



**The
Canadian
Society of
Presbyterian History**

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Message from the President

After holding two meetings in 2003, the Society had a relatively quiet year in 2004. The regular meeting was held in Knox College, Toronto with the usual menu of excellent papers.

During the business part of the meeting we again discussed the proposal to publish the "best of CSPH." Investigations during the year had indicated that producing a printed version would be difficult and expensive, and the Society decided instead to prepare an electronic edition. John Johnston, Donald MacLeod and myself were appointed a committee to make the selection and organize the "publication." We hope to report significant progress at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held in the Presbyterian Museum, St John's Presbyterian Church, Toronto on September 24th, 2005. The museum is a new creation, in large part the work of our past president, Dr John A. Johnston. By meeting there we will be able to taste Presbyterian history, not just in words, but, so to speak in the flesh.

We still have space for papers on our agenda, so if anyone has something in hand please let me know at the address below.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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“Gladdening the Wilderness”: The Importance of Parson Drone in Thomas McCulloch’s Literary Writing

by

Gwendolyn Davies

According to T.J. Gorringer the village can be a construction marked not only by physical proximity” but also by “face to face contact and by gossip.”¹ These characteristics were highlighted on 22 December 1821 when a candid series of letters signed Mephibosheth Stepsure began to appear in the *Acadian Recorder* of Halifax describing the comings and goings of the writer’s neighbours in “our town,” Nova Scotia. By the time the letters had reached the conclusion of their second series on the 29 March 1823, Stepsure had fastidiously exposed his fellow Nova Scotians as “a bustling, bargaining, running-about sort of folks”² whose greatest intimacy lay not in sharing the bounty of the harvest but in common detention by the local sheriff. Ironically, he had also revealed himself to be a gossipy, self-congratulatory moralist, as intent on his own ego-gratification as on the welfare of his fellow townsmen.

The double-edged satire in the *Stepsure Letters* could not have been more timely. During his tenure as Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia from 1816 to 1820, Lord Dalhousie had expressed concern about wasted farming opportunities in the province, and contemporary writers such as “Agricola” (John Young), Joseph Howe, and Thomas Chandler Haliburton were to elaborate on this theme. However, none of them gave life to their message as forcibly and as colorfully as did McCulloch’s “Stepsure.” Focused on finding wealth in one’s own cabbage patch, “Stepsure” also preached the virtues of living frugally, educating the mind, serving the family, and honouring the church. His endorsement of hard work and his conviction that “Everyman who works for his neighbour knows time to be money”³ sounded a note not dissimilar to Benjamin

¹ T.J. Gorringer, *Theology of the Built Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.166.

² Thomas McCulloch, *The Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters*, ed. Gwendolyn Davies (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990), p.38. All future references will be to this edition.

³ McCulloch, *Stepsure*, p.143.

Franklin's maxims on frugality.⁴ Both authors were masters of dry understatement and both had a keen eye for human idiosyncrasy, but the deliberate style and archly worded earthiness of McCulloch's "Stepsure" created a tone somewhat subtler than that of Franklin's better known personae (for example, "Stepsure's" representation of house frontages streaked by the emptying of chamber pots is one of many illustrations indicating that "To be genteel in the country, is attended with difficulties and losses of which you townsfolks can have no conception.")⁵

Moreover, while McCulloch could frame an axiom as adeptly as could Franklin or the Nova Scotian writer, Thomas Chandler Haliburton, he went beyond them in exploring the psychology leading to his neighbours' downfall ("Large wants very injudiciously keep company with little credit").⁶ Whereas the effect of Haliburton's 1835 Sam Slick sketches was to dazzle the reader by their exuberance of language and audacity of characterization, the effect of the *Stepsure Letters* was to provide thoughtful, if predictable, reasons for Nova Scotia's decline and fall.⁷ That they struck a chord is illustrated not only in McCulloch's inability to find unthumbed copies to send home to friends in Scotland,⁸ but also in the comment of the *Acadian Recorder* on the day that the first series concluded: "They have painted with such inimitable truth the thoughtless, luxurious, and extravagant habits of our population; that we see ourselves as in a mirror, reflected back in them . . . The correction of these follies must be the first step in the augmentation of the provincial capital; and the severe satires, which are directed against them in the letters of our correspondent, cannot fail to produce a certain effect."⁹ As McCulloch explained in a letter to his Glasgow friend, the Reverend John Mitchell, in November 1822 when he was planning to send the sketches to Scotland for publication as *The Chronicles of Our Town . . . Or A Peep at America*: "No writing [in] these provinces ever occasioned so much talk. Almost every one who read them was angry in his turn and by and by laughed at his neighbour. One of the Judges told me that he believed our Governor had [memorized] them by heart."¹⁰

At the core of the sketches, as critic Northrop Frye has noted, is a low key, ironic humour more intent on creating a standard of living than on raising it.¹¹ McCulloch has not been discussed as a literary contemporary of Jane Austen, but the two writers --

⁴ H. Northrop Frye, "Introduction" to Thomas McCulloch, *The Stepsure Letters* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, NCL No. 16, 1960), p.viii. Frye talks of Haliburton's having the proverbial style of Franklin.

⁵ McCulloch, *Stepsure*, p.13.

⁶ McCulloch, *Stepsure*, p.26. See also Frye, p.vii.

⁷ Frye, p.vii.

⁸ Thomas McCulloch to John Mitchell, 10 November 1822, McCulloch Papers, MG1, Vol. 553, No. 18, Archives and Record Management of Nova Scotia, Halifax (ARMNS)

⁹ *The Acadian Recorder*, 11 May 1822, [p.3].

¹⁰ McCulloch to Mitchell, 10 November 1822.

¹¹ Frye, p.vii.

parsonage inspired, rural based, and Enlightenment-educated -- are not dissimilar in their interest in defining "proper moral behavior in the face of a largely immoral world."¹² Nor can they escape the economic realities driving community evolution. For this reason, McCulloch's "Stepsure" celebrates Parson Drone as an exemplar who, when he "came amongst us . . . tried to persuade us, I remember, that the property of the town at that time could not make us all wealthy; and, therefore, that if we would all be rich; we must, by labour, add as much to its value, as would enrich us all."¹³ Drone's vision is rejected by his fellow townsfolk who privilege individualistic trading in "watches, old horses, & other kinds of truck"¹⁴ over the cultivation of communal values. They also ignore his admonition that when a towns-fellow is "striving to leave a farm worthy of his son, he should take care to leave a son worthy of his farm."¹⁵

"Stepsure" endorses Drone's core philosophy, dryly making the point that he is not like "Robinson Crusoe, cast upon a desolate island" but is "in the midst of neighbours who kindly spent a great part of their time, in preventing one another from being lonely."¹⁶ In spite of "Stepsure's" denigration of those who ignore their farms, McCulloch, as does Jane Austen, encourages neighbourliness as an ideal. For that reason, "Stepsure" valorizes his mentor and boyhood rescuer, Squire Worthy, a stock literary figure in eighteenth-century and Regency novels, who "instead of trafficking in writs for the sake of the fees, was the peace maker of the town. When neighbours quarrelled and threatened to sue each other; Squire Worthy, instead of sending the constable, used to get upon his horse and visit them; and somehow, by good natured remonstrances, for he was a very good natured man, he generally prevailed upon them to cease from strife. In short, he had been made a magistrate, because our governor at that time knew him to be a good man and likely to do good, not by dealing out law, but by promoting good neighbourhood."¹⁷

While the non-urban and Enlightenment backgrounds of Austen and McCulloch may well have created a mutually-sympathetic approach to the moral and economic emphases of their rural neighbourhoods, what stands out most significantly about McCulloch's *Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters* is the sense that, despite deviations from the desired norm, there still remain fundamental manifestations of human decency, moral responsibility, and spiritual purpose in "our town." Whereas Thomas Chandler Haliburton's 1835 Sam Slick sketches advocate ambition, individualism, and the exploitation of industrial opportunities, McCulloch's *Stepsure Letters* are about building a community around the spiritual integrity potentially informing every life. To this end, he begins the *Stepsure Letters* with Parson Drone, and, it is the clergyman figure, or his

¹² Alistair M. Duckworth, *The Improvement of the Estate: A Study of Jane Austen's Novels* (Baltimore & London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), pp.91-2.

¹³ McCulloch, *Stepsure*, p.28.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.29.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.76.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.96.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.86.

surrogate, the faithful Covenanter, often ignored, merely tolerated, or even persecuted, who emerges from the *The Mephibosheth Letters* (“The Chronicles of Our Town”) and the Parson Drone sketches of the *Halifax Journal* and the *Acadian Recorder* as a representative figure around whom the community and the reader should coalesce. Whereas Haliburton’s the Reverend Mr. Hopewell remains a foil figure to Sam Slick throughout the many versions of Sam’s escapades, McCulloch’s faithful clergyman figure, Parson Drone, steps forth from his fiction as a modest moral exemplar for readers.

On initial reading, Parson Drone might not seem to assume such importance in the *Stepsure Letters*. The elderly clergyman is prone, as we learn in the first few lines of Letter 1, to meet every exigency with a “standard consolation:” “What can’t be cured, must be endured: let us have patience.”¹⁸ The result is that, although “our townsmen respect him,” they have “little to give but good wishes.”¹⁹ Therefore, Parson Drone has passed his life “between preaching and starving,” and, although a good man (“except when he is angry, [he] is very good natured”),²⁰ he initially seems to the reader to be as ineffectual as are the rest of “Stepsure’s” neighbours.

However, the importance that McCulloch gives Parson Drone in developing the social and moral centre of the “Stepsure” sketches emerges incrementally, often through “Stepsure’s” memories of the clergyman since “the parson first came among us” as “a brisk young gentleman” preaching “upon a great variety of subjects.”²¹ It is Parson Drone’s lot in the sketches to try to impress upon his tipping congregation the negative impact of drinking upon children,²² to remind municipal authorities that they must be “guardians of good order,”²³ and to convince his neighbours that “Time stands in relation to eternity. The duties of this life, also, are a step to a better; and he who neglects them, neglects both body and soul.”²⁴ He is also the vehicle for emphasizing the importance of reading and education as essential foundations of a civil society. To this end, Parson Drone founds a library in “our town,” is comforted in his own life by his reading “of the old Scotch and English divines,”²⁵ and, in conversation with “the stranger” in Letter 5, introduces the names of “Adam Smith, Ricardo, Du Say, and the French Economists” as key economic theorists who have influenced the times.²⁶ T.M. Devine has commented on

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.11.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.24.

²² *Ibid.*, p.34

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.39.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.52.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.56. Adam Smith’s ideas on political economy in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) influenced David Ricardo (1772-1823) and Jean-Baptiste Say (1767-1832), two leading economists in McCulloch’s lifetime. The “French Economists” or *Économistes* included amongst their views that land was the single source of wealth. As such, proprietors and cultivators were seen as the

the “high levels of reading literacy in many parts of Lowland Scotland in the eighteenth century,”²⁷ and, although Drone’s Scottish antecedents are not emphasized in the *Stepsure Letters*, he projects this background into his observation “that an inclination to read, is an incalculable gain” providing not only “information and enjoyment” but also “those sober and steady habits which constitute character, and qualify persons for the duties of the social life.”²⁸

Nowhere is Drone’s importance as a social and moral exemplar in the sketches more consistently illustrated than in his recurring reference to the importance of “home” as a foundation of family and community well-being. Although often linked to “Stepsure’s” valorization of his own wife Dorothy, Drone’s philosophizing on the importance of congenial marriage, uxorial respect, domestic responsibility, and making “a house a *home*”²⁹ unifies the sketches. In this context, his message conforms to the social norms of his day. As Marilyn Yalom has pointed out in *A History of the Wife*, eighteenth-century American, wifehood was still very much constructed around three basic identities: wife as “sexual and emotional partner,” wife as mother; and wife as “housekeeper, with daily duties that consumed most of her energy.”³⁰

Although the *Stepsure Letters* began to appear in the *Acadian Recorder* in a slightly post-eighteenth century period (1821), it is clear from Parson Drone’s admonitions to his congregation that he sees the construction of the female role in traditional eighteenth-century terms. Wives, he sermonizes, should perform “domestic labours” while their husbands toil in the fields. They have the “duty of sweetening his toil and soothing his sorrow.”³¹ Thus, they become “keepers” and “guides” of the household, practicing an economy whose “first care is the solid and permanent comforts of domestic life.”³² As does “Stepsure,” Parson Drone castigates the wife who puts sartorial finery before economy, noting that “To your elegant appearance and feasting, as far as they are consistent with a Christian deportment, I do not object. But, surely, for the sake of fine clothes and frolicking, either to involve your husbands in debt, or to be deprived of the real comforts of life during the greater part of the year, discovers a disregard of domestic happiness, which cannot fail to produce ill doing husbands and wretched wives.”³³

That the wives of the congregation find convenient excuse to physically escape the parson’s sermon says much about the ineffectiveness of Drone’s advice. However, the

productive members of society. Drone’s inclusion of these references suggests the role that he plays in the sketches in reinforcing McCulloch’s approach to creating a strong rural economy in Nova Scotia.

