing with inquirers." 22

Unpredictable as they might be, outbursts of revival were not altogether inexplicable. They took place under the ministry of outspokenly evangelical preachers, largely of the Free Church, who hoped for them and gradually built up a corresponding desire among their people. Hugh MacLeod wrote from Mira of a revival in 1852: "for the last two years I was led, in the providence of God, to expect such a season, for there was not only an extraordinary thirsting after the Word, a flocking of the people from all quarters and in all kinds of weather to hear it, and a melting down under it, but also cases now and then of decided conversion, as I have cause of believe, like drops before a shower." 23 The message that aroused such thirst emphasized not only the dangers of remaining in a guilty state but the joys that awaited the believer now and hereafter. The messengers commonly adopted a pleading style of delivery that was very effective in Gaelic although not easily transferred to English. A nineteenth-century traveller thus described one such occasion in Cape Breton:

> One of the worthy ministers seemed to me of a type perfectly suited to the scene. He was a patriarch in years, in fatherly kindness, in serenity and simplicity. His cherubic face, set in a frame of gray hair and beard, seemed to be made for smiling; but some interior power had won half of him over to severity - at least it seemed so at times when one brow, one eye, one side of the mouth, all contracted with an expression of gloom. Standing up in the little sentry-box with his hands clasped over his rotundity, he waited in silence for some moments, until he had established himself in a slow swaying motion from side to side; this swinging seemed essential to all these Cape Breton speakers and singers. Soon he started, in a very low voice, a hemming, a word, and a hesitation all together, and the hesitation often triumphed, made him wait again until more swinging had evolved a suggestion. The great silver-bowed spectacles finally came up from the depths of a pocket, and after two or three attempts scaled the heights, and planted themselves astride his nose. The discourse was then pursued in its regular form; the voice continued very low, confidential, winning. Judging him by his English sermons, ideas were as rare as the angels' visits that seemed reflected from time to time on the old man's benevolent face; so, to fill in, the last words or phrase of a sentence may be sometimes repeated three, even four times; the connections were made by these lapped joints. The pauses were frequently longer than his short phrases, but the swing, the driving power, held out; the majestic slowness did not fail, even though, as I saw, it should rain during the entire day. He preached eternity. 24

Despite protestations of surprise when revival occurred, preparation for it was sometimes quite intentional. Almost always prayer meetings were part of the prehistory; at Charlottetown revival broke out only after four years of special services and the institution of a weekly inquirers' meeting. 25 In many places the January week of prayer popularized by the Evangelical Alliance was an important factor. At Lancaster in 1864 John Anderson, despairing of the spiritual state of his people, announced that he would be in the church each evening in this week and invited others to join him. Three showed up on Monday, six on Tuesday, and by week's end crowds who insisted that the meetings continue. 26 At Indian Lands, when revival broke out in the same year, the week of prayer had been held for three consecutive years, and in the last two years services had been carried on until the spring breakup. Also influential there was Mrs Gordon's Bible class, which provided the first nucleus of converts. 27 At River John the awakening grew out of meetings specifically called to pray for revival, meetings that once again began small but eventually outgrew the village churches. 28

Although no two revivals were identical, certain elements were almost universal. The main thrust was carried by daily services that might last far into the night. At first these were conducted by ministers, but elders were often called in to relieve the strain and others participated by reading Scriptures and leading in prayer. 29 The first step toward conversion was conviction of sin, which often induced great anxiety and put a premium on confession. 30 To deal with inquirers after-meetings were often set up, while ministers had to allocate much of their waking time to those seeking release. Individuals took themselves to private prayer, and groups often came together spontaneously. 31 At some point conversions would begin to take place, giving an impetus to revival by reminding others of what they were missing. Most accounts emphasize the lack of unusual physical symptoms, although in those days trembling, weeping, and sobbing were not regarded as out of the way. Yet the McDonaldites of Prince Edward Island, for whom "the works" were a staple of every service, were not the only exception. Among those affected by the preaching of Peter MacLean of Whycocomagh there were many reports of bodily prostration and cries of alarm or joy. 32 At New Mills, where cases of temporary paralysis were common, people were struck down "in the family circle, on the wayside, while engaged in their lawful callings". 33

The annual communion once usual in Scottish Presbyterian congregations figured prominently in accounts of revivals. Sometimes it marked the beginning, 34 sometimes the climax, 35 of visible awakening. Almost always it was a significant milestone. Nor is this difficult to understand. In a rural community the communion was the most dramatic event of the year, involving five days of intense call for self-examination. It brought together crowds, estimated in 1855 at 5-6,000 at Mira and almost as many at Whycocomagh and Boularderie, that could bring mass psychology into play. 36 The communion itself could have been a stimulating experience if the four ounces of wine/reported elsewhere were duplicated here. 37 Added to all these was a discipline that bred anxiety. While attendance was large, participation was select. To commune one required a token, which the elders of the congregation gave out only after careful consideration. Even after that test was passed the officiating minister would fence the tables, haranguing prospective communicants at considerable length and in great detail to fulfil the injunction of answer 97 of the Shorter Catechism to "examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience, lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves". Some people held back even at this point or went forward with a sense of terror. Yet neither was it easy to watch a communion from the outside, especially since the line between those who partook and those who did not was the most obvious indication of who might be predestined to eternal life and who to eternal damnation. Small wonder that even ordinarily careless

Presbyterians became increasingly introspective as the communion season approached and that the anxiety often reached a breaking point during its course!

With fair unanimity the reports emphasize the diversity of those affected: all ages, both sexes, the obviously bad and the apparently good. One does not read far, however, without becoming aware that not all were affected equally. At New Mills the "grossly wicked" were said to have led the way for the more respectable to follow, 38 and a similar if less neat progression can be inferred elsewhere. Almost everywhere the young were singled out as constituting the bulk of the converts. 39 Some were very young, schoolchildren who wept in secret over their sins or congregated in informal prayer meetings in defiance of mocking playmates. 40 Sex ratios are more difficult to determine. At Mira in 1852 young men were singled out as especially affected, 41 at Indian Lands in 1864 they led in devotions, 42 and in 1875 they fanned out from New Glasgow to revive neighbouring communities. 43 We are told less about women, but perhaps greater susceptibility on their part was simply taken for granted. On one point there would have been general agreement: the subjects of religious awakenings, a church committee noted, "were to a large extent persons who had in early life been carefully instructed in the system of Divine truth". 44

