



**The  
Canadian  
Society of  
Presbyterian History**

**Papers 2002**



# The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers 2002

**Editor:**

**David R. Elliott**

**Box 704, Parkhill, Ontario N0M 2K0**

**THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY (CSPH)  
1975-2003**

*Dedicated to the study of Presbyterian and Reformed history, this religion-centered Learned Society, meeting annually on the last Saturday of September, was organized in 1975 in recognition of the centennial of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.*

**Message from the President**

The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History is pleased to publish the papers presented at its annual meeting held in Knox College, Toronto on 28 September 2002. Although Canada cannot, like Scotland, Malwi or Korea be considered a Presbyterian country, Presbyterianism, as the Scottish variant of the reformed tradition, has been a major influence in the development of English Canada. Coming to understand that influence is like assembling an enormous jig saw puzzle. Since its inception over twenty-five years ago the Society has been assembling the pieces, essay by essay, looking forward to the day when a future historian will put them all together in a masterful historical synthesis, a successor to John Moir's *Enduring Witness* which has been such a helpmeet to us all.

The Society is not the only table at which such pieces are being assembled. The second volume of *Gifts and Graces*, containing seventeen short biographies of Presbyterian women, was published in 2002. The Presbyterian Museum is up and running, a tribute to the determination and energy of our past President, Dr. John A Johnston. The Synod of Southwestern Ontario has authorized a history of the Synod, by John Moir and myself, and the work is well under way.

This year the Society will meet twice. The regular meeting will be held in Toronto on September 27th, in Knox College. We are assembling a rich and varied feast for the mind. On October 18th we will meet in Pictou, Nova Scotia for a discussion of Thomas McCulloch, one of the great figures of early Presbyterianism in Nova Scotia, and, some say, also one of the fathers of Canadian humour, a distant ancestor of Rick Mercer. Members and friends are cordially welcome at either or both of these meetings.

Proposals for papers should be sent to the President, whose address appears below. The annual fifteen dollar membership dues are payable to the treasurer, Mr. Michael Millar, 292 Shanty Bay Rd., Barrie, ON, L4M1E6. He is also happy to receive your money in person at the annual meeting. Once again our thanks are due to Dr. David Elliot for his work in preparing these papers for publication.

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**The Jardine Auxiliary  
of Wychwood / St. Columba Presbyterian Church:  
A Skeletal Reconstruction<sup>1</sup>**

by

Lydia Ross Alexander

The minutes of the Jardine Auxiliary at Wychwood / St. Columba Presbyterian Church in Toronto<sup>2</sup> permit a skeletal reconstruction of an important period in Canadian social history, tracing the expanding sphere of influence of such societies, and the growing professionalism and confidence of Canadian women. The minutes reflect a North American trend to merge home and foreign mission efforts, the gradual eclipsing of home missions by foreign missions, and by mid-century, a reconsideration of the missionary enterprise. As well, the minutes evidence a struggle to retain some control, however modest, over funds raised for worthy causes Auxiliary members deemed important – so called “special objects.”<sup>3</sup> Beneath the

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<sup>1</sup> I am most grateful to Dr. Marilyn Färdig Whiteley who commented on drafts of this paper throughout the process, and to the United Church of Canada, Victoria University Archives, Toronto, Ontario, without whose resources this paper would not have been possible. The librarians at Northern College, Kirkland Lake Campus, were of enormous assistance.

<sup>2</sup> The minutes of the Jardine Auxiliary of Wychwood/St. Columba Presbyterian Church, United Church of Canada, Victoria University Archives, Toronto, Ontario (hereinafter cited as UCA). Occasional references will be made in the body of the text to these minutes, by the dates of the meetings.

<sup>3</sup> Patricia R. Hill, *The World Their Household: The American Woman's Foreign Missionary Movement and Cultural Transformation 1870-1920* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1985). Also see, for example, John Webster Grant, “Two-thirds of the Revenue: Presbyterian Women and Native Indian Missions” in *Changing Roles of Women with the Christian Church in Canada*, edited by Elizabeth Gillan Muir and Marilyn Färdig Whiteley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), p.106.

surface of the minutes we discern a process of mythologizing the missionary endeavour -- not in the sense of erroneous fiction -- but as “a legitimate *form* of statement.”<sup>4</sup>

The form of the Jardine minutes is simplicity itself. Beginning in 1904 they record the highlights of monthly and annual meetings of a small group of Presbyterian Church women. Handwritten and usually one page in length, they include the date, opening and closing prayers, a brief statement of activities, and the signatures of the current president and recording secretary. The writing is often unclear, and the spelling of names, creative.

The minutes reveal a growing assuredness in the minister's wife, Mattie McEachran MacTaggart, as she guided and broadened the Auxiliary's activities, upon occasion, in support of her sister, Ethel McEachran, missionary to Korea. As well, the minutes show the supportive hand of the minister, Will MacTaggart, who mediated at key points in the Auxiliary's history. And the minutes parallel and intertwine with the life work of Ethel McEachran as she oversaw the building of a high school in Korea, which grew from a tiny two-roomed cottage of six pupils to a group of spacious buildings with over eight hundred pupils.<sup>5</sup> The congregation of St. Columba Church and its Auxiliary generously contributed to this effort.

*Labor omnia vincat* (hard work conquers all) was the pioneer spirit Ethel transported to Korea, and Mattie and Will provided in their leadership at St. Columba Church. This was borne out in the minutes of the Jardine Auxiliary testifying to their life-long support of the missionary endeavour -- spiritually, emotionally and financially.

A life-defining moment for the sisters Ethel and Mattie was the death of their mother, Martha Maude Proctor McEachran, in 1883 at the birth of Mattie. Ethel was three years old. Their father, Colin McEachran, returned to his parent's homestead in Vaughan Township, County of York, Ontario, to live out his years. There was “little or no contact with the McEachran side of the family” wrote Mattie years later.<sup>6</sup> Two sisters of their mother quickly assumed responsibility for the girls, so that Ethel and Mattie were raised separately -- Ethel in Maryborough Township, Wellington County, Ontario, with the Methodist Brandon family, and Mattie in King Township, York County, Ontario, with the Quaker/Anglican/Methodist Hollingsheads. They did spend idyllic childhood summer days together on their grandmother Proctor's family farm in King Township,<sup>7</sup> in

<sup>4</sup> Harold Fallding, *The Sociology of Religion: An Explanation of the Unity and Diversity in Religion*. (New York: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1974).

<sup>5</sup> UCA, *Presbyterian Church in Canada, Records of Proceedings*, Woman's Missionary Society Annual Report for the year 1933. Ethel became a leader in Korean Christian education, and her school attained certification with all the required supporting agencies in spite of tumultuous economic, social and political change in Korea.

<sup>6</sup> In the estate of Mary MacTaggart (daughter of Will and Mattie MacTaggart) were found a few handwritten notes, a cookbook, a 1936 travel journal, a photo journal “Glimpses of China,” and some undated, unidentified news clippings. These are henceforth referred to as the MacTaggart Papers.

<sup>7</sup> Personal communication and the MacTaggart Papers. Handwritten notes by Mattie MacTaggart, presumably prepared for the booklet by Althea Steveley, *The Proctor Family History 1831-1981* (Woodstock: Print & Litho Ltd., 1981).

the hope that Mattie and Ethel would become sisters in spite of being reared separately. The sisters did become very close and this was borne out by a life-long friendship.

The sisters were second-generation Scottish/Irish immigrants, raised in rural Ontario in middle-class, devout homes connected by deep kinship ties. Close in age, the sisters taught school in rural Ontario as stepping-stones in their respective life missions. Ethel and Mattie attended Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. The choice of Queen's University in Kingston, some distance from their homes, was no doubt made because of its Presbyterian affiliation. While Mattie graduated, taught school and married Will MacTaggart by 1907, Ethel completed her degree through correspondence courses offered by Queen's,<sup>8</sup> graduating while on furlough in 1922, at age 41.

It is difficult to grasp today just how remarkable an accomplishment it was for Ethel and Mattie to attend university. In 1891 only 0.5 per cent, or 25 out of 5,000 of all Canadian youth aged 15 to 24 attended universities. Only 13 per cent, or 3 of those 5,000 Ontario university students were women in 1901.<sup>9</sup> There certainly was no family precedent for the higher education of women, nor expectations for women beyond, perhaps, an advantageous marriage, by which I mean the acquisition and consolidation of precious farmland. Ethel was the first female family member, either by necessity or by will, to seek financial independence, and to remain single. By age 19 she was working and boarding independent of her adopted parents. Thus, the sisters were of an early generation of university women who may have felt a particular responsibility to contemplate a more public social contribution. Both sisters entered ministries of a sort.

We may surmise that the sisters were members of that invisible generation of women who quietly and resolutely went about their business without expectation of earthly reward. Ethel is generally not credited -- nor did she seek credit -- with founding Hamheung Girls' High School.<sup>10</sup> It is not surprising that there is little reference to Ethel in the exhaustive memoirs by her missionary colleagues.<sup>11</sup> Mattie and Ethel left very few personal papers.<sup>12</sup> Possibly, the sisters' single-mindedness alienated colleagues and

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<sup>8</sup> Queen's played a pioneering role in the development of correspondence courses. An interesting line of inquiry might well be the history of long distance learning in Ontario first offered at Queen's University in the 1890s and its impact and importance on women's history. See Chad Gaffield, Lynne Marks, and Susan Laskin, "Student Populations and Graduate Careers: Queen's University 1895-1900" in Paul Axelrod and John G. Reids, eds. *Youth, University and Canadian Society: Essays in the Social History of Higher Education* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).

<sup>9</sup> Lynne Marks and Chad Gaffield, "Women at Queen's University, 1895-1905: A 'Little Sphere' All Their Own?" *Ontario Historical Society Quarterly*, 78:4 (December 1986), p.336.

<sup>10</sup> UCA, biographical file for Ethel B. MacEachern (sic). Credit for building the school is however acknowledged. "Miss Ethel B. MacEachern, Hamheung Girls' High School. She founded this School, built the new building, and was Principal until . . . 1941."

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, Helen F. MacRae, *A Tiger on Dragon Mountain: The Life of Rev. Duncan M. MacRae, D.D.* (Charlottetown, 1993); William Scott, "Canadians in Korea: A Brief Historical Sketch of Canadian Mission Work in Korea," unpublished typescript, 1975; and Florence J. Murray, *At the Foot of Dragon Hill* (New York: Dutton, 1975).

<sup>12</sup> MacTaggart Papers.

contemporaries. Ethel may well have appeared to the next missionary generation as “some uncongenial saint of a missionary who always rub[bed] your fur the wrong way.”<sup>13</sup>

St. Columba’s origins were as a mission of Bloor Street Presbyterian Church in the Wychwood district of Toronto, served by student pastors of Knox College and then called Wychwood Presbyterian Church.<sup>14</sup> In 1904 the Home Mission Council appointed Will MacTaggart as student missionary. At that time the church’s congregation consisted almost entirely of Scottish immigrants working five-acre market gardens each with a substantial brick house.<sup>15</sup> The name of the church was changed in 1918 to St. Columba Presbyterian Church – a particularly apt name as St. Columba, missionary and abbot, is traditionally credited with the conversion of Scotland to Christianity.

The name of St. Columba’s women’s group, the Jardine Auxiliary, also had Scottish roots. It is said that the clan Jardine fought at the Battle of Bannockburn and were even present at the early Crusades. But then the McEachran clan claim to have been present at the fall of Troy, in fact, inside the Trojan horse,<sup>16</sup> so one needs to keep a sense of proportion in these matters. Mrs. Amy Hislop McClure, wife of Dr. Robert Baird McClure,<sup>17</sup> innocently reported to the Jardine Auxiliary in 1915, she was “encouraged” to relate that “the backbone of the opium habit in China [was] broken”(10 June 1915). It is ironic then that an infamous member of the Jardine clan, Dr. William Jardine, surgeon, trader and entrepreneur (1784-1843) also known as “the Iron-Handed Old Rat,”<sup>18</sup> acquired his inestimable wealth smuggling opium into China.<sup>19</sup>

Typically, the Jardine Auxiliary women were married, middle-aged and middle-class with time and money to pursue worthy causes outside the home. Also included were

<sup>13</sup> Ruth Compton Brouwer, "Home Lessons, Foreign Tests: The Background and First Missionary Term of Florence Murray, Maritime Doctor in Korea," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 1995, New Series, vol. 6 (1996), pp.103-128. Note p.119.

<sup>14</sup> UCA, fonds 2516. Administrative History or Biographical Note. St Matthew’s United Church (Toronto, Ontario). “St. Columba was originally a Presbyterian Church mission at the corners of Alcina Street and Vaughan Road in 1890. This work was abandoned in 1896 and a subsequent mission in 1902 developed into a new church at St. Clair and Vaughan (1903), known as Wychwood Presbyterian. In 1918 the name was changed to St. Columba, and new construction in 1924 resulted in a larger church joining the United Church in the following year.”

<sup>15</sup> MacTaggart Papers. Fred Egan, “Zestful 40 Year Pastor Saw City Engulf Church,” from unidentified Toronto newspaper, n.d.

<sup>16</sup> Flora McPherson and Norman F. Peterson, *Clan McEachran*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., (Waterloo, Ont.: Norman F. Peterson, 1988), p.15.

<sup>17</sup> Mrs. McClure, wife of Dr. Robert McClure, United Church missionaries to China, sponsored by Bloor Street Church. See Munroe Scott, *McClure: The China Years* (Toronto: Canec Publishing, 1977).

<sup>18</sup> See Gazetteer for Scotland: “William Jardine,” <http://www.geo.ed.ac.uk/scotgaz/people/famousfirst627.html>

<sup>19</sup> Wikipedia: “William Jardine,” [http://www.wikipedia.com/wiki/William\\_Jardine](http://www.wikipedia.com/wiki/William_Jardine) Dr. William Jardine, 1784-1843, co-founded the famous Jardine Matheson conglomerate, making his fortune smuggling Opium into China, and sparking the opium wars.

widows, a few spinsters, and some teachers.<sup>20</sup> Ruth Compton Brouwer in *New Women for God* describes a typical Auxiliary meeting as an

opportunity to come together in a good cause, to enjoy a sense of sisterhood, and to turn for a time from mundane household responsibilities to the exotic challenges of a faraway world. The monthly missionary meeting was often one of the few outings available in a narrow social existence, and many women made extraordinary efforts to attend.<sup>21</sup>

There is a family story of a contemporary of Ethel's who wished to attend a Ladies' Aid meeting. No one was available to drive her so she instructed her 13-year-old daughter to drive the new car. Never having driven before on the road, and forgetting how to stop the vehicle, they drove through the unopened farm gate. Upon arrival at the church, farm gate attached to the car in most accounts, they circled the church until running out of gas. This story has been refined over the years in delicious re-telling, but there is no disputing that attendance at a church meeting was important.<sup>22</sup>

The women of St. Columba Presbyterian Church held their first meeting 2 March 1904 for the purpose of organizing a Missionary Society under the Women's Home Missionary Society (WHMS) of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. At this inaugural meeting Mrs. Wm. Cochrane, first President of the WHMS,<sup>23</sup> presided and "show[ed] them] how to organize a meeting." She described the accomplishments of the WHMS and "the great need of help no matter how small."<sup>24</sup> The Auxiliary proceeded to approve the constitution as provided by Mrs. Cochrane, and adopted the name "The Jardine Auxiliary of the Women's Home Missionary Society." The election of officers took place and the new President, Mrs. Bryce, took eight "mite boxes" which Mrs. Cochrane had fortunately brought with her to be "sold to the [Auxiliary] members for two cents a piece" (7 September 1904). In turn, the "mite boxes" would be distributed to young

<sup>20</sup> For further discussion of this historic model see Rosemary R. Gagan, *A Sensitive Independence: Canadian Methodist Women Missionaries in Canada and the Orient, 1881-1925* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

<sup>21</sup> Ruth Compton Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions, 1876-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), p.42.

<sup>22</sup> Personal communication. The year would have been circa 1922.

<sup>23</sup> Edmund H. Oliver, *His Dominion of Canada: A Study in the Background, development and Challenge of the Missions of the United Church of Canada* (Toronto: The Woman's Missionary Society and the Board of Home Missions of the United Church of Canada, c.1932), p.239, tells us that the Women's Home Missionary Society (WHMS) emerged to relieve the sufferings in the Klondike mining camps. For background details on Mrs. W. Cochrane, born Miss Mary Houston of Paisley, Scotland, see R.N. Grant, *Life of Rev. William Cochrane, D.D.* (Toronto, 1899), pp. 66-7. Mrs. W. Cochrane was the First President of the WHMS, and Mr. Wm. Cochrane was Convener, Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

<sup>24</sup> UCA, Acc. #77.716L, Box 8, file 7; provenance: St. Matthew's United Church, Toronto. *Jardine Auxiliary Minutes*, 2 March, 1904.

children to collect their pennies for missions.<sup>25</sup>

At the very next meeting, the women listened to a letter from a Mrs. Hunter of the Teulon, Manitoba, Mission that “made us want to be up and doing what we could to help the mission” (8 April 1904). They decided to make garments for children. The next month, seven women were buying and sewing garments. Leah Dinwoody, future missionary to China, suggested making a quilt (7 September 1904). By December they considered starting a Mission Band for boys and girls. Children “with their enthusiasm raised substantial gifts for missionary purposes.”<sup>26</sup> In 1905 bales of clothing were sent to the poor in Chicago and native peoples of Western Canada.

The Jardine Auxiliary enthusiastically supported home missions, responding to incoming waves of settlers. The logging camps in Northern Ontario, the Chinese women in Toronto, and the Japanese and Polish settlers in the Alberta mine fields were discussed and studied, as were the Galicians<sup>27</sup> and Russian Doukhobors of Western Canada, and the Roman Catholics in Quebec; eventually the latter mission was considered less than encouraging.<sup>28</sup>

The earliest mention in the minutes of foreign missions was in March of 1906 when Mrs. J. Griffith addressed the Jardine Auxiliary about the women of Honan, China. Funds were raised and interest in mission work was sustained and augmented by guest speakers at meetings of the Jardine Auxiliary. The list of guest speakers reads like a veritable “Who’s Who” of the mission field. A partial listing of the foreign missionaries includes, from China: Mrs. J. Griffiths, Mrs. Jonathan Goforth, Mrs. Robert McClure, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Menzies, Mrs. Duncan MacRae, Mrs. Duncan, Mrs. McKay, Misses McDonald, Dinwoody, McNeeley, and Dr. Mitchell; from India: Drs. Margaret Patterson and Margaret McKellar, Mrs. Wilkie, Mrs. G. Bryce and Miss Grier; from Korea: Misses McCully, and McEachran; from French Indo-China: Mrs. Cadman.

Between 1904 and 1920 the programme content was fairly evenly divided between home and foreign missions: 24 were on home missions; 30 on foreign missions. From 1920 to 1945, however, the programmes concentrated more on the foreign mission field: 7 programmes were on home missions; 30 on foreign missions. As Rosemary Gagan points out foreign missions were highly marketable and fundable; human

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<sup>25</sup> A young child might take the boxes home at the beginning of a special course of study “not to be kept longer than one month, as a month is a long time to a child.” See Martha B. Hixson, *Missions in the Sunday School*, (Toronto: The Methodist Young People’s Forward Movement for Missions, 1906), pp.130-1. Hixson suggests that there might be more dignified, more creative ways of giving to missionary causes.

<sup>26</sup> Hixson, p.64. There also seems to be another meaning for Mission Band; that is, “an association of young ladies organized in a local congregation to aid the WFMS and undertaking to raise not less than \$20 a year.” UCA Finding Aid 226, p.viii.

<sup>27</sup> John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*. Updated and Expanded ed. (Burlington, Ont.: Welch Publishers, 1988), p.119.

<sup>28</sup> Gagan, p.11.

resources were available, and the need, evident.<sup>29</sup> The Jardine Auxiliary is an example of a group for whom home missions were gradually eclipsed by the more exotic and fundable foreign fields.

Mattie McEachran married St. Columba's minister, Will MacTaggart in 1907. She made her entrance as the minister's new wife at a meeting of the Auxiliary in October 1907 having just returned from her wedding trip to Scotland. She was young enough to be the daughter of most of the members, yet women commonly expected leadership from the wives of their ministers. The challenge must have been daunting for this 24-year-old. Fortunately, her social background in the Hollingshead household, her university education, her teaching experience, and her natural grace eased her through this transition. Nonetheless, the confining mantle of church leadership was not always comfortable for Mattie, and gave their summer island retreat in Muskoka special meaning. The island with its oriental arching bridge and stepping-stone paths represented both an escape from worldly concerns, and a place of contemplation. The island also demonstrates that cultural contact is a two-way street.

Mattie quickly assumed a leadership role and at that October 1907 meeting she volunteered to invite the next speaker. Her interest in foreign missions was evident in the papers she delivered in 1908 -- "Mission Work in Manchuria" and "Ways and Means of Support for our Home-[word struck] Missionaries". The striking out of the word "home" so that the sentence reads "Ways and Means of Support for our Missionaries" may indicate a broadening of interest in missions worldwide.

The missionary world was small, and often a family affair; for example, the Dinwoody family were four of St. Columba's original thirteen charter members.<sup>30</sup> The three Dinwoody daughters, Leah, Maud, and Jennie, all served as recording secretaries of the Jardine Auxiliary at various times; Mrs. Dinwoody served as vice president, and Mr. Dinwoody toured mission fields in China and Korea. It well may have been when Miss Margaret MacDonald spoke to the Auxiliary on 2 June 1909 that Miss Leah Dinwoody was recruited or confirmed an alliance with the missionary MacDonald. What is certain is that "Miss Dinwoody was appointed with [Miss MacDonald] to complete her language study"<sup>31</sup> and that the two taught together in China.<sup>32</sup>

At the Auxiliary's Annual Meeting in December 1910, the women received a communication from session requesting a change in the Auxiliary's constitution to state that the name of the society be the "Jardine Auxiliary of the Women's Missionary Societies (sic)." This appears to be a move away from affiliation with only the home

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, The Methodists came to see that "missionary operations outside Canada's borders would attract far more attention, money and personnel than home missions."

<sup>30</sup> "St. Columba United Church," 7 page typed handout provided by staff of St. Columba United Church, n.d., p.2.

<sup>31</sup> Margaret H Brown, "History of the Honan (North China) Mission of the United Church of Canada. Originally a mission of the Presbyterian Church of Canada: 1887-1961." 2 vols. Typed. (Toronto, 1970), XLVIII, p.3 and XLVII, p.12.

<sup>32</sup> MacTaggart Papers. Photo journal "Glimpses of China 1922."

missionary society, and toward official affiliation with foreign work. In any case, the expressed goals of the society, like all such societies, were “to foster the missionary spirit throughout the congregation and to raise funds for missionary work” (13 December, 1910). Clearly defined rules and regulations were set out.