²⁷ T.M. Devine, *Scotland’s Empire: 1600-1815* (London: Penguin, 2004), p.146.

²⁸ McCulloch, *Stepsure*, p.93.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.157.

³⁰ Marilyn Yalom, *A History of the Wife* (New York: Perennial [Harper Collins]), 2002, p.146.

³¹ McCulloch, *Stepsure*, p.140.

³² *Ibid.*, pp.140-41.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.141.

confrontation between a domestically-based homespun economy and a market economy emerges consistently in McCulloch's sketches, especially in cases studies such as that of the Gosling family where Polly goes to Halifax to see the fashions, the girls learn to paint china instead of doing domestic chores, and "morning visits in the afternoon, dressing, and other things, interfere so often with rural industry, that great show and sad accidents are usually combined."³⁴ As much as McCulloch's surrogate is Mephibosheth himself in such illustrations, Drone strikes a typical note in Letter 13 when he directs his parishioners' back to nature, both metaphorically and metaphysically:

This and this only, will gladden the wilderness and solitary place, will make the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose. Do you wish the excellency of Carmel and Sharon to adorn your fields? Arouse activity to labour; and then, in the restoration of beauty and fruitfulness to the face of nature, and in the return of rational and religious enjoyment to your home, you shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God.³⁵

If Drone periodically brings such moments of spiritual depth to the comic text of *The Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters*, he also helps to sustain the tone of double-edged satire in the sketches by providing McCulloch with a lovable but ineffectual example of how church and colonists are failing to intersect. As Marjory Harper has pointed out in *Adventurers & Exiles: The Great Scottish Exodus*, "Clergymen were often seen as the keystones of emigrant communities."³⁶ To that end, when a witness to Scotland's select committee into emigration was asked in 1841 "whether Highland emigrants to Canada should be accompanied by a clergyman," the answer was instructive:

I deem this of the utmost importance . . . nothing tends so much to keep a community of persons going to a strange land together, as having some one person of superior intelligence, prudence, and benevolence among them, who being possessed of their confidence and respect, they can look up to as their adviser and friend, and who by his counsel and example will encourage them to persevere in overcoming difficulties which without such advice and encouragement they might regard as insurmountable. A clergyman is evidently the person most likely to answer these purposes.³⁷

In the *Stepsure Letters*, McCulloch portrays Drone as possessing these exemplary qualities. Like the archetypal clergyman in the select committee report, Drone is a "person of superior intelligence, prudence, and benevolence" who enjoys the "confidence and respect" of his parishioners as both "adviser and friend." Nonetheless, in

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.13.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.139.

³⁶ Marjory Harper, *Adventurers & Exiles: The Great Scottish Exodus* (London: Profile Books, 2003), p.338.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

McCulloch's fictional immigrant town, individualism dominates over respect. "Our minister Maister Drone is a troo frien' to the cause," writes Highland immigrant Saunders Scantocreesh in a fictional letter to *The Acadian Recorder* in 1822," but the onest man, atween gangrels intrudin' into the office unsent, and his ain poverty, is sair ha'den don."³⁸ The discrepancy between idealism and practice is further reinforced by Scantocreesh's conjuring in the *Stepsure Letters* the memory of the "persecuting times" and the Scotch Worthies who wandered "among moors and mosses."³⁹ The contrast between their selflessness and the townsfolk's self-interest reinforces the current fall from grace:

They dinna lay duly to heart how mony drunkards they are helpin' to mak. Our minister Maister Drone has aften tauld them, "That the vices which they patronize, are marked as theirs in the book of remembrance; and that the groanings of wretchedness from every part of the town, have ascended on high, and, with irresistible supplication against them, press into the presence of that Being who declares justice and judgment to be the habitation of his throne." But our magestrats think themsels a' great men and dinna care a snuff o' tobacco for what the minister says.⁴⁰

Although McCulloch clearly designed Drone as a secondary character in the *Stepsure Letters*, it is perhaps not surprising that his spiritual importance and his personal genuineness caught the imagination of both the public and McCulloch himself. Since the late eighteenth century, the clergyman figure had emerged as a popular literary type in novels such as Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), and John Galt's *Annals of the Parish* (1822). Perhaps because of this context, Parson Drone began to assume a second literary life after the *Stepsure Letters*.

On May 6 and May 15, 1822, Abishai, supposedly a correspondent to *The Halifax Journal*, began to quote from and review a book entitled *Parson Drone's Sermons* purportedly published in Antigonish in 1821 and selling for 10s. 6d. These mock reviews and their accompanying "excerpts" appeared in the context of a fictional literary journal, *The Ramshag Review*, discussed earlier by Abishai in *The Halifax Journal* on 29 April 1822, in what is an ironic send-up of serious British periodicals such as *The Edinburgh Review* and *The Quarterly* (British rivals to which Abishai compares *The Ramshag Review*).

Although there is no evidence that Abishai is actually McCulloch, there is much in the style of the writing to suggest either McCulloch himself or a clever McCulloch imitator. For example, comic inversions such as "as man cannot be altogether good, that is no reason, why he should be altogether bad" in *The Ramshag Review* sound very like McCulloch's "except when he is angry, [he] is very good natured" in *The Stepsure Letters*.⁴¹ Similarities in the comic relationship between narrator and editor, the mock self

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.222-23.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.58.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.222-23.

⁴¹ "For The Halifax Journal, No. 1V," *The Halifax Journal* (29 April 1822), p.2.

deprecation of the narrator, and the slapstick interplay of characters reinforce the stylistic parallels between *The Ramshag Review* sketch and the *Stepsure Letters*. And the list of books waiting to be reviewed by *The Ramshag Review* suggests, in its impish inclusions, the kind of word play, comic type names, and juxtaposition of incongruities that McCulloch exploited for effect in the *Stepsure Letters* (for example, *An Essay on Sliding Down Icy Hills on Corduroy Breeches*, by Jedediah Freebottom, Gent., in 3 volumes and *An Elucidation of Scots Poetry* by Watty Landells and Dick the Bardie, 1 volume, published in Halifax in 1820).

Adding to the possibility of McCulloch's authorship is the not-so-subtle connection that Mephibosheth in the *Stepsure Letters* and Abishai in *The Ramshag Review* sketches both take their names from 2nd Samuel in the Bible and are affiliated with King David. Furthermore, as Dr. William B. Hamilton of Mount Allison University has pointed out, Ramsheg was the early name of Wallace, Nova Scotia, a shore-line community not unknown to McCulloch's Pictou and the site of another Secessionist congregation.⁴² Finally, the reviewer of Parson Drone's sermons elaborates on themes already developed in the *Stepsure Letters*. The "people of this land," notes Abishai, are "a bartering, trading race," marked amongst the young by "sinful lusts" and amongst the elderly by "avarice." "That a reformed protestant land should be in such a state of ungodliness and unregeneracy," he adds, "is most lamentable, especially a land peopled, very generally, with slips from the great tree of the Covenant."⁴³ Sounding very much like Saunders Scantocreesh from the *Stepsure Letters*, Abishai further laments that

But as this is the woeful day of indiscriminate toleration, and the established Kirk of Scotland as it now calls itself, is fast running into prelacy, we can perceive no better means to keep alive true Christianity than for us, the descendants of those who in so Godly a manner, for conscience sake, saw fit to secede from that establishment, before the Day of Wrath, to persist, without heart shrinking in encouraging those Godly ministers of the gospel, who labour in the vineyard, in the good old way of our fathers, not by fine moral discourses, composed like essays for a book, and with more attention to the style than the matter, but by local stirring sermons, concerning man's original disposition to sin, and his utter inability to work out his salvation by his own works.⁴⁴

For all these reasons, Abishai embraces Parson Drone's book of eighteen sermons and six lectures as an agent in restoring "this backsliding generation to something like what Presbyterians once were." The remainder of his "review" sustains that stance, quoting, summarizing, and reiterating his opinions on the ungodliness of the times. In the

⁴² I am indebted to my former Mount Allison University colleague, Dr. William B. Hamilton, for pointing out to me that Ramsheg was the early name of Wallace, Nova Scotia, where there was a Secessionist congregation. The presence of this congregation, and the relative proximity of Pictou to Wallace, encourages suspicions of McCulloch's authorship.

⁴³ Abishai, "For The Halifax Journal: Parson Drone's Sermons," *The Halifax Journal*, 6 May 1822, p.2, cols. 1-3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

process, the Parson Drone figure is portrayed in both scholarly and slightly unworldly roles in the 1822 *Ramshag Review* sketches, reinforcing the impressions of Drone that were appearing concurrently in the *Stepsure Letters* in the *Acadian Recorder*.

While the 1822 Abishai sketches on Drone develop aspects of his human strength and frailty, the “Timothy Ticklemup” letter on the minister published in the *Acadian Recorder*, 6 April 1833, resonates with sadder nuances. On Thomas McCulloch’s surviving personal copy of the newspaper containing the “Timothy Ticklemup” sketch, one of the McCulloch children has written “Father” as a confirmation of McCulloch’s authorship. The content of the letter brings Drone’s tale full circle. Whereas the *Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters* established Drone’s centrality to McCulloch’s spiritual message in “our town,” the Timothy Ticklemup sketch situates the Reverend Theophilus Drone in a heritage of Scottish rurality, in particular linking him through his mother’s family to Jenny Geddes and the reformation of the Kirk of Scotland.⁴⁵ Ticklemup’s sketch explains the split within the church-house of Drone’s own family. One brother enters the ministry of the episcopate, and the other, Parson Drone, emigrates to “our town” in Nova Scotia as a secessionist Presbyterian clergyman. Therefore, the Drones demonstrate on a family level the religious differences that afflict the spiritual life of McCulloch’s fictional community. When this church divisiveness is enhanced, as it were, by the inclination of the townsfolk to privilege and personal monetary gain over spiritual values, the result, as McCulloch has revealed in the *Stepsure Letters*, is not only the diminution of church influence, but also the potential demise of the church as a relevant social force.

Thus, when Drone arrives in “our town” in the Timothy Ticklemup sketch, only to be greeted by a ragged, pipe-smoking Trot who tells him that the youngsters are off watching Jack Scorem and Swap fight over a couple of gallons of rum, he has found himself not in the Celestial City but in Vanity Fair. The Timothy Ticklemup sketch therefore precedes the *Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters* in chronological if not publication time, laying the foundation, so to speak, of the church and the challenge that Drone must address throughout “Stepsure’s” narration of the chronicles of “our town.” It is doubly dispiriting, therefore, that at the end of the sketch, after forty-six years of Drone’s attempting to develop the church in the community, that Timothy Ticklemup concludes with the line: “With respect to the parson, I need say nothing: you already know how we have all been exerting ourselves to soothe him in his declining days.” Only after the reader notes Ticklemup’s public position under his signature – “Overseer of the Poor” – does the full import of the sketch’s bleakness emerge in this 1833 sequel to the *Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters*. If the *Stepsure Letters*, as satire is intended to do, were to effect social and moral change after their 1821-23 publication, surely their sequel, the Timothy Ticklemup sketch, reveals how, by 1833, McCulloch felt that they had had little impact on the moral directions of “our town.” Thus, the satire of the *Stepsure Letters* is clearly darkened by relegating to the poorhouse the symbolic spiritual centre of McCulloch’s book. When the aged Drone dies, the last spiritual rudder of the town will die, and moral aimlessness will prevail.

The loss of a sense of fictional fun in the Timothy Ticklemup sketch came at a time when McCulloch also seemed to be turning more reflectively to the novel form as a way

⁴⁵ Timothy Ticklemup, “For the Recorder: Mr. Holland,” *Acadian Recorder*, 6 April 1833, McCulloch Papers, MG1, Vol. 550, #84, ARMNS.

of valorizing the Covenanter ancestors whom he venerated, including, in his view, that modern reincarnation of the Covenanters amongst them, the Reverend James MacGregor. The synergy between the religious courage of the Scottish Covenanters in “the killing times” and the challenges faced by MacGregor in the colonial settlement conditions of Nova Scotia sufficiently impressed itself upon McCulloch to bring the memory of “the killing times” into his New World tale of “Morton” even though it is set in Nova Scotia in the early nineteenth century. In the clergy figure of James MacGregor in “Morton,” McCulloch created a symbol of piety and simplicity so evocative of seventeenth-century Covenanter sacrifice that his voice and actions stood as bulwarks against the wilderness of the spirit encountered by McCulloch’s characters. However, “Morton” and McCulloch’s unfinished four-hundred page novel, the *Days of the Covenant*, did not find favour with his publisher, Oliphant’s, in Scotland, and the two works remained unpublished. By 18 July 1834, McCulloch had written to John Mitchell in Glasgow that he was done with “publishing applications.”⁴⁶ Thus, Parson Drone stands as McCulloch’s most on-going, developed clerical figure during the author’s fiction-writing life. “Much respected,”⁴⁷ well liked, but ultimately ineffectual, Parson Drone has been an overlooked agent in the satire and irony of McCulloch’s literary legacy.