Whatever the course of revival, the excitement would eventually dissipate and the meetings taper off. What then? It was generally admitted that many who had been caught up in the excitement quickly fell away and that the withdrawal period severely tested the depth of converts' commitment. There were further suggestions that well cultivated vineyards were particularly tempting to Universalists and other foxes 45 and that those whom revivals thrust into positions of leadership were tempted to "arrogance and presumption". 46 Always, however, it was agreed that on balance the results had been good. After a visit to Lancaster in the wake of the 1864 revival Principal Michael Willis of Knox College reported: "more than a hundred have been added to the communicants' roll of a country congregation since January last ... persons lately living to the present world - younger as well as older persons - have cast their idols away and manifested an unwonted preference for spiritual exercises and religious companionships, and ... whole households of nominal Protestants, or members of Christian families, hitherto untouched by law or gospel, have spontaneously sought to confess Christ." 47 Daniel Gordon, the minister of Indian Lands, emphasized the disappearance of party feeling. 48 His wife, while also noting "the manifest growth of brotherly love", was practical enough to add "the punctual payment of the subscriptions to the minister's salary". 49 Perhaps the most tangible long-term result was

the emergence of leaders for another generation, both locally and in wider spheres. Areas swept by revival were fertile sources of candidates for the ministry, and many missionaries traced their call to such an event. 50

To many people it seems distinctly out of character for Calvinistic churches obsessed with correct doctrine and suspicious of human contrivance to have nourished awakenings of the type I have described, and indeed the usual state of many Presbyterian congregations belied the possibility. Yet, knowing the fruit, we can readily trace it back to the seed. Calvin, known to many only for the doctrine of predestination and the execution of Servetus, insisted that "the assent which we give to the Divine word ... is from the heart rather than the head, and from the affections rather than from the understanding". 51 He added that "even pious persons, and such as fear God, still stand in need of the peculiar impulse of the Spirit". 52 The Shorter Catechism echoed this teaching: "We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit." 53 It only needed the insistence of Puritans on a converted membership and the introspection this implied to complete a prescription for revival.

In Scotland this impulse to revival found classic expression in 1742 in the Glasgow suburb of Cambuslang. George Whitefield had a considerable part in it. William McCulloch, Cambuslang's evangelical but reportedly not very eloquent minister, was so impressed by reports of Whitefield's meetings in America that he retailed them to his congregation and did what he could to promote a similar revival. 54 Then in 1741 Whitefield came to Scotland, conducting successful missions in a number of places including Glasgow. By the spring of 1742 there was getting to be such a stir at Cambuslang that McCulloch felt justified in asking Whitefield to take part in the preparations for communion in July. On that occasion the crowd was estimated, perhaps liberally, as twenty thousand. 55 Such was the momentum that McCulloch announced another communion for August, during which season Whitefield preached again to an estimated thirty thousand. 56 Robert Burns of Knox Church and College, Toronto, pointed to the Cambuslang "wark" and to another shortly thereafter at Kilsyth in Stirlingshire as formative of the evangelical party in the Church of Scotland and ultimately of the Free Church. His reminiscences make clear that these revivals were still a very living part of his own historical memory. 57 Leigh Eric Schmidt, who links this revival tradition closely with the mass meetings associated with the annual communion, traces it back to late medieval attitudes and makes a strong case for regarding it as the origin of camp

and protracted meetings and thus of much North American revivalism. 58

To turn from Canada to Cambuslang is to recognize many familiar landmarks. We encounter the same admixture of surprise and calculation, the same physical phenomena, the same general mix of converts by age, sex, and former condition, the same concentration of "those brought up religiously", the same winnowing as excitement died down, the same positive evaluation of results. Most significantly, perhaps, we meet the same inistence that revival was sparked by orthodox Calvinist doctrine proclaimed in the traditional way. 59 That the work was of a sovereign God rather than of human instruments was made clear by McCulloch's use of the familiar watchword from Zechariah 4: 6, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts". 60 One distinctive note at Cambuslang. though not altogether without parallel in Victorian Canada, was the use of explicitly sexual imagery; McCulloch preached from the Song of Solomon, and Whitefield's sermon that drew most comment was on the suggestive text, "Thy Maker is thy husband". 61

Gaelic revivals in Canada drew even more directly on a special Highland tradition. The Highlands were little affected at first by the Reformation. Their clergy for the next century and a half were largely episcopal in sympathy and for almost as long after that "moderate" in their approach to religion. In this situation the rise of evangelicalism was closely linked with the activities of an unofficial order of zealous lay preachers known simply as *na daoine* or "the Men", who worked closely with evangelical ministers and would have nothing to do with moderates. The earliest Highland revivals took place in the mid-seventeenth century through the influence of Puritan refugees and a few ministers of Puritan sympathies. Notable among the latter was the fiery Thomas Hog of Kiltearn, who has been credited with enlisting the first of "the Men". 62 During the next century Cambuslang had repercussions in the Highlands, especially in Ross-shire and especially among Gaelic-speakers. 63 According to John Kennedy, a mid-nineteenth century historian of the revivals, their best days had been even before this. 64 In numbers and intensity, however, they reached their peak only in Kennedy's time 65 During this period they developed another node in Perthshire and spread into the Western Isles.

Several factors contributed to this outburst of religious zeal. One was the formation during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries of several societies dedicated to the civilization of the Highlands. All of them were evangelical in inspiration, and their schoolteachers regularly conducted services in parishes where only

moderate preaching was available. 66 The Edinburgh-based Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge is best known, but was handicapped by its insistence on teaching in English. The Gaelic School Society, founded in 1811, had readier access to the people and was able to take advantage of the publication of a Gaelic Bible in 1801. Another factor was the destruction of the clan system after 1745, calling for a reconstitution of a sense of identity that revival helped to provide. There was also an element of social protest against the moderate clergy, who generally took the side of the landlords and were often related to them. 67 And despite frequent dereliction of duty an increasing supply of ministerial services was awakening an appetite for religion. The situation of my ancestral parish of Glenurquhart, where in the seventeenth century a ministry of twenty-four years passed without a celebration of the Lord's Supper, 68 would become unthinkable, as would the excuse offered for infrequent communion at Dingwall that "the frequent charges that ther people gott to be in arms against the Macdonalds obstructed ther friedom to that great work". 69

These circumstances gave a distinctive colouring to Highland revival. The mass gatherings at long communions, and at the revivals associated with them, were largely composed of visitors who were boycotting their own moderate ministers; the fervour thus generated owed a good deal to partisan feeling. 70 The Men, old-fashioned in dress, tending to morbidity in self-examination, fervent and sometimes fanatical in their piety, imparted a note of austerity reminiscent of the medieval Culdees. As in Cape Breton, evangelical ministers were characterized by a distinctive whine or "sough". 71 Their converts were generally quieter than in the Lowlands, although an occasional groan or ejaculation might be heard. 72 In Lewis, however, many during 1823, the so-called "year of swooning", were seized with convulsions and spasms of screaming aloud. 73 Highland evangelicals constantly teetered between two extremes of piety. On the one hand, in reaction against self-indulgent clergy, they displayed a severity that could terrorize their congregations and reduce their communion rolls to a handful; 74 in the process many traditional elements of Highland customs and folklore were banished for ever. On the other hand, their message was ultimately one of free pardoning grace to bind up sinners' wounds. Sometimes a preacher would successfully combine the two emphases. Sometimes, as at Alness, a thunderer like James Fraser would awaken members of his congregation to the enormity of their guilt and then happily send them to his neighbour John Porteous of Kilmuir for release. 75