By March 1911 the newly formed Jardine Auxiliary of the Woman’s Missionary Society “held their first institute” and the Foreign Mission Committee, Secretary, Rev. R.P. MacKay, received “reports of missionary secretaries of each organization of the Church” (14 March 1911). The Auxiliary was becoming more structured, and by 1912 an executive committee considered meeting the day prior to the regular meeting to prepare the business to be presented to the society; henceforth, this was the form.

Home mission work continued at a quieter pace and this was reflected in how the women of the Auxiliary agreed to divide their fund-raising between home and foreign missions in 1912: \$25 to the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society, \$25 to the Women’s Home Missionary Society, and “\$25 reserved to be voted by the Society to missionary objects in which they were especially interested,” and “The balance to be placed in the general fund [text underlined] to be voted by the session to whatever cause they deem[ed] most worthy.” At this same meeting a motion was made by Mattie “to have a fund obtained by work or special contribution to be held by the Society for any worthy cause. To be distributed by them.” (AGM, 9 January 1912). This strategy was reinforced at the 14 January Annual General Meeting, wherein \$25 was voted “to be kept for our own society.” Clearly the women were engaged in a struggle to retain some control over the allocation of funds.

The financial pressures on the Auxiliary may be gleaned from the May 1913 minutes. Mrs. Wood read a letter from the Zenana Missionary Society<sup>33</sup> of India, acknowledging the receipt of the \$20 the Auxiliary

had contributed for the supply of a boy for one year. They asked that we take a girl if desirable at \$35 as there was not a boy at present ready. The Executive thought that at present we would take a boy owing to the special needs in our own church.

While this quotation raises many questions we may at least conclude that the Auxiliary preferred to select a specific project for which to raise funds, putting a face on fund raising, if you will, and to be directly involved in how the money was spent.

No doubt it was difficult to refuse the direct entreaties of missionaries on furlough such as Miss McCully, who addressed a special meeting of the Jardine Auxiliary in 1915 on the great needs of Hamheung Mission Station in Korea. “Only \$5.00 a month would support a Biblewoman or a girl in the boarding school” – of which their very own designated missionary, Ethel McEachran, Miss McCully pointedly remarked, was now Principal (4 March 1915).

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<sup>33</sup> In this sense, ‘Zenana Missionary Society’ means the Woman’s Missionary Society in India. Literally, Zenana refers to Muslim or high-caste Hindu women’s quarters. See Brouwer, *New Women for God*, pp.97ff.

In May 1915 the Women's Home and Woman's Foreign Missionary Societies of the Presbyterian Church amalgamated to become the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Western Division. In fact, the women of the Jardine Auxiliary had already moved in that direction, and at that year's Annual meeting, the Secretary wrote "this [amalgamation] makes little difference [to the work of the Jardine Auxiliary] as we have for some time been dividing our effort between home and foreign work" (December 1915).

Fund-raising for mission work was a primary goal for the Auxiliary and over the years various projects were mounted; for example, for \$25 a woman could become a life member of the WMS, or could be so honoured by someone else; in 1921 seven life memberships were presented, garnering \$175. All successful fund-raising activities contain a strong social element and this was evident when members opened their homes for picnics, meetings and teas. Mission band "mite boxes" raised a surprising amount of money,<sup>34</sup> and a new-to-the-Presbyterians compartmentalized envelope system of systematic giving was successfully introduced in 1922. Of course, the most successful fund-raisers were guest speakers such as Rev. R.M.P. Scott's "Illustrated Lecture on Korea" which three hundred attended (17 November 1913), while two hundred attended Miss Craig's "Illustrated lecture on the missionary work among the Indians of the West" (13 May 1913).

It must have been exciting to hear Mrs. Rosalind Bell-Smith Goforth's address on Honan, China as well as any incidental insights she might have given about her husband, the colourful, and 'quite peculiar' Jonathan Goforth,<sup>35</sup> and equally, to hear Miss Tasker report on her Christian mission work among the Jews in Toronto in 1910. They voted to give Miss Tasker one dollar, and this to be done "immediately" (10 January, and 12 April 1910).

The Minutes record three ceremonial leave-takings for outgoing missionaries who became local heroines in the process: Leah Dinwoody (10 September 1912), Grace Beattie (1916),<sup>36</sup> and Ethel McEachran (1913). Leah Dinwoody, missionary to China, was a charter member of the Jardine Auxiliary and sponsored by that group. The situations of the other two women were more complex. Bloor Street Presbyterian Church designated Grace Beattie, missionary to Trinidad on May 17, 1916.<sup>37</sup> The following day, at St. Columba, Miss Beattie received "a shower by several societies of the Church" (18

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<sup>34</sup> Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, p.57.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Rosalind Goforth, *Goforth of China*. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1937), and Alwyn Austin, *Saving China: Canadian Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom*. (Toronto: University Toronto Press, 1986), p.27.

<sup>36</sup> W.G. Wallace. *These forty years – and after: being the story 1887 – 1927, of Bloor St. United Church, Toronto told by W.G. Wallace* (Toronto: Rous and Mann, 1927), p. 60, wherein Miss Grace Beattie is described as destined for "the great mission field overseas." In the Jardine Auxiliary minutes (18 May 1916), Miss Beattley (sic) is described as "a member of this congregation and leaving shortly for the mission field of Trinidad."

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.60

May 1916) as "one who has filled a large place in the work of our congregation." Certainly such joint sponsorship provided a broader network of fundraisers.

It would be an error to assume that Ethel had been a life-long, active member of St. Columba or raised in a Presbyterian household.<sup>38</sup> Ethel grew up in a strong Methodist home in Maryborough Township, and was studying or teaching in rural Ontario in these early years. A prospective missionary could name his or her preference of sponsoring organization, and if unable to do so the Board office would arrange for a congregation to undertake the person "as their own missionary in which case [the designation service] should be in that Church."<sup>39</sup> It is probable too that Mattie and Will mediated on Ethel's behalf to arrange for St. Columba to sponsor Ethel.

At the designation service for Ethel, Will MacTaggart spoke solemn words of farewell. Ethel addressed the Auxiliary on China's growth -- the opening up of communications with the telephone, telegraph and the railroad -- and proclaimed, "the light of the gospel is being shed in the dark places of China" (17 June 1913). It appears that Ethel had little or no specific preparation for the Korean Mission field. It was not until 1926 that the Jardine Auxiliary introduced an annual mission study book.<sup>40</sup>

While such farewells were highlights in the life of the Auxiliary, the women continued faithfully to do the group's everyday business: quilting, prayers, fund-raising bazaars and teas; boxes of clothing were sent to outfit an Indian boy. Mattie gave numerous talks and lectures on missions "adding personal sketches of missionaries she has known herself," drawing maps to illustrate her points, and upon one recorded occasion, using seventy stereopticon views of Korea. Missionaries home on leave were welcomed as speakers, customarily illustrating their talks. Miss McNeeley used dolls in 1920 to describe the culture of the Chinese people. When missionary guest speakers were not available, Auxiliary members prepared their own "instructive papers." Thus Mrs. Meade borrowed "Formosan idols" from Dr. Rev. G.W. MacKay to illustrate her talk (11 February 1913).

When missionaries came home on furlough or retired they actively joined the congregation and the Auxiliary. Over the years there were: Rev. A.H. Boyd and his family, Honan China; Rev. and Mrs. H.H. Smith, India; and, Dr. and Mrs. Bryce, India. Mrs. Davina (Robb) Menzies on leave in 1914 entertained the Auxiliary with tales of Christmas in China, started a Mission Study Class and became Honorary President. Leah Dinwoody, on leave in 1917, served as Auxiliary Secretary *pro tem* and Mrs. Bryce, President.

Correspondence with individual missionaries, particularly at Christmas, served to sustain and stimulate interest in missions. These letters were read with delight at monthly meetings, and so it was with Ethel McEachran and Leah Dinwoody. Miss Dinwoody

<sup>38</sup> Her adoptive parents, James and Charlotte Brandon, were Wesleyan Methodist.

<sup>39</sup> UCA, Letter from A.E. Armstrong, Assistant Secretary, Foreign Mission Board, to Rev. W.A. Hunter, April 8, 1913.

<sup>40</sup> UCA, *Jardine Auxiliary Review of 25 Years*, loose filed, undated, typed, page 7. Brouwer points out that no specialized mission study books were available until 1931. Presuming Brouwer is correct, the Jardine Auxiliary were on the forefront of mission study books. See Brouwer, "Home Lessons," p.111.

wrote her first impressions of China in 1913, and in response the Auxiliary agreed that a member write Leah on a monthly rotation. Often such letters were shared in church publications, an aspect some missionaries found tedious.<sup>41</sup> Admittedly "There were some good workers on the field who could not write interesting letters about their work," wrote Mrs. J.A. MacDonald in 1907.<sup>42</sup>

By 1917 the structure of the society was full blown with an Honorary President, President, two Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Auditor and six Secretaries serving in the capacities of Recording, Corresponding, Envelope, Literature, Supply, and Strangers. By 1922 the Board had added a third Vice President, Messenger Secretary, Home Helpers Secretary, Library Secretary, Pianist, Social Convenor and Press Secretary. After Church union in 1925 the officers of the 'Jardine Mission Auxiliary' included Community Friendship, Missionary Monthly, Christian Stewardship And Finance, Supply, Home Helps, Temperance and Christian Citizenship, Literature, Study Book, and a League Of Nations Representative.<sup>43</sup> The titles had become more specific and at the same time, more obscure, more formal and broader in scope. While the society's structure was more complex, the Auxiliary membership was not increasing.

The Auxiliary's response to the floods and famine in China in 1918 illustrates the increasing formality of the Auxiliary's structure and their lessened authority over spending. While they could not allocate funds for this cause as an association they could contribute, if they so wished as individuals (21 January 1918). Meanwhile, Miss Dinwoody, shortly returning to China, impressed on the Auxiliary "the necessity for the personal touch in mission work" and eloquently appealed to the Auxiliary that they "might . . . support at least one girl in the mission school -- cost per annum being \$20.24" (November 1918).

The February 1919 minutes note that there were seven missionaries from the congregation currently serving in the field and their photos were to be framed and hung in the Lecture Room of the Church. We surmise that the list included Ethel McEachran (Korea); Leah Dinwoody, (China); Miss Verne McNeeley,<sup>44</sup> (Shanghai, China); and Miss Grace Beattie, (Trinidad). The photos, sadly lost,<sup>45</sup> served as a constant reminder to the

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<sup>41</sup> Gagan, p.79.

<sup>42</sup> *Home Mission Pioneer* IV (January, 1907), No. 1907-8, p.157.

<sup>43</sup> UCA, *Jardine Auxiliary Minutes*. Loose filed, undated news clipping: "Officers installed in Jardine Auxiliary: Mrs. G.L. Johnston Presides at St. Columba's Church Event."

<sup>44</sup> M. Verne McNeeley (1885-19?), served in Shanghai, China, by special appointment 1909-1914, as assistant to Dr. Donald MacGillivray. In 1914 she advised Dr. MacGillivray that she wished to work for and with women and children "as was her original intention." See Brown, Vol. XXI, p.127.

<sup>45</sup> Accommodating staff at St. Columba Church, spring 2000, had no knowledge of photos of missionaries. A caretaker recalled a box of photos stored somewhere, but could not locate them.

Church membership who "shared in her victories and kept her in sweet remembrance," and just possibly kindled the interest of others.<sup>46</sup>

After WW I the church added 300 new members each year for five consecutive years. Indeed, the Church was rated as the third largest Presbyterian Church in Canada with a Sunday School of 1,000. This was a time of waves of immigrants to Canada, and the Auxiliary responded. Mrs. Anderson spoke on the "Chinese Incoming Tide to Canada" (14 November 1918).

Will MacTaggart was very busy in 1919. As he said,

there was an influx of Old Country [Scots] settlers. Lots were subdivided and each of the settlers built a modest home, adding doors and windows as they could pay for them. 'They were fine people . . . They wouldn't get into debt.'<sup>47</sup>

In spite of the influx of immigrants Auxiliary membership was declining and in the May 1919 minutes a show of hands of those willing to bring a new recruit to the next meeting was requested. The 1921 Annual Report noted that membership in the Auxiliary was not commensurate with the size of the congregation. The Auxiliary members were growing older and new recruits were not on the horizon. Even so, in 1921, average monthly attendance was reported as thirty-three, consistent with earlier reports.

1925 saw, yet again, a new and larger church being built in the very same year that the congregation voted in favour of Church union with the Methodist Church and the Congregational Union to formally become St. Columba United Church. Church union was not accomplished without serious dissent. Only five hundred of the congregation withdrew to form their own Wychwood Presbyterian Church.

During the 1930s the financial situation was very bad for the missionary cause and members "were asked to pray each day . . . for spiritual help for our missionary problems."<sup>48</sup> By mid-century the Auxiliary's programming reflected a serious re-consideration of the missionary enterprise. Mrs. Hugh Taylor in 1942 chose as her theme "Is this the end of Christian Missions?" and in 1946 Mrs. Percival Foster, President of the National Council of Friendship, spoke on "The Art of Living Together." "We have to think of Canada as the centre of the world in this atomic age. It is the prime duty of Canadians to rid themselves of prejudices to other races and creeds" (June 1946). At St. Columba United Church, the women of the Jardine Auxiliary faithfully continued their work.

This study attempts to re-evaluate and demythologise the very real contribution these women made, based on the minutes of the Jardine Auxiliary. At the same time this

<sup>46</sup> *Ecumenical Missionary Conference New York, 1900: Report of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, Held in Carnegie Hall and Neighbouring Churches, April 21 to May 1.* (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), vol. 1, p.135.

<sup>47</sup> MacTaggart Papers.

<sup>48</sup> UCA, Acc.#77.7166, Box 7, file 3. "WMS Jardine Auxiliary Review of 25 Years: 1925 - 1950," typescript, n.d.,p.3.

study seeks to identify the myth-making element in the Auxiliary's activities that served to justify and perpetuate the missionary endeavour.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the missionary was seen as a mythical hero and healing prophet, who endured a great pilgrimage to far away, strange lands performing superhuman deeds in large, life-threatening situations to vanquish the barbarian and heathen anti-heroes. It is the classic tale of triumph of perceived good over perceived evil -- "pressing forward into the darkness of heathenism."<sup>49</sup> Most remarkable in this mythological system is that women were of equal importance to their male counterparts, and in the instance of missions for women, of greater significance. Women had to imagine such a world before actively creating it.

The minutes testify to the Auxiliary's contribution to this myth-making process: the Auxiliary's speakers served to perpetuate and strengthen the myth; the little dramas of the ceremonial leave-takings functioned as reaffirmation of the commitment to missions by the *deus ex machina*, the Auxiliary; the on-going correspondence created a dramatic and persuasive narrative form.

The Auxiliary endeavour as myth demonstrates a remarkable degree of flexibility to accommodate changing world circumstances and they did this with growing self-confidence and an aptitude for organization in a time when there was no precedent in the Presbyterian Church for female leadership. They shifted their focus from the less successful home mission effort to the then more realizable foreign mission field and they modified their language to accommodate a more formal and business-like stance. In their group discussions the Auxiliary began to question the goal of world evangelicalism, and we begin to see an examination of the nature of prejudice. It is evident that the missionary myth served to reinforce Church values of prudence and diligence.

Women's auxiliaries have suffered much ridicule through the years. "Frivolous," "time-wasting," "busy-work" is the language of such rhetoric. By mid-century missionaries and by extension the ladies of the Auxiliary were considered at best naive; at worst, cultural imperialists. The debate is ongoing as to just whether these women were the precursors of feminism. Alvyn Austin writes that the Woman's Missionary Society, and by extension our Jardine Auxiliary, was not a feminist movement in the modern sense but a "broad movement for the education, enfranchisement, and emancipation of women."<sup>50</sup> Rosemary Gagan disagrees. These women were feminists in "their passionate concern for other women and for their own prerogative."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> *Ecumenical Missionary Conference New York, 1900: Report of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, Held in Carnegie Hall and Neighbouring Churches, April 21 to May 1.* 2 vols. (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), vol. 1, p.134.

<sup>50</sup> Austin, p.93.

<sup>51</sup> Gagan, p.8.

*“We [women] have only just begun,”* pronounced Mrs. N.M. Waterbury in New York in 1900. *“We have begun to see faintly, dimly, what we can do, and we have already done what we thought we could not.”*<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> “Results of Forming Woman’s Missionary Societies,” delivered by Mrs. N.M. Waterbury, Secretary Woman’s Baptist Foreign Missionary Society at Carnegie Hall on April 26, 1900. Published in *Report of the Ecumenical Missionary Conference on Foreign Missions*, 2 vols. (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), vol. 1, p. 215.

## Presbyterian Chaplaincy during the First World War

by

Bob Anger

The following paper will provide a general introduction to the Canadian Chaplain Service of the First World War, and specifically, Presbyterian involvement in that service. The first section attempts a brief overview of the Chaplain Service, its organization and development, along with a look at the administrative response of the Presbyterian Church in Canada -- primarily the creation and development of the Military Service Board of the Church. The second section will then examine the various duties and responsibilities of the chaplains during the war, taking examples from the work and experiences of some of the Presbyterian chaplains. This is not aimed at placing the Presbyterian chaplains in a different category than the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and other denominational chaplains as they performed the same work, but rather to bring to light some of the actions and experiences of those Presbyterian ministers that felt "called" to this service.

On the morning of 9 April 1917, Easter Monday, the Battle of Vimy Ridge began. As the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade entered the action, the Reverend George Wood, minister from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Chatham, New Brunswick and chaplain to the brigade, scrambled out of a trench near the ridge and moved forward through the German barrage with other members of the 4th Battalion Headquarters. Since 8 p.m. the night before, with limited equipment, he had been preparing coffee so that by zero-hour he was able to provide each of the 800 or so men in the nearby assembly trenches with "half a pint of steaming hot coffee."

They passed over the open ground without casualties, before clambering into a trench and scrambling forward through mud almost knee deep. With him was the C.O. (Commanding Officer), the Adjutant, the liaison officers, and a few runners and signallers. The Medical Officer and stretcher-bearers were with them originally, but had fallen behind in the mud. As they moved forward through the barrage, a shell made a direct hit on the trench, killing the Adjutant and one of the liaison officers, and wounding everyone else but the C.O. and Wood. Wood stopped and gently lifted the Adjutant in his arms, witnessing his last breath.

Wood and the C.O. then continued down the trench, trying to reach the dugout where a temporary headquarters was to be established. When they arrived, they found it filled with wounded men taking cover from the intense shelling. Wood did what he could, tending to the wounded before sending them back to friendly lines: two, who could no longer walk, he sent back on stretchers carried by German prisoners. He then left the dugout, and after a brief search, found and re-joined the Medical Officer at a temporary Aid Post filled with wounded. There he remained, tending the men as best he could and organizing parties of German stretcher-bearers to carry them back to the British trenches. At noon they began moving forward again and by 2 p.m. had set up the foremost aid post of the Division. Wood stayed at this post for the next two days assisting the Medical Officer.

Through prayer and gentle words Wood did his best to provide spiritual comfort; he took names and addresses and wrote dozens of letters on behalf of the wounded and dying to their mothers and girlfriends, fathers and brothers. Due to the intense shelling many of the wounded had not eaten in twenty-four hours, so he scouted the surroundings and eventually found a dugout filled with German rations of coffee, biscuits and "Bully Beef" to feed the men. During these two days he also established a cemetery later recognized by the War Graves Commission, and buried twenty-six soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

Based on the documentary evidence that exists, these activities of Major Wood during the Battle of Vimy Ridge, courageous and impressive as they are, were in fact, not all that extraordinary or uncommon of the work of the chaplains during the Great War. Whether they were attached to an Infantry Brigade at the Front, or appointed to one of the hospital districts in England, the chaplains performed a surprising range and breadth of duties in an equally diverse range of situations and locations. They tended the wounded, visited and prayed with soldiers in hospitals, wrote letters of re-assurance to loved ones, provided hot coffee and tea, established cinemas and recreation huts for the soldiers' entertainment, and buried the dead, and in so doing, cared for the religious, moral and social welfare of the troops.

Compared to the duty of the individual soldier, to fight and die if necessary, the chaplains' services may appear less brave and less courageous; yet far from simply preaching Sunday services behind the lines, the chaplains' efforts were many, and truly aimed at caring for the men, both in body and in spirit.

From a purely Presbyterian point of view, it appears that very little has in fact been written on the Canadian Chaplain Service during the First World War. This is surprising. Some of the Presbyterian Chaplains that served in the war wrote brief accounts of their activities separately or as part of an autobiography, such as Alexander Gordon's recollections in "A Chaplain at the Front," published in *Queen's Quarterly* in 1919, Clarence MacKinnon's *Reminiscences*, published in 1938, as well as Charles Gordon's, *Postscript to Adventure*, published posthumously, also in 1938. William Beattie, a Presbyterian minister who served as chaplain for the entire length of the war, eventually rising to the position of Director of Chaplain Services in Canada, wrote a history of the service in 1921, but it was never published.

Duff Crerar of Grande-Prairie Regional College, has written the most descriptive and in-depth account of the Chaplain Service in his *Padres in No Man's Land*, providing

<sup>1</sup> National Archives of Canada (NAC), Series R611-275-6-E Canadian Chaplain Service Records, Vol. 4666, Vimy Ridge file, Report of G.W. Wood.

a great deal of insight into the work of the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian churches during the war. However, few glimpses exist into the Presbyterian involvement in the Chaplain Service of the First World War. As Dr. Crerar noted in his book, "Great War experiences fascinate us. Yet, curiously, our uniformed clergy have never been given much attention or credit."<sup>2</sup>

### Development of the Canadian Chaplain Service

Before looking at the development of both the Canadian Chaplain Service and the Military Service Board of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, it may be of interest to look at some numbers. Of the 447 Canadian Chaplains that served overseas during the war, 98, or approximately 22%, were from the Presbyterian Church in Canada. If we take into account those that served as chaplains in Canada, then the number grows to approximately 116.<sup>3</sup> Of these 447 chaplains, a total of seven died as a result of the war: two of these were killed in action, one died from wounds received, one was killed when his ship was torpedoed, and three died of sickness or debilitations resulting from the war.<sup>4</sup> Of these seven, two were Presbyterian ministers: the Reverend Donald MacPhail, and the Reverend Joseph Elliott.