⁴⁶ Thomas McCulloch to John Mitchell, 18 July 1834, McCulloch Papers, MG1 Vol. 553, No. 60, ARMNS.

⁴⁷ McCulloch, *Stepsure*, p.73.

The Formation of the Articles of Faith Committee: Ascendant Barthianism in the 1940s in the PCC

by

A. Donald MacLeod

Fifteen years after church union, the continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada found itself no longer preoccupied with concerns of survival. The Second World War was raging and the future of Western Civilization seemed at stake. The denomination was ready and anxious to engage in serious theological discussion. Because there was no forum for such a debate a committee focusing on church doctrine, named the Articles of Faith Committee, was formed.¹ This paper will describe how the theological debate between old-time liberals such as Stuart Parker, the Barthianism of Knox College Principal W W Bryden and his followers, and the confessionalist response of men such as W Stanford Reid and J Bernard Rhodes, defined the debate in the 1940s. It will argue that the ultimate issue became the question of confessional revision and the nature of the adherence of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to the Westminster standards of 1643-7. By the end of the decade the issue had been fought to a draw.

Material on the early days of the soon-to-be-called Articles of Faith Committee is scarce. A single box is to be found in the Archives of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. The only item of historical interest there is the minute of a meeting on 9 March, 1943 (not 1942 as in the document) of what would become the committee, and which was published verbatim in the 1943 *Acts and Proceedings*. This lack is surprising because George Douglas, first secretary of the committee and subsequently convener, was librarian at Knox College and in that capacity started the archival collections of the PCC around 1970. However there is considerable material collected by W. Stanford Reid, as a founding member of the committee, and placed by him in the Archives, McLaughlin Library, University of Guelph, in the W. Stanford Reid archive, Box 7.

It was at the 1942 General Assembly of the PCC, held in Knox Crescent Church in downtown Montreal, that the first stirring of theological inquiry took place. That Assembly received two overtures: Overture 18 from the Presbytery of Hamilton, and Overture 24 from the Presbytery of Toronto. The Presbytery of Hamilton overture was specifically directed toward the statement in "the Basis of Union of 1875 [that] the Confession of the Church re 'The Civil Magistrate' was declared to be not binding, but rather that full freedom of conscience is

¹ Now called the Church Doctrine Committee.

permitted to everyone.” The result was that “people, elders and clergy [were left] without definite guidance in the important matter of how to affirm their loyalty to the State; and the State on its part is left without assured knowledge of its powers and duties, under the Lord Jesus Christ toward the Church.” The overtures asked “the Venerable the General Assembly to provide for a Confession of Faith, with respect to the powers and duties of the Civil Magistrate and the relation which exists, under the Lord Jesus Christ, between the Church and the State.” It would appear that the overture did not clear the Presbytery of Hamilton without what was described as “long reasoning.” William Barclay of Central Church and N. D. MacDonald of St John Church made the final motion that carried, though C. L. Cowan of St Andrew’s was given leave to dissent for two reasons: it was out of order, and further, reflecting the skittishness of the post-Union church about any further disruption, “It is divisive.”² “Roman collar,” as Cowan was known as a regular contributor to the *Presbyterian Record*, was speaking for many in the church who thought that the lion of creedal revision should not be let out of its cage. The subordinate standards should remain as they were, subordinate as well to the interests of unity in the light of the losses inflicted on the denomination in 1925 and the attempt to paper over the cracks among the various groupings within the post-Union denomination.

The second overture, Overture 24 from the Presbytery of Toronto, was less controversial and seemed more preoccupied by *lèse-majesté*, though it dealt with a related theme. The state, it was claimed, had proclaimed so-called “Days of Prayer” “without intimating to ministers” and “without consultation with the courts of the church.” It cited a variety of such occasions – St. George’s Day service (would St. Andrew’s have been equally censured?), Torch services, Great Crusades, arranged by civic authorities or voluntary national committees. It then took a swipe at clergy who signed on to such organizations - Moderators of General Assembly, the Clerk of the General Assembly, who styled themselves as “Rt. Rev.” or “Very Rev.” “without any consultation with, or instruction from, the Courts of the Church.” It asked five specific questions:

- “(1) Do we recognize the right of the State to call the Church to the observance of days and seasons?
- (2) Whose voice does the Church obey when she responds to these proclamations?
- (3) Do we recognize the right of voluntary (national) committees to determine what times and seasons the Church shall observe?
- (4) Do we approve the association of our ministers with these voluntary (national) organizations, and the use of their official designations in such a way as to allege, or to have it assumed, that they speak in some official capacity and for the Church?
- (5) Do we approve the forms of religious service and the suggested forms of prayer that are notable in their failure to confess Jesus Christ?”³

Stuart Parker, minister of St Andrew’s Toronto, and moderator of the 1939 General Assembly (who delighted in calling himself Very Rev. and then Right Rev.) was asked to consider these two overtures and report back to the Assembly. Subsequently Parker brought in his report, ignored the question of titles, and after responding to the five points raised in Overture 24, harumphed “that no general ‘declaration’ is required.” Allan S. Reid (Stanford’s uncle) moved that debate continue at a later session of the Assembly. Parker then proceeded to bring in

² *Acts and Proceedings of the Sixty-eighth General Assembly of the PCC* [1942], pp.112-113.

³ *Ibid.*, pp.116-117.

a second report on the civil magistrate, the question raised in the Presbytery of Hamilton overture 18 and a further memorial from the Presbytery of Paris (“For a Declaration of Liberty of Conscience, and the Lordship of Christ over the State.”) Both had requested a new confession of faith in regards to church-state relations. Parker stated that there was no need for such clarification because relations between the two “are founded upon mutual respect and goodwill” and - most significantly - “to make formal pronouncements or claims in these circumstances would provoke, without any good purpose being served, controversy and division, not only between Church State, but within the Church itself.”⁴

Parker represented the old liberalism that had remained Presbyterian in 1925 more for cultural than theological reasons. Coming to Canada from Scotland two years before Union, his downtown congregation with its Scottish baronial architecture, represented the acme of socialite conservative Scotophilia. His assistant from 1929 to 1934, Frank W. Beare, was fulminating against the noxious influence of so-called neo-orthodoxy. Beare had been appointed to teach New Testament at Presbyterian College and was continually bating not only the confessionalists but also enthusiasts for the theology of Karl Barth. “Barthianism is not synonymous with Christian theology ... I warn our Barthian friends that neither the Presbyterian Church in Canada nor any church which is truly catholic will ever allow itself to be chained in such a fashion.”⁵

It would appear that Parker felt that by avoiding theological debate the Presbyterian Church in Canada would either slide into a theology he would find compatible or, at the least, allow his own liberalism to remain unchallenged. With like-minded F. Scott MacKenzie, who in 1929 was appointed Principal of Presbyterian College Montreal, he had taught systematic theology at the reconstituted Knox College in 1925-1926, thus giving the lie to anyone who saw the continuing Presbyterians as uniformly champions of historic confessional orthodoxy. At the same time Walter Bryden was called from Woodville to teach church history part-time. The Bryden-Parker polarity had begun, though Bryden’s espousal and advocacy of Barthianism was still ahead.⁶ The future theological direction of the non-concurring Presbyterian Church was uncertain.

The subsequent postponed debate in the 1942 General Assembly sharply defined the issues. For the first time the Bryden group emerged as a clearly identifiable group within the denomination. They coalesced in opposition to Parker’s attempt to throttle theological debate. Young Gordon Peddie, a student of Bryden’s, rose to speak for the Presbytery of Paris memorial. He moved that Overture 18 from the Presbytery of Hamilton be sent down to presbyteries for study. George Douglas, another Bryden protégé, seconded the motion. John McNair and Allan Reid moved as an amendment to the motion “That the Assembly appoint a competent committee to take this matter into consideration and bring in a finding at next Assembly.”⁷ That amendment carried and the motion, as amended, was approved. The Articles of Faith Committee was on the way.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.44 [4422].

⁵ Frank Beare, “Against The Barthian Theology,” *The Presbyterian Student*, March 1937, pp.9-10.

⁶ As Brian Fraser states of the 1926 General Assembly appointees to the new Knox College faculty: “Eakin, Bryden, and Cunningham were grounded in the progressive orthodoxy and Biblical theology of their predecessors who entered union. Bryden, in the end, would question and challenge his roots more thoroughly than the others.” *Church, College and Clergy* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1995), p.145.

⁷ *Acts and Proceedings of the Sixty-eighth General Assembly of the PCC* [1942], p.44 [4422].

On 9 March 1943 the committee met, it would appear for the first time, in the church offices at 100 Adelaide Street, Toronto, with E. G. Thompson as convener. George Douglas was asked to be secretary, and G. P. Duncan and James S. Short, retired the previous year after eighteen years at St. Andrew's Barrie, were present along with Walter Bryden. Before lunch the moderator of General Assembly, Norman MacLeod of First Brockville, paid a brief visit, speaking about his recent encounter (accompanied by representatives of three other denominations) with Mackenzie King when they had complained that the churches had been left out of preparing civic services (in one the name of Jesus was not even mentioned). They were assured this would not happen again.

The discussion following lunch focussed initially on the relationship between the state and the Presbyterian Church in Canada as expressed in the basis of union of 1875. "This led the discussion farther afield into other parts of the Westminster Confession of Faith, its origin, the times in which it was framed, the right place of a Church ever to examine its subordinate standards in the light of Scripture, the place of a Confession of Faith in the life of the Church, the question of the interpretation of Scripture, and the final authority of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, as the Word of God." Their conclusion was that the forthcoming General Assembly be informed that pronouncements could not be made "at the present time without leading to misunderstanding and confusion; Further that these issues are too weighty and far-reaching to be dealt with adequately by themselves, since they form an integral part of our whole confessional position as Church, and as such we feel that they are so important that the whole situation should be carefully studied."⁸

The recommendation sent on to the sixty-ninth General Assembly as it met in Hamilton was "that a larger committee comprising the ablest men in the Church be appointed for the purpose of reexamining our whole confessional position as a church, with a view eventually to stating what we believe as Reformed Church in language and concepts relevant to our own day and situation." On motion of the convener of the Special Committee, seconded by Walter Bryden, the motion passed.

The following year the Special Committee was named and approved by the seventieth General Assembly: men "representative of the various views in regard to the Church's Confession assumed to exist at present in the Church." Including the previous convener Edward Thompson, they were Peter Dunn of St. Paul's Hamilton, Joseph Wasson of Calvin Toronto, Arthur Cochrane of St. Andrews Port Credit, Wardlaw Taylor, elected with J. W. MacNamara in 1925 as clerk of the General Assembly and a well-known constitutional expert, Walter Bryden and W. Stanford Reid. The seven chosen certainly represented "the ablest men in the church" and were fairly representative, though without any strong participation from theological indifferentists or liberals. In the two colleges, only Bryden offered a definite theological framework. There simply were no alternatives taught that had either the academic rigour or the credibility he possessed.

This new Committee, which by 1946 settled on the name "Articles of Faith," was charged with submitting "if thought advisable" to the next General Assembly "a brief statement of the faith of our Church and as based on the Westminster Confession and Holy Scripture." This report

⁸ "Minutes of Special Committee Meeting of the General Assembly" found in the Archives of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Don Mills, "Articles of Faith Committee" box. The minute is also to be found in the *Acts and Proceedings of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly of the PCC* [1943], pp.130-1. The date has been changed from 1942 to 1943 and spelling corrected.

would then be submitted to presbyteries and the final document would be presented to General Assembly in 1946. It was an ambitious commitment.