The Highland tradition of revival reached its two

chief Canadian centres in rather different ways. It has been noted that whereas those who settled in Cape Breton before 1820 or 1825 had largely been unaffected by it, those who followed them carried its fervour with them. 76 Certainly the most florid expressions of revival were in areas of late settlement. Since only evangelical ministers were sent to Cape Breton, however, there was less severity and little anticlericalism - to the dismay of Norman MacLeod, who regarded his loyal followers at St Ann's as lacking the faith that would justify a celebration of the Lord's Supper. 77 Whatever relevance the revival tradition may have had to their particular circumstances, Cape Bretoners seem merely to have been continuing a familiar pattern that faded from memory, as John Murray suggested, when the Men on the island died out. 78 In Glengarry settlement was virtually complete at an earlier stage, and for some years moderate preaching predominated to the point where the people were said to have inherited "Moderate feelings and formalities". 79 Revivals occurred with just enough frequency to allow for a vestige of continuous local memory, but later ones impressed people by their novelty rather than their familiarity. Here revivals were, to a greater extent than in Cape Breton, worked up by Scottish-born ministers. Instead of recalling a treasured past, they seem to have marked a transition from frontier roughness to a more settled and sophisticated state of society. In Connor's novels, of course. the chief male converts went on to become tycoons.

Finally, it is my impression that, contrary to the desires of those involved in them, the revivals inspired by Calvinism helped in the long run to undermine it. John Kennedy suggested this of the Highland revivals of his time, 80 and Ralph Connor made the claim explicit in his late novel Torches through the Bush. 81 Perhaps there was an unresolvable tension between a doctrine that attributed salvation totally to God's initiative and a practice that called on sinners to choose. In the Canadian case, however, I suspect that the change came about mainly because even Highland preachers were subtly affected by the Arminianism endemic to North American revivalism. As my chief witness I call one who who would have been scandalized by being cast in such a role, somewhat unfairly perhaps since he was not of Highland or even Scottish background. Jonathan Goforth, a pioneer Presbyterian missionary who gained fame for his ability to inspire mass movements in China and Manchuria, was described by Charles G. Trumbull as standing "like Gibraltar, steadfast, uncompromising for the old faith which is ever new". 82 For the watchword of his evangelism, in a day when watchwords were taken seriously, he looked back to the

the Calvinism of Cambuslang: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit". 83 Yet he was reported as beginning to achieve wholesale success when he read and applied the formula of Charles G. Finney: "A revival is a purely philosophical result of the right use of constituted means". 84 Goforth never seems to have suspected any inconsistency between his motto and his methodology. Nevertheless, he may stand as representing the point, about the turn of the twentieth century, by which Presbyterian revival in Canada had lost its distinctive character and blended into a general North American tradition.

NOTES

1. Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), xiii.

2. An appeal for decision was reportedly as common in Presbyterian as in Methodist sermons (L.E. Smith, "Nineteenth-Century Canadian Preaching in Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational Churches", Th.D. thesis, Victoria University, 1953, 45.

3. Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland (H & F (FS)). Mar. 1846, 323; Canadian United Presbyterian Magazine 5 (1858), 143.

4. Laurie Stanley, The Well-Watered Garden: the Presbyterian Church in Cape Breton, 1798-1860 (Sydney: University of Cape Breton Press, 1983), 135-6.

5. H & F (FS), Dec. 1852, 127; Mar. 1853, 213.

6. John Murray, History of the Presbyterian Church in Cape Breton (Truro, NS: News Publishing Co., 1921), 61.

7. Presbyterian Record, May 1878, 119; Dec. 1885, 317; Murray, History, 144-5.

8. Donald N. MacMillan, The Kirk in Glengarry, 1784-1984 (Finch, ON: 1984), 427-8; H & F (FS), July 1850, 350; May 1847, 95; Mar. 1848, 350; Apr. 1849, 371; Ecclesiastand Missionary Record of the Presbyterian Church of Canada (E & M (FC)), Nov. 1847, 4; Jan. 1848, 53.

9. MacMillan, Kirk, 429-35; Home and Foreign Record of the Canada Presbyterian Church (H & F (CP)), May 1864, 214-16; Oct. 1864, 342-4; May 1865, 221-3; Apr. 1866, 186-8; J.D. Anderson, ed., Reminiscences and Incidents Connected with the Life and Pastoral Labors of the Reverend John Anderson (Toronto: William Briggs, 1910), chaps. 14, 15. Descriptions thinly disguised are in Ralph Connor, The Man from Glengarry (New Canadian Library, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960) and Torches through the Bush (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1934), and in [M.M. Robertson], Shenac: The Story of a Highland Family in Canada (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1901).

10. A.H. Scott, Ten Years on My First Charge (Toronto: Hart & Co., 1891), 71; MacMillan, Kirk, 435; Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1882, clxii.

11. H & F (FS), Oct. 1848, 506-7; July 1852, 413.

12. Ibid., 1 Aug. 1860, 15-17; 1 Nov. 1860, 923; 1 Dec. 1860, 113.

13. Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Church of Scotland (H & F (K)), 1 Apr. 1875, 314-16; 1 Nov. 1875, 511; 1 Dec. 1875, 534-5; W.L. Grant and Frederick Hamilton, Principal Grant (Toronto: Morang & Co., Ltd., 1904), 171-2.

14. Murray, History, 143.

15. Robertson, Shenac, 133.

16. Grant and Hamilton, Grant, 171.

17. H & F (K), 1 Apr. 1875, 316.

18. H & F (FS), 1 Aug. 1860, 15.

19. H & F (K), 1 Nov. 1860, 92-3.

20. Ecclesiastical and Missionary Record of the Free Church of Nova Scotia, Sept. 1854, 47.

21. P. 158.

22. H & F (K), 1 Dec. 1875, 535.

23. H & F (FS), Mar. 1853, 213.

24. C.H. Farnham, "Cape Breton Folk", reprinted in Acadiensis 8 (spring 1975), 104.

25. H & F (K), 1 Apr. 1875, 314.

26. Anderson, Anderson, 266-72.

27. H & F (CP), May 1865, 221-2.

28. H & F (K), 1 Dec. 1875, 535.

29. Robertson, Shenac, 234; Connor, Man from Glengarry, 158.

30. Connor, Torches, 210.

31. Anderson, Anderson, 276.

32. Murray, History, 60.

33. H & F (FS), 1 Aug. 1860, 16.

34. Connor, Man from Glengarry, 157.

35. H & F (K), 1 Apr. 1875, 316.

36. Ecclesiastical and Missionary Record of the Free Church of Nova Scotia, Aug. 1855, 164.

37. Leigh Eric Schmidt, Holy Fairs: Scottish Communions and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 197.

38. H & F (FS), 1 Nov. 1860, 92.

39. Ibid., Apr. 1848, 371; H & F (CP), May 1865, 223; Anderson, Anderson, 61.

40. Anderson, Anderson, 280, 282-6.

41. H & F (FS), Dec. 1852, 127.

42. H & F (CP), May 1865, 222.

43. Grant and Hamilton, Grant, 172.

44. H & F (CP), July 1869, 263.

45. Ibid., Oct. 1864, 343.

46. H & F (CP), Jan. 1869, 70.

47. Ibid., Oct. 1864, 342-3.

48. Ibid., May 1865, 223. Cf. G.M. Grant in H & F (K), 1 Nov. 1875, 511.

49. H & F (CP), Apr. 1866, 188.

50. Ruth Compton Brouwer, New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions, 1876-1914 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 84.