MacPhail was minister of Knox Presbyterian Church, Cayuga, Ontario, when he enlisted as a chaplain in April 1916. He served briefly at the Bramshott Camp in England before traveling to France in November. He served at the front with the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Division, and the 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Division until September 1917 when he returned to England as chaplain to the London Area. In June 1918, he became chaplain to the hospital ship "Llandoverly Castle," which later that month was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine. His body was found washed up on the coast of France.<sup>5</sup>

The Rev. Joseph Elliott, minister for eleven years to the congregation at Beechwood/Nairn Presbyterian Church, Ontario, was taken on strength as chaplain in December 1915. Posted to the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Division, in June 1916, he served in the Ypres Salient, on the Somme, and at Vimy Ridge before being invalided to England in November 1917. He never recovered, remaining in hospitals in England until July 1919, when he was transferred to St. Andrew's Military Hospital in Toronto, passing away later that year.<sup>6</sup>

The growth and development of the Chaplain Service is in itself quite an interesting story. Denominational differences and tensions, the military attitudes of both officers and

<sup>2</sup> Duff Crerar, *Padres in No Man's Land* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 235-247, 298.

<sup>4</sup> NAC Series R-611-275-6-E, Vol.4653, Honours and Awards #1 file, report Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>, 1919; NAC Series R-611-275-6-E, Vol. 4649, Biographies #1 file, Joseph Elliott.

<sup>5</sup> NAC Series R-611-275-6-E. Vol. 4649, Biographies #2 file, Chaplain Service Records – Biographies File, D.G. MacPhail.

<sup>6</sup> NAC, Biographies #1 file, Joseph Elliott.

men, pressures from home, and inexperience, all could have de-railed it, yet after the war, Lt. General Sir Arthur Currie commented on the service saying:

throughout all the weary months of war I have learned to rely upon the Chaplain Services as a very dependable and helpful organization. It is hard indeed to estimate at its proper worth the true value of their services. In the line and out of the lines, on the battle-fields, in the rest areas, on the Lines of Communication, and at the rest camps, they have at all times most unselfishly performed their duty, and it is indeed a pleasure to me to testify to this fact.<sup>7</sup>

In 1914, it was a different story – the chaplains were, for the most part, inexperienced and the Chaplain Service itself would not be formed for another year. With the outbreak of hostilities in Europe at the end of July 1914, and the declaration of war made by Britain in early August, Canada promised an initial contingent of 25,000 soldiers.<sup>8</sup> Through the month of August, militia units and newly-enlisted soldiers made their way to Valcartier, Quebec for training at a hastily established military camp. Within weeks the number of soldiers at Valcartier had grown to 32,000.

In the same way, a number of clergy also found themselves called to Valcartier. Some were chaplains of local militia units, but many were not. One that was not, was the Rev. Alexander MacLennan Gordon. However, Gordon was the son of "Fighting-Dan" Gordon, who had won renown for his conduct as a chaplain during the Northwest Rebellion of 1885, and as a result had the Minister of Militia's attention<sup>9</sup>. Gordon arrived at Valcartier on 5 September 1914. With him was the Reverend Dr. Herridge, Moderator of the 40th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, who addressed the recently assembled soldiers the next day.<sup>10</sup>

During these first few weeks, tension between the denominations was, unfortunately, high, as each wished to have due representation when the first contingent was assembled. On 14 October, Sam Hughes, the Minister of Militia, announced the names of the thirty-three chaplains that would accompany the first group of soldiers overseas. Of these thirty-three, five were Presbyterians: William Beattie, John Beattie, John Pringle, Alexander Gordon, and Alexander Cornett. As Duff Crerar indicated, Hughes based his selections more on zeal and conservative politics than on militia service and experience, and as a result this "left a record of spectacular leadership and embarrassing failure."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> NAC, Vol. 75, "10-8-26" file, Currie to the Minister of the Overseas Military Forces of Canada, May 6, 1919.

<sup>8</sup> NAC website, [http://www.archives.ca/02/02010601\\_e.html](http://www.archives.ca/02/02010601_e.html), Records of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

<sup>9</sup> Crerar, p.33.

<sup>10</sup> Queen's University Archives (QUA), A.M. Gordon Papers, Diary entry 4 Oct. 1914, pp. 3-4.

<sup>11</sup> Crerar, p. 33.

For Presbyterians, however, it may be of interest to know, and safe to say, that the five Presbyterians chosen by Hughes, leaned more towards spectacular leadership than embarrassing failure. All of them served the length of the war, with numerous decorations between them: William Beattie eventually rose to the rank of Hon. Colonel, becoming Director of the Chaplain Service in Canada, and was one of only five chaplains to be decorated as a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George; Pringle rose to the rank of Hon. Lieut. Col. and was mentioned in dispatches for "gallant and distinguished service in the field;" Alexander Gordon was awarded the Military Cross and decorated as a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order; Alexander Cornett was one of only three chaplains in the war decorated with the Order of the British Empire; and John Beattie, although less decorated than the others, nevertheless rose to the rank of Hon. Major, and diligently served the entire length of the war both at the front and in the military camps in England.

As mentioned, Sam Hughes personally selected this first contingent of chaplains to proceed overseas with the soldiers; at the same time he appointed Richard Steacy, an Anglican priest, to be the Senior Chaplain. As Canada's involvement in the war increased and a Canadian Corps was formed, Steacy recognized the need for a separate "Chaplains Department" to oversee and administer the work of the Canadian chaplains overseas, both in England and in France. This led to the formation of the Canadian Chaplain Service on 19 August 1915.<sup>12</sup> Steacy was, in turn, appointed Director of Chaplain Services (DCS) with a staff stationed in London, and assumed command over all Canadian chaplains sent overseas by Hughes. John Almond, also an Anglican priest, was in turn appointed Assistant Director of Chaplain Services (ADCS) with responsibility for administering the work of the chaplains in France.

In early 1917, Almond replaced Steacy and instituted several reforms in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service. Chaplaincy to the Roman Catholic soldiers was finally improved with the appointment of an Assistant Director to oversee the work of the Roman Catholic chaplains. Further changes instituted by Almond over the following year included the appointment of two additional Assistant Directors: one to oversee the work in England, and another, appointed in Dec. 1917, responsible for the chaplains work on the Lines of Communication in France (the hospitals, clearing stations, railway and forestry units, etc.). Another development was the establishment of the Chaplain's Social Service "Department," responsible for planning and organizing social and recreational programmes for the soldiers. This "Department" was administered by a "Corps Chaplain," reporting to the Assistant Director (Canadian Corps). A final development, instituted in 1918, was the creation of a Director of Chaplain Services in Canada, to oversee the work of organizing and providing reinforcements overseas, while at the same time, helping to re-integrate into civilian life, those who were returning home.<sup>13</sup>

To become a chaplain a member of the clergy had to be appointed by the Ministry of Militia, but first had to gain the approval of the Officer Commanding of a local military unit, usually a battalion, as well as from their denomination -- in the case of Presbyterians, this meant from the Military Service Board of the Church. After his

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<sup>12</sup> Crerar, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75

appointment, the chaplain would serve with this unit, and when the time came, travel overseas with them. Once in England, he would serve at one of the Military Camps under the administration of a senior chaplain, before being appointed to one of the Canadian convalescent hospitals in either England or France. After a period of time, he might then be transferred to one of the Canadian Casualty Clearing Stations nearer the front, before finally being posted to one of the Infantry Brigades of the Canadian Corps at the front. Some then remained in this post, while others were transferred back to England, or to a hospital in France, to serve as a Senior Chaplain. Not all chaplains followed this path, but this appears to be a fairly standard method of progress.<sup>14</sup>

### Response of the Presbyterian Church in Canada

How then did the Presbyterian Church in Canada respond? How did the church as a national body interact and respond to the needs of the Chaplain Service and to the needs of the ministers that served overseas? These seem like simple enough questions, yet answers are not that easy, primarily because very few administrative records have survived relating to this topic. The minutes of the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada following the outbreak of hostilities barely mention the work of the chaplains overseas, or for that matter the men at the front. A brief resolution was passed during the 15<sup>th</sup> sederunt, recording the Assembly's appreciation of the work of the chaplains, but that was about it.<sup>15</sup> The fact that the Canadian Chaplain Service itself was not fully formed and that relatively few chaplains were serving overseas at this time may help explain this fairly meager response of the Church.

At the 1916 General Assembly, the chaplains sent greetings to the commissioners with a request that they appoint a committee "empowered to suggest to the Minister of Militia the appointment or recall of Presbyterian chaplains." The Assembly then established the 18-member Military Service Board with the Moderator of the Assembly, the Rev. Dr. Andrew Baird, as Chairman. This Board was given the following mandate: to deal with all matters pertaining to chaplaincies, to work with other denominations in arranging religious services in training camps, to consider methods for caring for returning Presbyterian soldiers and ministering comfort to dependent and bereaved families, and doing whatever else it may deem necessary or advisable in the interests of the Presbyterian men in training, on active service, or invalided home.<sup>16</sup>

This Board appears to have been a fairly significant development, and it continued to exist with the Moderator as Chair, until the 1918 Assembly, when it was enlarged and re-established as the National Service Commission.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, records of this Board's activities do not appear to have survived. At the very least they were never deposited as a collection with the Presbyterian Church Archives or the United Church Archives, nor at the Archives of Ontario, or at the Queen's University Archives. Neither were they deposited with the National Archives of Canada. All that appears to remain is a

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84-109.

<sup>15</sup> *Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada*, 1915, p. 2235.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 1916, p. 2372.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 1918, pp. 2545-2556.

single letter, written on "Board of Military Service of The Presbyterian Church in Canada" letterhead, found in one of the personnel files of the Chaplain Service records at the National Archives. Other isolated letters of the Board may indeed exist, but in all the boxes and files, finding aids, guides and indexes researched for this paper, that was the only item found. This is extremely sad and unfortunate.

Judging by the annual reports of this Board, which can be found in the yearly *Acts and Proceedings* of the General Assembly of the Church, and by the fact that the Moderator was appointed as chair – and even by the fact that it had its own stationery -- it is probably safe to say that the work of this Board was quite significant. The records of the Army and Navy Board, the equivalent body for the Methodist Church, are a wonderful and detailed collection of minutes, reports and correspondence spanning the years 1915 to 1919 and taking up several metres of shelf space at the United Church Archives. It is really quite unfortunate that nothing similar exists for the Presbyterian Church.

One year after its formation, Dr. Baird presented the first report of the Board to the 1917 General Assembly. As previously mentioned, the Board had responsibility for "all matters pertaining to Chaplaincies." From the few reports that do survive this meant a fairly large scope of activities. One of the earliest acts of the Board was to request that the Department of Militia and Defence respect the Board's endorsement, or approval, of a Presbyterian chaplain before appointing them to overseas service: this in hopes of avoiding the appointment of someone not in regular standing with the Church, or generally not suited to the work of a chaplain. Oddly enough, the one surviving letter of the Military Service Board mentioned earlier, includes an apology to the Assistant Director of Chaplain Services in England, for the fact that an individual the Board had endorsed didn't quite work out.<sup>18</sup>

Other activities of the Board included: co-operating with the Methodist, Baptist and Congregational churches in producing two small booklets of hymns, prayers and scripture readings for the soldiers; communicating with the Department of Militia and Defence on issues such as the moral and social conditions in the camps, especially relating to the consumption of alcohol and the spread of venereal disease; and, as is mentioned in the Board's report to the 1917 General Assembly, adjusting difficulties and securing rights on behalf of a number Presbyterian chaplains and soldiers.<sup>19</sup> What exactly this involved is, unfortunately, not mentioned, but it does indicate that the Board was to some degree in touch with the chaplains overseas and willing to assist and support them as they could.

The 1917 General Assembly was also addressed by the Rev. Dr. Thurlow Fraser, who having spent the previous eighteen months as chaplain in both England and France. He spoke on the work of the chaplains overseas and the conditions under which this work was being carried out. Brief greetings from William Beattie on behalf of the Presbyterian

<sup>18</sup> NAC, Vol. 4616, Wm. Beattie (C-B-8), Letter from J.G. Shearer to Wm. Beattie, 28 Dec. 1917.

<sup>19</sup> *Acts and Proceedings* 1917, p. 546.

chaplains overseas were also once again delivered to the Assembly, with the interesting postscript of "every Chaplain consulted enthusiastically endorses [church] union."<sup>20</sup>

In terms of financial support, the Presbyterian Church, through the Military Service Board, also helped provide monetary assistance to the chaplains. In late 1917, the Director of Chaplain Services appealed to the churches for \$50,000 to help support the social work of the chaplains overseas, and by June of 1918, the Board had raised \$14,000 of their required share of \$15,000.

In early 1918, the Board was also involved in sending the Moderator, Dr. John Neil, to England and France to visit the chaplains, give a personal message to the men and visit the fields of battle, and to report upon the moral conditions in the camps. Thus, although few records survive to help tell the story, there is enough, at least, to provide a brief outline of some of the work undertaken during the war by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and its Military Services Board.

### **Duties and Functions of the Chaplains**

The preceding has provided some insight into the development and growth of both the Chaplain Service of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and the Military Service Board of the Presbyterian Church in Canada: the administrative framework in which the chaplains served. The next half of the paper will focus a little more on the actual work of the chaplains, outlining the functions and activities that the chaplains performed, while at the same time highlighting some of the experiences of the Presbyterian chaplains.

What exactly were the chaplains duties? At the beginning of the war, the role and functions of the military chaplain were not explicitly laid out. As the Rev. Alexander Gordon, assistant minister at St. Andrew's in Ottawa prior to the war, noted in his diary shortly after arriving at the Valcartier military camp in 1914, "the duties of a chaplain, as far as I can learn, are not laid down exactly...Preaching on Sundays is one of them, but only one of them. His first business is to identify himself as closely as he can with the life of the troops."<sup>21</sup> Even when the first contingent of Canadians arrived in England and was stationed on Salisbury Plain, Gordon later noted "part of our work was to find out what our work was."<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, during the course of the war the chaplains' experience in providing pastoral care and ministry showed through in the way the scope of their work grew and expanded and became more clearly defined.

The Presbyterian chaplains that served overseas did so in a variety of ways, but as mentioned earlier, not all served with the Canadian Divisions at the front. Many were stationed in England, where they served at the military camps, ministering to the men being trained for service in France, or in one of the "hospital areas, ministering to the Canadian wounded. Others served in France, not with an Infantry Brigade, but on the "Lines of Communication," which included work in the hospitals and casualty clearing stations, the Railway Battalions, Tunneling Battalions, Labour Battalions, and the

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 1917, p. 44. In fact, as Duff Crerar notes on page 215 in his *Padres in No Man's Land*, "of the 93 Presbyterian ex-Chaplains in Canada at the time of Church Union, thirty-six (or 39%) remained with the original church, while fifty-seven (or 61%), led by MacKinnon, Gordon and Oliver, proceeded into Union."

<sup>21</sup> QUA, A.M. Gordon Papers, Diary entry 4 Oct. 1914, p.5; Crerar, p. 274.

<sup>22</sup> QUA, A.M. Gordon papers, "A Chaplain at the Front," *Queen's Quarterly*, 1919, p. 170.

Forestry Corps. Beyond this, several Presbyterians were posted to even more exotic places, such as George Farquhar who served as chaplain with the Siberian Expeditionary Force late in 1918, or Samuel Compton, William McConnell, Charles Shelley and Thomas Thompson, all of whom served with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

### **During Fighting/At the Front**

Most chaplains that enlisted, however, wished to be at the front; although many were, indeed, stoic about where they were stationed. George Kilpatrick, a young Presbyterian at the time, wrote a fairly hot-headed letter to the Director of Chaplain Services when he found out he was being transferred to the Shorncliffe Military Camp, rather than to France with his unit, but quickly wrote a second letter apologizing, saying:

I have been doing some thinking since I wrote to you. My conclusion is this, I am not nearly grateful enough for the privilege of service that is mine. How many men in Canada would just give anything if they could get a chaplaincy. I have that honor and then have the nerve to talk about going to Shorncliffe merely as a duty.

This sentence sprang out of a page and slapped me in the face. "The man who 'does his duty' never gets to heaven... But the children of God go singing up the road, go laughing into paradise, even while crying." Henceforth I sing.<sup>23</sup>

Three months later he was posted to France and remained at the Front until the end of the war. Mentioned twice in dispatches, he was also awarded the Distinguished Service Order for conspicuous gallantry, and somewhat ironically, for devotion to duty.<sup>24</sup>

The chaplains that were lucky enough, if that can be said, to serve with one of the Infantry Brigades at the front, performed a variety of roles and functions. During active fighting some were posted with the forward lines, finding themselves "going over the top" with the troops, tending the wounded and ministering to the dying, and organizing parties of stretcher-bearers to carry them back to the dressing stations. Other chaplains were then stationed at the dressing stations, ministering to the dying, serving hot coffee, biscuits and cigarettes to the wounded, and writing letters to their loved ones.<sup>25</sup>

Like George Wood's activities during the Battle of Vimy Ridge recounted earlier in the paper, the following excerpt from a report by George Taylor, Presbyterian chaplain to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion, helps shed some light on the work of a chaplain posted to the Front during fighting:

The line was extremely difficult owing to the nature of the ground and we lost many men and officers by sniping. I was dressing a man who got wounded in the arm a second time by a sniper working near us. Later in

<sup>23</sup> NAC, Vol. 4629, "C-K-4" Kilpatrick file, Letter to Col. Steacy from G.G.D. Kilpatrick, 11 Feb. 1916.

<sup>24</sup> NAC, Vol. 4649, Biographies #2 file, Kilpatrick.

<sup>25</sup> NAC, Vol. 4666, Amiens file, Report of ADCS (Canadian Corps) to the DCS, 20 Sept. 1918.

the afternoon when I went forward with "D" company to the attack on Jig-Saw Wood we were driven to shell holes by snipers in a place we thought clear of the enemy. I had two water-bottles full of hot coffee and ran about among the men giving this to them as long as it lasted. The want of water made this doubly acceptable. By three, the company had gained its objective but we had lost heavily. I went back and took a party of 60 prisoners forward to carry out the wounded. So intense was the gun fire that we could not do much for the first two hours. In this time four of the party had been killed. At dark I went forward with the Medical Officer...we rested until the moon rose and then brought out the last of the wounded. The Division was relieved the next morning, but I remained from Monday till Saturday with the Burial Party when I returned to the regiment for the Sunday Services."<sup>26</sup>

Both Wood's and Taylor's reports highlight the chaplains' role in tending the wounded, organizing parties of stretcher-bearers, and burying the dead; but interestingly enough, both also highlight something else - the providing of coffee to the soldiers. The provision of hot coffee and other "comforts" was in fact a cornerstone of the chaplains' work that began during the Somme offensive in July 1916 when a coffee-maker was first given to the Canadian chaplains by the Australians.<sup>27</sup> The success of providing hot coffee to the men during this battle, led to the establishment of numerous chaplains' "coffee stalls" at advanced dressing stations, casualty clearing stations, in support trenches and other areas; often within range of enemy shelling. Although it may seem like a trifling service, the thankfulness of the men for a hot coffee is summed up in the following statement by a Field Officer and later reported to the Director of Chaplain Services, "If the Chaplains are doing no other work than this they have more than justified their existence in France by the help they are giving the troops in the coffee stalls alone."<sup>28</sup>

Not only was coffee and tea provided at these stalls and by the chaplains in the lines, but also biscuits, chocolates and cigarettes, and always free of charge. During the fighting at Passchendaele from 21 Oct. to 11 Nov. 1917, 2456 lbs of coffee, 536 lbs of tea, 2404 tins of milk, 3200 lbs of sugar, 15874 packages of biscuits, 8928 chocolate bars, and 108500 cigarettes, were all distributed by the Chaplain Service.<sup>29</sup>

These examples highlight some of the activities carried out by chaplains during an offensive. When an active operation wasn't involved, however, the chaplains attached to infantry battalions would divide their time between a number of activities in order to care for both the religious and social welfare of the men.

<sup>26</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports France file, Report from G.C. Taylor to the Senior Chaplain 3<sup>rd</sup> Cdn. Division, 26 Aug. 1918.

<sup>27</sup> Crerar, p. 119.

<sup>28</sup> NAC, Vol. 4653, Historical #1 file, Precis - Canadian Chaplain Services, Aug. 1917.

<sup>29</sup> NAC, Vol. 4648, England 1917-1918 file, Report - Quantities of Benefit Supplies distributed by Chaplain Service from 21<sup>st</sup> October to 11<sup>th</sup> November.

The most obvious activity in terms of ministering to the soldiers spiritual well-being was providing Sunday worship services, or church parades. The value of these services has been questioned by many, both during and after the war. As noted by Duff Crerar, "if there was any event in army life where chaplains, soldiers and officers were at cross-purposes, it was the parade service."<sup>30</sup> Alexander Gordon, one of the first Presbyterian chaplains to be sent overseas, wrote the following on the topic, "Most people know the arguments both for and against church parades. It might be urged that human beings could not be forced to worship, that church parades were wearisome... Well, church parades had no monopoly on weariness to both flesh and spirit."<sup>31</sup>

To Gordon, at any rate, it was not the church parade that was the most beneficial, but the voluntary services. As he later noted "these services were a pure joy. There was no constraint about them, men were free to attend or stay away, just as they pleased. In point of fact a most gratifying number usually did attend."<sup>32</sup> Sometimes the services held were evening "sing-songs," or Sunday Communion services. Daniel Oliver, Minister in Moosomin, Saskatchewan both before and after the war, reported holding "an average of four services on Sundays, with Communion in the early morning and twice in the evening,"<sup>33</sup> while William Muncaster, from Calgary, reported holding services in German for some of the prisoners-of-war.<sup>34</sup> Bible study classes and short prayer services were also held.<sup>35</sup> It was these quiet times, when they were able to hold private conversations with the men, that the chaplains felt the greatest impact was being made on the spiritual life of the soldiers. As Alexander Gordon later wrote

It seemed to come to some men as a great surprise when they discovered that a parson was not of necessity a milksop or a fool. When he deserved their confidence by showing himself a true man, in rest billets and on the field alike, they usually talked to him most freely. Many a chaplain will cherish as long as he lives the memory of personal conversations held with the fighting men of all ranks.<sup>36</sup>

Although rarely mentioned in reports, the sheer numbers of men appointed to each chaplain must have hindered this "personal" touch. Charles Gordon, a.k.a. Ralph Connor, brought this topic up in a letter to Father John Almond, Director of the Chaplain Services, in July 1917. In it, Gordon strongly advises that there are not nearly enough

<sup>30</sup> Crerar, p. 92.

<sup>31</sup> QUA, A.M. Gordon Papers, *A Chaplain at the Front*, p. 170.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports France file, Report of D. Oliver for the month of October 1917.

<sup>34</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports ADCS France file, Report of ADCS to DCS, 10 Oct. 1917.

<sup>35</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports of ADCS France file, Report of ADCS to DCS, 17 Sept. 1917 (John Pringle reported holding 30 short prayer services with small groups of men while the Battalion was in line).