The convener the committee chose from its ranks was Peter Dunn, the secretary Joseph Wasson. Dunn had a strategic role in the early years, though because of his deteriorating health, he only presented its report in 1945 and 1946, Bryden taking on that responsibility at the 1947 General Assembly in Calgary. Peter Dunn, though born in 1884 in Stellarton, Nova Scotia (where his Scottish father was minister of St. John's Church from 1872), was educated at the University of Edinburgh (M.A. and B.D.) and served congregations in Scotland until moving to the Central Congregational Church in Boston. When that congregation amalgamated with First Presbyterian to form the Church of the Covenant in 1932, he accepted a call to St. Paul's Church, Hamilton, the city of his wife's birth. At his funeral (he died in 1949 at the age of 63) William Barclay said: "He exemplified an all-round Presbyterianism, being faithful in attendance at the courts of the Church, and a diligent student of the Theology of our Reformation Fathers."⁹ When his health failed in 1947, Arthur Cochrane became Vice-Convener and *de facto* chair. To the great impoverishment of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Cochrane left to teach at the seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, the following year. Cochrane, a Canadian with an Edinburgh Ph.D. had forged close links with the German Confessing Church in the 1930s. Joseph Wasson, a crusty Irishman, and secretary of the committee, served Calvin Church from its formation as a minority group out of Deer Park Presbyterian Church in Toronto. As Walter Bryden's minister, he had a strategic role in the development of the committee's agenda and tasks.

By 1947 the committee's document, "The Doctrine of Revelation and the Word of God" was ready for presentation, having had preliminary documents vetted across the church. Only ten presbyteries had set up the recommended committee for discussion. Criticisms had been received in regards to the section on the knowledge of God and the lack of any specific doctrine of the Holy Spirit. But it was particularly in response to concerns expressed the previous year about the use of the term "Word of God" and the need for greater clarity on the subject of revelation that the report tried to clear up ambiguity.

In addressing these issues about revelation the committee was trying to reconcile both Barthianism and traditional confessional orthodoxy. Stanford Reid had tried to bring a coalition together between those who maintained strict adherence to the Westminster Confession and the advocates of Barth's theology of crisis. It was risky for someone in his camp to do so: in 1946 Westminster Seminary professor Cornelius van Til had labelled Barthianism (in a book with that title) *The New Modernism*. But he continued to value Walter Bryden as an ally who shared a common desire to make the Presbyterian Church in Canada think theologically. He wrote in the [Orthodox] *Presbyterian Guardian*:

While one may feel that Professor Bryden and his supporters do not go as far as a thoroughgoing Calvinist might wish, nevertheless it must be recognized that their influence upon the church has been healthy. They have emphasized a return to the Scriptures, a return to doctrine, and also have stressed the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. True, they do not always place quite the same content in these terms as we might wish. Nevertheless, they have exercised a good influence on the church in

⁹ *Acts and Proceedings of the Seventy-sixth General Assembly of the PCC* [1950], p.311.

calling people back to examine the church's standards, to see if the church is loyal to that which it professes.¹⁰

It was over questions of epistemology that the divide between Reid and the Bryden group first became apparent. In Bryden's one definitive expression of his theology, *The Christian's Knowledge of God*, he writes "when we consider revelation as it appears in the New Testament, there is no solution, no explanation in terms of mere thought, no fitting definition of it; just baffling paradoxes arise."¹¹ This existentialist view was questioned by traditionalists who wondered whether what was called the Word of God was Jesus Himself, Holy Scripture, or the proclamation of the Scriptures as preached.

The 1947 statement claimed to embrace all three as vehicles of revelation. It spoke of Jesus Christ as "God's one and complete revelation." It also used the word "infallibility" in speaking of Scripture but it meant something different than the Westminster Confession of Faith, when it refers to the Bible as "this infallible truth" (I.5) It stated that "...every conversion of God's Word into an infallible human word or every conversion of a human word into an infallible Word of God is a denial of the sovereign majesty of God's grace and mercy in which the eternal and incarnate Word condescends to be present to His Church by the Holy Spirit in the human words of His witnesses."¹² The divide between the two camps was becoming increasingly apparent.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the discussions on the committee were becoming more heated and divisive. One parishioner of Stanford Reid's in Montreal recalls how he met Joseph Wasson at a Toronto church function, and told him who his minister was. Reid at the time was struggling to establish a new suburban congregation in the Town of Mount Royal without outside financial help, and was a part-time lecturer (and in 1948 an Assistant Professor) at McGill. Wasson waspishly replied: "Stanford Reid, eh? I always thought the ministry was a vocation, not an avocation."¹³

By its 1948 report the Committee on Articles of Faith was clearly and publicly divided, with Stanford Reid appending a dissent from its statement on Election and Predestination. It would appear, from records Reid left from that fractious year, that he was lone man out. The Committee had co-opted his old nemesis Scott MacKenzie, but MacKenzie had been unable to attend. Robert Lennox, who had replaced him as Principal of Presbyterian College, was added as were J. G. Berry and W. Harold Fuller, then minister at Jarvis. Fuller, a member of the watershed Princeton Seminary class of 1927, was an American who came to Canada in response to the request for clergy following union. From 1953 to 1968 he would be the editor-in-chief of the Board of Christian Education of the PCC. He became secretary of the committee and, with George Douglas, played a vital role.

In an undated "commentary on Dr. Bryden's statement re Election and Predestination," representing discussions he and his "ginger group" in Montreal Presbytery had had, Reid accuses

¹⁰Reid, "The Presbyterian Church in Canada 1. Historical Background," *The Presbyterian Guardian* (10 May 1946), pp.141-2.

¹¹ *The Christian's Knowledge of God* (London: James Clarke, 1960), p.106.

¹² *Acts and Proceedings of the Seventy-third General Assembly of the PCC* [1947], p.182.

¹³ Conversation on 28 August 2004, confirming previous interview with Russell Merifield, Toronto.

Bryden of having been unfair to Calvin and having misrepresented the Westminster Confession of Faith. One of the issues was Bryden's denial of the doctrine of double predestination -- God electing humankind either to salvation or damnation, always a thorny subject. Reid denied that this teaching was exclusive to Calvin, quoting Luther in support of it. "In this matter," Reid wrote, "the Scriptures are the final authority, and if we really believe that this doctrine is ultimately a mystery we must go as far as the Scriptures but no further. Therefore, we should not reject the doctrine merely because it does not satisfy our wishes or our demands."¹⁴

In response to Bryden's critique of Calvin's view of predestination being simply "philosophic determinism" Reid countered: "Rather, I would say here that we have in the Scriptures two matters emphasized: i. That God has chosen in Christ His people from all eternity; and ii. That they have the responsibility of accepting Christ by faith as their saviour from sin. That we cannot logically bring these together is perfectly true, but nonetheless both are there and both must be accepted. This would appear to be Calvin's view, and it seems to me to be thoroughly Scriptural."¹⁵ He then counters Bryden: "Dr. Bryden claims that Calvin lands in a logical contradiction, which, however, should not be any argument against Calvin, for above he has rejected him really for being too logical and landing in a philosophic determinism."¹⁶

But the real nub of the argument was neither double predestination nor the antinomy that Calvin proposed between the two apparently contradictory statements of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. It was rather the implicit universalism in Karl Barth's formulation of divine election. "To say that everybody is elect, means simply that there is *no* election at all. Therefore, the whole use of [the] term predestination is also changed, for it no longer means predestinate. One cannot be truly predestinated to two diametrically opposed ends. What the term predestinate means here I cannot say, but it certainly does not mean predestination." Reid's conclusion: "Dr. Bryden's statement is faulty because it seems to vacillate between a possible Arminianism and a possible Universalism, both of which seem to be out of accord with Scriptural teaching."

It would appear (documents are undated and hence hard to sequence) that Bryden's statement was taken by members of the committee and turned into a full-fledged "Doctrine of Election and Predestination." This was submitted to the full committee for discussion at a meeting at Knox College on 27 January, 1948. Reid's copy of the seven page document is riddled with critical comments. The body of the statement is double-spaced, but inserted throughout are single-spaced critiques of the position of the Westminster Confession of Faith. By the time it appeared as Part II of "The Doctrine of God" on pages 131 to 137 of the 1948 *Acts and Proceedings of the Seventy-fourth General Assembly* this distinction is more difficult to follow but the text remains the same.

Appended to that Report were Reid's three reasons for dissent. The first was a general concern "that this statement is beyond the scope of the work of the committee, as the committee seems never to have been authorized to do anything more than state in simpler and clearer form the doctrines of the church. This statement on election is setting-forth something which is

¹⁴ WSR, "Commentary on Dr Bryden's statement re Election and Predestination," undated three page paper in Box 7, W. Stanford Reid archive, Special collections, University of Guelph Library, p.1.

¹⁵ WSR, "Commentary on Dr Bryden's statement," p.2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

definitely not the doctrine held by the Westminster Confession of Faith.” When the committee’s report came to the floor of the Assembly (Reid was a commissioner and preached at short notice the opening sermon at the request of moderator C. Ritchie Bell to great acceptance) there was a concern, when the document was sent down to presbyteries for study and comment, that the original purpose of the committee as stated in 1945 and 1946 be reiterated, namely “to prepare a statement of the faith of the Church as based on the Westminster Confession and Holy Scripture.” Reid as a commissioner moved that the report “be sent back to the committee with a strong reminder that the Westminster Confession of Faith is still the statement of this Church’s faith, and that the report be not printed in the Minutes.” He lost and the report was indeed published, though not in pamphlet form, as a defeated third recommendation of the committee had requested.

The position of the Westminster Confession of Faith as a subordinate standard had been in debate since the 1890s. Donald Harvey MacVicar had written in 1892: “We have said enough to show in a general way the nature and extent of the current movement in favour of revision, reconstruction or relaxed subscription. To Canada belongs the honor of being conservative in this respect.”¹⁷ John MacBeath in an anti-Union tract (undated, early 1920s) titled *The Burning Bush and Canada* had written “During these recent years we have been constantly asked by the advocates of the corporate union of certain churches to abandon our historic doctrinal standards, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, to which Standards our ministers and elders give adherence by their signatures ...The day will arise in Canada when people will look back to our generation and thank God for the men and women who resisted civil and ecclesiastical coercion, and who, in spite of all the forces arrayed against them, became, in the spirit of their forefathers, bulwarks, but the grace of God, against the tide that would have devastated the fields of freedom in this wide new Dominion.”¹⁸ As Keith Clifford states: “Many opponents of union believed that secularization was caused by the undermining of biblical authority by the higher critics and the watering down of doctrine by the modernists. In order to stem the tide of secularization, therefore, they insisted on adherence to the Westminster Confession and demanded that their ministers subscribe to it.”¹⁹ Now the Bryden group had declared open war, it was asserted, on the Westminster Confession of Faith and, by inference, on creedal subscription. The hoped-for coalition between subscriptionists and the new neo-orthodox, which seemed so promising at first, had completely broken down.

Reid’s second reason for dissent related to the theology the statement on election and predestination espoused. “This doctrine is not only not held by the Confession, it would seem to be contrary to the Confession of Faith. Its whole concept of election is anti-Reformed, and rejects the historic position of Presbyterianism.” As an historian Reid regarded the Barthian articulation of the doctrine of election as not in agreement with its formulation both by Calvin and in the subsequent Reformed creeds.

¹⁷ MacVicar, D. H. “The Westminster Confession of Faith,” *Presbyterian College Journal*, X, No. 1 (November 1890), p.9.

¹⁸ “Our Great Standards,” John MacBeath, in *The Burning Bush and Canada* (Toronto: John M. Poole, The Westminster Press), n.d., pp.41 and 52.

¹⁹ Clifford, N. Keith *The Resistance to Church Union in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), p.239.

Reid's third reason for dissent gained an appreciative response from lay people, mystified by the high level of theological and philosophical speculation; "This doctrine is set forth in such paradoxical forms, and with the term 'elect' being used in so many different connotations, that it is much more obscure and difficult to understand, than the doctrine it is supposed to clarify."²⁰

In a mimeographed supplement to their 1948 report and circulated to the Assembly at the time, the committee defended itself, taking issue particularly with Reid's understanding of what it meant to be a confessional church: "...it is abundantly clear that the Committee was appointed to reexamine our whole confessional position as a Church in the light of Holy Scripture. The Westminster Confession was to be a guide and subordinate standard, but not our ultimate authority."²¹ The committee then went on to distinguish between the purpose of the Westminster Confession ("to bear witness to God's free grace") with which it concurred and the formulation of the doctrine of election which differed from the Confession. "In this particular doctrine," it countered Reid, "we have taken special pains to show wherein we have disagreed with the Westminster [*sic*] and we have been careful to give our Scriptural and theological reasons for doing so. Dr. Reid has dissented because of what the Committee did consciously and deliberately." It concluded on a truculent note: "Therefore we believe that the Committee on Articles of Faith not only may but *must* examine the Westminster Confession of Faith in the light of Scripture, if it is to be obedient to Christ, and if it is to be faithful to the fundamental principle of the Westminster Confession of Faith itself."²²

Their victory was a pyrrhic one: Reid left the Articles of Faith Committee, to return years later. His confessional position was now represented by J. Bernard Rhodes.²³ The committee itself went on to consider a less controversial item, which was part of its original mandate: the relationship between church and state, made ever more pressing because of the Cold War, the emergence of Canada as a sovereign nation on its own, and continuing demands in the 1950s for civil religion - the last gasp of Christendom, as it later turned out to be.