51. Institutes of the Christian Religion, 3.2.8.

52. Ibid., 3.24.13.

53. A. 29.

54. D. Macfarlan, The Revivals of the Eighteenth Century, Particularly at Cambuslang (Edinburgh, Johnston & Hunter, 1847; reprint, Wheaton, IL: Richard Owen Roberts, 1980), 35-6, 47.

55. Ibid., 63.

56. Ibid., 65.

57. R.F. Burns, The Life and Times of the Rev. Robert Burns, D.D., F.A.S., F.R.S.E., Toronto (Toronto: James Campbell & Son, 1872), 3, 267.

58. This is the general theme of Holy Fairs.

59. Macfarlan. Revivals, 16, 35, 88, 94, 175.

60. Ibid., 52.

61. Isa. 54:5; Macfarlan, Revivals, 65, 139, 187.

62. Ian A. Muirhead, "The Revival as a Dimension of Scottish Church History", Scottish Church History Society Records 20: 3 (1980), 184-6.

63. Macfarlan, Revivals, 215, 253.

64. The Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire, 4th ed. (Toronto: James Campbell & Son, 1867), 12.

65. Gordon E. MacDermid, "The Religious and Ecclesiastical Life of the Northwest Highlands, 1750-1843", Ph.D. thesis, Aberdeen, 1967, 260, 281-2.

66. James Hunter, "The Emergence of the Crofting Community: The Religious Contribution, 1798-1843", Scottish Studies 18 (1974), 104.

67. Kenneth J. Logue, Popular Disturbances in Scotland, 1780-1805 (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd., 1979), 173-5; Steve Bruce, "Social Change and Collective Behaviour: The Revival in Eighteenth-Century Ross-shire", British Journal of Sociology 34 (1983), 554-72.

68. John Mackay, The Church in the Highlands, or The Progress of Evangelical Religion in Gaelic Scotland, 563-1843 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914), 151.

69. George B. Burnet, The Holy Communion in the Reformed Church of Scotland, 1560-1960 (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), 147.

70. Mackay, Church in the Highlands, 250-1.

71. Burnet, Holy Communion, 221.

72. Ibid., 227.

73. Hunter, "Crofting Community", 106.

74. MacDermid, "Religious and Ecclesiastical Life", 269.

75. Kennedy, Fathers in Ross-shire, 33-4.

76. MacDermid, "Religious and Ecclesiastical Life", 304; Stanley, Well-Watered Garden, 38-9.

77. Stanley, Well-Watered Garden, 163, 165-6.

78. History, 266.

79. H & F (FS), Apr. 1848, 371.

80. Fathers in Ross-shire, 120-1.

81. P. 222.

82. Rosalind Goforth, Goforth of China (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1937), unpaginated introduction.

83. Ibid., 186.

84. Ibid., 179.

Interpreting the Stuff of History: The Theology and Practice of History in The Presbyterian Tradition in Canada

by
John A. Vissers

Canadian Presbyterian theologian and historian Alan Farris has argued Christians must account for three factors when interpreting the stuff of history:

> The Christian understanding of history involves...three factors: necessity, human initiative and God. God, man and creation are all involved in a highly complex relationship out of which the processes of history emerge. So complex and intricately involved are these relationships that no human being can hope to sort them out. Having insisted, however, on the operation of these three factors in making up the stuff of history we must also insist that the initiative is always with God, the direction of history is of His choosing and the end is of His ordering - not however in such a way as to leave no room for the exercise of the freedom with which God has created man, or the demands made upon him by the nature to whose laws man is at once subject, and yet over which he is ordained by God to have dominion.1

The obvious question which arises, however, concerns the nature and extent to which the understanding and writing of history are affected by faith in God and the ecclesial commitments of the historian. How may one describe the activity of God in history? Can one be a committed Christian and at the same time utilize the scientific tools of historical inquiry with integrity? How have historians of presbyterianism in Canada dealt with questions of the distinction between so-called historical facts and interpretation, historical relativity, and the historical criticism of the biblical documents in church historiography? In this essay we seek to investigate such questions through an

examination of the theology of history and the practice of historiography within Canadian Presbyterianism.

In general the Reformed and Presbyterian view of history shares much in common with the wider western Christian tradition to which it belongs, and with it much that is common to eastern Christianity and the other two monotheistic religions Islam and Judaism. History is linear with its beginning point in the creation of the universe out of nothing by a divine being and its telos in the eschatological messianic kingdom at the end of time. Thus it is to be distinguished from other views of history such as a Greek view in which history may be understood as an expression of the cycles of nature with no real meaning or telos, a Marxist view of history in which economic necessity drives history in a deterministic manner, or a humanist interpretation of history in which human initiative is the primary factor in shaping historical understanding.[2] What distinguishes the Christian view of history from Islam and Judaism, however, is the claim that the meaning of this history is found in Jesus Christ, who as the preincarnate Logos was the agent of creation, and whose life, death, and resurrection defines the purpose and telos of history.

As part of the Christian religion the contribution made by the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition is found primarily in the emphasis that a sovereign God of creation, providence, and redemption creates, sustains, and directs the affairs of human history. God is the sovereign Lord of history who stands outside of it and at the same time providentially orders it. History is the creation of God and serves as the arena of God's providential

activity between the creation of the world and its completion. Jesus Christ is the centre of this history. Human history is the unfolding of the struggle between Christ and the powers of evil but in the end Christ will triumph and reign, assurance of this having been given by God's raising him from the dead. In this understanding of history, the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition reflects Augustine's view of history in his well-known work The City of God. For Augustine the meaning of history is located in the struggle between an earthly kingdom and a heavenly kingdom, between the City of God and the City of Man. This struggle shapes the unfolding of history and its end is certain: the Kingdom of God will triumph.[3]

Within this general theological framework historiography within the Presbyterian Church in Canada since 1925 has been shaped by two theologians and practitioners of church history, Walter W. Bryden and Alan L. Farris. In their work we see the convergence between a theology of history and the practice of historiography in presbyterianism in Canada.