<sup>36</sup> QUA, A.M. Gordon Papers, "A Chaplain at the Front," p. 173.

chaplains in the establishment to allow them any true influence over the men in their care. To give an idea of the ratio of the number of soldiers per chaplain, a report of August 1916 indicates that at that time there were eighteen non-Anglican, non-Roman Catholic chaplains in France, serving a total of 26,180 men; a ratio of 1 chaplain for every 1454 men. The ratio for Anglican chaplains was 1 to 1270, and for Roman Catholic chaplains, 1 to 665. However, more than just the numbers, Gordon felt it was the geographic dispersal of the battalions which made the chaplains' work difficult: of the four Battalions, one would generally be at the front, one in support, one in reserve, and one in rest, with miles of trenches, both difficult and dangerous to navigate, in between. The ability of the four Brigade chaplains to maintain personal relationships with so many men, scattered over such a large area was, at least in Gordon's mind, "impossible."<sup>37</sup>

Similar to the importance of personal conversations with the men, many chaplains felt it was extremely important that they be alongside the men when things got dangerous, and to experience the same situations. Oddly enough, the military authorities in the first years of the war didn't share this feeling and chaplains were not officially allowed into the front lines until mid-1916. To them, the chaplains were there to preach on Sundays and stay with the Medical officers on weekdays – out of the way.

One of the most famous of the Canadian chaplains of the First World War, and one who frequently disobeyed this rule, was Canon Frederick Scott, who once remarked, "I knew that an ordinary officer on running away under fire would get the sympathy of a large number of people, who would say 'the poor fellow has got shell shock'... But if a chaplain ran away, about six hundred men would say at once 'we have no more use for religion'."<sup>38</sup> With Scott leading the way, the other chaplains followed, frequently disobeying regulations and joining the men in the front lines. By mid-1916 these actions were rewarded as the new Corps Commander, Sir Julien Byng responded with praise when he met several chaplains in the trenches. John Almond, Assistant Director of Chaplain Services wrote to Alexander Gordon on August 27, 1916, informing him that Byng personally felt that the chaplains needed to be seen by the men "at the posts of danger" if they were to have any influence over them. Gordon, along with the other Senior Chaplains, were from then on free to post their chaplains in line at the Front.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to ministering to the spiritual well-being of the men, the chaplains were also involved in tending to their social welfare through the provision of recreation huts, canteens, cinemas, by managing sporting events and organizing concerts. These activities formed part of the "social-service" work of the chaplains. The YMCA was also quite active in providing recreational and social services for the troops during the war, which unfortunately, lead to some rivalry and tension.

This aspect of the chaplains' work had its beginnings in the summer of 1915 when regular concerts were provided to the soldiers of the First Division by a troupe under the direction of Arthur McGreer, an Anglican chaplain. The success of these concerts led to similar developments in the other divisions, and the organization of social and recreational activities became a prominent feature of the chaplains' work.

<sup>37</sup> NAC, Vol. 24, "7-4-2" file, Report of the DCS to Sam Hughes, 11 Aug. 1916.

<sup>38</sup> Crerar, p. 29.

<sup>39</sup> QUA, A.M. Gordon Papers, Letter to Gordon from John Almond (ADCS), 27Aug. 1916.

Canteens, with recreation rooms and usually a small library, were established in areas where they could serve the most men. The proceeds from these sales were then used to purchase the coffee, tea and biscuits that were provided free of charge at the Chaplains' Coffee Stalls. Cinema huts were also established to show "good and wholesome" films throughout the week, except of course on Sunday, when the huts were used for worship services.<sup>40</sup> Profits from both the canteens and cinemas were also used to provide libraries for field ambulance rest stations, pictures for decorating mess halls and billets, and sports equipment.<sup>41</sup>

Sports and other recreational activities were often organized for the men. James Whillans, Presbyterian minister from Balmoral, Manitoba, and chaplain to the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Winnipeg Rifles, reported in July 1917, "I organized four baseball games, securing the grounds upon which they were played. A league was started amongst the Companies of the Battalion, and another amongst the platoons: it is hoped that we shall be able to finish the games later on."<sup>42</sup> Numerous requests were sent to the Chaplains' office in London for footballs, rugby balls, baseball bats and gloves, tennis racquets, cricket bats and even decks of playing cards. Dominion Day in both 1917 and 1918 were recognized by the Chaplain Service with track and field athletic activities. On 1 July 1917, over 250 participants and 5000 spectators from the Canadian Corps enjoyed the sports organized by the Chaplain Service.<sup>43</sup>

The social-service work was administered by the "Corps Chaplain," Allan Shatford, an Anglican priest. Accounts of individual Presbyterian chaplains organizing sports and other recreational activities, however, are numerous and scattered throughout the Chaplain Service records at the National Archives of Canada. Captain Frederick Anderson, reported to the Assistant Director of Chaplain Services in October 1917, "We have just opened here... a fine new Mess Hall which is also fitted up with an excellent stage outfit, and I am endeavoring to assist in securing suitable programmes for their entertainment;"<sup>44</sup> Capt. Charles Oke, established a canteen for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Artillery Brigade, which was reported by Shatford as "doing good work for the men;"<sup>45</sup> while the same Captain Whillans that organized the baseball games, also reported giving educational lectures twice during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of July 1917, "once to 300 men and another to 800."<sup>46</sup>

<sup>40</sup> NAC, Vol. 4658, Newspaper clippings file, *Chaplain Service and Social Work*, *Montreal Gazette* (n.d.)

<sup>41</sup> NAC, Vol. 4666, Vimy Ridge file, Report of ADCS to Col. Anderson, Assistant Chaplain General of the Second Army, 27 Nov. 1917.

<sup>42</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports ADCS France file, Report of ADCS (Canadian Corps) to the DCS, 1 Aug. 1917.

<sup>43</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports ADCS France file, Report of ADCS (Canadian Corps) to the DCS, 14 July 1917.

<sup>44</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports France file, Report of F.W. Anderson for the month of Oct. 1917.

<sup>45</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports ADCS France file, Report of the ADCS (Canadian Corps) to the DCS, 16 June 1917.

<sup>46</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports ADCS France file, Report of the ADCS (Canadian Corps) to the DCS, 14 July 1917.

### Military Camps and Hospital Work

As noted previously, however, many chaplains served in areas other than the front. Many were stationed at the Canadian hospitals and Casualty Clearing Stations in France, or in one of the military camps or hospital areas in England. This work was perhaps not as "glamorous" or dangerous as those of the chaplains at the front, but was no less arduous. Again the numbers of soldiers per chaplain must have made this task exceedingly difficult. One chaplain posted to the Purfleet Hospital Area in England, which covered Essex and Sussex, reported visiting the Canadian wounded in fifty different hospitals during the month, most of them at least once a week. In doing so he figured the average number of miles he covered per day by "train, tram, bicycle and walking" was fifty-five.<sup>47</sup> The duties of the chaplains in these areas were in essence the same as those of the chaplains at the front: providing worship services, Bible study classes, educational and other social activities, writing letters for the wounded, and burying the dead.

Work at the Casualty Clearing Stations in France would have been exceptionally difficult as well, especially during active fighting when the numbers of wounded would swell. Speaking words of comfort and praying with these men was a dominant activity of the chaplains, as was writing letters to the family of the wounded or dead. Presbyterian chaplain, Capt. Robert Howie reported one incident during the fighting at Passchendaele, when a young Australian was brought into the station badly wounded, "his lower jaw completely shattered: one eye almost destroyed":

When I asked if I could do anything for him – was there anyone to whom he would like me to write – the poor fellow was quite unable to speak... But I saw that there was evidently someone to whom he wished me to write. I looked therefore through his pocket-book, and found a letter signed "Mother." I showed him this letter and pointed to the address at the top, and asked if he would like me to write to his mother...His face at once lighted up, indicating that he certainly wished this. But he did not seem altogether satisfied...I looked through his pocket-book again, therefore, and found the photo of a beautiful girl signed "Gladys," and then found a letter with the same signature. I showed him the photo and letter...and asked him if he would like me to write to "Gladys" at this address and send her also his love. It was marvelous to see how his face seemed almost to light up with joy even through his terrible wounds. It made me realize in a new way the truth of these words of Scripture, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."<sup>48</sup>

Capt. Howie later received a letter from Gladys thanking him for his letter and asking him "Will you convey just one little word of hope to him? Tell him my love is just the same as ever, and will continue whatever happens." He heard again from Gladys a little later, letting him know that her sweetheart was in hospital in London and doing

<sup>47</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports Lt. Col. Beattie file, Report to DCS, 22 Feb. 1918.

<sup>48</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports to DCS London file, Extracts – Capt. Robert Howie.

wonderfully and that they would be married as soon as he was able to return to Australia.<sup>49</sup>

The extent of letter-writing is actually quite incredible. While attached to the No. 3 Canadian General Hospital, Edmund Oliver reported writing 1025 letters during the month of October alone.<sup>50</sup> This is undoubtedly a unique example, and yet the same Captain Howie mentioned earlier wrote a total of 838 letters during the same month. He also received 260 letters from family or friends to whom he had written earlier, which he noted "bears testimony to how much this service is appreciated."<sup>51</sup>

### Education

Finally, one of the most interesting endeavors of the chaplain service - and one that was the focal point of a few specific Presbyterian chaplains - was providing educational opportunities for the soldiers. In the summer and autumn of 1917, Principal Clarence MacKinnon of Pine Hill Theological College in Halifax, who was serving as Senior Chaplain to the 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Division at Witley Camp in England, began organizing educational lectures and classes for the men in the camp. By the end of October 1917, approximately 800 soldiers had enrolled in these classes. Following the success of this work and its gradual development in the other military camps, MacKinnon was appointed to a newly-created three-member Military Education Committee for the army -- Col. Birks from the YMCA and Captain G.C. MacDonald from the General Staff Headquarters were the other two members appointed. MacKinnon was then given responsibility for developing educational programmes in England, with another chaplain, Professor Harold Kent, also from Pine Hill, serving as his deputy.<sup>52</sup>

Edmund Oliver, Principal at the Presbyterian Theological College in Saskatoon, serving in France at the No. 3 Canadian General Hospital, was also keen on the development of educational programmes and had been working with General Lipsett of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division in this area. In late November, Principal MacKinnon and Captain MacDonald travelled to France to assist Oliver in bringing this work to fruition. The end result of this concerted effort was the creation of the University of Vimy Ridge, also known as the Khaki University. It was established by a Canadian Corps Order issued by Lieut.-General Sir Arthur Currie<sup>53</sup>, and placed all educational programmes and services in the Canadian Corps in France under the purview of the University and appointed Oliver as the officer in charge.

Although given the title of "University," it was designed more as a means of providing technical and vocational education and skills to the men, to better prepare them for integration back into civilian life, or alternatively, to provide a sort of bridge for those

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* Extracts – Capt. Robert Howie.

<sup>50</sup> NAC, Vol. 4664, Reports France file, Report of E.H. Oliver for the month October 1917.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, Report of Robert Howie for the month October 1917.

<sup>52</sup> Crerar, p. 79.

<sup>53</sup> NAC, R1878-0-9-E, William Beattie fonds, Manuscript on history of the Chaplain Service, Chapter "Chaplains' Part in the Khaki College."

whose studies were interrupted by the war<sup>54</sup>. The University began by providing classes on agriculture, business efficiency, applied sciences, and civics to registrants from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division. French was also taught, as was instruction in various elementary subjects, if needed.

Education Officers with the necessary skills and abilities to lecture in these subjects were organized and trained at the Battalion, Brigade and Division levels, and helped secure the formation of classes, suitable rooms for study, and in many cases helped establish libraries. In addition to the regular coursework in agriculture, business efficiency, applied science and civics, Education Officers also provided one-time lectures on various subjects relating to the war and the history of the countries involved. Reading courses were also prescribed for soldiers who wished to take more advanced studies, and arrangements were made to ensure that credit for such work would be accepted from educational institutions in Canada<sup>55</sup>. As the programme met with success in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division, it was quickly expanded and developed in the rest of the Corps and through the Lines of Communication.<sup>56</sup>

Like the social-service work, the educational activities were also a joint-venture with the YMCA, with the Y providing the financial support and often the classroom facilities. Again, this co-operation strained relations between the two organizations. However, as Duff Crerar noted in his book on the Chaplain Service, both organizations "fought over their spheres of influence [with the men] and the credit for educational work, not because they were merely glory-seeking but because they were intensely, even desperately concerned about the post-war nation and their influence upon it and in it."<sup>57</sup>

At any rate, the establishment of the University of Vimy Ridge and the development of the education programme by Oliver, MacKinnon and others, is an interesting chapter in the work of the Chaplain Service and a testament to the way in which individual chaplains took the initiative in broadening the definition of their work in ministering to the soldiers.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, therefore, we can see that the chaplains serving overseas during the First World War provided a broad range of services in an equally diverse number of situations. What was the impact of this work? What results were obtained? Is it even possible to tabulate, and if so, by what can you judge success? Many soldiers no doubt, had no use for the chaplains, while at the same time many surely found great comfort and strength in their presence. The soldier receiving a steaming cup of coffee after sitting in a trench, marching through mud, or taking cover in shell hole all day, or the mother who received word from the chaplain that her son was wounded and unable to write, but

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<sup>54</sup> NAC, Vol. 4651, Education #4 file, Report "Resume of Educational Work on the Continent" by E.Oliver, 23 April 1919.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> NAC, Manuscript on history of the Chaplain Service, Chapter "Chaplains' Part in the Khaki College."

<sup>57</sup> Crerar, p. 78.

otherwise alive and okay, must no doubt have been thankful and grateful for the chaplains' service.

Overall, the chaplains' work and the development of the Canadian Chaplain Service is a fascinating story. The Great War took the lives of over 56,000 Canadians, and wounded more than 149,000,<sup>58</sup> wreaking terrible destruction. Charles Oke, Presbyterian chaplain to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division, reported after the Battle of Vimy Ridge that "during those five days I saw three phases of the war which were new to me, the Hospital Dressing Station, the military cemetery and the battlefield, and I have no hesitation in saying that this last phase was the most terrible sight of all, the saddest sight I have ever seen or ever hope to see."<sup>59</sup>

One might wonder how the chaplains managed at all, explaining to soldiers the presence of God in such a terrible wasteland. Perhaps, in conclusion, the Rev. George Kilpatrick, chaplain to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, best answers that question, in a letter he wrote to his parents on 14 May 1918, while at the front:

All the rude iconoclasm of war... the apparent denial of our faith by the fact of war – has failed to alter the fact that Christ and His Gospel alone can save men. Indeed the very bitterness of the experience has only served to reveal in new and wonderful ways His power to do this. On the battlefield it has been seen daily as men in the grip of pain – or confronted by approaching death felt the need of power greater than their own and fell back on God. In that Aid Post of bitter memories, in the pill box at... Passchendaele, I spoke to a big rough-looking American with a shattered leg of the sustaining Presence of the Master and he replied – 'I know it and have been hanging on to that for 24 hours in a shell hole.' To hundreds of stricken men I have said the same thing – even trying to tell it in faltering German to a dying enemy and not once has the great assurance been received with anything save gratitude, often pathetically eager.... surely it has significance enough that in an hour of extremity – faced by grim realities men found comfort and strength in God – as in nothing else... For 4 years the figure of the Christ has been very busy on the battlefield saving men. His unseen but living Presence has still its ancient power to strengthen and uphold.<sup>60</sup>

Of all their duties, sharing this awareness was perhaps the chaplains' greatest duty.

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<sup>58</sup> <http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/casualties.htm>

<sup>59</sup> NAC, Vol. 4666, Vimy Ridge file, Report of Charles Oke.

<sup>60</sup> UCA, G.G.D. Kilpatrick fonds (#3303), Box 2, File 39, Letter from G.G.D. Kilpatrick to his father, 14 May 1918.

otherwise alive and okay, must no doubt have been thankful and grateful for the chaplain's service.

Overall, the chaplain's work and the development of the Canadian Chaplain Service is a fascinating story. The Great War took the lives of over 56,000 Canadians, and wounded more than 148,000.<sup>18</sup> Wearing terrible destruction, Charles Oke, Presbyterian chaplain to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division, reported after the Battle of Vimy Ridge that "during these five days I saw three phases of the war which were new to me, the physical suffering, the military cemetery and the battlefield, and I have no hesitation in saying that this last phase was the most terrible sight of all, the saddest sight I have ever seen or ever hope to see."<sup>19</sup>

One might wonder how the chaplain managed at all, explaining to soldiers the presence of George Kipstick, chaplain to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, best answers that question, in a letter he wrote to his parents on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1918.

## **PRESBYTERIANS IN SEARCH OF A PRESBYTERY; OR THE SEARCH FOR PURE WORSHIP**

All the true wisdom of war... the apparent denial of our faith by the fact of war - has failed to alter the fact of Christ and His Gospel alone can save men, indeed the very bitterness of the experience has only served to reveal in new and wonderful ways. Here on the battlefield it has been seen daily as men in the grip of pain - or confronted by approaching death - fell the word of power greater than their own and fell back on God in that

by

Kenneth S. Barker

The Ontario town of Chesley, located in Elderslie Township of Bruce County, should be of interest to this society. With a population of only 1850 it is home to three Presbyterian congregations, perhaps the highest concentration of Presbyterian churches per population of any community in Canada. The largest of the three is Geneva which has been a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and its antecedent, The Canada Presbyterian Church, since 1868. In 1925 it was the largest Presbyterian congregation within the Presbytery of Bruce. The second congregation, located at 135 Main Street, has never been a part of any of the various branches of Presbyterianism which came together in the unions of 1861 or 1875. To this day it seeks to preserve "purity of worship" by refraining from lyrics not found in the Biblical text and abstaining from musical instruments of any kind in public worship. In the community it bears the nickname "the oatmeal church." The third Presbyterian congregation, Ebenezer, broke away from the second congregation in 1974. Although it is composed largely of people of Dutch extraction, it is affiliated with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

This paper is devoted primarily to the second congregation of the three.<sup>1</sup> Its history is of interest because it illustrates the difficult challenge faced by Presbyterians of such conviction not only in obtaining ministerial supply, but presbyterial affiliation. This paper will explore the tangled history of the congregation as it has been related to four different Presbyterian bodies.

<sup>1</sup> I wish to express my indebtedness to Donald D. McClure, whose history of this congregation, *The Presbyterian Reformed Church, Chesley, Ontario*, was published in 2000. It provides many of the details contained in this paper as well as a number of interesting photographs.

## Early Beginnings

The congregation had its roots among Presbyterians in the Strathaven, Williamsford and Chesley areas of Grey and Bruce Counties who would not in conscience unite with those Presbyterian groups which came together in 1875 to form The Presbyterian Church in Canada. These folk were early served by missionaries of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, J.C.K. Faris and J.M. Johnston. However this work did not lead to the formation of a Reformed Presbyterian congregation in the Chesley area.<sup>2</sup> It should be noted, however, that Reformed Presbyterian congregations were established further south in Teeswater and Ripley, both in Bruce County. Their history has been well documented by Dr. Eldon R. Hay.<sup>3</sup>

## The United Presbyterian Church of North America

The organization of a congregation in Williamsford came through the efforts of Rev. Thomas Hannay, a native of Ayrshire, Scotland, who had been brought up in the Old Light Covenanter Church before moving to the United States about 1840. Ordained in 1842 by the Reformed Presbyterian Presbytery of New York, he served congregations in Pennsylvania; Conococheague in Franklin County and Slipperly Rock in Butler County. However, when the Reformed Presbyterian Synod renewed their covenant in 1871, Hannay was one of the few ministers who refused to accept the change.

In 1871 Hannay moved to Williamsford and there found a sympathetic group of followers. In 1872 he joined the United Presbyterian Church of North America (not to be confused with the United Presbyterian Church of Canada which became part of the Canada Presbyterian Church in 1861), and encouraged those who sympathized with him in the Strathaven-Williamsford-Chesley area to be organized as a congregation of the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

The congregation of Williamsford and Chesley was organized in October 1873, at Williamsford, by Rev. David Mann, then minister at Walton in the Presbytery of Stamford. The first communion was held in Elliot's Hall, Williamsford, by David Mann on 5 October 1873. Although Thomas Hannay was a charter member of the congregation who did supply preaching, he was apparently never inducted as the minister of the congregation, possibly because of poor health. However, he continued to be part of the congregation until his death on 7 June 1881. He was buried in the Presbyterian churchyard at Chatsworth. On 16 November 1882 the *Owen Sound Advertiser* carried an article from the *Toronto Globe* with regard to his controversial will.

<sup>2</sup> A United Presbyterian Church (Canada) was organized in Williamsford by Rev. William Barrie on Monday, 15 September 1851. Williamsford was then known as Sauble.

<sup>3</sup> *The Reverend Nevin Woodside and the Pittsburgh and Ontario Reformed Presbyterian Presbytery 1883-1910* (1996). William Elliot, one of the early elders of the Williamsford-Chesley congregation, joined the First Reformed Presbyterian Church of Toronto in December 1890 when Stuart Acheson was minister. In 1891 Acheson was involved in the formation of the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation in Teeswater. William Elliot of Chesley was also involved with this congregation. It is of interest that Stuart Acheson returned to the Presbyterian Church of Canada in 1894 when he became minister of St. Paul's, Warton, also in Bruce County. From Warton Acheson went to Broadview, Saskatchewan in 1906. There he died on 11 May 1913.

Mr. Justice Proudfoot has delivered a judgment construing the strange will of the Rev. Thomas Hannay, a minister of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, who died at the village of Williamsford, county of Grey, this Province about a year ago. The will contained, among others, the following bequests: - "Thirdly, as the time for the fulfilment of the prophecy in the conversion of the Jews is now speedily approaching, I give for a Jewish mission the sum of \$1,000, to that Church which is sound and evangelical in doctrine and pure in worship, using in songs of praise the inspired book, which can unite all nations, Jews and Gentiles, in all ages, in singing with their voices together to the honor and praise of God. Fourthly - To the pious, poor converted Jews that meet together for the reading of the Scriptures for their instruction and mutual edification I leave \$1,000." With reference to the third bequest the learned Judge says in his judgment: "There can be no doubt that the testator intended the Church with which he was himself connected, the United Presbyterian Church of North America, which however, does not claim this legacy, and it does not appear if that body has a mission to the Jews, or if it is willing to apply the legacy for that purpose - these matters must form the subject of enquiry before the Master." Mr. Proudfoot goes on to say: "The fourth bequest to the pious, poor converted Jews, etc., was said to be void for uncertainty. I think it is a good charitable bequest, not more vague or uncertain than many to be found in the books. There will have to be an enquiry if any such pious, converted Jews are to be found. I may also say with regard to those two bequests for a mission to the Jews, and to pious, poor converted Jews, that if the United Presbyterian Church of North America will not accept the former, and if no pious, poor Jews can be found, the Court will administer the funds *cy. Pres.*" i.e. the Court will seek out fitting objects that the intended charity may not be disappointed. It will be seen that the learned Equity Judge has held these bequests valid, and that the two sums of \$1,000 will be devoted to charitable purposes, as nearly as possible in the way indicated by the testator. The enquiry whether "pious, poor converted Jews can be found," may turn out a troublesome and expensive business.