The 1949 Assembly received a mimeographed report from the Articles of Faith Committee. This report on the sacraments was sent down to Presbyteries *simpliciter* for study and report on amendment by Doug Crocker²⁴ and was not printed as the Committee had requested. There was fear as to the reaction of the church at large. At the same Assembly a subcommittee of the Board of Evangelism and Social Action was charged to work with the Articles of Faith Committee on a Declaratory Clause in regards to Chapter 23 of the Westminster Confession, on the Civil Magistrate.

²⁰ *Acts and Proceedings of the Seventy-fourth General Assembly* [1948], p.137.

²¹ "Supplement to the Report of the Committee on 'Articles of Faith' - An Answer to Dr. Reid's Dissent" second page, undated unnumbered three page paper in Box 7, W. Stanford Reid archive, Special collections, University of Guelph Library.

²² "Supplement to the Report of the Committee on 'Articles of Faith'," third page

²³ J. Bernard Rhodes (1903-1953), son of China missionaries, studied at Princeton Seminary for a year and graduated from Knox College in 1929. He served first in Exeter, was called in 1933 to St. Andrew's Cobourg, where he rebuilt a fire-gutted sanctuary in 1937. Appointed to the staff of Toronto Bible College on 1 September 1939, in 1946 he became Principal, succeeding John McNicol. He received a Th.D. from Emmanuel College in 1949. Bryden had great regard for Rhodes, saying "We have had many students at Knox College, but we have not had any better than J.B.Rhodes." (TBC *Recorder*, Dec. 1946, 61 as quoted by John Stackhouse, Jr. in *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), p.233 n.61.

²⁴ *Acts and Proceedings of the Seventy-fifth General Assembly* [1949], p.67 [4974].

At the 1950 General Assembly the two committees announced that they were dovetailing their work to produce such a statement. George Douglas became chair of both, with Wilfred Butcher as secretary of the joint committee on church and nation and Harold Fuller as secretary of now dormant work of the Committee on Articles of Faith. The result would be the *Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation of 1954*, which became a second subordinate standard. In the meantime the Articles of Faith committee issued a plaintive third recommendation: "That in view of the fact that the 75th Anniversary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is now being observed that this General Assembly reaffirm our Church's adherence to the historic Reformed Faith, taught in the Westminster Standards"²⁵ Walter Bryden died the next year, though his continuing impact on the Presbyterian Church in Canada remained with the many students he had inspired. It was a draw between the confessionalists and the Barthians.

The early years of the Committee on Articles of Faith exposed, in spite of all attempts to plaster over the cracks, deep theological fissures in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and wide diversity as to what subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith as a subordinate standard really meant. The attempted *rapprochement* between confessionalists and Barthians Stanford Reid tried to bring about did not materialize. At the same time theological debate had helped to encourage greater awareness as to the heritage of the denomination and make clear the special historic contribution of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to the life of the nation as a Reformed community of faith. As a strong confessionalist, Stanford Reid never opposed updating the language of the church's credo. Years later he wrote to the author of *Enduring Witness* (the first edition) in explanation of his view at the time: "We did not and do not object to a new confession in 20th century terms, but we do object to a confession that is so vague that anyone, whatever his [or her] beliefs, or even if he [or she] had none could enter our ministry."²⁶

Today the church at large is arguably less able theologically to evaluate its faith and life than ever before. There is a widespread distaste for dogma, and systematic theology often receives a bad press. The average layperson, no longer having memorized the Shorter Catechism as in days of yore, finds doctrine dry and uninteresting. Yet in no age of the church has it been more crucial for a Reformed community of faith such as the Presbyterian Church in Canada to think theologically. The struggle of the 1940s within the denomination is instructive as to how this process can help us understand what it means to be bound by our subordinate standards. The way both Barthians and confessionalists shaped that debate has much to teach us in our own time.

²⁵ *Acts and Proceedings of the Seventy-sixth General Assembly* [1950], p.148.

²⁶ WSR to Professor John Moir, 6 February 1974, Box 4, WSRFF, PCC Archives.

THE BARNESVILLE COVENANTERS AND THEIR COMMUNION SERVICE

by

Eldon Hay

The Covenanters

The Covenanter or Reformed Presbyterian [RP] story in South Stream/Barnesville¹ (in Kings County) starts in Saint John. There, in the early 1800s, a group of Covenanters were undoubtedly worshipping together. They wrote to the American Covenanter Synod, asking for "preaching ordinances." In response, a couple of Covenanter clergy made an exploratory trip to Saint John in 1821, and organized the Covenanters there into a Society. Noting that some of the folk were Irish, some Scots, the two men wrote to both the Scots and Irish Synods, asking that they give the situation in Saint John serious consideration, and "urgently requesting them to send missionaries to these steadfast yet destitute people."² The two American Covenanter clergy then went back to the United States.

The Irish Synod paid attention to this call from Saint John. Apparently, the Scots Synod did not -- the efforts of that Synod were directed to Upper and Lower Canada, rather than to the Lower Provinces of British North America - Nova Scotia [NS] and New Brunswick [NB].³

¹ Formerly South Stream, the community was called Barnesville from the mid-1850s. Author of *Place Names of Atlantic Canada* (Toronto, 1996), William B. Hamilton, writes that Barnesville is located in Kings County, on Highway 820 - not far from Loch Lomond. The name originated with the establishment of the post office in 1854. It honours Thomas G. Barnes, the first postmaster and an early settler in the area. The new name replaced South Stream, a descriptive, deemed as "not sufficiently distinctive" by postal authorities(*New Brunswick Reader*, 2 October 2004, p.5; 16 October 2004, p.5). The former name of the community is frequently spelled Southstream.

² W.M. Glasgow, *History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America* (Baltimore, 1888), pp.165-66.

³ This arrangement was probably effected in the mid-1820s. Visiting in Aberdeen, a leading American RP minister, Rev. Alexander McLeod (1774-1833) wrote a letter, dated 4 May 1830: "The Scottish Synod have formed a Missionary Association for England & the Canadas. The Irish will cultivate Nova Scotia & New Brunswick" (paragraph in a letter to author, 7 November 1985, from Professor David Carson, Beaver Falls,

The Irish Synod paid attention - but it took some time for that attention to issue in missionary results.⁴ It was not until 1827 that a missionary came to Saint John. The Rev. Alexander Clarke (1794-1874) arrived with wife and two daughters -- one of whom was born crossing the Atlantic -- on 23 August 1827. He was an able and energetic man, but the situation in Saint John was discouraging. Some of the Covenanters had scattered, the few remaining were dispirited. Clarke cast his net further; he worked outside Saint John over the winter of 1827-28. Clarke tells us that he continued to work in Saint John, but he was invited "out towards Hampton and Hammond River."⁵

The first place mentioned is Hammond River. About that place, we read that Clarke, late in September and early in October of 1827, "had preached several times to numerous congregations. He had been accommodated with a house of worship by the Baptists, and persons hearing of his mission had come from distances of 10 or 12 miles to hear him."⁶ Years later, writing as an old man, Clarke tells us that he tried to raise funds in Saint John, unsuccessfully, "in aid of a new church at Hammond River where the Rev. Mr. Lawson, Reformed Presbyterian minister, is now placed."⁷

Clarke soon moved on: to Amherst, NS, where he lived a long missionary life, dying in 1874. Even after he moved to Amherst, he made the occasional trip back to Saint John, though he probably never came to the Barnesville area after the winter of 1827/28.

In the summer of 1831, another Irish Covenanter minister came to Saint John, the Rev. William Sommerville (1800-1878). In 1833, he moved to Cornwallis, NS. But for a period of a couple of years, he made his home at Shepody, and visited places from Saint John, NB to Pugwash, NS, a wandering assistant to the Rev. Alex. Clarke. We have records, made by Sommerville, of baptisms he himself performed, not only in Saint John, but also in Saltsprings, Jerusalem, Londonderry, Nerepis, and South Stream. It is very highly likely that Sommerville had services in, or contact with folk from South Stream.⁸ And indeed, it was later claimed that it was Sommerville who had planted the first Covenanter seed in the

PA).

⁴ Covenanter licentiate, John Warnock (1800-1855) found his way to Saint John, preaching there in the summer of 1822. He soon left the area. But his coming had been a private affair, having nothing to do with the attention of the Irish Synod. At any rate, Warnock soon left for the USA, spending his career largely in the South, in Presbyterian, not RP circles (*South Western Baptist*, 25 October 1855).

⁵ Alexander Clarke, "Autobiographical Sketch" (written ca. 1873), Mount Allison University Archives, Sackville, NB, 7001/23. See Eldon Hay, *The Chignecto Covenanters* (Montreal and Kingston, 1997), chapter 1.

⁶ *Statement of the Constitution and Proceedings of the Reformed Presbyterian Home and Foreign Missionary Society: First established in 1823, and re-modelled, according to appointment of Synod, in 1828* (Belfast, 1828), pp.11-12. Original at Reformed Presbyterian Theological Hall, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

⁷ *Statement*, p.12.

⁸ Clarke, "Autobiographical Sketch."

⁹ "Baptisms performed by Rev. William Sommerville": found in appendices to the minutes of the *New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Reformed Presbytery, 1832-1919*. Microfilm copy in Maritime Conference United Church Archives, Sackville, NB.

Barnesville area.⁹ But after Sommerville moved to Cornwallis in 1833, it is unlikely he visited Barnesville for some years.

After short visits by Clarke and Sommerville, the mid-1830s in Barnesville were strongly Church of Scotland. In April/May of 1838, the folk of Barnesville and surrounding communities -- Saltsprings and Londonderry -- called a Church of Scotland missionary, the Rev. Christopher Atkinson (fl. 1839-1844), to be their minister.¹⁰ And in May/June there was a piece of property bought in Barnesville for the erection of a Church of Scotland house of worship; the deed has the name of the Rev. Christopher Atkinson on it, as well as others.¹¹ It is highly likely that a small church was erected in or near Barnesville during Atkinson's ministry, though not on the site which had been purchased earlier.¹² Atkinson was in the Barnesville area for about a year and a half.¹³ Then Atkinson got into some sort of difficulty with folk in the congregation.

¹⁰ J.R. Lawson, "Letter from Rev. James R. Lawson," *Monitor and Missionary Chronicle* [hereafter, *Monitor*] (October 1847), p.132. Lawson's letter is dated 6 August 1847. He writes that "Our dear brother Sommerville was . . . with me [for] a few Sabbaths [here in Barnesville], whose services are . . . particularly acceptable to . . . the people of my church, [he] having first planted the standard of our Covenanted testimony in this destitute locality."

¹¹ The call was made in April of 1838. See "Announcement," *New Brunswick Courier*, 16 June 1838 -- among the men and places mentioned were Samuel Henderson of South Stream; John Simpson of Saltsprings; and James Crawford of Londonderry: "We, the Elders, Managers, &c. of the Presbyterian Churches in the South Stream, Salt Springs and Londonderry Settlements, being destitute of a Pastor, and being well assured, from good information and their own experience of the piety, prudence, zeal, and other qualifications of the Reverend CHRISTOPHER ATKINSON, L.M., have (with the full approbation of the inhabitants of the above places,) chosen him to be our Minister, and take the charge of our souls; and we do promise all dutiful submission and reverence in the Lord, together will a suitable maintenance."

¹² The date of the deed is 17 May 1838: Kings County Registry Office, Hampton, NB, Book B-2, p. 78. Among others named in the deed were Samuel Henderson and John Curry.

¹³ Christopher William Atkinson's work appeared in three additions: *The Emigrant's Guide to New Brunswick, British North America* (Berwick-Upon-Tweed: 1842); *A Guide to New Brunswick, British North America*, Second edition (Edinburgh: 1843); *A Historical and Statistical Account of New-Brunswick, B.N.A. with Advice to Emigrants*, Third edition. (Edinburgh: 1844).

In each of the three editions, Atkinson spends little time speaking of his stay in the Barnesville region; and not at all of the circumstances of his leaving. In the body of the text of his three *Guides* there is no mention of the building of a church there. The community Atkinson went to after leaving Barnesville was Mascreen, where a church was built during his stay there; and Atkinson is not shy about claiming a major role. See his *Guide*, 1842 ed., pp.48-50. He also makes abundantly clear that he left Mascreen with much honour; the matter is documented. See his *Guide*, 1844 ed., pp.49-50.

In spite of the fact that Atkinson does not speak in the text about building of a chapel in or near Barnesville, in both the 1843 and 1844 editions, in that section entitled "Roads and distances in the Province," there is a mention of "Atkinson's Chapel," 1843 ed., p.206; 1844 ed., p.256.