Walter W. Bryden (1883-1952) was the leading theologian of the Presbyterian Church in Canada after 1925. After studies at the University of Toronto, Knox College, and the United Free Church College in Glasgow, Bryden served pastorates in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario before his appointment as professor of church history and the history and philosophy of religion at Knox College in 1927. From 1945 until his death in 1952 he also served as principal of the college. Through his lectures, articles and books Bryden influenced an entire generation of Canadian

presbyterian theological students in their approach to the church's history and theology.[4]

As professor of church history Bryden approached history from within the Reformed tradition. His primary interest was in the history of Christian thought rather than the history of institutions, and he sought to introduce his students to the history of doctrine in such a way that they would be able to discern the critical contemporary theological issues and develop positions which would assist them in their preaching and pastoral ministries. Bryden saw church history as "Word of God" history:

> The church is the "Body of Christ"; it is an extension of the incarnation, i.e. of Christ's coming into the world. Great institutions are all established by God; some, however, grow out of the necessities of the natural life, while others arise out of the necessities of man's relation to God since God has come into the world. The church, i.e. the believers of Jesus Christ as Lord, is "called" into being by God; and Christ therefore is enthroned in the lives of Christians instead of man's own "self" by nature. The second Adam has taken the place of the old Adam in the membership of the Church of God in Christ.[5]

Church history, in this sense, was a unique history in Bryden's eyes, to be distinguished from all other types of historical investigation. He rejected that scientific historical methodologies could encompass Christian faith and life. He argued that modernism in theology wrongly presupposed that the Christian revelation could be authenticated in history by empirically verifiable historical evidence.[6] Indeed modernism represented "a deliberate and sustained tendency to discover the revelation contained in the New Testament upon the purely historic plane and by purely empirical method".[7] In following this tendency, Bryden

argued, the eschatological, apocalyptic, and transcendent dimension of Scripture was dismissed. Since the publication of David Strauss' Leben Jesu, revelation in the New Testament had been subsumed under the category of the "historic Jesus" alone, "in which his "unique personality", the incidents of His human life and His moral religious teachings constitute the matters of prime consideration".[8] Such an approach was more concerned with ideas than with facts. Revelation became an historical ideal rather than the real history of God's dealings with humanity in Jesus Christ.

In his critique Bryden questioned the assumed unlimited usefulness of the historical-critical method of biblical interpretation. Christian faith, he contended, cannot rest upon historical reconstruction alone. The activity of the sovereign God cannot be reduced to empirically verifiable historical events. Historical investigation is useful insofar as it sets out the historic and the factual which is always essential but in and of themselves such approaches cannot describe the activity of God.

For Bryden, then, a Christian understanding of history always had to account for the reality of the activity of God. It was this perspective which he brought to Presbyterian Church in Canada during the church union controversy. While Bryden wrote little history himself his theological work provided the assumptions which have very much shaped the historiography of the church.

Bryden's successor as professor of church history at Knox College was Alan Farris (1920-1977). Farris stood in the same

theological tradition as Bryden and adopted many of the same approaches to church history. Farris distinguished a Christian approach to history from a Greek view, a Marxist view, and a humanist view with their emphases on historical necessity, dialectical determinism, and human rationality. As noted above Farris argued that a Christian understanding of history involved necessity, human initiative and God. It must also account for the mystery of evil within the personal and universal history in which human beings live.

For Farris, then, the biblical understanding of history begins with the world's creation by God. "Time is the continuum of the historical process and God is the Lord of the historical process".[9] Humanity in revolt against God is in resistance to this Lordship. But God as Lord acts to redeem His people, initially in the history of Israel, and finally and supremely in the history of Jesus, who is the centre of history. It is he who overcomes evil and it is in the light of this victory that the church lives between the times. The church rules now with Christ who is the Lord of history but that rule is yet to be fulfilled in that day of triumph when the processes of history shall reach their goal "and a new and marvelous day will dawn when all that is of God in past history will be taken up, transfigured and given its place in the new age".[10]

This Christ-centred salvation history, however, does not mean that God is not involved in secular history or universal world history. Farris argued that a Reformed approach to history cannot simply account for <u>heilsgeschichte</u> (redemptive history)

but also had to deal with weltgeschichte (universal history). Universal history is more than the scaffolding upon which the redemptive history of the world is worked out. It too has a purpose and goal. Even after the Fall God is still the Lord of His creation. The history of the kingdom of God is not identical with the history of the this world but it is not an entirely different history either. (The same might be said of church history in sofar as it overlaps universal and redemption history). Secular history belongs to God but is at the same time touched by evil. Secular history, salvation history, and church history all find their meaning in Jesus Christ.

The contributions of Bryden and Farris to Canadian presbyterian historiography may be summed up as follows: they provided a theology of history which shaped the intellectual and theological historiography of the church after 1925. History done in and for the church had somehow to account for the reality of creation, revelation, and salvation as central to the very life of the church's own history. That God had created and continues to govern and sustain the world; that the divine being had been supremely self-disclosed in Jesus Christ; and that the crisis of human existence had been confronted in the death and resurrection of this Jesus Christ - these were realities without which it would be impossible to understand the history of the church. These were the theological presuppositions which shaped the faith of those whose motivations and actions shaped the history of the church's life. Church history which ignored these realities of faith could in the end only report on the development of a human institution. Historiography had somehow to account for necessity,

human initiative, and God; to combine theology and practice; to live in the world of the modern historian and at the same time the world of the believing Christian.[11]

To what extent, however, do these theological presuppositions actually shape the church's historiography? How has history really been written within the Presbyterian Church in Canada? It may be argued that at least five different genres may be discerned in the historiography of the church since 1925: apologetic, institutional, biographical, intellectual, and social. The five genres are not mutually exclusive but rather reflect different approaches to historiography within the denomination, and thus different theological assumptions about the nature of history and the way historiography ought to function within a particular ecclesiatical context. The proposal is intended also to be descriptive rather than prescriptive. The concern is not to argue for how history should be written but simply to reflect upon what in fact has been done. In this paper we deal only with apologetic and institutional historiography and very briefly identify the three other genres.

First, from 1925 until at least 1960 much of the history done within the Presbyterian Church in Canada was written as a defense of the decision of the continuing Presbyterians to reject church union. Historiography functioned as post-church union apologetic the purpose of which was to justify the existence of The Presbyterian Church in Canada by demonstrating its continuity with the Presbyterian Church in Canada of 1875 (with which the United Church of Canada also claimed continuity) and more

generally with the presbyterian and Reformed tradition. For example, W.M. Kannawin in his 1935 book for presbyterian young people, Our Church: A Brief Study of the Background, Government, and Work of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, states that "The Presbyterian Church in Canada is in historical continuity with the Church of Scotland, Reformed in 1560".[12] The thrust of most historiography during this post-union period was to demonstrate this continuity so that the Presbyterian Church in Canada could maintain its identity and status within Canadian culture and not be relegated to the sectarian sidelines.