The first inducted minister of the Williamsford congregation was William Findlay who came in the summer of 1875 and conducted his first communion in Eliot's Hall, Williamsford on 21 November 1875. Within a short time, however, Findlay persuaded the congregation to make Chesley the principal point in the charge. All agreed to remove to that locality as soon as possible. During the summer and fall of 1876 a manse and brick church were erected on adjoining lots on Dunn Street in Chesley. William Findlay was officially inducted as minister of the congregation on 7 July 1876. The first communion in Chesley was held in Halliday's Hall on 11 July 1876. Findlay's pastorate came to an end on 15 April 1879 when the Presbytery dissolved the relationship in response to a petition of complaint from the congregation.

On 10 April 1883 D.M. McKinlay, a licentiate, was appointed to serve the congregation. However he complained to the Presbytery that the congregation had locked him out.

Tension between the congregation and the Presbytery came to a head in 1886 when the Presbytery in April warned the congregation to comply with the authority of Presbytery or be dropped from the roll. In October Chesley was removed from the roll of the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

Mr. William Eliot and others then petitioned Clarion Presbytery of the Associate Presbyterian Church to provide four weeks preaching supply. Rev. Samuel Hindman McNeel was appointed to supply the Chesley congregation during the month of August 1886. However, shortly after McNeel returned home, Rev. G.P. Raitt, a United Presbyterian minister, took charge of the congregation and continued as stated supply for nearly two years. During his ministry the congregation was restored to its place in the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

### **The Associate Presbyterian Church of North America**

After Mr. Raitt's departure, the congregation voted to change their church affiliation and forwarded a petition to the Presbytery of Clarion asking to be received into the Associate Synod of North America. On 11 April 1889 the Presbytery of Clarion, meeting in Four-mile, Pennsylvania, ordered Chesley to be placed on its list of congregations. Mr. Samuel Hindman McNeel was installed as minister on 17 October 1890 and served until his death in 1907.

A highlight of this relationship with the Associate Church came in 1892. On 24 May the Presbytery of Clarion met in Chesley; on the following day the Associate Synod met.<sup>4</sup> The Associate Synod met again in Chesley from 24-31 May 1899.

In 1904 a new church was built at 135 Main Street. It bore the name Associate Presbyterian Church. The old building on Dunn Street was sold for \$1,050 to the Lutherans who used it until 1937 when it became the Orange Hall. Samuel H. McNeel's ministry came to an end on 15 June 1907 when he died at Richmond, Kansas, age fifty-three. His body was taken back to Chesley and buried beside his son.

Over the next several years the congregation issued calls to four ministers without success. In frustration it turned to Scotland and on 8 May 1912 petitioned to be received into the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

<sup>4</sup> Tragedy struck on 28 March 1898 when Samuel Ralph McNeel, son of Samuel and Margaret McNeel was drowned in the north branch of the Saugeen River at Chesley. The details were recorded in the 31 March 1898 issue of the *Paisley Advocate*: "On Monday afternoon a young boy named Samuel Ralph McNeill [sic], aged 15 years, a son of the Rev. Mr. McNeill, [sic] of Chesley, was drowned by the upsetting of a small sailboat. He and his companion, a son of Mr. Joseph McNeill, Manager of Elliott & Co's bank, were sailing on Fensom's millpond, in that village. There was a strong wind blowing at the time, and, losing control of their sails, the boat was turned over and both were thrown into the water. His companion succeeded in reaching the shore, but young McNeill sank to his death. His body was recovered about half an hour afterwards."

## Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland must not be confused with the Free Church of Scotland. It was formed in 1893 in response to the Declaratory Act passed by the Free Church of Scotland in 1892. Following the union of 1900, which joined the United Presbyterians and the majority of the Free Church of Scotland into the United Free Church of Scotland, a minority of the Free Church of Scotland dissented and continued under that name. They were more popularly known as the "wee frees." Attempts to unite the "wee frees" and the Free Presbyterians were unsuccessful. In more recent years the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland has suffered serious divisions.

In April 1912, Rev. Walter Scott sailed from Greenock, Scotland with his wife as a deputy from the Free Presbyterian Church to the Canadian Mission, only three days after the Titanic left the same port. He preached for three Sundays in the Chesley Church with the result that the congregation voted to affiliate with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Scott completed his tour of duty in Canada and returned to Scotland on 6 September 1912. He accepted a call from the Chesley congregation and was inducted in St. Jude's Church, Glasgow on 11 October 1912 for the pastoral charge of Chesley, Ontario. He began his work in Chesley on Sunday, 6 November 1912 and served the congregation until his death on 18 January 1916.

Scott was succeeded by the congregation's first Canadian born minister, William Matheson who had been born in Dunwich Township on 20 February 1882. Matheson began his ministerial work as a student in the Lochalsh church during the summer of 1907. Two years later he began serving the congregation in Winnipeg.

In 1914 Matheson began his theological studies under a tutor, Rev. Donald Beaton at Wick, Scotland. He gained nearly 100 percent in all his examinations and was ordained on Monday 6 August 1917 as a missionary to the Free Presbyterian Mission in Canada.

Although Matheson moved to Chesley he was also responsible for congregations in Lochalsh, East Williams, Wardsville, Kincardine, Newton, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Detroit, Michigan. However, his relationship with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland was soon troubled by the issue of Sabbath observance. In 1921 the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland resolved that "Church privileges, such as Baptism, are not to be given to any who engage in Sabbath work (other than works of necessity or mercy), or who travel by trains or cars run in systematic disregard of the sacred day." Later in the decade the Synod learned that some of Matheson's congregation in Winnipeg who were using street cars to attend church had been admitted to the Lord's Table and Baptism. They expressed strong disapproval of Matheson's lax attitude and warned him that the ruling of the Synod must be honored.

On 19 September 1928 Matheson's session declared that they did not agree with the Synod's opposition to the use of public conveyances on the Sabbath for Church-going purposes. The Synod responded that if they were not notified by 30 August 1930 that Matheson's session had fallen into line with the Synod's decision *simpliciter*, they would not be considered a Kirk-session of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Although Matheson continued to use the Free Presbyterian name to the end of his ministry (the Free Presbyterian Church of Ontario), and although he continued to serve

the groups at Lochalsh, Newton and East Williams, he and his session were not reinstated. They continued to exist as a Presbyterian congregation without any presbyterial affiliation.

Matheson was a man of remarkable ability, involving himself in local politics as a supporter of Walter E. Harris, Liberal federal member of parliament, contributing scholarly articles to the *Westminster Theological Journal*<sup>5</sup> and taking an active roll in the Chesley Ministerial Association. He died on 2 November 1957 and was buried in the Lochalsh Cemetery not far from the Lochalsh church and his parental home. A report of his death was printed in the 4 November 1957 issue of the *Owen Sound Sun Times*:

Rev. William Matheson, pastor of 40 years of the Free Presbyterian Congregations of Chesley, Lochalsh, Newton, East Williams and Cambleton, passed from this life quietly on Saturday in Chesley after a brief illness. The son of Mr. & Mrs. William Matheson, he was born in Dunwich Township in Elgin County on February 20, 1882. His mother was the former Mary Taylor. He was raised in the Lochalsh Community of Huron County. After attending Glencoe High School and Goderich Collegiate, he taught school for three years. He then completed his preparation for the ministry in courses of honor philosophy and English at the University of Toronto and theology in Glasgow, Scotland. After serving in the pastorates in Winnipeg and Scotland, he became convinced that his call lay in the service of Western Ontario congregations.

From 1917 he continued in that calling until his last morning service at Lochalsh on October 27. Rev. Mr. Matheson leaves to mourn his wife, the former Barbara Ross; a daughter Mary, Mrs. Bain Stewart of Toronto; a son William R. of Chesley; five brothers, Murdock of Lochalsh, John of Chesley, Peter of Calgary, Farquhar of Vancouver and Duncan of Sarnia; and three grandsons. Mr. Matheson was very active in public affairs and was chairman of the hospital board for many years. A prominent Liberal he had nominated Hon. Walter Harrison on each occasion of his seeking office of member of Parliament.

### **The Presbyterian Reformed Church**

Following Matheson's death, his long time friend, Professor John Murray of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, attempted to forge a new presbyterial attachment. Murray had actually started coming to Canada to take Free Presbyterian Church services as early as 1925 when he was a graduate student at Princeton Seminary. After he joined the staff of Princeton and later, Westminster, he continued to make his students aware of the Free Presbyterian congregations in Canada.

In 1959 one of Westminster Seminary's graduates, R. Quincy Caldwell, was invited by the Chesley congregation to come from Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia to supply the pulpit. Later a call was issued to Mr. Caldwell and in January 1963 he was ordained

<sup>5</sup> *Westminster Theological Journal*: "Conscience" (vol. 4, 1942); and "Justice in the Social Order" (vol. 8, 1946).

and inducted into the Chesley congregation by a "presbytery" made up of Professor Murray of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Rev. John MacSween of the Free Church of Scotland; Rev. Hamstra; and the elders of the congregations.

A further step came on 17 November 1965 when the Chesley congregation and the Bloor East Presbyterian Church, Toronto ratified a basis of Union prepared by Professor Murray, and became a Presbytery within a new denomination: The Presbyterian Reformed Church.

Following the acceptance of Caldwell's resignation on 31 May 1968, the Chesley congregation was supplied by a number of ministers, including Finlay McCormick and Dr. David Freeman. During this period the Victoria Park, Toronto congregation, the successor to the Bloor East Presbyterian Church, left the Presbyterian Reformed Church to affiliate with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. A portion of the Chesley congregation, along with elder Gerrit Schuit did likewise and formed the Ebenezer Presbyterian Church. This congregation eventually purchased the old Evangelical United Brethren church in Chesley.

On 16 June 1975 a motion was approved to call Finlay McCormick as minister of the Chesley Presbyterian Reformed congregation. Mr. McCormick served the congregation from 1975 to his retirement in 1998. Since then the congregation has been supplied by Rev. David Compton and Rev. Donald D. McClure.

### The Presbyterian Reformed Church

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<sup>1</sup> Westminster Theological Seminary, "Westminster" (vol. 4, 1942) and "Pact in the Social Order" (vol. 8, 1946).

## **Matters of Expediency or Matters of Faith: The Paris Deliverance vs “A Munich Complex”**

by

John S. Moir

The beginning of this episode in Canadian Presbyterian history is found in the union of 1861 that brought together the Free Church and the United Presbyterians under the name Canada Presbyterian Church. Most unions involve compromises, but in this union the Free Church had rejected a United Presbyterian amendment to the fourth article, namely the long-standing issue of defining the Headship of Christ over the nations. The United Presbyterians had wanted to add an affirmation of “liberty of conscience”<sup>1</sup> but this was adamantly opposed by the Free Church, and finally the United Presbyterians agreed to the omission for the sake of union. The Preamble of the Basis did contain a distinct denial that “unanimity of sentiment”<sup>2</sup> was required on this contentious doctrine of separation of church and state, but Dr. Alexander Topp explained that “no forbearance is granted . . . except such as brotherly love and Christian principle demand.”<sup>3</sup>

Although the Free Church had been the larger part in that union of 1862, and also the dominant element in the new national church formed just thirteen years later by the union of the Canada Presbyterian Church with the Church of Scotland, that 1875 Basis did include the ideal of forbearance regarding the practical application of the Headship of Christ over the nations. The 1875 union’s compromise solution to this very Presbyterian controversy was “forbearance” or “full liberty of conscience,” a statement reinforced in 1890 by approval of complete separation of church and state.<sup>4</sup> In both these unions the

<sup>1</sup> Alexander F. Kemp, ed. *Digest of the Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada*, . . . (Montreal: Lovell, 1861), pp. 290, 304, 307, 308.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.325.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.332.

<sup>4</sup> Presbytery of Paris, minutes, 10 April 1939, pp. 54-5.

Free Church strand saw itself as the true defender of Calvinist orthodoxy. It suspected that the Kirk was theologically unsound, which was the reasoning behind the heresy charge laid in 1876 and pursued by Dr. Topp against Canada's foremost Kirk preacher, D.J. Macdonnell of Toronto. It is therefore surprising that in the union of 1875 Christ's headship over the nations was treated so casually.

Six decades later, however, in the midst of the war against Nazi Germany, the Presbyterian Church was made uncomfortably aware that this doctrine of "a Free Church in a Free State" was a self-imposed gag that made it constitutionally impossible for the Church to express officially any further declaration on politico-religious issues. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has suggested that the Confessing [German] Church's Barmen Declaration of 1934 may have awakened some Canadians to the issue of church-state relations.<sup>5</sup>

At its meeting in March 1939 Paris Presbytery, with only eleven congregations -- the second smallest presbytery of the Hamilton-London Synod of southwestern Ontario -- received a document entitled "Church and Works" that declared Christ to be "the only Head and Lord of our life." "There are no spheres of our life in which we are to own other lords." Since the Church is entirely Christ's property, "a church is not permitted to alter the form of her message and her order according to her own pleasure or what she thinks expedient or to changes in public or political conviction or ideologies." The Presbyterian Church in Canada had not been faithful in doctrine or testimony, according to the Paris Presbytery which planned to discuss the matter in June. Apparently the subject was too vital to endure a wait of three months, so a special meeting of Presbytery was held in early April 1940 to consider "the attitude of the church in this present crisis."

A.R. Ferguson, Scottish-born minister of St. Paul's, Simcoe, presented "A Theological Statement," generally called the Paris Deliverance.<sup>6</sup> This was supposedly the first and only doctrinal statement by any court of the Church acknowledging Christ's Headship over the State,<sup>7</sup> and Presbytery reaffirmed this Deliverance in March 1940. At its reception in April, however, it was adopted as a presbyterial Deliverance, ordered to be read from every pulpit in the Presbytery, and copies to be sent to all synods and presbyteries. The only dissenting vote came from Arthur C. Cochrane, minister in Tillsonburg, who had studied in Germany and married a German girl.

Less than three weeks after that special meeting, Paris Presbytery inducted the Rev. Gordon Alexander Peddie into the charge of Norwich-Bookton. Peddie, born in Toronto thirty-three years earlier, had ministered in Peace River and Clinton-Bayfield since his graduation from Knox College in 1935, and just two years after his induction he was elected Moderator of Presbytery. Although the Presbytery had already opened the controversy over "forbearance" two years earlier, it is Peddie's name that has become synonymous with the influential Deliverance. The Deliverance was adopted in turn by the Synod of Hamilton-London and was sent down to all its presbyteries and up to the General Assembly which, according to Peddie, in an appeasement frame of mind, sent the

<sup>5</sup> *Church and Nation: a study for congregations*. (Don Mills, ON: The Board of Congregational Life, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 2<sup>nd</sup> printing 1982), pp. 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> See *King of Kings*, p. 212; Presbytery of Paris minutes, 10 April 1939, pp. 54-55.

<sup>7</sup> *King of Kings*, p.21.

Deliverance to a committee but rejected the committee's recommendation to refer the document to the presbyteries for consideration. No action on the Deliverance appears to have been taken during 1940, but a resolution on the position of the Church "in the present crisis in the affairs of our Nation and Empire" was amended to reaffirm "the pledge of loyalty and whole-hearted support of the Church to the Government of Canada." The resolution passed with only four dissenting votes.<sup>8</sup>

In March 1941 Peddie reopened the issue of the Deliverance by reading to Presbytery a "lengthy statement" which was adopted and adapted as a petition to the next General Assembly.<sup>9</sup> For good measure Peddie was also chosen as a commissioner of the approaching General Assembly. During the winter of 1942 he wrote and published, apparently at his own expense, a 31-page pamphlet, "*The King of Kings*": *The Basis of Union of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and its relationship to the present need of the Church for a Confession of Faith in Jesus Christ as Lord of Church and State*. In his "Preface" to the pamphlet he took full responsibility for its contents, other than Presbytery's one-page petition calling on the General Assembly to "take immediate action to dispel the cause of the existing confusion by making a clear and authoritative declaration on the doctrine of liberty of conscience and on the power and duty of the civil magistrate under the Lordship of Jesus Christ."<sup>10</sup> Peddie's text rehearsed the Church's position on these issues from the *Westminster Confession* through the modifications in the 1861 and 1875 unions, discussed the Jesuits' Estate Act as a test case, and ended with the Paris Deliverance which he referred to as the "Emergence of a Confession."

At the 1942 General Assembly a committee examined the Deliverance but its report, submitted at the final *sederunt*, was not adopted because of what Peddie described as a Munich complex.<sup>11</sup> Now the Synod of Hamilton-London spoke again in the Presbytery's cause with an overture to the 1943 General Assembly. A deliverance from a Presbytery might be ignored and filed under the carpet, but a Synod's Overture was a different matter, and this time the General Assembly responded by appointing a committee to examine "the Church's belief in the basic areas of Christian doctrine." One year later a "selected" committee was appointed, of "members who are representative of the various views . . . assumed to exist" in the Church. This committee's report, entitled "Statement of Faith -- tentative-in-part" included "The Doctrine of Church and State," and was sent down to the presbyteries in 1945.

In 1946 General Assembly named a "Committee on Articles of Faith," and a decade later, after countless hours of work by the committee and by presbyteries, a "Statement of Faith" emerged. Meanwhile the issue of church-state relations occupied the Committee especially during the early 1950s.<sup>12</sup> The Statement's summary on Church and

<sup>8</sup> *Acts and Proceedings of the sixty-sixth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1940*, pp. 37, 41.

<sup>9</sup> *King of Kings*, p.1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> *A Historical Digest of the Work in Articles of Faith B 1942-1967*. (Don Mills, ON: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1967?), pp. 6-7.

State is contained in just three pages and its principles in just four points -- co-ordinate jurisdiction of church and state, no state church, no theocracy and no total separation of church and state. To explain its fourth point further, the authors agreed that, "The relative claims of State and Church will necessarily be in a condition of tension. Under such circumstances, it is the duty of the Church to be ever humble, patient, long-suffering, to respect and above all to pray for the State and its officaries believing in the power of God and His Word. But it is also the supreme responsibility of the Church, even at great risk to herself, to pronounce judgment upon palpable injustices, to call the State's attention to its subordination to God and its divine obligations."<sup>13</sup> This seems in fact to be a restatement of pure Free Church principles from the Victorian age, and these are echoed again in the explanatory comment that total "liberty of conscience" would be fatal to the "fundamental principle of the Westminster Confession of Faith," and that the "forbearance" of the 1875 union "was never intended . . . to be applied to all matters of religion."

Three questions of interpretation persist into this new millennium. Does church membership demand one hundred per cent conformity? Can the individual conscience be separated from the collective voice of the Church? How does this version of state-church relations fit with the religious pluralism of Canada?

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46.

## A Case Study of Presbyterian Theological Education in British North America (1820-1843)

by

Jack C. Whytock

In 1994, there was a scholarly conference at Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick – “The Contribution of Presbyterianism to Atlantic Canada.” Some of the papers were subsequently published in an edited volume by Charles Scobie and George Rawlyk. One paper which was not published in the 1997 book was Sheldon MacKenzie’s paper, “Theological Education in Nova Scotia, 1848-1858.” It was a delightful paper and formed part of the basis for his 1998 work *Gathered by the River The Story of the West River Seminary and Theological Hall 1848-1858*. The author and I exchanged some discussions about the forerunners to the West River Theological Hall and my premise that these institutions needed to be viewed from the standpoint of a continuum with their Scottish roots. Thus, in part, this paper is the “chapter” prior to Sheldon MacKenzie’s work both in terms of chronology, context, and comparison – the latter three words being key to my approach.

I focus now upon the first Presbyterian theological institution in British North America. It was established in 1820 for the purposes of training men for the ministry and continued under the solo Professorship of Dr. Thomas McCulloch until his death in 1843. I have purposely used the broader title today for this paper as “A Case Study of Presbyterian Theological Education in British North America, 1820-1843” to examine this endeavour with a wider lense rather than looking only at McCulloch.

Our starting point is with Thomas McCulloch as theological educator by way of his writings. Then we turn to student accounts, Synod involvement, foreign involvement, Presbytery involvement; and, thereby taking all this together, we arrive at a case study and “towards” a conclusion.

### 1. Thomas McCulloch: Writings and the Hall

Since we possess Professor McCulloch’s first lecture to the Divinity students at the opening of the Divinity Hall in Pictou in 1820, we are able to develop an

understanding of McCulloch's vision and conduct for the Hall.<sup>1</sup> The lecture should also be viewed as unique since this was the actual opening of the Secession Hall in British North America. Such a lecture as this at the beginning of a session in a Divinity Hall was common place in all of the Scottish Secession Halls. It was customary with McCulloch's theological professor, Archibald Bruce of Whitburn.

This lecture was distinctive in that McCulloch covered several themes, perhaps because he realized it was a very historic lecture. As would be expected, the lecture combined the marriage of piety with theology, yet it was not excessively pietistic. He reminded the students that the study of Divinity is for the purpose of being a minister of the gospel and, as such, what is preached must be in harmony with what is studied.<sup>2</sup>

McCulloch began the lecture by recognizing that the men of this first session in the Hall had completed their "academical course," were now taking up the "clerical office," and would be taught "under my charge." He then stated that before they began he would "make a few remarks, connected with your choice of office and your professional studies."<sup>3</sup> McCulloch acknowledged that service in the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia presented "few inducements" from a secular perspective, yet he quoted to the students Daniel 12:3 to remind them of the blessings which would flow from their labours. Next, he reminded them that they were to be sincere and godly and that "Of all the fools who are exalted to honour, there is none more despicable than a pretender to religion..."<sup>4</sup>

That McCulloch was well aware of the historical importance connected to the commencement of the Hall is attested throughout the lecture. He spoke to them of the reputation of the Hall and Synod which they bore and that they were but the first fruits "of an abundant harvest" and as such these men of the first class would "give a tone to the character of those who succeed you in education..."<sup>5</sup> Surely this was calculated to make them apply themselves and set a good example. They were exhorted not to "encourage any system of religious opinions which indulges ignorance or inattention to duty; which either permits knowledge to terminate in speculation, or cherishes activity uncombined with intelligence."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas McCulloch, *Introductory Hints to Theological Students – A Lecture, Delivered at the Opening of the First Theological Class in the Pictou Academical Institution; and Designed to Suggest a Course of Preparation Requisite for the Successful Discharge of Ministerial Duties in the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia* (Glasgow, 1821). This lecture was reprinted as "Appendix A" in W. McCulloch, *Life of Thomas McCulloch*, [1920] pp.197-215. All subsequent references will be to this edition of the lecture.

<sup>2</sup>"Appendix A," *Life of Thomas McCulloch*, p.215.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p.198.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p.199.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p.200.