For some reason that has ... not found its way into history, Atkinson fell out with a leading trustee with whose family he boarded and was told that he could not occupy the pulpit any longer. It was a novel way of dissolving the pastoral relation, but Mr. Atkinson, after holding open air services in the churchyard for one Sabbath, accepted the situation and left the place.¹⁴

Atkinson left Barnesville and he did not return.¹⁵ Nor was he succeeded by other Church of Scotland ministers or missionaries. For the next minister -- the great Covenanter clergyman of South Stream/Barnesville -- was the Rev. James Reid Lawson (1820-1891).

James Reid Lawson was Irish, born in County Down. He had been born and raised in the same Covenanter congregation as Sommerville, but he was younger.¹⁶ He accepted the challenge of being a missionary in the British North American colonies. He was ordained in 1845, in his home church.¹⁷ Shortly before he left Ireland, an affectionate farewell celebration was held.¹⁸

On 5 November 1845, the Rev. James Reid Lawson arrived in Saint John, "after a pleasant journey of one month."¹⁹ On the next Sabbath, four days after he arrived, he preached twice in the church of Rev. Alex. M. Stavely (1816-1903).²⁰ He worked as a kind of assistant to Stavely (the Covenanter minister who had come to Saint John in 1841)²¹ for the first few months, undoubtedly visiting the scattered mission stations in NB. Quite soon, however, he was called by the folk at South Stream/Barnesville to be minister there. At a

¹⁴ Atkinson, *The Emigrant's Guide*, 1842 ed., p.20.

¹⁵ Robert M. Sommerville, "Missionaries of the Reformed Presbyterian Church to the Lower Provinces of Canada: James Reid Lawson," *Olive Trees* (October 1899), pp.307-08.

¹⁶ W.G. MacFarlane, *New Brunswick Bibliography* (St. John, NB: 1895), p.6: "Atkinson, Rev. W. Christopher, Presbyterian missionary from Scotland in Kings Co., NB, pastor at Mascreen, a Scotch settlement in Charlotte Co., 1839-41, in latter year returned to Scotland."

¹⁷ David J. Magee, *A Story Worth Telling - Historical Sketch of Rathfriland Reformed Presbyterian Church: 1777-1977* (Rathfriland: 1977), pp.9-10: "Mr. William Sommerville [was ordained] on 31st May, 1831. [He] became widely known and esteemed from his work as a missionary in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia ... Mr. James Reid Lawson ... was ordained in 1845, [and] became a missionary in Barnesville, New Brunswick."

¹⁸ The ordination is described in the *Banner of Ulster*, 24 October 1845. In that account he is referred to as the fourth missionary to be sent out by the Irish RP Synod. The first three were Clarke, Sommerville and Stavely.

¹⁹ "Address to the Rev. J.R. Lawson." Typescript given to me by Mrs. Margaret Stewart, a descendant of Lawson. The event described must have happened in September/October, after Lawson's ordination on 11 September, and before he sailed for British North America on 5 October 1845. It seems the event occurred in Rathfriland congregation.

²⁰ Sommerville, "Lawson," p.307.

²¹ *New Brunswick Courier*, 8 November, 1845: "The Rev. J.R. Lawson, Missionary from the Reformed Presbyterian Synod of Ireland; to those provinces, who has just arrived in this City, will preach in the afternoon and evening."

meeting of the NB and NS Reformed Presbytery in Saint John on 12 April 1846, the minutes note that:

A call to Revved. J.R. Lawson from Southstream requiring his services for three years promising an annual support of 60 pounds currency - is laid on the table of Presbytery. It is proposed and agreed to that Mr. Lawson be the stated supply of Southstream in compliance with the stipulation of the invitation.²²

Many folk in Barnesville and district were Irish; but very few were Covenanters; most were Church of Scotland. As Lawson himself put it: "at my entrance on that field, there were only two persons in the membership of the [RP] Church. The population, was, however, in general, friendly, and accessible to instruction, in the principles of the Covenanting Testimony."²³ Further, the members of the old Church of Scotland congregation "were received into [Covenanter] fellowship only on accepting the testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church."²⁴ Actually, the Presbytery established a committee of Lawson and Stavely to "deal with the applicants for communion according to the good order of the [Covenanter] church."²⁵ The fact that the former Church of Scotland folk gladly became Covenanters is witness to the ability and tact of Lawson. What about the church building, built in Atkinson's time, in or near Barnesville? What about the church site, bought for a Church of Scotland church, though still vacant? Folk were obviously prepared to follow Covenanter Lawson here as well. The Atkinson Church of Scotland church building was used by Lawson and the Covenanter congregation, for a time. As for the Church of Scotland site, the trustees gave "a quit claim deed of the property to the 'Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland, represented by the Reformed Presbytery of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia."²⁶ It was on this site that the church later built by the Covenanters was erected.

Lawson went on missionary trips to other communities; he visited and held services in Jemseg, in Black River, in Tynemouth Creek, amongst others. He cooperated with Stavely and with Sommerville: witness the fact that all three were present at the opening of the new RP church in Saint John in 1850. And the same three: Sommerville, Stavely and Lawson took turns going to preach to the community of Covenanters at Houlton, Maine.²⁷ Stavely and

²² Eldon Hay, "Alexander McLeod Stavely: Irish-Canadian Covenanter," *Reformed Theological Journal* (November 1991), pp.5-16.

²³ *NB and NS Reformed Presbytery*, 12 April 1846.

²⁴ J.R. Lawson, "Our Church in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia," *Our Banner* (April 1880), p.125.

²⁵ Sommerville, "Lawson," p.308.

²⁶ *NB and NS Reformed Presbytery*, 12 April 1846.

²⁷ Sommerville, "Lawson," p.308. The deed is found in Kings County Registry Office, Hampton, NB: Book M2, p. 492. Among those named are Samuel Henderson and John Curry.

Lawson also went to Millstream/Queensville from time to time.²⁸

Nevertheless, Barnesville was to be Lawson's home and the centre of his activity. In 1851, he married Margaret Hastings (1833-1921) of Saint John, the two were to be the parents of a family of two sons and seven daughters. Like many families of that time, the Lawsons had their ups and downs.

In January [1852] last, his [Mr. Lawson's] dwelling-house accidentally took fire, and was speedily and totally consumed. In the depth of winter, to be thus suddenly rendered houseless, was felt to be a heavy affliction. But Mr. Lawson states that he and his family experienced much sympathy and attention from persons of all classes. His house was partially insured. Though called to provide a dwelling-house for his family, he is encouraging his congregation to erect a new house of worship, that which they formerly occupied being found in various respects unsuitable. This they have taken measures to do in the course of the present season. The expense is estimated at between 250 and 300 pounds.²⁹

In March of 1853, the new church at South Stream/Barnesville was opened for worship.

The new and neat Reformed Presbyterian house of worship, which has been erected in this locality through the exertions of the Rev. James R. Lawson and his people, was opened for Divine service on the 13th March last. Rev. Alexander M.L. Stavelly, of St. John's, preached in the forenoon, from Psalm xxvii. 4, and Rev. James R. Lawson, the pastor, in the afternoon, from Psalm cxxxii. 7. Owing to the inclemency of the weather, the attendance was not numerous, but the liveliest interest has been manifested in this district in the exertions of our brethren in erecting this neat and substantial house of worship. It is trusted that this effort will not only contribute to place the sustenance of the ministry on a better footing than it has hitherto stood in this part of the province, but that it will likewise tend to the advancement of the covenanted cause in these colonies. We cordially wish our beloved brother and his flock all prosperity in their exertions, for strengthening the stakes and lengthening the cords of Zion.³⁰

It must have been a fine house of worship. And it had "boxed pews."³¹ The seating

²⁸ See Eldon Hay, "Cross-Border Covenanter Communities," *Semper Reformanda*, (Spring, 2001), pp.21-45.

²⁹ See Eldon Hay, "The Queensville Cemetery: Its Past and Present," *Generations: The Journal of the New Brunswick Genealogical Society* (Summer 2000), pp.49-56.

³⁰ "Reformed Presbyterian Church - Colonial Mission," *Monitor* (May 1852), pp.19-20.

³¹ "Southstream, New Brunswick," *Monitor* (June 1853), p.44.

arrangement in the church “included twelve family or group pews, six on each side in the form of the letter U, so that all did not face the pulpit. There was no choir loft, or musical instrument.”³²

The congregation took a good deal of pride in this church. Late in his ministry, Lawson was able to say,

We have a commodious and beautiful house of worship, a perfect contrast to the barn-like structures which appear so frequently in country places and which are dignified with the name of meeting houses and in localities too where the people are more wealthy than in this place. In a magazine published in the United States, I saw some time ago a letter from one who had visited this place, and in that letter he made special mention of our little house of worship, so neat and so superior in its appearance to the other places of worship in our village, and which is a peculiarly gratifying circumstance, there is not a cent of debt upon it.³³

Lawson continued as a faithful pastor at Barnesville, with the exception of one brief hiatus. In June of 1856, he accepted a call to a new congregation in Boston, MA, though folk in South Stream petitioned Presbytery that he not be removed.³⁴ Presbytery

after maturely weighing all the circumstances of the case, particularly the peculiarly favourable opening which appears to be presented in Boston for the dissemination of Covenanting principles, and also the state of our brother's health which does not seem to admit of so much travelling as is required from a Colonial Missionary ... feel it to be their duty to consent to Mr. Lawson's acceptance of the call.³⁵

The possibility of less travel no doubt weighed heavily on Lawson, whose health was

³² Grace Aiton, *The Story of Sussex and Vicinity* (Hampton: 1967), p.97.

³³ W. Harvey Dalling, "The History of the Covenanter Church in Kings County," *Newsletter of the Kings County History and Archival Society* (April 1984), pp.2-6; (May 1984), pp.1-4. This quotation is from April 1984, p.5.

³⁴ 'Donation Visit - Lawson gives Address.' See "Reformed Presbyterian Church," *Saint John Telegraph*, 13 May 1882, p.3. This account makes clear that 3 May 1882 was the date of the event. And see 'Speech by James Reid Lawson.' Typed 8-page manuscript, copy of which was given to the author by Greg Stewart, a descendent of the Lawsons, in 1989. Stewart is in possession of the original.

³⁵ *NB and NS Reformed Presbytery*, 17 June 1856: "A memorial from the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Southstream, praying that Mr. Lawson may not be removed from his present sphere of labour is also presented and is supported by several commissioners from said congregation."

³⁶ "Report of the Reformed Presbytery of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia," *Minutes of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod of Ireland*, 1856.

not robust. He left for Boston in the fall of 1856. A year later, he was ready to move again.³⁶ He had a call from New York city, and a call from South Stream.³⁷ He chose to return to Barnesville, in the fall of 1857.³⁸ None of the church reports attempt to explain this move back to New Brunswick after a year in Boston. But a strong reason has come down through the family. "They only stayed a year ... Margaret Hastings [Lawson] did not like Boston, so they returned to Barnesville."³⁹

What about Covenanter faith and life and worship? We know that Covenanters were not to vote. Near the end of 1846, Lawson wrote a letter from South Stream in which he says:

Two of our members were excluded from participating in our [recent] high and holy communion. Amidst the agitation and excitement necessarily connected with the election of members for the Provincial Legislature, they [these two members] forgot their solemn vows and engagements; and, yielding to the temptations by which they, in common with the other members of the Church, were assailed, abandoned the principles they had engaged to maintain, by exercising the elective franchise. I am glad to say, however, that these individuals are again "seeking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward:" they have privately expressed their regret at their procedure, and I trust it will be in my power, in a subsequent letter, to report their re-admission to the membership and privilege of the Church.⁴⁰

We do know some of the elements of Barnesville Covenanter worship. In worship, "when prayer is announced the people rise to their feet according to the scriptural order in the congregation of the Lord."⁴¹ (In personal and family devotions, Covenanters knelt to pray⁴²).

³⁷ Samuel McNaugher, "Reasons for Congregational Rejoicing: Historical Sermon [of the] First Reformed Presbyterian Congregation of Boston," *Olive Trees* (December 1904), p.266: "The Rev. J.R. Lawson was the first pastor, installed Nov. 20, 1856 ... Mr. Lawson remained less than a year and returned to his former charge in New Brunswick."

³⁸ *NB and NS Reformed Presbytery*, 25 August 1857. At this meeting it was reported that South Stream had issued a call to Rev. Lawson, of Boston. "The Moderator is authorized to write two letters, one to the Presbytery of New York, setting for the great news that there is for the labours of Rev. Mr. Lawson being again enjoyed in this part of the Church ... The other letter to be written to Mr. Lawson himself urging his acceptance of the call, and his return to the Provinces."