One of the first books to appear in this genre was E. Lloyd Morrow's Church Union in Canada: Its History, Motives, Doctrine, and Government published in 1923 even before the consummation of church union. Although Morrow sought to give an objective account of the developments leading towards church union he freely admitted that his own personal judgments as an anti-unionist affected his historiography:

> In this book, the incorporation of my personal judgments is almost inevitable. My sympathies will appear in the way in which I describe and evaluate the various movements...But the main purpose of the book is to give information in so objective a fashion that it will be, I hope, a sourcebook for anyone, whether he happens to agree with my valuation or not.[13]

Morrow represented the "left wing" of Presbyterian opposition to union with his concern that the unionists were not progressive enough in the theology of the proposed Basis of Union. Having been trained at the University of Chicago he sought to utilize scientific historiographical methods to justify that opposition.[14]

Ephraim Scott's book Church Union and The Presbyterian Church in Canada (1928) represents another example of this type of apologetic history, albeit from a different theological perspective. In distinction from Morrow Scott charged that the proposed Basis of Union was too liberal, too modern and an abandonment of the Westminster Confession of Faith.[15] He saw the Basis of Union as a misreading of the Reformed tradition and therefore not in continuity with it. Scott was editor of the Presbyterian Record and was elected moderator of the General Assembly of the continuing Presbyterian Church in 1925. In his book Scott tried to demonstrate the continuity of the Presbyterian Church in Canada not only with the Church of Scotland but with the prophets and the apostles. He argued vigorously that the church union movement was ultra vires (outside of the law of the church) and concluded by noting that while cooperation in Christendom is possible, reunion is impossible and undesirable. In his book The Canadian Experience of Church Union John Webster Grant describes Scott's work as "a vitriolic little book on church union in which he traced the persecution of presbyterians back to the day of the apostles".[16]

In 1929 R.G. MacBeth's book The Burning Bush and Canada was published by the Westminster Press of Toronto. MacBeth also admitted that the purpose of his book was to convince people of the anti-unionist position:

> This book is frankly written in order that people, young and old, may get the viewpoint of Presbyterians regarding recent efforts to merge certain churches in Canada into a new denomination.17

MacBeth traced the presbyterian system of church government back

to the Old Testament and the New Testament in order to make his case for the continuity of the Presbyterian Church in Canada with the holy, catholic church. The continuing existence of the Presbyterian Church in Canada was justified on the basis of its historical continuity with the biblical pattern. Since presbyterianism was biblical, it was historically justifiable. Implicit in this argument are also certain assumptions about the historicity of the biblical narratives. MacBeth's assumption was that what happened in his time was the same as what happened in biblical times. Historiography, biblical and ecclesiastical, recorded this history and demonstrated the historic continuity.

Other books in which this genre of apologetic historiography is to be found include Not Yet Consumed: A Short Account of the History and Antecedents of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (1946) by Stuart C. Parker, the minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, King Street, Toronto; Why I Am A Presbyterian (1934) by Walter W. Bryden of Knox College, Toronto; and Our Heritage and Our Our Faith (1950) by John McNab and F. Scott Mackenzie, a work published by the 75th Anniversary Committee of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Each functions as a post-union rationale for the continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada and seeks to ground the life of the church in the Reformed and presbyterian tradition as represented in the Church of Scotland, reformed in 1560, and thus in continuity with the holy catholic and apostolic church of the New Testament era. Presbyterian historiography since 1925 has been shaped by the events of church union. United Church historian John Webster

Grant notes:

> Those who have dealings with both the United Church of Canada and the continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada must accustom themselves to two semantically incompatible approaches to the events of June 10, 1925. What one celebrates as a union, the other deplores as a disruption.18

It must be noted that similar types of historiography may be found on the unionist side and that much of the presbyterian historiography was written in response to it. George C. Pidgeon's book The United Church of Canada: The Story of the Union (1950) and the work by C.E. Silcox, Church Union in Canada: its Causes and Consequences (1933) may be cited as examples. Even John T. McNeill's The Presbyterian Church in Canada 1875-1925 was written from a unionist perspective.[19]

Two more recent studies from both the Presbyterian and the United Church sides show that while interpretations of the church union movement continue to vary, a greater historical objectivity has come to have force in church union historiography. Alan Farris wrote "The Fathers of 1925" (Enkindled By The Word: Essays on Presbyterianism in Canada, Toronto, 1966) in which he tried to show that continuing Presbyterianism in Canada not only represented the heritage of Scottish Presbyterianism, but also a much broader heritage than was usually assumed. United Church historian N. Keith Clifford's study The Resistance to Church Union in Canada 1904 - 1939 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985) provides the most recent analysis of the church union movement with a particular focus on those who chose to remain presbyterians.

In sum, in writing their own history Canadian presbyterians

have had to set their interpretation over against another competing interpretation of the events from the perspective of United Church historians. Both interpretations have been shaped by Christian faith and ecclesial commitments. Apologetic historiography within the Presbyterian Church in Canada shows that the issues are never as easy as might be supposed, and that historical interpretation is not a simple choice between faith and scientific historiography. Interpretations through the eyes of faith are always affected by other interpretations, and likewise, so-called objective renderings of the history of the church are always written from a particular perspective. The apologetic mode of historiography represented by the examples above reflects a continuation of the providential view of history in the Reformed tradition in which specific events may be explained with reference to the specific plan and purpose of God as well as to necessity and human initiative. It included appeals to biblical history as a pattern for the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in order to justify its continuing existence. Both the unionists and the anti-unionists believed they were being faithful to a Reformed understanding of the Gospel and the church. The continuing Presbyterian histories intensify this perspective in that they also represent a tradition of "persecution histories" which may be found in the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition in which the people of God's covenant see themselves as the faithful remnant.

Secondly, after about 1960 historiography within the Presbyterian Church in Canada became less preoccupied with

defending the existence of the denomination and more concerned with setting forth its history within the wider ecclesiastical landscape of Canadian society. The growth of the denomination during the 1950's seemed to give a new sense of confidence and identity to presbyterians in Canada, a confidence which may be seen in a historiography concerned to understand The Presbyterian Church in Canada in the broader Canadian social and cultural matrix. Presbyterian historiography was undertaken with the assumption that the Presbyterian Church in Canada was a mainline Canadian Protestant denomination which had made and which continued to make an important contribution to Canadian society.