He warned the students of becoming diverted from their first labour – “men’s souls” – by taking up farming or schooling to derive part of their income. McCulloch diverted his lecture for several paragraphs on this point. Basically, he argued that though this may have been necessary in laying the foundations, now that “the same church is founded and enlarged, these are neither consistent with the injunction of Christ, nor with the success of the gospel.”<sup>7</sup> Likewise, he stated that it was the responsibility of the church to provide adequately for her minister and he made a strong argument of this point to the students.

Following this interlude, McCulloch set forth the value of their philosophical studies “as subservient to theological improvement” and explained that these studies would prove valuable. The students were advised “to review occasionally their former studies; and, to your previous knowledge, to add such acquirements, as may render you esteemed and useful, in the various stations which are within the sphere of your professional choice.”<sup>8</sup> McCulloch qualified this in the very next paragraph: “No classical nor scientific acquirements can qualify you to be entrusted with the charge of souls because the principle aim of a Divinity student must be the acquisition of religious knowledge.”<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, the students were charged to attend their Divinity studies “as a scientific pursuit” in this regard and thus make the object of their studies the mastery of a system of truth. McCulloch had very definite views about the place of Systematic Theology in a Divinity Hall as being indispensable. He stated that a minister who cannot see the systematic arrangements is ill qualified to serve in the Church. Connected to this was his belief that “public instructors in the church ought to possess a uniformity of religious views.” Error, he said, will not produce the same ends that truth does. Furthermore, in the Hall the constitution of the Church was to be taught; that is, “its system of religious principles.” McCulloch did not name it, but he was referring to the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.

McCulloch moved from the Confession’s system, to give advice, on how the students were to study the scriptures. For seven pages he set before the students several hermeneutical principles, then exhorted them to the right use of the languages in translation work, and finally warned them not to neglect books which dealt with topography, chronology of nations, political systems of the ancient nations, religious life, and customs and habits. (The last point sounds very close to McCulloch’s old friend George Paxton’s work, *Illustrations of the Holy Scriptures*.) He also told them that commentaries would be invaluable on scripture and this would allow the student to “enjoy the conversation of both the dead and the living.” Systematic theology texts, he explained, were invaluable to scriptural study if they prove their system from the

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<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.200-203.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p.204. This point is not far removed from the advice offered by John Stott in his chapter “The Call to Study” in *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, 1982), pp.190-210.

<sup>9</sup>“Appendix A,” *Life of Thomas McCulloch*, pp.204-205.

scripture.<sup>10</sup> As in the Church, the school of Christ, so in the Hall, the students must study the Bible and he exhorted them to make this “the subject of [their] rigorous investigation.”<sup>11</sup> He reminded them that in the pursuit of truth there is only one “source,” the Bible, and so this must be studied with great care and interest.

In continuing to survey other components of the Divinity curriculum in this opening lecture, he then proceeded to make some brief comments (one paragraph) on “ecclesiastical history.” He mentioned its connection to “Christian belief” (Historical Theology) and “deportment” (practice) and explained that the Scriptures contain the authentic history of the church, thus providing the student with much Church History. “(F)or a knowledge of succeeding ages, you must apply to the works of the ecclesiastical historian.”<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, McCulloch did not tell us in this introductory lecture which Church History texts he would have the students read, nor did he state such under Systematic Theology. The only mention of a specific text outside the scripture is the Constitution of the Church (The Confession) in the field of Symbolic Theology.

The final comments concern what can be referred to as Practical Theology. Here he gave advice on pulpit eloquence and church polity. He was of the opinion that little regard was given to “communicating.” One way to improve, he believed, was for students to be more exacting in composing their sermons with “careful analysis” and to combine this with the study of published sermons for their analysis, doctrine and application (“its practical bearings”).<sup>13</sup> McCulloch warned the students to give attention to style and manner in sermons for “The person best qualified to command the attention of an audience, is most likely to promote their improvement. Like the skilful preparer of food, he creates a relish for what he has provided.” McCulloch then added this caveat:

The spirit of God only, it is true, can communicate efficiency to the word of his grace. But the Holy Spirit operates upon the rational mind, by means agreeable to its nature; and, therefore, in religion a pleasing mode of address may be as useful, as in the ordinary intercourse of life.<sup>14</sup>

Concerning polity, McCulloch told the students it was such an important subject that he would “reserve it for the subject of a separate discussion.”<sup>15</sup> Here he expressed his concern about ministers and students who applied themselves to sermons, yet could not direct the government of the church. Until this additional lecture on polity was given, McCulloch directed the students to study Paul’s “delineations of a Christian bishop” and

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.206-212.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p.206.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p.213.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p.214.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.214-215.

to “acquire those habits which may qualify you to succeed him in the government of the church.”<sup>16</sup>

In conclusion, the lecture reflects a continuity with Scottish patterns in theological education within the Secession. Men entering the Hall were required to have the proper educational background from a “university” and McCulloch’s statements here reflect the ideal of a Scottish Enlightenment university where the classes encompassed far more than the Classics. He recognized that the study of Divinity must include the marriage of piety and theology and a commitment to the authority of the Scriptures. McCulloch envisioned the inclusion of confessional or symbolic studies, systematic theology, the proper interpretation of Scripture, and Bible background all as constituting the curriculum to be taught in the Divinity Hall. Ecclesiastical History, Homiletics and Polity were “add-ons” and McCulloch believed that much of this could be given to the student more as directed reading. Here McCulloch assumed the presbyteries would take care of ecclesiastical history through assigned chronologies. McCulloch did mention that he would give a lecture on Polity. In Homiletics, it appears that McCulloch assumed that their College courses in Rhetoric and Logic would have afforded them sufficient background for their taking up further sermon analysis.

In reviewing McCulloch’s other published writings or manuscripts which were never published, it is evident that many of these do not have direct bearing upon McCulloch’s work in the Divinity Hall. Nevertheless, they do reveal much concerning McCulloch’s interests, and abilities, and the controversies with which he was involved. His two volumes of *Popery Condemned by Scripture and the Fathers* reveal McCulloch to be a well-studied student of patristic literature.<sup>17</sup> The parallels here are quite striking with McCulloch’s own Divinity Professor, Archibald Bruce, who had acquired an amazing knowledge of Roman Catholic history and the patristic period. However, these two volumes by McCulloch did not originate as lectures in the Divinity Hall and there is no direct evidence showing that McCulloch used these in his lectures, but perhaps students were referred to them in preparing for their Ecclesiastical chronologies.

We turn now to McCulloch’s writings which were used in the Divinity Hall. These works are doctrinal. The most significant work is his *Calvinism: The Doctrine of the Scriptures*. It was published posthumously in Glasgow in 1846.<sup>18</sup> From one of McCulloch’s students in the Divinity Hall that met on Argyle Street, Halifax, George Patterson, we learn that “the chief importance was attached to the study of Theology. Orthodoxy was then considered a *sine qua non* in any person looking forward to the Presbyterian ministry. He [Thomas McCulloch] had by this time his lectures on the

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<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p.215.

<sup>17</sup>Thomas McCulloch, *Popery Condemned by Scripture and the Fathers: Being a Refutation of the Principle Popish Doctrines and Assertions maintained in the Remarks on the Rev. Mr. Stanser’s Examination of the Rev. Mr. Burke’s Letter of Instruction to the Catholic Missionaries of Nova Scotia, and in the Reply to the Rev. Mr. Cochran’s Fifth and Last Letter to Mr. Burke, etc.* (Edinburgh, 1808) and Thomas McCulloch, *Popery Again Condemned by Scripture and the Fathers, Being a Reply to a Part of the Popish Doctrines and Assertions contained in the Remarks on the Refutation, and in the Review of Dr. Cochran’s Letters, by the Rev. Edmund Burke* (Edinburgh, 1810).

<sup>18</sup>Thomas McCulloch, *Calvinism, The Doctrine of the Scriptures* (Glasgow,[1846]).

Calvinistic system written out....”<sup>19</sup> Patterson was in McCulloch’s last Divinity class (1842 or 1843), and McCulloch’s lectures on Calvinism were published shortly after his death. Patterson informed us that this published volume on *Calvinism* was comprised of lectures from the Divinity Hall. Anne Wood referred to these lectures as “sermons” by McCulloch, but all evidence points to the Divinity Hall as the venue, not a Sabbath pulpit.<sup>20</sup> This work was subtitled “A Scriptural Account of the Ruin and Recovery of Fallen Man, and a Review of the Principal Objections Which Have Been Advanced Against the Calvinistic System.” McCulloch made references to six authors and their works in these lectures:

John Taylor, *The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin* (1767)

Daniel Whitby, *A Discourse Concerning Election and Reprobation* (1816 edition)

George Hill, *Lectures in Divinity* (1825 edition)

William Magee, *Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural Doctrine of Atonement* (1809)

Jonathan Edwards, *Works* (1817 edition)

Benedict Pictet, *Theologie Chretienne* (Genevan edition of 1721)

Pictet was a beloved theologian of Professor Archibald Bruce. Hill, though generally classified in the politically Moderate camp, yet Calvinistic in Divinity, was widely used by a range of ministers. McCulloch used his lectures to refute and attack the Arminian and Pelagian theology of Taylor and Whitby. Jonathan Edwards had also attacked Taylor. This explains McCulloch’s use of Jonathan Edwards’ *Works* since he could see how Edwards defended historic Calvinism.<sup>21</sup> It is not surprising to learn that McCulloch did not deviate from historic orthodox Calvinism.

In summary McCulloch was walking in the high Calvinism of his Professor, Archibald Bruce. There is no evidence suggestive of McCulloch moving towards an Amyraldian Universal atonement theory in which the United Presbyterians in Scotland were engaged in the 1830s. The Hall between 1820 to 1843 represented in many regards a tighter orthodoxy than in the motherland. It was typical of mission situations and was reflective of McCulloch’s time as a student in Scotland.

<sup>19</sup> George Patterson, “The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies,” *The Theologue*, Vol. 3:2 (1892), pp.38-39. *The Theologue* has been deposited in the Maritime Conference Archives, Sackville, New Brunswick under “Pine Hill Divinity Hall Collection,” Box PHDH-36.

<sup>20</sup> Anne Wood, “The Significance of Calvinism in the Educational Vision of Thomas McCulloch,” *Vitae Scholasticae*, 4 (Spring/Fall, 1985), pp.15-30.

<sup>21</sup> For a helpful summary of McCulloch’s *Calvinism*, see William Klempa, “History of Presbyterian Theology in Canada to 1875,” in *The Burning Bush and a Few Acres of Snow* (Ottawa, 1994), pp.201-204. The work which McCulloch was interested by Edwards was, *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended; Evidences of its Truth Produced, and Arguments to the Contrary Answered* (1757, 1767, 1819). William Magee’s work was also important since it was a refutation of Deism and Rationalism. Magee argues against Thomas Belsham’s Unitarianism and the attacks which had waged against William Wilberforce. See, William Magee, *Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice* (London, 1859; original 1809), p.5.

The other doctrinal writings of McCulloch were on the Holy Spirit, the person of Christ, baptism, and the eldership. The first two of these were never published. Again, it is difficult to determine if his "Dissertation upon the work of the Holy Spirit" and "A Scriptural view of the person and doctrine of Christ" were first given as lectures in the Divinity Hall. It is fairly certain that this was the origin of both these studies.<sup>22</sup> Professor John Mitchell wrote to Thomas McCulloch in June, 1843 concerning the manuscript entitled, "A Scriptural view of the person and doctrine of Christ":

I had it read to me with much care, and cannot but say that the argument for the divinity of Christ, though on a topic which has been frequently handled, seems to me to be discussed in a manner so admirably ingenious and conclusive, that I do not remember to have read any treatise so new, as well as so entirely satisfactory, and I should be extremely sorry, especially in these times of rampant error and infidelity, if the public and Christian religion were deprived of the benefits of it by your declining to publish. Print it, I beseech you.<sup>23</sup>

Four months later McCulloch was dead and this manuscript was never published.

## 2. The Operation of the Hall from Student Sources

The Divinity Hall at Pictou began with twelve students in November 1820. Of these twelve students, six were eventually ordained by the Secession Presbyterians.<sup>24</sup> Like the Secession Halls in Scotland, the duration of the whole course was to be covered in four sessions per year. It appears that during the 1820s the Hall met on Saturdays, either once a month or twice a month "during the whole four years."<sup>25</sup> All of the students taught school and the above pattern allowed them to remain in this occupation. We can speculate as to why McCulloch departed from the Scottish practice and did not have them gather for a few weeks in August/September each year. One factor was probably the harvest. Perhaps there were other factors. One of the first students, Rev. Robert S. Patterson,<sup>26</sup> left a brief description of the conduct of the classes by Professor McCulloch. They read very similar to the Scottish Secession Halls.

<sup>22</sup>W. McCulloch, *Life of Thomas McCulloch*, pp.142-143, 185.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.185-186.

<sup>24</sup>A. E. Betts, *Pine Hill Divinity Hall*, pp.10-11.

<sup>25</sup>G. Patterson, "The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies," *The Theologue*, Vol. 3:1 (1891), p.3.

<sup>26</sup>The first class of students in the Hall in 1820 were: Angus McGillivray, Michael McCulloch, James McGregor, Duncan MacDonald, John MacDonald, Hugh Ross, Hugh Dunbar, David Fraser, John L. Murdoch, John McLean, Robert S. Patterson, and Archibald Patterson. See George Patterson, "The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies," *The Theologue*, Vol. 3:1 (1891), pp.5-6. The first licentiate died three months after licensure, and Archibald Patterson died in Paisley, Scotland in 1821. Of the original twelve students, six became ministers in the Lower Provinces, with seven becoming licentiates, but one never receiving a call and eventually took up farming.

The most that we received in the way of lectures was remarks on the Confession of Faith. For our knowledge of Divinity, we had to depend in a good measure upon our reading. When we met in the Hall, we delivered discourses on subjects prescribed to us by the Professor. These were criticised by him, and his criticisms were particularly valuable. Although we were obliged to write all our discourses, we were not permitted to read them. The Professor took from us the manuscript, and if we failed to remember it, he told us. This was a kindness to us, as we did not think of reading, when we entered upon the work of preaching. I have never yet read a sermon during my life, either in the Hall or since I left it.<sup>27</sup>

Patterson's comments accord with much in the Scottish Secession Halls in that student discourses were the common form of student assignment followed by critical remarks. Also, clearly the Confession lay at the heart of the curriculum and this parallels with what McCulloch stated in his opening lecture to the Hall. However, it is difficult to evaluate Patterson's comment on the teaching of divinity (systematic theology). What does "we had to depend in a good measure upon our reading" mean? Did McCulloch never give theology lectures? Evidence shows that he gave some, but we are unclear as to the chief textbook he assigned for readings. Patterson made no mention of exegetical work or of church history, homiletics or polity. This Patterson went to Scotland in 1824, and was one of three Pictou Academy graduates to be examined by Professors at Glasgow University and granted the M.A. degree without further requirement. He was ordained to the Bedeque Church, Prince Edward Island in 1826, and remained there as minister until 1882.<sup>28</sup>

The two other Divinity Hall students who went to Glasgow for examination were John Murdoch and John McLean.<sup>29</sup> Murdoch was ordained for Windsor, Nova Scotia and John McLean for Richibucto, New Brunswick. The other three who were ordained from the first class were Hugh Ross to Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia; Hugh Dunbar to Cavendish and New London, Prince Edward Island; and Angus McGillivray to East River, Nova Scotia.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Betts, *Pine Hill Divinity Hall*, p.10. Betts is quoting in part from George Patterson's, "The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies," *The Theologue*, Vol.3:1 (1891), p.5. George Patterson interviewed Robert Patterson shortly before Robert Patterson's death.

<sup>28</sup> A. E. Betts, *Our Fathers' Faith*, pp.106-107.

<sup>29</sup> G. Patterson, "The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies," *The Theologue*, Vol.3:2 (1892), pp.34-35.

<sup>30</sup> Biographical information for the first six men to be ordained who attended the Divinity Hall in Pictou can be found in the following:

(1) John McLean: A. Blaikie, "Memoir of the Late Rev. J. McLean of Richibucto" I, *Christian Instructor*, Vol. 2:1 (Jan. 1857), pp.6-13, A. Blaikie, "Memoir of the Late Rev. J. McLean of Richibucto" II, *Christian Instructor*, Vol. 2:2 (Feb.1857), pp.52-59. McLean was likened to be Nova Scotia's Robert Murray McCheyne in piety. He was noted for his enthusiastic distribution of tracts and Brown's Catechism.

Originally, Dr. McCulloch taught the Hebrew grammar class in the Pictou Academy and the Hebrew translation or exegesis classes in the Divinity Hall. E. Arthur Betts postulated that in later years in the Pictou Academy Dr. McCulloch gave the Hebrew grammar class over to his son, Michael, who had completed the Academy course. Thus, Dr. McCulloch only retained the Divinity Hall Hebrew reading classes and not the grammar portion.<sup>31</sup>

Betts' conclusion here is congruent with the development of studies and teaching which was emerging in the Academy after its commencement. Likewise, at Dalhousie College, where McCulloch had others to assist him in the teaching, McCulloch was not teaching the entire curriculum. Evidence is actually conclusive that Michael McCulloch taught Hebrew in Pictou Academy to those students after 1824 who were "looking forward to the ministry." Thus, the same model was followed here as in Scotland: students were to have done Hebrew studies prior to entering the Divinity Hall where Hebrew readings would then be done.<sup>32</sup> However, after 1837 Dr. Thomas McCulloch returned to the teaching of all Hebrew grammar lessons and readings in the Hall. His Hebrew classes in the Divinity Hall in Halifax that met at his house were not limited to Presbyterians. Charles DeWolfe, a Methodist, also joined McCulloch's Hebrew class in Halifax. (DeWolfe went on to become the Professor of Theology in Sackville, New Brunswick at Mount Allison College.)<sup>33</sup> Another of these students, Alexander McKenzie, went on to teach Hebrew at the Divinity Hall for the United Presbyterians in London, Upper Canada, 1847-1850.

Further details are gleaned from George Patterson as a student of the Hall in Halifax.<sup>34</sup> He stated that there were two classes, one in Hebrew and one in Theology. It

(2) John L. Murdoch, Anon., "Obituary – Rev. John L. Murdoch," *The Home and Foreign Record of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of British North America* Vol.13:9 (1873), pp.262-265. Comments about Murdoch's time in the Hall are found on page 263 and his "special licensing" as a Gaelic student was mentioned here and that he was designated as one of "the pioneer native preachers of British America."

(3) Robert Patterson, J.P. MacPhie, *Pictonians at Home and Abroad* (Boston, 1914), pp.43-45, 62.

(4) Angus McGillivray, Anon., "In Memoriam – Rev. Angus McGillivray," *The Home and Foreign Record of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of British North America*, Vol. 9:9 (1869), pp.234-237.

(5) Hugh Ross, Anon., "Obituary – Hugh Ross," *Christian Instructor*, Vol. 4:1 (Jan. 1859), pp.30-32.

(6) Hugh Dunbar, Anon., "Obituary – Hugh Dunbar," *Christian Instructor*, Vol. 3:1 (Jan. 1858), p.32.

<sup>31</sup> Betts, *Pine Hill Divinity Hall*, p.11. Michael McCulloch became Professor of Classics and Mathematics in the Pictou Academy at the conclusion of his studies in the Divinity Hall, 1824. See G. Patterson, "The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies," *The Theologue*, Vol. 3:1 (1891), p.7.

<sup>32</sup> G. Patterson, "The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies," *The Theologue*, Vol. 3: 2 (1892), pp.36-37.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.38; John G. Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963* (Toronto, 1984), Vol. 1, pp.80, 87-88, 98, 101.

<sup>34</sup> Betts, *Our Fathers Faith*, p.106. George Patterson (1824-1897) was ordained in 1849 in Green Hill, Pictou County and was the author of several books which were historical or doctrinal. See George Patterson, *A History of the County of Pictou*, N.S. (Montreal, 1877); George Patterson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Underlying the Revelation of Redemption* (Edinburgh, 1870); George Patterson, *Missionary Life*

must be remembered that George Patterson attended only one session in the Divinity Hall with Professor McCulloch so his comment of “two classes” does not take in view the rotation of subjects covered over four years. Patterson wrote that McCulloch delivered lectures on “the Calvinistic system” and the students were then examined on these lectures. This was standard with all the Scottish Halls, both Secession and Kirk.

Next, Patterson recorded that the students delivered their discourses “*memoriter*” and “plans of sermons” (skeletons of sermons). The discourses were doctrinal, but sometimes they were also assigned discourses showing the connection of the doctrine with the duty. This would have been like an exercise on a text (the doctrine) with the addition attached (the application). Patterson cited three texts in this regard: Titus 2:14; 3:6; 3:14. These student discourses, exercises and additions were followed by “further elucidation on the part of the Professor.” Patterson then clarified this to say that the students were also invited to “state our difficulties or objections,” so student criticism was not excluded by McCulloch, but clearly he was in charge of these critical discussions. From these criticisms the Professor issued some very helpful advice on the art of preaching. Patterson then gave an example which McCulloch used in one of these criticisms: “Give them a good introduction. If you get them with you at the start, it will carry you through the middle of your discourse, then stop when you think they would like a little more....”<sup>35</sup> The work done through these student discourses thus begins to shed a proper light on what Patterson said, namely, that they had two classes – Hebrew and Theology. He was not counting the discourses that were in the field of Applied Theology, such as Pastoral Ministry, Homiletics, and also Biblical Theology, or Exegesis of Scripture.

It appears that the actual pedagogical style of the Divinity Hall in Pictou or Halifax, was not unlike the Secession Halls in Scotland with a single Professor. The lectures, exercises and conduct of the classes were the same as under an Archibald Bruce, a George Lawson, or a John Dick. The one main difference was in the actual meeting times of the Hall. The Nova Scotia Hall appears to have struggled with this issue and moved to a settled pattern of a four-week session in November. This was approximately half the length of the session in a Scottish Secession Hall where six to nine weeks was more the norm. However, the Scottish Halls faced a continual struggle in keeping students there for the duration of a whole session, so perhaps in reality there was less of a time difference than it appears.

When the Hall was in Pictou, the students resided in their own homes and journeyed for the Saturday meetings to Pictou. It is uncertain where the students resided in later years (1833 to 1837) when they attended the Hall in Pictou and in Halifax (1838 to 1843). Since there are no references in his biography to the Divinity students during these years, it appears fairly certain that they did not reside with Professor McCulloch. This was also the case in Scotland – divinity students did not reside with the Professor in the Secession Halls – this is a common misconception.

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*Among the Cannibals: being the life of the Rev. John Geddie, D.D., first missionary to the New Hebrides, with a history of the Nova Scotia Presbyterian Mission on that group* (Toronto, 1882).