³⁹ The formal installation of Mr. Lawson took place on 15 October 1858. See *NB and NS Reformed Presbytery*, 15 October 1858.

⁴⁰ Letters from Greg Stewart to Eldon Hay, August and October, 1989.

⁴¹ Lawson, 'Letter from the Rev. James R. Lawson,' *Monitor* (February 1847), p.4.

⁴² 'Donation Visit - Lawson gives Address.' cf. footnote #34.

And, in Covenanter worship, there were no hymns or paraphrases used: the psalms alone were sung. Psalms are "the exclusive matter of praise in our sanctuary, in our prayer meetings, and at our family altars."⁴³ In the singing of the psalms, the congregation was seated.

Communion season was a high point in congregational life, held once or twice a year. If it was possible, Lawson would have some help with the communion services; most often Stavely; occasionally the Rev. William Sommerville or a clergyman visiting from the United States. We do not have direct evidence of Barnesville practice; but it is likely that Thursday or Friday would be a fast day, with a service in the evening - a time of self-examination; Saturday afternoon when new adult members were added; and communion tokens distributed to those planning to partake of the communion on Sabbath morning; the communion service Sabbath morning; and a service on Sabbath afternoon or evening. On Monday morning a final service, at which infants would be baptized. At the communion service on the Sabbath morning, a simple table would be set up down the centre aisle; and folk came forward and sat around this table, till it was full; after they had communed, it would fill up again: the last table was for the elders, served by the minister who was served last by one of the elders.⁴⁴ How many communicants? It would vary, of course. When he retired, Lawson gave thanks that "now around our communion table there can gather from time to time nearly 50 sons and daughters of the Covenant."⁴⁵

And there were prayer meetings, Bible classes, Sabbath school. And meetings of the Bible Society. Although practice varied somewhat from congregation to congregation, Covenanters, because of their distinctive principles, were not engaged in a broad spectrum of ecumenical activities. But the Bible Society was one such area in which the Covenanters participated, indeed they gave leadership. None more than Lawson.

For over thirty years [Lawson was the] respected President of "The Upham and St. Martin" branch [of the Bible Society], and when latterly, owing to impaired health and vigour, he again and again expressed a wish, at the annual meeting, generally held in his Church at Barnesville, to retire from the position which he so long and so acceptably filled, he yielded to the importunate solicitations of the office-bearers and members of the large and influential Association, and remained its President until his death.⁴⁶

The Bible Society meetings were traditionally long, and many of them were held in the

⁴³ "Posture in Religion," *Monthly Advocate* (June 1880), 26-7. The *Monthly Advocate* was edited by Lawson: the guidelines for worshipful prayer - kneeling in private, standing in public.

⁴⁴ 'Donation Visit - Lawson gives Address.'

⁴⁵ Eldon Hay, "Covenanter Worship and Religion: Chignecto Practice," *Presbyterian History: A Newsletter of the Committee on History, The Presbyterian Church in Canada* (May 1988), pp.1-7; (October 1988), pp.1-7.

⁴⁵ 'Donation Visit - Lawson gives Address.'

⁴⁶ Alexander M. Stavely, "In Memoriam - Rev. J.R. Lawson," *Covenanter* (September 1891), p.176.

Barnesville church.

Lawson retired in the early 1880s; his request was finally accepted by Presbytery on November 22 of 1882. His health had been failing for some time, he wanted to retire earlier; but his conscientiousness and the wishes of his congregation and presbytery prevented that. The cause is given as partial paralysis; and it seems that it gradually incapacitated Lawson. Lawson's brief and beautiful will was written in 1888.⁴⁷ He died in 1891.

Lawson was a fine preacher, scholar, and pastor. He loved his congregation and was loved by them. In some situations he was fearless. The story is told that in the neighbourhood there were some rough characters; one of whose favourite amusements "was the refined sport of cock-fighting, and stories were told of the summary manner in which he broke up gatherings for this purpose when he accidentally heard of them."⁴⁸ Lawson was also a writer: he wrote, for his co-religionists in Ulster, a significant number of letters and articles.⁴⁹ A few of his sermons and addresses were published.⁵⁰ For two years, from 1880 until 1882, he edited the *Monthly Advocate*, the only Covenanter journal published in Canada. At this point some thirteen of the twenty-four issues of that journal have been located.⁵¹

Among Covenanter lay folk was John Toland (c. 1823-1886). "He was quite a noted school teacher in his day and one of the first teachers to teach in the Sussex school."⁵² He was an elder in the Saint John Covenanter congregation, but on moving to Passekeag, he was named elder in Barnesville.⁵³ After teaching school, he was agent for several years, of the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Bible Society. His work took him to many communities in the two provinces, and he was a good speaker. He was "endowed with an excellent memory, combined with fine scholarly attainments, [and] his discourses were listened to by thousands

⁴⁷ The will, written 20 June 1888, is found in the NB Provincial Archives, Fredericton, NB.

⁴⁸ E.H. Buck, "A Trip to New Brunswick," *Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter* (February 1893), p.48.

⁴⁹ The letters described to Irish readers the situation in NB: i) "Colonial Missions," *Monitor* (January 1851), pp.753-4: an introduction; ii) "Colonial Sketches. - No. 1," *Monitor* (February 1851), pp.775-7: geography of NB; iii) "Letters from the British North American Colonies. - Climate of New Brunswick," *Monitor* (April 1851), pp.805-7; iv) "Letters from the British North American Colonies. - Climate of New Brunswick," *Monitor* (June 1851), pp.838-41: In spite of the title, this sketch is about the native Indians of NB; v) "Letters on The British North American Colonies," *Monitor* (December 1851), pp.931-3: Lawson writes about religious sects and about the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England in NB; vi) "Colonial Sketches. - Methodism in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia," *Monitor* (June 1852), pp.35-8. Lawson also wrote an article for American readers, shortly after the NB and NS Reformed Presbytery had joined the American synod: "Our Church in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia," *Our Banner* (May 1880), pp.124-6.

⁵⁰ For a list of his published writings, see appendix in Eldon Hay, "Canadian Covenanter Contributions," *Semper Reformanda* (Fall 1998), p.193.

⁵¹ CIHM, #04623.

⁵² Dalling, "History" (April 1984), p.6.

⁵³ W.M. Glasgow, "St. John," *Reformed Presbyterian Record*. Presented on 12 April 1902, to the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Alleghany, PA, by James Tibby of the Pittsburgh Congregation. Copy in the RP Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh.

of people of both provinces with interest and instruction."⁵⁴

Another Covenanter layman was Dr. John Brady (1825-1887). In the cemetery of the Barnesville church there is a plain ordinary slab stone with this inscription: "In memory of John Brady M.D. A native of Ireland. For 29 years a resident of Barnesville. Died June 9, 1887 age 62 years. There remaineth therefore rest to the people of God."⁵⁵ He was a native of Rathfriland, like Lawson, and came to New Brunswick at Lawson's request. He was greatly beloved and respected.⁵⁶

Two other lay men, both elders, are John Curry and William Parks. Both men died near the end of December 1886.

Mr. John Curry and Mr. John Parks, of Barnesville, Kings County, 75 years ago, were boys born and bred in the same place in Ireland. In time they emigrated together to New Brunswick, and settled in the same village, Barnesville, within a short distance of each other. They lived there in unbroken friendship, married and raised families. During the past year Mr. Curry was not in good health, and on the 16th inst. he passed away, leaving a family of three sons. Mr. Parks followed his old friend to his last resting place, and one week later complained of weakness, and, after a short illness, died Tuesday morning. Both men were honest, upright citizens, and were elders in the same church, the Reformed Presbyterian of that place.⁵⁷

There were other elders, of course, some only known by their names in the lists. Associated with South Stream/Barnesville were Samuel Henderson, Henry Sands, John Curry, John Parks, John Toland, Alexander E. Kelso, William Conners, as well as John Curry and John Parks.⁵⁸

And the story of a woman. Unfortunately we know nothing of Mrs. Curry, nothing of Mrs. Parks. Covenanter history is like a lot of church history; written by men about men. There's only one woman about whom much information exists, and that was Margaret Hastings, wife of the Rev. James Lawson. Several things are known about her.

She was a Canadian, born in Saint John. According to family information, "Mrs. Lawson was the daughter of a wealthy sea merchant in St. John. Yet, she married this poor Covenanter missionary and had nine children."⁵⁹ We know the family spent a year in Boston,

⁵⁴ See Eldon Hay, "John Toland, Passekeag Citizen Makes Mark on the World," *Generations: New Brunswick Genealogical Society* (Spring 1955), pp.35-41.

⁵⁵ Dalling, "History" (April 1984), p.5.

⁵⁶ 'Obituary of Dr. Brady,' *Covenanter* (August 1887), pp.291-2.

⁵⁷ "Their Journey Ended," *Saint John Telegraph Journal*, 30 December 1886. 16 December 1886 was the date of Curry's death; 28 December 1886 was the date of Parks' death.

⁵⁸ Glasgow, "South Stream & Barnesville," *Record*. Nos. 137 and 205.

⁵⁹ Betty Weimer, Letter to Robert More about Mrs. James Reid Lawson, 12 February 1988. Betty Weimer is a descendent of the Lawsons. A copy of the letter was given to Eldon Hay by Robert More in 1998.

during which time one of those daughters was born. But Margaret wanted to go back to Barnesville; and the family did so. She outlived her husband by some 21 years, dying in 1912. "Mrs. Lawson will be remembered by many of the ministers in the Reformed Presbyterian church who have preached in Barnesville during the past thirty years. Like the 'Shunammite,' she always had a little chamber for the 'man of God' as he passed that way and a table spread to satisfy his hunger."⁶⁰ From the family tradition, two other traits: Seminary students and licentiates "always referred to Mrs. Lawson as Lady Lawson." Further Mrs. Lawson loved hats. There's a family photo in which Mrs. Lawson, two of her daughters and two of her granddaughters are all wearing hats - all the hats provided by Mrs. Lawson. "She loved hats so gave everyone a hat to wear for the picture."⁶¹

Lawson was succeeded by others, after he resigned in 1882. Rev. Thomas Patton (1852-1920) was ordained and installed as pastor in Barnesville, 26 May 1887; he resigned, 29 September 1891, a few months after Lawson's death. After a hiatus of some seven years, Rev. W.T. Knox Thompson (1870-1948) was ordained and installed in Saint John 26 May 1891, installed at Barnesville a day later. Seven years later, 26 May 1905, Thompson resigned from both Barnesville and Saint John. Rev. James McCune (1871-1924) was installed in Barnesville, 7 July 1910, but resigned 15 months later, 10 November 1911. He was the last full-time minister in Barnesville; and the last full-time minister in Saint John, Rev. D. Bruce Elsey (1877-1950) resigned from Saint John, 22 April 1914. There were also a number of students and licentiates. The most notable licentiate was W.M. Glasgow, in NB in 1884. What we know of Covenanters in Canada owes much to the fact that Glasgow did spend time there; and wrote about it.⁶² He later went on to write the classic history of the American RP church.

Lawson was the dominant figure. He cast a long shadow on those who came after him. He was a preacher of singular clearness and force. But as one of those who followed after Lawson said, "this makes it hard for a young man to please the people of Barnesville. They instinctively compare every one with Mr. Lawson, and set you down at once as inferior, because you do not come up to him."⁶³ Fifteen years after Lawson's death, licentiate John Coleman (1882-1961) impressed Barnesville folk. He "reminded them of the good old days when Mr. Lawson so faithfully preached the Gospel."⁶⁴

For a number of reasons, the Covenanter or RP movement declined. Severity of climate, severity of doctrine and practice? There were many factors: the formation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1975, in which Covenanters played no part; the death of

⁶⁰ "Death of Mrs. Rev. J.R. Lawson," *Christian Nation*, 18 December 1912, p.10.

⁶¹ Letters from Greg Stewart to Eldon Hay, August and October 1989.

⁶² Reference has already been made to Glasgow's *History* and his *Record*. In addition, he wrote two excellent articles: a) "The Provincial Churches," *Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter* (January 1885), p.218; and *Our Banner* (January 1885), pp.28-32 and (February 1885), pp.51-5; b) "Annals of the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Presbytery," *Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter* (June 1895), pp.104-8; 125-32.

⁶³ Buck, "A Trip," p.48.

⁶⁴ "Barnesville, N.B.," *Christian Nation*, 25 July 1906, p.11.

William Sommerville in 1878; the Great Fire of Saint John in 1879, resulting in Stavely returning to Ulster. The removal of the NB and NS Reformed Presbytery from the Irish to the American Synod in 1879 was meant to boost the Maritime presbytery: it did not.