Earlier histories of presbyterianism in Canada in the nineteenth century were written from this perspective and the later institutional histories followed their pattern. For example, William Gregg's History of the Presbyterian Church in the Dominion of Canada from the Earliest Times to 1834 (1885) was, in the words of John Moir, "a pioneer effort which made extensive use of primary materials"[20], and thus provided the basis for later historiographical work. In 1963 N.G. Smith's essay "The Presbyterian Tradition in Canada" was published in The Churches and the Canadian Experience, a work edited by John Webster Grant and published as a Faith and Order Study of the Christian Tradition by the Canadian Council of Churches. While still arguing that the Presbyterian Church in Canada stood in historic continuity with the Church of Scotland as reformed in 1560, Smith also set the history of the church within the wider ecumenical context. Presbyterians rightly took their place alongside other mainline Canadian Protestant denominations,

including the United Church of Canada.[21] In 1967 the Centennial Committee of the Committee on History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada published A Short History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. In Part I Alan Farris covered the period from 1600 to 1850 documenting the life of the presbyterian churches in Canada from the French regime to the disruption of 1844. In Part II H. Keith Markell followed the development of the church from 1850 through to the church union movement of 1925. The period from 1926 to the present was written by Neil G. Smith who traced the years of post-union reconstruction within the Presbyterian Church in Canada.[22]

Such institutional histories reflected a greater emphasis on the collection and research of primary documents as well as a concern simply to tell the story as clearly as possible. The assumption now was that church union was but one episode within the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada which the institution survived and from which it emerged, admittedly smaller in number, but still as a presbyterian church with a bright future under the providence of God. At the time, it certainly appeared that Presbyterian historians had every reason to believe this perception was an accurate one. But subsequent decline in numbers, finances, property and influence since the 1960's indicate that this perception was not altogther accurate. Institutional historiography which assumed institutional survival, if not institutional prosperity, was also shaped by certain theological convictions and ecclesiastical commitments.

The official history of The Presbyterian Church in Canada,

Enduring Witness was written by John S. Moir and published in 1975 as part of the Church's centennial anniversary. In choosing Moir, a leading Canadian historian of religion, to write its history the church took a major step away from purely theological and apologetic historiography to a more objective institutional historiography. Moir's work is unsurpassed in terms of its careful research and documentation and its reliance upon primary sources. It tells the story of the Church in a straightforward and clear manner. At the same time some have been concerned that it lacks the theological perspective required to understand the motivations and the decisions of the church throughout its history. In this sense, Moir's work represents the Church's struggle to understand its own history in the light of Enlightenment historiography rather than purely in terms of faith and theology. But can an account of the Presbyterian Church in Canada neglect the motivations behind human initiatives and are such motivations easily accessible to the historian? These motivations are mixed, including ideology, economic interests, social pressures, class conflict, and unconscious pyschological forces, etc.. But they also include faith, a faith which is not easily reduced to or subsumed by any other motivation. Thus, historiography in the Presbyterian Church, in seeking to be a genuine history of the church, seeks to include the reality of faith and theology in the writing of its history while at the same time avoiding the abuses in historiography which may so easily creep in.[23]

Similar institutional histories at other than the national level have also been encouraged within the Presbyterian Church in

Canada during the last thirty years, although sometimes they represent more chronicle and anecdote than history. Histories of local congregations, presbyteries, and synods have been written, as well as regional histories of the Church.[24] In 1986 Presbyterian College of Montreal published its own history written by H. Keith Markell[25] and Brian Fraser has been commissioned to write the history of Knox College, Toronto as part of its sesquicentennial celebrations in 1994.

In sum, Canadian presbyterian institutional historiography over the last thirty years has represented an attempt to be more meticulous and objective. In it the life of the church is explained in terms of human initiatives and historical continuities and causalities. To some extent, however, it failed to articulate a Reformed view of God's activity in history although some proceeded with the assumption that the church as an institution would prosper and grow as a mainline Protestant denomination, thereby continuing the providential view of history.

The third type of historiography within the Presbyterian Church in Canada is that found in biographical studies, primarily studies of theologians and ministers who exercised a significant leadership role within the denomination, although also included are prominent lay people within the Church who made a contribution to Canadian society. In Enduring Witness John Moir notes the signficance of, and need for, this type of historiography:

> In the field of biography some turn-of-the-century studies are of high quality but the

> majority of such volumes from the nineteenth century tend to be uncritical accounts of pious lives, unrelated to the humanity of their subjects or to those forces in the contemporary society which influenced their actions and opinions. Most Canadian Presbyterian leaders who flourished after 1900 have found no biographers as yet, thus leaving a large historical void which desperately needs to be filled.26

A volume of biographical essays, Enkindled By The Word, was published by the Committee on History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1967 to mark the centennial of Confederation. It included essays on such prominent Presbyterian leaders as James MacGregor, John Cook, William Proudfoot, James Robertson, and the Fathers of 1925. More recently two volumes of short biographies have also been published by the Committee on History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada entitled Called To Witness.[27] These volumes contain historical biographies of twenty-two ministers, missionaries, and lay people, including men and women who have been influential in the life of the Church.

The genre of biographical historiography provides another perspective from which to observe the church's conceptions of its historic role and the assumptions with which its historiography has proceeded. First, almost without exception those biographies which do exist have been written about Presbyterian ministers. The assumption here, of course, is that the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada can be told through the lives and ministries of its most prominent leaders. Social historians are critical of the lack of attention given to the general membership of the church. And yet this too represents a certain theological assumption within the Presbyterian Church in Canada concerning

the place of the ordained ministry. Ministers of Word and Sacraments are those entrusted in a special way with the faith and the life of the church. From this perspective, then, to tell the story of the clergy is to tell the story of Presbyterian faith and life in Canada. While written from the perspective of the Reformed faith such studies are usually short on the social, economic, political, and cultural contexts which shaped the lives and ministries of their subjects. Such biographies are often "unrelated to the humanity of their subjects or to those forces in contemporary society which influenced their actions and opinions".[28]

Secondly, those biographies of lay people which do exist usually document the lives of Presbyterian women and men who have made a significant contribution to Canadian political, social, intellectual and cultural life. The critical issue here, however, is how and why their Reformed faith and their Presbyterian tradition shaped their lives and motivated their decisions and how they served that cause of the Reformed faith in the church and in the world. Very little biographical analysis of this type is extant in the biographical historiography within the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Finally, social and intellectual history within the Presbyterian Church in Canada is a developing form of historiography. In the first instance, much historiographical work is yet to be done on topical studies intellectual history - primarily the history of ideas and intellectual movements which have influenced the life of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Again John Moir notes the need for this type of work in Enduring

Witness:

> Equally serious, no topical studies of such movements and influences as the social gospel, fundamentalism, higher criticism, neo-Orthodoxy, or social teaching of the Presbyterian Church to name but a few, have been undertaken, and the few subjects of this nature that have been examined are buried in academic theses that have never appeared in print.[29]

Recent work has been done on some of these topics. Geoffrey Johnson has written Of God and Maxim Guns which deals with the history of Presbyterian missions in Nigeria and Brian Fraser has written The Social Uplifters, a study of the influence of the social gospel in the Presbyterian Church in Canada between 1875 and 1915. Although other studies such as those which deal with the role of women in the life of the Church, conservatism in the Church, and the Church's relations with the Jews, to name but a few, have been written, it is clear that this is an area in which much work has yet to be undertaken in order to gain a thorough understanding of the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.[30] It may be that in the writing of such intellectual history the Presbyterian Church may be able to join its double commitment to theological integrity and scientific historiography, and thereby more deeply understand its place within the larger redemptive purposes of God in the real history of the world.