<sup>35</sup> George Patterson, “The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies,” *The Theologue*, Vol. 3:2 (1891), pp.38-39.

### 3. Scotland and Books

Assistance from Scottish Seceders for the Divinity Hall Library in Pictou must receive attention in this case study, as the furnishing of resources for the students is important. A Society was formed in Scotland that helped both the Pictou Academy and the Divinity Hall. This Society, "The Glasgow Society for Promoting Religion and Liberal Education Among the Settlers in the North American Provinces," was constituted on 29 September 1826. Its chief object was to serve as a defence of liberal education in the Colonies and also to encourage a "native ministry." This Society, in its inaugural publication, praised Professor McCulloch for his vision and labours in the creation of the Pictou Academy:

Formed upon the model of the University here, which is so justly regarded by our citizens with partiality, it opens to all without distinction or exception the paths of science, and presents to men of all persuasions in religion, the means of obtaining a complete classical and philosophical education, uncircumscribed by religious disabilities, and untainted by the spirit of party. The theological class, connected with this institution, may be regarded as a *Home Missionary Society*, in which those who are about to be sent forth to preach the gospel to their countrymen, receive an appropriate, and an evangelical education.<sup>36</sup>

The Society primarily assisted by sending books for the libraries in the Academy and in the Hall. Key leaders in this Glasgow Society were William McGavin, Ralph Wardlaw, John Dick and John Mitchell.<sup>37</sup> This Society, formed shortly after the 1825 "Memorial on Behalf of the Literary and Philosophical Institution at Pictou, Nova Scotia," was circulated in Scotland for the gathering of names. Those who signed this "Memorial" were "recommending it [Pictou Academy] to the public in this country [Scotland]." The list of subscribers included Henry Moncrieff Wellwood, Andrew Thompson, Thomas McCrie, John Jamieson, Robert Jamieson, John Brown, Patrick Neil, James Haldane, Stevenson McGill, George Jardine, William Meikleham, William McGavin, John Dick, James Ewing, Greville Ewing, Ralph Wardlaw and George Baird.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>*Proceedings in the Formation of the Glasgow Society for Promoting Religion and Liberal Education Among the Settlers in the North American Provinces With an Address by the Committee* (Glasgow, 1827), pp.12-13.

<sup>37</sup>*Second Report of the Glasgow Society for Promoting Religion and Liberal Education Among the Settlers in the North American Provinces* (Glasgow, 1830), pp.iv, vi. Also in extract form under the article, "Institution of Pictou," *Edinburgh Theological Magazine* 4 (1829), pp.77-86.

<sup>38</sup>"Memorial on Behalf of the Literary and Philosophical Institution at Pictou, Nova Scotia" (n.p., 1825). A copy of this memorial may be found in the Maritime Conference Archives, Sackville, N.B., Box PHDH-1, No.4. The memorial uses three names for the Pictou Academy: College of Pictou, Pictou Seminary, and The Literary and Philosophical Institution of Pictou. The purpose of the memorial was to appeal "to the generosity of the liberal and enlightened Friends of Science in Britain" and "by the aid of their countrymen, to enable this infant and promising Institution to surmount the adversities with which it has been beset and assailed, and to enlarge its usefulness by multiplying its means of Education; in short, to render it still more

This "Memorial" of 1825 came at the same time the "Glasgow Colonial Society" was founded, chiefly under the leadership of Robert Burns of Paisley. Since many in its membership were hostile to a non-Kirk College like Pictou, a tremendous friction arose. The "Memorial" was an effort to overcome this and in reality it failed. Thus, in the mid-1820s two rival Societies emerged in Glasgow promoting mission work in British North America and the one mentioned above, which was aiding the Secessionists, has been virtually ignored by historians.<sup>39</sup> The full list of subscriber names makes for very interesting reading and reveals a degree of complexity often ignored by historians.

McCulloch was obviously receiving books from this Society and, although today it is difficult to recreate the catalogue list for the Divinity Hall Library in Pictou and Halifax, there are enough hints to lead to the conclusion that a determined effort had been made in the establishment of a Hall Library. There are forty-two books in the Atlantic School of Theology Library, Halifax which bear the seal of "McCulloch's Library". Although there is some uncertainty as to whether they were Professor McCulloch's or the Divinity Hall's, it appears that these were what students actually consulted, so the question for our purpose is somewhat irrelevant. The two oldest books are Bibles, one printed in Basle in 1556, and the other in Antwerp, 1571, volume five of the *Antwerp Polyglot Bible*. The remainder of the volumes were printed between 1596 and 1818. The majority are from the seventeenth century. Several are Patristic writers: Clement of Rome, Eusebius of Caesarea, Lactantius, Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Origen of Alexandria, and are all Latin editions. There are several ecclesiastical histories by Allix, du Pin, Bower, Baronius, and Alexander Petrie and two gospel harmonies in Latin by Thomas Cartwright and Johann Gerhard. Two interesting volumes are Charles Drelincourt's *La defense de Calvin* (1667) and John Forbes' *Instructiones historico - theologicae* (1645).<sup>40</sup> In addition to this collection, there are fifteen more volumes in the

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efficient as a Scientific and Christian Seminary." (p.2). The first three subscribers to endorse the memorial were James Hall, George Paxton, and John Mitchell, then followed another paragraph of endorsement after which forty-two subscribers were listed, all of whom constituted leaders in Scottish education, civil government and church. From the perspective of students in the Academy and Hall the Glasgow Colonial Society clearly opposed both institutions. See "Extract of a Letter from a student in Theology, Attending the Pictou Academy, To a Clergyman in this Country," dated, Pictou, October 8, 1829, in *Edinburgh Theological Magazine*, 5 (1830), pp.120-121. For encouragement from the "other" Glasgow Society, see "Religious and Philanthropic Intelligence," in *Edinburgh Theological Magazine* 5 (1830), pp.182-183.

<sup>39</sup> *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1993), p.365. The article on the Glasgow Colonial Society makes no reference to "The Glasgow Society for Promoting Religion and Liberal Education..." and states that "For over a decade the Society was almost solely responsible for providing Presbyterian facilities in Canada...." See also *Selected Correspondence of the Glasgow Colonial Society 1825-1840*, in Elizabeth Ann Kerr McDougall and John S. Moir, eds. (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1994), pp.xxxviii, xlii. The editors are incorrect to assert that McCulloch was attempting to transform Pictou Academy "into a publically-supported theological college" – a college yes, to be supported by public support, but not a Divinity Hall. Other sources are John S. Moir, "'To Fertilize the Wilderness': Problems and Progress of the Synod of Nova Scotia in its first Quarter Century," *Canadian Society of Presbyterian History, Papers* (1992), pp.67-86; R.F. Binnington, "The Glasgow Colonial Society and its work in the Development of the Presbyterian Church in British North America 1825-1840" (unpublished Th.D. thesis, Emmanuel College, Toronto, 1960).

<sup>40</sup> "Catalogue of Books from the McCulloch Library" filed with the Librarian, *Atlantic School of Theology* (1977) Halifax, Nova Scotia. The books are housed in the Rare Book Room of the Library. Though

Special Collections at Dalhousie University all bearing this same stamp mark as well. These sixty volumes in total help us to examine the resources that were available to the Divinity students.<sup>41</sup> In addition to the shipments of books from Scotland (culls from the United Secession Divinity Library, and from Professor Mitchell), plus money from Scotland for the purchase of books for the Divinity Library, the Nova Scotian Synod often gave a yearly grant and Dr. McCulloch often used what “salary” he was given to purchase books. Also, many congregations in the Synod of the Lower Provinces formed “Penny-a-week” Societies.<sup>42</sup> These Societies in congregations collected contributions for purchases to be made for the Divinity Hall Library.

#### 4. Synod Records and Theological Education

##### (i) Origins of The Hall

The first reference to some kind of Theological Hall in British North America can be found in the special *Report* issued by the Synod of 1818. This *Report* set forth several ideals or goals for the Synod to work towards: such as, the securing of a printing press, the exercise of discipline by all the sessions, the increase in meetings for fellowship, etc., the revival of the Presbytery Exercise,<sup>43</sup> the congregational support of ministers fully, and, eventually, less reliance upon Britain for preachers. With this last point we read:

all supplies from that quarter must be temporary and precarious... a Church which has no resources for a succession of Clergymen, can neither be extensive nor permanent. The Committee would, therefore, earnestly recommend to the Synod, the establishment of a seminary of education from which Preachers of the Gospel may be procured; and, in the event of attaining this valuable acquisition, it might be also advisable, to afford to

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Sheldon MacKenzie also mentions the Divinity Hall Library, he likewise includes no reference to finding a Catalogue. See R. Sheldon MacKenzie, *Gathered by the River: The Story of the West River Seminary and Theological Hall, 1848-1858* (Winnipeg, 1998), pp.57-59.

<sup>41</sup>“Special Collections Card Catalogue” in the Special Collections Library, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. There is not a separate catalogue of books bearing the Thomas McCulloch stamp, rather these are within the Special Collections Card Catalogue. The Special Collections Library at Dalhousie also possesses 42 volumes of books with the seal of the “Pictou Academy Library.” These books were all printed between 1763 to 1816 and as would be expected cover the following subjects: natural philosophy, Greek literature, moral philosophy, rhetoric, history and English literature. I have also endeavoured to ascertain where other books from McCulloch’s Library and from the Divinity Hall Library may have went. Three were found in a personal library, namely, George Buchanan’s *The History of Scotland* [trans. James Aikman] (Glasgow, 1827), volumes I, II, and III only. The name inside these books is only “Dr. McCulloch,” so I conclude they were from his personal library.

<sup>42</sup>G. Patterson, “The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies,” *The Theologue*, Vol. 3:1 (1891), p.4.

<sup>43</sup>*Report... for Promoting Religion*, pp.3-19, 28.

young men of piety and talents, every possible encouragement to dedicate themselves to the work of the ministry.<sup>44</sup>

Since the Academy had begun in 1817, we understand the reference here to “a seminary” to broadly mean the Academy and a Divinity Hall, without which the church could not have a “succession” or a permanence, nor could it be extended. The *Report* of 1818, was truly visionary. Later in the *Report*, the term “seminary” was again used to describe this educational vision in a very broad sense.<sup>45</sup> Clearly, the long range goal was that what was established in Pictou would lead to the securing of ministers.

## (ii) Solo Professor

By the June, 1820 Synod meeting, the report on Pictou Academy stated that there were several young men finishing their philosophical studies and ready to enter the study of divinity. A Synod Committee was appointed to find and recommend the name of someone to become the Professor of Divinity. Their recommendation was for Thomas McCulloch to assume this task, in addition to his pastorate at the Prince Street Church in Pictou, and his Professorship at Pictou Academy. The Synod proceeded to appoint McCulloch as its first Professor of Divinity at this same meeting and gave twenty pounds from Synod funds to purchase more books.<sup>46</sup>

## (iii) Raising Funds in the Maritimes for the Divinity Library and Endowment

In reading the Synod Minutes from 1817 to 1844, the matter of raising funds for collecting books for the Academy Library and the Divinity Library figures several times. In 1821, McCulloch declined the salary from the Synod for being Professor of Divinity in order that this money be used to purchase needed books for the use of the Divinity students.<sup>47</sup> In 1823, the Synod gave £20 from the congregational collections for the Library of the Divinity Hall,<sup>48</sup> and in 1837, £10 were given from which Dr. McCulloch and two others were to select appropriate books.<sup>49</sup> In 1837, the Synod also requested that a “Catalogue of the Books in the Divinity Hall Library” be made and presented to the 1838 Synod.<sup>50</sup> Turning to the 1838 Synod *Minutes*, we discover that the “Catalogue of

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.20-21.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p.30.

<sup>46</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1820.*

<sup>47</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1821.*

<sup>48</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1823.*

<sup>49</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1837.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

the Divinity Hall Library” was completed and duly laid before the Synod.<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately, the catalogue itself is not in the *Minutes* and the trail of attempting to locate it has proven unsuccessful to date. It would have been most interesting to see what constituted the 1837/38 “Catalogue of the Divinity Hall Library” in British North America and then have attempted a full comparison with the United Secession’s Divinity Hall Library in Scotland. The Divinity Library went with Dr. McCulloch’s successor, Professor John Keir,<sup>52</sup> to Prince Town, Prince Edward Island, by order of the Synod of 1844.<sup>53</sup>

The designation of £10 from Synod funds was deemed too little, and in 1838 an extra £20 was added to it from proceeds of the sale of a Mr. Dick’s estate. With £30 to purchase books, the committee appears to have been rather slow, because in 1839, they reported having only spent £6 of the £30. They were directed by the Synod to purchase more books.<sup>54</sup>

The 1843 Report moved to improve of the Theological Professorship Endowment Fund by encouraging the Committee managing those funds to invest them in order to obtain a Bill of Incorporation for the Fund.<sup>55</sup> This does show the Synod’s commitment to seek to some extent an adequate fund to pay for its Professor of Divinity. However, this Endowment Fund had begun in 1832, when the Synod approved the establishment of the fund, and it set a goal of £2,500.<sup>56</sup> It appears that the Fund grew very slowly, as in 1834 it only had £87; in 1836, £162; in 1839, £212; and in 1840, £230.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1838.*

<sup>52</sup> Keir likewise studied divinity with Professor Bruce at Whitburn and may have studied for one year with Professor Paxton at Edinburgh. For a brief memoir of Professor Keir see Anon., “The late Rev. John Keir, D.D.,” *Christian Instructor*, Vol.4:1 (Jan. 1859), pp.1-8; Vol.4:2 (Feb. 1859), pp.33-40; Vol.4:3 (March 1859), pp.65-72; and Vol.4:4 (April 1859), pp.97-110.

<sup>53</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1844*, MCA for the re-location of the Divinity Library to P.E.I. My personal visit to Montreal, Presbyterian College to see the “John Keir Library” housed there revealed there was no catalogue. The collection would be of about 500 volumes, much of which pre-dates 1844 or McCulloch’s death. There is some question if this John Keir Library was really only Keir’s personal library, or if it may have also been the Divinity Library. Again, since divinity students used the Hall Library and the Professor’s Library, it is moot to this paper.

<sup>54</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1838, 1839.*

<sup>55</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1843.*

<sup>56</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1832.* Part of the reason for the establishment of an Endowment Fund was no doubt due to the fact that in 1830 the Synod could only pay Professor McCulloch thirty pounds of the promised forty pounds thus was in arrears. See *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N. S., 1830*. Betts, in *Pinehill Divinity Hall* (p.12), says it was the Synod of 1833 that began the Endowment Fund. The *Minutes* read 1832.

<sup>57</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1834, 1836, 1839, and 1840.* In 1845 the Fund had grown to three hundred thirty nine pounds. See *Abstract from the Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia., 1845*, p.3.

The Synod was not the only means of enlarging the Divinity Hall Library. There was a stream of correspondence with the mother church in Scotland.<sup>58</sup> Sometimes this was at a formal level, between Synods, but often it was between Professors in Scotland and Nova Scotia; that is, between Professor Mitchell and Professor McCulloch. The correspondence was not restricted to the Professors of Divinity, but was also amongst the Divinity students or by McCulloch to the students of Divinity in Scotland. Two Nova Scotian Divinity students sent a letter to the Divinity students in the United Secession Hall, Glasgow, in 1827, in which they stated the need for assistance with the Library.<sup>59</sup> The Scottish students of Divinity became patrons for the Hall in Pictou and in 1829/30, they sent £104 for the aid of the Hall in Pictou.<sup>60</sup> These exchanges were more than merely the building of a Divinity Library in British North America, more of which we will mention at appropriate junctures.

#### (iv) Student Attendance in the Hall

The *Minutes* of Synod in the early years provide very little evidence of the amount of time Divinity students actually spent at the Hall and for how many sessions. However, as time passed, there was an obvious switch to a regulated annual session of “four complete weeks every year, commencing on the first Wednesday of November” and “the Professor of Divinity having the power of assembling the students at such other times as he may judge expedient.”<sup>61</sup> Though the Synod passed this resolution in 1833, it does not necessarily mean that McCulloch had not moved towards an annual session prior to this time. The Synod may have been regularizing what he was already doing. From letters

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<sup>58</sup>Evidence of this can quickly be found from the Scottish “United Associate Synod Minutes” (April 1826), pp.166-168 where full discussion was given to the Synod by a report from Professor McCulloch while in Scotland. The Synod responded with approval and encouraged congregational offerings be given to the Pictou Institution. See also “United Associate Synod Minutes” (September 1826), pp.176-177 for the report of Synod’s Committee to aid the Nova Scotia Church and its Institution. These manuscript Minutes are housed in the National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh. A microfilm version is available at the United Church of Canada Archives, Victoria University, Toronto.

<sup>59</sup>“James Waddel and Alexander Blaikie, Divinity Students, Pictou, N. S. to the Students of Theology, United Secession Hall, Glasgow, 19 Nov. 1827,” *Letterbook*, National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, manuscript CH3/305/2, pp.183.

<sup>60</sup>“D. Thomas, G. Thomson, Pres. & Sec., United Secession Divinity Hall Society to Rev. McCulloch, Pictou, N. S., 23 September 1830,” *Letterbook*, National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, manuscript CH3/305/2, p.226. Also, McCulloch himself describes the Scottish Divinity students as providing patronage and that “without your beneficial patronage, so much good could not have been done.” See “Thomas McCulloch, Pictou, N. S. to the Theological Students under the inspection of the Rev. Drs. Dick and Mitchell, Glasgow, Scotland, 14 May 1830,” *Letterbook*, National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, manuscript CH3/305/2, p.224.

<sup>61</sup>*Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1833.*

and very occasional references in the Synod *Minutes*, it would appear that under Thomas McCulloch there were, on average, ten students in total at each Divinity session.<sup>62</sup>

Upon McCulloch's death in 1843, the Synod of 1844 appointed the Rev. John Keir as Professor of Divinity. At this time they also stated that each session would last one month and that during the first session the Presbytery of Prince Edward Island would supply Keir's pulpit.<sup>63</sup> Under Professor Keir, the session began the first Friday of October, and it lasted for one month.<sup>64</sup> We can conclude that the Divinity sessions for the Nova Scotian Hall were annual one month sessions, not unlike its Scottish counterpart. The "semi-monthly" meetings were only conducted during the initial years of the Hall.

As in Scotland, there were obvious attendance problems with some students. We read in the 1833 *Minutes* about some students of Divinity who gave "occasional attendance." The Synod wanted this to stop and directed that students were to give "constant attendance" during the four week session.<sup>65</sup> It appears that the session did not always begin the first Wednesday of November, as the 1834 Synod gave the Professor of Divinity liberty to alter the meeting time, provided that it was convenient with the students.<sup>66</sup> As in Scotland, attendance at the annual sessions of the Divinity Hall was not the total extent of the student's education and training. The 1833 Synod Regulations also state: "that the presbyteries shall superintend the students who live within their respective bounds, appointing to them courses of reading, assessing them as to their proficiency, and prescribing to them, and receiving from them, such discourses as may be deemed requisite."<sup>67</sup>

#### (v) Philosophical Course

The Synod of Nova Scotia maintained as much as possible the pattern of having students complete a full College course before commencing their Theological studies.

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<sup>62</sup>Since the Synod *Minutes* did not contain student lists one has to look for other clues. For example, in 1822 McCulloch had eleven students studying divinity and in 1829 in a letter to the Secession Divinity Hall we learn he had nine divinity students, and since on average two or three would be licenced each year, and ordinarily a student would attend the Hall for four years, this allows us to make a fairly accurate statistical average of ten per session. See *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1822* and "Daniel McCurdy and John Baxter, students at the Presbyterian Divinity Hall, Pictou, N. S. to the Students in Glasgow at the Secession Hall, 20 October 1829," *Letterbook*, National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, manuscript CH3/305/2, p.210 and "Thomas McCulloch, Pictou, N. S. to students under Revs. Dick and Mitchell, 14 May 1830," manuscript CH3/305/2, p.224. Also, the 1843 *Minutes* state that year two candidates were licenced. See *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1843*.

<sup>63</sup>*Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1844*.

<sup>64</sup>*Abstract from the Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1844* (n.p.), p.2.

<sup>65</sup>*Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1833*.

<sup>66</sup>*Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1834*.

<sup>67</sup>*Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1833*.

However, as in Scotland, the regulations did not insist upon graduation with a M. A., nor did it preclude doing some of the Arts and Theology consecutively. There was very little change from the tradition of education in Scotland within the Secession. For example, in Rev. McCulloch's 1820 report to Synod, he stated that several men were finishing their Philosophical studies and were ready to enter the study of Divinity.<sup>68</sup> This supports the continuity thesis with the Scottish model. Also, we would expect to find a Synod-appointed Committee making certain that the Arts work was sufficient and of an acceptable standard. Again, we find that the Synod appointed a five-member committee to visit the Academy for the purpose of observing and participating in the student examinations in Philosophy. These examinations were conducted orally, as was the custom of the day, and in the Committee's report back to the Synod they stated that they were "highly pleased." The Committee proposed that this good report should be read from all the pulpits.<sup>69</sup> One senses that such Committee examinations were not only valuable for guarding orthodoxy, but they promoted the Academy's standing in the colonies and served as a challenge to the King's College monopoly.

In 1825, the Synod passed a regulation for students of Divinity that Presbyteries could "if they judge it expedient, admit young men to the study of Divinity though they have not previously attended a course of Natural Philosophy; as condition, however, that they complete their Academical course before they be licensed."<sup>70</sup> This regulation was not far removed from the Secession Church's custom in Scotland, where men often took some of the two courses of study simultaneously. In fact, there is some question as to whether or not this was the case with Thomas McCulloch, whereby he undertook some course work at the University of Glasgow while also attending the Divinity Hall at Whitburn.<sup>71</sup> This was different from lowering the standard by removing the philosophical course altogether. The Presbytery of Truro petitioned the Synod about this matter in 1835, and they made it very clear that they disapproved of licensing any student who had not studied Natural Philosophy.<sup>72</sup> The Synod deferred the petition, probably not because of their disapproval, but because of the crisis over the future existence of the Pictou Academy. Without an institution of philosophical instruction, the existence of the Divinity Hall was jeopardized.

<sup>68</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1820.*

<sup>69</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1821.* See also *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1822*, manuscript MF-7 where Rev. John Keir was appointed to serve on this five-member examining committee. These oral examinations were virtually identical to the famous Blackstone examinations conducted at the University of Glasgow.

<sup>70</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1825.*

<sup>71</sup> See earlier in this chapter footnotes 6 and 8.

<sup>72</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1835.*

### (vi) Mission Work by the Divinity Students

The divinity students in Scotland played a vital role in the expansion and mission of the Secession Church, and we find the Synod of Nova Scotia doing the same. In fact, one almost senses that the Synod had such a pressure upon it to find home missionary preachers that the Synod kept pressure upon McCulloch to quickly turn out men for licensure trials. In 1823, Synod asked McCulloch if any students were ready for licensure because there was a pressing need for “missionary” preachers. McCulloch responded that none of the men were ready yet for licensure.<sup>73</sup> This not only demonstrates the need for a Divinity Hall, but it also shows the link to mission work and the extension of the Secession’s ministry. Two instances may be cited here as examples. In 1827, and 1828, “missionaries” were sent to the Bay of Chaleur area of New Brunswick and Quebec and to the area around Richibucto, New Brunswick. The two men who were sent had just completed their course of studies at the Divinity Hall.<sup>74</sup> The second example again parallels a common theme in Scotland; namely, sending out those students who could preach in Gaelic and encouraging swiftness in licensure. Two students, William Fraser and Alexander McKenzie, both advanced students in the Divinity Hall and both “acquainted with the Gaelic language,” were such students of whom “the commissioners were instructed to take early measures for the licensing of these young men, should they find it to be expedient.”<sup>75</sup>

Three were licensed in June 1824, and George Patterson believed that possibly three others had been licensed in the Autumn of 1823 due to the need for Gaelic preachers in Cape Breton. He concluded this from the 1822 Minutes of Synod where “the Presbytery of Pictou was allowed to license such of the young men, who now attend the Divinity Hall and understand the language, as upon examination and trial they shall find qualified, to go for a few weeks to preach the gospel in some of the destitute Gaelic settlements.”<sup>76</sup> Patterson believed at least two or three were licensed in 1823 and spent the winter in Cape Breton. If such was the case, it does not necessarily mean that they did not return to the Divinity Hall to complete their studies. Since a student could not “preach to a congregation” until licensed, an expediency of licensing students for the Gaelic settlements was needed. This was also common in Scotland. However, it appears the Nova Scotian Synod created a special category of “special license” to authorize a student “whose capacity and progress in study they had tested” could be authorized to preach at a certain place with the understanding that “they should preach only discourses

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<sup>73</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1823. The 1818 Report...for Promoting Religion* (pp.22-23, 30) stressed the need for all ministers to take their turn in doing missionary work in the colonies. It would appear that once students were forthcoming, the burden fell more upon them to do this.

<sup>74</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1828.*

<sup>75</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1832.*

<sup>76</sup> George Patterson, “The First Theological Hall in the British Colonies,” *The Theologue*, Vol. 3:2 (1892), pp.33.

that had been approved either by the Professor or the Presbytery.”<sup>77</sup> These Gaelic students thus may have actually been given “special license” for the Gaelic settlements on Cape Breton only. In the 1850's, we again find reference to “special license” for the third year students to be able to preach, but with the stipulation that they had to complete their fourth year in Divinity before ordination.<sup>78</sup>

It appears that the Synod annually appointed a Committee to oversee the home mission work. This Committee then distributed the preachers amongst the Presbyteries and “in destitute places as they shall deem most expedient.”<sup>79</sup> Unfortunately, we do not have, in the *Minutes*, nor in the *Abstracts*, full lists of names and places assigned.

#### (vii) Directives to Presbyteries

The final matter of particular note from the *Minutes* of the Synod comes from the 1843 “Report of the Committee on the General State of the Church:” a committee of six, consisting of Professor McCulloch, Rev. Keir, Rev. Trotter and Mr. Gammel, Mr. Clarke and Mr. Cameron. The Report was adopted by the Synod and additions were made by the Synod. Several items in the report are related to the students of Divinity and the Presbyteries. There are six sections to the report with the third point being a general exhortation to greater diligence in preparing students for the office of the minister.<sup>80</sup> It certainly appears that it was not directed to Professor McCulloch, but rather to the Presbyteries. When Presbyteries met the “Synod further agreed that in all meetings of Pbties at which Students in Divinity are enjoined to give in their prescribed exercises it shall be the order to receive these exercises before the Pbtly enters upon the consideration of any other business.”<sup>81</sup> Obviously, some Presbyteries were putting the student exercises later on their docket, and this regulation was to correct the problem and ensure that proper time was given to what should be viewed as a high Presbyterian priority – the examination of student discourses. Connected with this resolution was the exhortation to the Presbyteries “to enjoin the students in Divinity...to be punctual in their attendance at the Hall, and to come up in due time and duly prepared, so that they may devote their undivided attention to its exercise.”<sup>82</sup> This resolution no doubt came from McCulloch’s experience with “tardy” students and a need for better Presbyterian involvement.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.33-34.

<sup>78</sup> James McLean, “Our College: – Its History, Its Present Position, and Its Prospects” I. – “The Pictou and West River Period. 1817-1858,” *The Theologue*, Vol. 8:4 (1897), p.104.

<sup>79</sup> *Abstract from the Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, 1843*, (n.p.), p.4. In 1844 this Committee of Missions was made the “Board of Domestic Missions.” See *Abstract from the Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, 1844* (n.p.), p.2.

<sup>80</sup> *Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of N.S., 1843*.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

The other major resolution concerned the actual meeting of the Presbytery and its purpose. Though not directly related to students, indirectly it did relate, as students were expected to attend. This fifth resolution states that the meetings of Presbytery were to stress the mutual improvement of its members and the Synod added three sub-points here:

1. The improvement of the members of the Presbytery by the reading and delivery of essays of discourses on some selected or prescribed subject. The essay or discourse may afterwards become the subject of friendly criticism as according to the discretion of the Pbtly.
2. The improvement of the members of the congregation by inviting them to attend such meetings and by communicating to them interesting and important information on the public affairs of the church with the expectation that by these means they may be induced to take a more lively interest in her prosperity.
3. The personal religious improvement of the members of Presbytery in particular by religious conference and prayer.<sup>83</sup>

All of this was a return to the vision of the old Scottish Exercise. To what extent this 1843 Synod vision became a reality is beyond comment here, but it does place a greater stress on Presbytery as an educational body for on-going ministerial development, "lay-elder" training, and student training.

This 1843 resolution can actually be traced back to one of the earliest printed documents of the Synod. In 1818, the Synod had printed "*The Report of a Committee Appointed by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, To Prepare a Statement of Means for Promoting Religion in the Church, Securing the Permanence of the Church, and Enlarging Its Bounds....*" Amongst other matters this report recommended:

the revival of an obsolete practice, from which the Presbyterian Church in other countries has derived much advantage: that is, that the meetings of Presbyteries be as frequent as possible; and be designed for ministerial improvement, as well as for the direction of the affairs of the Church: and, that each Clergyman in rotation, for the exercise of his talents, receive a subject for discussion, which he shall deliver at next ordinary meeting, subject to the critical remarks of his brethren.<sup>84</sup> (Note, later in the *Report* it reads "criticised by the brethren in private.")<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *The Report of A Committee Appointed by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, to Prepare a Statement of Means for Promoting Religion in the Church, Securing the Permanence of the Church and Enlarging its Bounds, and also The Subsequent Resolutions and Arrangements of the Synod* (Halifax, 1818), pp.8-9. [C.I.H.M. #29125]

<sup>85</sup> *Report...for Promoting Religion*, p.28.

The context of the report is the need for ministers to speak with preparation and with skilful rhetoric. It would appear that many were having to farm or teach school, in addition to the ministry. From reading the *Report* it would appear that this was cause for concern that the standards of preaching would be lowered.<sup>86</sup> Thus, the need was seen to return to the Presbyterian Exercise. It is interesting that this was the theme in 1818 and was still the theme in 1843.

**(viii) Foreign Mission News**

The exchange of student letters between the Secession Hall in Glasgow and the Hall in Pictou highlights two other matters which were important to the development of students for the ministry. One concerns news of the wider church and the world. Waddell and Fraser, writing from Pictou, told the Divinity students under Dick and Mitchell how good it was for them to give them word of missionary news and endeavours.<sup>87</sup> This was 1829, yet we know in the 1830s the Pictou Academy and Hall were keenly aware of missions. Perhaps, in part, it can be traced back to this exchange of letters between the two Halls.<sup>88</sup> The Scottish students were well versed in the work of the London Missionary Society – surely this is the backdrop to the New Hebrides' Mission. The other matter of importance from these letters shows how students in both Halls had similar experiences. For example, in Scotland, probationers or licensed students were constantly sent out itinerating in destitute districts.<sup>89</sup> This was also the case for licentiates in the Synod of Nova Scotia. In Scotland, the students in the Hall formed a Society and in the Nova Scotia Hall we find that they likewise formed a Society called "The Pictou Students Academical Society." It would appear that this Society was more inclusive, as it is not always easy to separate Academy benefits from Hall benefits.<sup>90</sup>

Finally, the old Scottish custom of students of Divinity teaching in schools or tutoring while pursuing their theological studies was occurring for some of the Divinity students in Nova Scotia. Waddel and Blaikie were both teaching in "country schools" while attending their Divinity class.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>*Report...for Promoting Religion*, p.6-7.

<sup>87</sup>"Waddel and Fraser, Pictou to the theology students under Dick and Mitchell, Glasgow, 28 Nov. 1829," manuscript CH3/305/2, p.215.

<sup>88</sup>On John Geddie, a student of the Pictou Academy and the Divinity Hall and missions see R. S. Miller, *Misi Gete: John Geddie Pioneer Missionary to the New Hebrides* (Launceston, Tasmania, 1975) and John G. Paton, *John G. Paton, Missionary to the New Hebrides. An Autobiography* ed. James Paton (New York, 1889), I, pp.103ff.

<sup>89</sup>"Students of the United Secession Divinity Hall, Glasgow, to the Students in Divinity under Dr. McCulloch, Pictou College, N. S., 23 Sept., 1830" *Letterbook*, manuscript CH3/305/2, p.229.

<sup>90</sup>"Waddel and Fraser, Pictou to the theology students under Dick and Mitchell, Glasgow, 28 Nov. 1829," manuscript CH3/305/2, p.213.

<sup>91</sup>"Waddel and Blaikie, Pictou to the divinity students of the United Secession Hall, Glasgow, 19 Nov. 1827," manuscript CH3/305/2, p.180.

### (ix) Pedagogy

As was the case in Scotland in both the Secession and Kirk Presbyteries, students had several Presbytery discourses to complete between each session in the Hall. This remained the case with the Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia (Secessionist). The normal custom was to give assignments to the students at one Presbytery meeting and then to have them carry these through at subsequent meetings. Student Presbytery assignments included homilies (with an assigned text of one verse), Church History chronologies, Greek examinations, and Hebrew examination of a prescribed Psalm or text, doctrinal controversies, popular sermons, theses, exegetical exercises and additions.<sup>92</sup> There is nothing in any of these Presbytery assignments which deviated from what was being done in Scotland. It was reflective of the basic approach to theological education and training which used a Divinity Hall, but also kept the Presbyteries heavily involved. I have not found the use of Latin in these student assignments in Nova Scotia either in Hall or in Presbytery.

### Conclusion

This single case study of the first Presbyterian Divinity Hall in British North America shows that the Scottish Secession Divinity Halls served as models, which Thomas McCulloch transferred to Nova Scotia. Such a model Hall could only function if the philosophical course was first in place, as was the case in Scotland, then attendance at sessions with a solo Professor of Divinity could follow. The Nova Scotian Hall in the 1820s to 1840s continued with a solo Professor, unlike the move to specialization in the United Secession Hall, which had begun in the mid-1820s in Scotland. In Nova Scotia, this was not so much due to philosophical convictions, but because of the pragmatic shortage of ministers, and the fact that none could serve as a second Professor. However, by the late 1840s the situation was beginning to change and the staffing of the Hall was likewise changed.

The pedagogical methods used were the same as in Scotland and over time so was the move to annual sessions, but not initially. There is no evidence to show that McCulloch departed from the traditional theological emphases in the Secession Halls; rather he appears to have followed a consistent and steady course in that regard and reflects an entrenched conservatism.

The work of the Presbyteries was critical in this case study: the large number of assignments which each student did, the exercise-like meetings, and, the shortness of the annual session in the Divinity Hall highlights a continuity with Scotland.

The links with Scotland *via* societies, student exchanges and synod exchanges can be well documented to show that an intimate contact was maintained between the two countries. The Nova Scotia Presbyterian Church (Secessionist) Synod *Minutes* reveal

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<sup>92</sup>Sheldon MacKenzie provides in one chapter, "Role of Presbytery in the Curriculum" an excellent overview of the role of presbytery in educating and training divinity students chiefly between the years 1848 and 1858. These assignments had all been in place during Professor McCulloch's time, as well as evidenced by Synod's 1843 reminder that all student exercises were to be done before a presbytery transacted other business when they met. MacKenzie, *Gathered by the River*, pp.63-77, 98-173.

very little that is distinctive from that of Scotland. The only exception would be that of the Theological Endowment Fund, which for all practical purposes did not have any success. McCulloch combined his work as Professor of Divinity with his work in the Philosophical division of Pictou Academy, as well as the Harbour Church. He resigned from the Harbour Church in 1824 and later became the President of Dalhousie College. Pluralities were a way of life for Secession Professors of Divinity whether in Scotland, Ireland or Nova Scotia through the 1840s. The only exception was George Paxton. Perhaps this maintained the strong church attachment and created an ethos in these Halls not as Academic Institutes of Theology, but as ministerial educational centres. That model was maintained in Nova Scotia from 1820 to 1843.

### Conclusion

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<sup>32</sup> Sheldon Mackenzie provides in one chapter, "Role of Presbytery in the Curriculum," an excellent overview of the role of presbytery in education and training divinity students chiefly between the years 1843 and 1858. These assignments had all been in place during Professor McCulloch's time, as well as evidenced by Synod's 1843 minutes that all student exercises were to be done before a presbytery. He noted other business when they met. Mackenzie, *Gathered by the River*, pp. 63-77, 98-113.

## THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY:

### Minutes of the Annual Meeting, Knox College, Toronto, 28 September 2002:

The meeting was Called to Order by the Chairman, Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston, at 2pm. The Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Michael Millar, acted as Secretary for the meeting. Thirty members were present.

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all who were present. He noted that this was the best attendance at a meeting that he could recall in his many years of involvement with the Society. He indicated that this would be his final meeting as Chairman and that a nomination for his successor would be brought forward later in the meeting.

The Chairman then called upon the Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Michael Millar, to present his report. A copy of his report is appended to these minutes.

Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Ms. Kim Arnold "That the report of the Secretary-Treasurer be received and its recommendations considered, seriatim." Carried.

Note: All recommendations moved by the Secretary-Treasurer and seconded by Ms. Arnold.

Recommendation 1. That the Financial Statement, as presented, be approved.

Following amplification by the Secretary-Treasurer on various points contained in the report, the recommendation was approved.

The meeting last year directed that one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) be taken from our bank account and be invested in a G. I. C. This was done with the Bank of Montreal at a rate of 1.3%. This instrument will mature on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2002.

Recommendation 2. That when this G. I. C. matures that it be re-invested in another one year G. I. C. at the best obtainable rate of interest. Carried.

Re United States and Foreign subscriptions.

Recommendation 3. That the subscription rate for individual and corporate subscribers in the United States be set at either fifteen dollars in United States funds (US\$15.00), or twenty dollars in Canadian Funds (CDN\$20.00). Carried.

Recommendation 4. That the subscription rate for overseas individual and corporate subscribers be set at either twenty dollars in United States funds (US\$20.00), or twenty-five dollars in Canadian Funds (CDN\$25.00). Carried.

Re advertising in The Presbyterian Record.

Recommendation 5. That a similar advertisement be placed each year in the September issue of the Presbyterian Record at a cost not to exceed two hundred and fifty dollars (250.00).

Following discussion on the timing of the advertisement, the mover and seconder agreed to change September to July-August. With this change the recommendation was Carried.

Re Membership Drive.

Recommendation 6. That the Secretary-Treasurer and Ms. Arnold be allowed a budget not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00) to continue this campaign. Budget to be used for additional postage and other incidental expenses. Carried.

Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Ms. Arnold "That the Report as a whole be approved." Carried.

A discussion took place on the feasibility of providing a list of papers and precis of the contents to anyone who desires one – the Secretary-Treasurer indicating that he had received two requests for this information. Moved by Mr. Tom Allen, seconded by Mr. Al Clarkson "That the list of Papers and abstracts thereof be put on the National Presbyterian Museum website." Carried.

Meeting next year. It was agreed that the next regular meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2003 at Knox College, University of Toronto, registration at 9:00am, presentation of Papers to commence at 10:00am, Annual General Meeting at 2:00pm.

The feasibility of holding an additional meeting in Pictou, Nova Scotia, in recognition of the two hundredth anniversary of the arrival there of Rev. Thomas McCulloch in the Autumn of 1803, was discussed. Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by the Rev. Ernest Nix "That we hold an additional meeting next year in Pictou, Nova Scotia, the Secretary-Treasurer to make the necessary arrangements." Carried.

In the absence of the Editor, the Chairman presented his report.

Election of Officers for 2002 – 2003.

Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Dr. John Moir "That the Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Johnston be elected Chairman." Carried.

Duly moved and seconded that Dr. David Elliott be continued as Editor and that Mr. Michael Millar be continued as Secretary-Treasurer. Carried. Several expressions of appreciation were given to the retiring Chairman, Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston, for all of his work on behalf of the Society over the course of the past several years. The Executive was then thanked with a round of applause.

It was further agreed that the Past-Chairman, the Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston, continue to be one of the signing officers for the Society. These will be Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Johnston, Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston and Mr. Michael Millar – any two of the three to sign.

There being no further business, the Annual General Meeting terminated at 2:40pm and the regular business of the Society continued.

John A. Johnston, MA, BD, Ph.D, DD.  
President.

Michael Millar, FRPSC.  
Secretary-Treasurer.

## THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY:

### Report to the membership for the 2002 Annual General Meeting:

The number of active members currently stands at forty-six (46). Corporate, or Institutional, supporters currently stands at eleven (11). However one of these, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, has asked that they be removed from our mailing list. No reason was given.

As will be noted from the attached Financial Report our finances are in good shape. No increase in dues for Canadian members is warranted at this time.

### Recommendation 1. That the Financial Statement, as presented, be approved.

The meeting last year directed that one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) be taken from our bank account and be invested in a G. I. C. This was done with the Bank of Montreal at a rate of 1.3%. This instrument will mature on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2002.

### Recommendation 2. That when this G. I. C. matures that it be re-invested in another one year G. I. C. at the best obtainable rate of interest.

At present we only have the one subscription rate regardless of whether subscribers are situated in Canada or not. Because of the prevailing rate of exchange as well as higher mailing charges to addresses outside Canada, the following two recommendations are made:-

### Recommendation 3. That the subscription rate for individual and corporate subscribers in the United States be set at either fifteen dollars in United States funds (US\$15.00), or twenty dollars in Canadian Funds (CDN\$20.00).

### Recommendation 4. That the subscription rate for overseas individual and corporate subscribers be set at either twenty dollars in United States funds (US\$20.00), or twenty-five dollars in Canadian Funds (CDN\$25.00).

The meeting last year directed that an advertisement on behalf of the Society be taken out in an issue of the Presbyterian Record. This advertisement appeared in the September 2002 of the "Record." We have already received four (4) new members as a result of this ad.

### Recommendation 5. That a similar advertisement be placed each year in the September issue of the Presbyterian Record at a cost not to exceed two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00).

Membership Drive. The Secretary-Treasurer and Ms. Arnold have been working on a campaign to increase our membership. Ms. Arnold is in the process of sending a mailing to all university libraries in Canada who are not already on our subscribers list. The Secretary-Treasurer sent out a mailing in mid-August to all Presbytery Clerks to outline the aims and objectives of the Society, to announce the upcoming meeting and to ask that this information be circulated to all of the congregations within their bounds.

### Recommendation 6. That the Secretary-Treasurer and Ms. Arnold be allowed a budget not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00) to continue this campaign. Budget to be used for additional postage and other incidental expenses.

Respectfully submitted.

Michael Millar, FRPSC,  
Secretary-Treasurer.

# THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY

## FINANCIAL REPORT - September 2002:

<u>Item:</u>	<u>Income:</u>	<u>Expenses:</u>	<u>Balance:</u>
<b>Balance forward 28 September 2001:</b>			<b>2309.79</b>
Memberships 2001 and 2002.	610.00		
Memberships 2003 paid in advance (2)	30.00		
Corporate memberships 2000, 2001 and 2002.	300.00		
Sale of papers.	70.00		
Donations.	250.00		
Bank Interest.	0.72		
John Moir dinner subscriptions.	225.00		
<b><u>Total Income.</u></b>	<b><u>1,485.72</u></b>		<b><u>1,485.72</u></b>
<b><u>Sub-total.</u></b>			<b><u>3,795.51</u></b>
G.I.C. maturing 6 November 2002. (1)	1,000.00		
Knox College Catering, 2001 meeting.	69.06		
Printing costs - 2001 papers.	311.42		
Office supplies.	128.76		
Postage.	213.83		
Bus parcel charges - 2001 papers.	21.24		
Mileage - Editor.	39.25		
Knox College Catering, balance re Moir dinner.	545.31		
Expenses - President.	24.11		
Photocopying.	20.00		
Advertising - Presbyterian Record. (2)	176.55		
<b><u>Total Expenses.</u></b>	<b><u>2,549.53</u></b>		<b><u>2,549.53</u></b>
<b><u>Balance Forward 28 September 2002:</u></b>			<b><u>1,245.98</u></b>
<b><u>ASSET:</u></b> G.I.C. maturing 6 November 2002.			<b>1,000.00</b>
<b><u>Total - Bank balance plus GIC.</u></b>			<b><u>\$2,245.98</u></b>

### Notes:

1. GIC is with the Bank of Montreal, Barrie. Interest is at 1.3%.
2. The meeting last year agreed to spend up to \$200.00 on an advertisement in the Record. The advertisement ran in the September 2002 issue.

Michael Millar, FRPSC.  
Secretary-Treasurer.

MEMO TO THE MEMBERSHIP:

With reference to Recommendation 2 that the One Thousand Dollars (\$1000.00) G. I. C. be reinvested upon maturity in a similar financial instrument at the best obtainable rate of interest, I can report as follows:

We have a another one-year Redeemable G. I. C. in the amount of One Thousand Dollars (\$1000.00), taken out on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2002, maturing on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2003, at a rate of 1.5% interest, 0.2% better than last year. The advantage of a Redeemable G. I. C. is that if interest rates do go up this G. I. C. can be rolled over into one which is paying a higher rate of interest.

Interest received on the matured G. I. C. amounted to Thirteen dollars and Two cents (\$13.02). Had this One Thousand Dollars (\$1000.00) remained in our bank account it might have earned the Society fifty to sixty cents (.50 - .60¢).

Again, for security purposes I have deposited the G. I. C. certificate in my safety deposit box at my bank in Barrie, Ontario.

Respectfully submitted.

Michael Millar, FRPSC.  
Secretary Treasurer.

19 November 2002.