What has it meant, then to interpret the stuff of history within the Reformed and presbyterian tradition in Canada? It has meant living between the two worlds of faith and scientific history. Dutch Reformed theologian Hendrikus Berkhof too sees

that these are indeed two different worlds:

> God called Israel and sent Christ. Israel's religion and the person of Jesus of Nazareth fall into the confines of the history of religion...But this reality is at the same time the object of historical research. These two approaches are entirely different. Faith (in scientific form: theology) talks about the cross and resurrection, about goal-directedness, about the antichrist and consummation. But the science of history nowhere encounters these realities. It sees everywhere flowing transitions and endless connections. It views human events in the light of continuity, causality, and relativity.31

The Presbyterian Church in Canada acknowledges that history has a telos but at the same time the limitations of its own interpretations of the movement of that history towards its goal must be acknowledged. The church's interpretation of history is not necessarily God's interpretation. The church walks by faith and not by sight and so it is immediately reminded of the fallibility, provisionality, and relativity of its own statements with reference to historical inquiry. The church sees through a glass darkly. But the church cannot be silent. It cannot live in one world and ignore the other. It cannot speak of God without also speaking of human initiative and historical necessity. It speaks of real history from the perspective of faith.

> Must we be silent and live in two worlds; one of a historical view of history, and a second, without connection with the first, of God's abstract judgments concerning that history? This cannot be the alternative. For relativity is not yet agnosticism. The fact that neither the Kingdom of Christ nor the kingdom of the antichrist has yet been revealed, but that they are hidden under the appearance of their opposite, and that they are everywhere intertwined, does not mean that nothing can be known or recognized of them. World history is not black or white, but it is not an even grey

> either. The eye of faith recognizes dark grey and light grey, and it knows that these gradual differences originate in differences of principle.32

Finally, then, Presbyterian Christians in Canada confess that what matters most is that God is the Lord of history and that the whole of history "proceeds under the fatherly care of God the Creator, whose will is done". The history of God's glory "takes place in, with and under the history of creation". It is a hidden history. No human conception of the process of history, not even a Christian view of history, not even a Reformed and Presbyterian view, has more than very limited worth. Not philosophies of history, but the belief in the God of providence and gracious self-revelation who has chosen a people in Jesus Christ gives a light to the path so that something of the hidden history of God's will and purpose in specific events and relationships may be seen.[33] The presbyterian theologian and historian "finds comfort not in any discoverable patterns in history, but in the finished work of Christ". What is seen is that Christ is "the victor over the evil dynamics operating within the processes of history." Christ is seen "by faith at the right hand of God ruling now over the ends of the earth with absolute and transforming power". Although the Reformed historian does not yet see the full and final fruits of Christ's victory, there is assurance "that that day will surely dawn".[34]

Endnotes

1. Alan Farris, "The Christian Approach to History", Christian Perspectives, (Pella, Iowa: Pella Publishing, 1960) p.63

2.Ernst Breisach, "Historiography: An Overview", The Encyclopedia of Religion, Volume 6. Edited by M. Eliade. p.371. See also Alan L. Farris, "The Christian Approach to History", pp.57ff.

3. Hendrikus Berkhof, Christ the Meaning of History. (London: SCM Press, 1966) Translated by Lambertus Buurman. p.23ff.

4. Walter W. Bryden's books include: The Spirit of Jesus in St. Paul (London: James Clarke and Company, 1925); Why I Am A Presbyterian (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1934); The Christian's Knowledge of God (Toronto: Thorn Press, 1940); The Significance of the Westminster Confession of Faith (Toronto:University of Toronto Press, 1943; Separated Unto the Gospel, Edited by Donald V. wade (Toronto: Burns and MacEachern, 1956).

5. W.W. Bryden, "Church History: Introductory", unpublished lecture notes, p.1.

6. W.W. Bryden, The Christian's Knowledge of God, p.ix.

7. Ibid., p.17

8. Ibid. p.17; see also Separated Unto the Gospel, pp. 202-203.

9. Alan Farris, op.cit. p.66.

10. Ibid. p.72.

11. Alan Farris, The Tide of Time. Edited by John S. Moir. (Toronto: Knox College, 1978).

12. W.M. Kannawin, Our Church: A Brief Study of the Background, Government, and Work of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1935). p. 56.

13. E. Lloyd Morrow, Church Union in Canada: Its History, Motives, Doctrine, and Government. (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 1923) p.7.

14. See John S. Moir, op.cit., p.202 for an analysis of Morrow's position.

15. Ibid., p.203. See also Ephraim Scott, Church Union and The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

16. John Webster Grant, The Canadian Experience of Church Union (London: Lutterworth Press, 1967).p.76.

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18. John Webster Grant, op.cit. p. 69.

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20. John S. Moir, op.cit. p.289.

21. Neil G. Smith, "The Presbyterian Tradition in Canada", in John Webster Grant, The Churches and the Canadian Experience (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1963) p.52.

22. N.G. Smith, A.L. Farris, H.K. Markell, The Story of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (Toronto: The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1967).

23. George Marsden, "A Christian Perspective for the Teaching of History" A Christian View of History. Edited by George Marsden and Frabk Roberts. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975. pp. 45-47.

24. John S. Moir, op.cit. p.289. A recent example of an excellent regional history is Laurie Stanley, The Well-Watered Garden: The Presbyterian Church in Cape Breton, 1798-1860 (1983).

25. H. Keith Markell, The History of Presbyterian College, Montreal (Montreal: Presbyterian College, 1985).

26. John S. Moir, op.cit. p.290.

27. W. Stanford Reid (ed.) Called To Witness. Volumes 1 and 2. Presbyterian Publications, 1975, 1980).

28. John S. Moir, op.cit. p.290.

29. Ibid. p.290.

30. See Brian J. Fraser, The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875 - 1915 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988); Geoffrey Johnson,Of God and Maxim Guns (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988); Ruth Compton Brouwer, "Presbyterian Women and the Foreign Missionary Movement, 1876 - 1914: The Context of a Calling", Papers,The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History, 1984-1985, pp. 1-24; Ruth Compton Brouwer, "Their Hope...Sorely Tried": Presbyterian Foreign and Home Missionary Concerns about the Treatment of South Asians in Canada. 1907-1925. Papers, The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History, 1989, pp. 15-40;Ian S. Rennie, "Conservatism in the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1925 and Beyond: An Introductory

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31. H. Berkhof, op.cit. p. 195.

32. Ibid. p.199.

33. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Volume III.3. See also C.T. McIntire, God, Historians, and History p. 205; and H. Berkhof, pp.203-204.

34. Alan Farris, op.cit. p.82