At the beginning of 1918, the fortunes of the Covenanter congregations in NB were at a very low ebb. We have a letter, written in January, from Saint John, to an American Covenanter journal, which tells something of the shrinking fortunes of the Covenanters of NB. Entitled "St. John and Barnesville Appeal for Preaching," the letter reads as follows:

We kindly ask your interest on behalf of our Covenanter churches in St. John and Barnesville. It is a year and a half since we have had any service in either places, and we are voicing the minds of Barnesville congregation, as well as St. John, when we say that it is our most earnest desire to have preaching the coming summer, or as early as possible in the spring. Some of the Presbyterian ministers in the city are trying strongly to induce our members to join with them. So far nothing has been accomplished. However, if we have none of our own church services soon, we fear the outcome. We have been thinking who to write to about this matter and felt that perhaps through the *Christian Nation* you would make a plea for St. John and Barnesville. We feel that something will yet be done for us, so that the banner "For Christ's Crown and Covenant" will be kept waving in New Brunswick.⁶⁵

Of the four persons who signed the letter, two were daughters of the Rev. James and Margaret Lawson - that is, Mrs. John H. Duncan and Mrs. Geo. T. Willis.

Perhaps the letter had some effect, for in the summer of 1918 Melville K. Carson (1890-1970), one of the last students to come to Barnesville, spent several weeks in the community. He shared some of his reflections:

There are some congregations in the Church about which very little is known. It is not because these congregations are not witnessing for Christ, that they are not known. It is not because they are not interested in the work of the Church and salvation of souls, but it is because these congregations are practically isolated ... [Yet] they are bearing aloft the banner "For Christ's Crown and Covenant," faithfully in the place where God has planted them. This is what I found to be true of the Covenanters in ... New Brunswick where they are without preaching most of the time. The Barnesville congregation is small, but how could it be otherwise. The surprising thing is that they still have an organization. But although small they are active in witnessing for our Lord Jesus Christ. This was shown this summer in their desire for a good attendance. By their invitation, encouragement and example to the people of the community, they kept the interest growing. The average attendance was very good, and was gradually increasing. But they were not satisfied merely to be witnesses in their own immediate community, but they secured an opportunity for me to preach ... to an appreciative audience, in the

⁶⁵ "St. John and Barnesville Appeal for Preaching," *Christian Nation*, 30 January 1918.

neighboring village of Titusville. At least seventy were present. The invitation was repeated, but the summer was too short for another meeting. There are many opportunities in Barnesville, and surrounding country and many hopeful signs of increased interest and growth in the Covenanter cause which was so firmly established in that place by the late Rev. J. R. Lawson. May we seize the opportunity of keeping alive the testimony of these eternal principles of the Kingdom of Christ in this field.⁶⁶

Carson's plea was eloquent, but there was apparently little response to the challenge proffered. In 1923, Barnesville was officially disorganized.

We have a description of the church at Barnesville in 1967, Canada's centennial year. "The church at Barnesville still stands, locked and silent, its windows boarded over."⁶⁷ It was in that year that Robert More⁶⁸ visited the Maritimes, and he wrote a letter suggesting that the church be razed.⁶⁹ In fact, the church was torn down, and the beams were used in the building of a few houses. The dismantling was done in 1968. A year later the Covenanters Cemetery Committee was organized. The cemetery is in good condition. The former church site is now the property of the Covenanters Cemetery Limited. There is a Presbyterian church in Barnesville today, its membership tracing their history back to some of the names mentioned above.⁷⁰

I conclude this section with a poem, published in the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal*, 2 February 1943, following the news that the last Covenanter church in Saint John, the one standing on the corner of Peel and Carleton, had been sold. The poem, by a man who styled himself 'Once [a] Covenanter]' is entitled "The Old Covenanters' Church."

So you are dead - your light is spent
 Unbroken yet - your covenant
 A hundred years or more ago
 Your light it shed a steady glow
 To light the pilgrim on his way
 In darkest hour of night or day.

In Barnesville and at Millstream Head

⁶⁶ Melville K. Carson, "New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Congregations," *Christian Nation*, 9 October 1918, p.8.

⁶⁷ Aiton, *Sussex*, p.97.

⁶⁸ Robert J. More, Jr., was the author of *Aurora Borealis: A History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada (Covenanter), 1820 -1967* (Philadelphia: 1967).

⁶⁹ Letter about Razing of the Barnesville Covenanter Church. The letter was written by Chester R. Fox, Secretary, Trustees of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, Pittsburgh, PA to Mr. Eldon Proctor, Barnesville NB on 25 September 1968.

⁷⁰ Joan C. Cho, editor, *The Churches of The Presbytery of St. John* (St. Stephen, NB: 2000), pp.11-12.

Our fathers followed where you led
 To purer, better life begotten
 Your catechism unforgotten
 In ancient covenant dearly bought
 We worshipped as our fathers taught.

When oppositions how e'er sent
 But stronger, held, your covenant
 To bridge the immeasurable span
 A link connecting God and man.
 Now you are dead - your light is spent
 Released at last - your covenant.

A rich reward may ever reap
 For ancient Sabbaths pledged to keep
 May modern church create a light
 To point the way from wrong to right
 Your ancient order to revise
 That light may shine for others eyes.⁷¹

The Communion Service

Some fifteen years ago, I gave a forerunner of this talk at Barnesville Presbyterian Church in November 1989.⁷² Before that, I visited the community, and found out that there was interest in and curiosity about a communion service or set which had once belonged to the Covenanter Church. It consisted of two communion cups, a plate and a flagon (with spout and cover). It had apparently been left in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Simpson, in Barnesville. But that couple had separated, the woman had remarried, and was living in Moncton, NB. Mr. Simpson didn't have the service. Possibly she did. Was it possible to get it back? Perhaps to be placed in the Kings County Museum in Hampton? I promised to investigate.

I was able to track down the former Mrs. Simpson, now Mrs. Doris Gallagher. By coincidence, Anne Pirie, my wife knew of Doris through social work connections. Doris Gallagher had the communion cups, the rest of the service was held by her daughter, Valerie Scott of Toronto. I shared with Doris the wishes of the Barnesville folk with whom I had talked. And I was able to take the two cups to the talk in Barnesville, promising to return them a few days later.

Immediately following the talk in Barnesville, a Mrs. Hosford talked with me - she

⁷¹ Information on the sheet containing the poem, given to me by Robert J. More, Jr., in 1988. According to that sheet, the author is G. William Elder (1895-1975). William Elder's uncle, Robert Elder (1812-1897), had been a Covenanter elder at Queensville/Millstream.

⁷² See Eldon Hay, "The Barnesville Covenanters and their Cemetery," *Generations: Journal of the New Brunswick Genealogical Society* (Summer 2001), pp.52-58.

had memories going back some 85 years or so: she remembered them being used when the Rev. James McCune was minister - back in 1910 and 1911

During the brief time they were in my possession, I examined the cups. On the bottom of each of the cups are two circular marks and a number. In one of the circular marks are the words, "Meriden B. Company" and in the other "Quadruple Plate". The number is "1390". On the side of each cup, near the top on the exterior are the letters "R.E.C."

I took the cups to Birks in Moncton, showing and sharing the identification marks. I was hoping, perhaps expecting, that the communion service might have come from Scotland (brought by Rev. Christopher Atkinson) or from Ulster (brought by Rev. James Lawson). However, according to the person at Birks, the cups were made in Connecticut in the late 1800s or early 1900s. I suppose they might have been purchased by the Lawsons during their stay in Boston, in 1856-57, probably not. Or someone else from the community got them. Or

....

Returning the cups to Doris Gallagher, I shared the information I'd received, and asked if she could find out how the flagon and the plate were marked. Subsequently, I wrote to Mrs. Gallagher, giving my address and phone number, and inviting her to get in touch with me should any news or developments take place concerning the communion service.

Early in 2001, I was phoned by Doris Gallagher's daughter in Toronto, Valerie Scott.⁷³ Valerie was now in possession of the entire service, and in fact, had been in possession of it for some time. Subsequently, we had a telephone and email exchange. I discovered that, on the top surface of the plate were the letters: "R.E.C." On the underside, markings similar to that of the cups. The flagon has similar markings, on its underside. On the side of the flagon, however, beneath the letters "R.E.C." is the name "Barnesville."⁷⁴

On a later visit to Valerie Scott in her Toronto home late in 2002, it was clear that she was somewhat open to the service being placed in a museum. At that time, I suggested as depository either the Kings County Museum in Hampton or the recently inaugurated National

⁷³ A perspective on Valerie Scott's life and work is found in "I love sex and I'm good at it," *Globe and Mail*, 17 March 2001, p.R14.

⁷⁴ The markings on the four pieces of the Communion Service - for which I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Tom Allen of Dundas, ON:

Two Cups: Engraved on the side of each cup, in script capital letters, are the initials "R.E.C." On the bottom is stamped a manufacturer's mark - this is a circle with the name "MERIDEN B. COMPANY" around the inside of this circle. Then there is a balance on a crest in the centre of the circle - beside the manufacturer's mark is another circle of the same size, with the words "QUADRUPLE PLATE" around the inside of that circle. Then below the two circles on each cup is the number "1390."

One Plate: In the centre of the top surface of the plate are the initials "R.E.C." the same size and script as for the cups. On the underside, there is the same manufacturer's mark, etc., as for the cups, and the number "1390" as well.

One Flagon: The initials "R.E.C." are engraved on the side of the flagon, the same size and script as for the cups and the plate, but under the initials is the name "Barnesville" in upper and lower case script. The underside has the same stamped circles with the manufacturer's mark and the words "QUADRUPLE PLATE," as on the cups and the plate. The number "1390" is shown the same way but, in addition, the number "2" is stamped underneath the number.

Finally - from the internet - this paragraph: "Meriden B. Company is the trademark of the Meriden Britannia Company, Meriden, CT, in business 1852-1898, making a vast array of silverplated tableware items."

Presbyterian Museum in Toronto (officially opened and dedicated, 29 September 2002). Valerie Scott indicated that she had clear and specific ideas as to how the service would be identified; should it be donated to an archive or museum. I indicated that, as donor, she would have the right to say how and with what language she wanted - surely the wording she wished could be negotiated. I then corresponded with the Director of the Kings County Museum - that Museum would be glad to receive it. I talked with Dr. John Johnston of the National Presbyterian Museum, he said that his museum would be very pleased to have it.

Late in 2003, there was another phone conversation. Valerie Scott was now inclined to deposit the service in an archive; for one thing, her home had been broken into. Valerie chose the National Presbyterian Museum. Early in 2004, I emailed Dr. John Johnston, suggesting that he phone and talk with her. He did, Valerie Scott subsequently visited the National Presbyterian Museum. Arrangements were made for the deposit of the service there. The wording for the identification of the service was agreed upon - it is as follows:

THIS COMMUNION SERVICE BELONGED TO SOUTHSTREAM
BARNESVILLE COVENANTER CONGREGATION, NB, 1845-1923.
FOLLOWING ITS DISSOLUTION, IT REMAINED IN A BROTHEL IN
TORONTO UNTIL PRESENTED TO THE MUSEUM IN 2004.

DONATED BY VALERIE SCOTT, SPOKESPERSON, SEX PROFESSIONALS OF
CANADA

No Pan of Squares

by

Geoffrey Johnson

It was said of Jacques Parizeau that he could make numbers sing. I don't pretend to a comparable talent, but I hope I can tell this tale of money raising and spending with enough pizzazz to keep you awake. I offer this afternoon, not a pan of squares, but an analysis of the finances of the overseas missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada from its inception in 1875 to its centenary in 1975. My experience with numbers from the past is that they raise more questions than they answer. This paper then is very much a work in progress, a first canter around the pasture

Because the schism of 1925 is so important in Presbyterian history this paper naturally breaks into two parts. In some respects the material for the first part is more accurate than for the second. Up until 1922 people could direct their donations to their choice of the "Schemes of the Church," the colleges, the pensions, home missions or foreign missions. After 1922 congregational contributions were put in a single pot, romantically called the Budget, and divided up by an Assembly Committee in Toronto.

My first point is that givings for foreign missions increased at an impressive rate. In 1875-1876 the total amount raised for all congregational purposes was \$841,854, the amount raised for the schemes of the church was just under \$94,000, of which \$17, 895 was for foreign missions. The amount raised for foreign missions more than doubled every ten years until 1922, when they changed the system. Between 1905 and 1915 it almost trebled. In 1922 congregations gave \$362,145 to foreign missions twenty times as much as they had fifty years earlier. In 1875 givings to foreign missions were 2.1% of the amount raised for congregational purposes. In 1922 they were 5.6%.¹

The Presbyterian Church grew steadily throughout the period, avoiding the hills and valleys of the Canadian economy. When our numbers begin in 1875, Canada was in a slack period that did not end until 1896.² In those days more people left the country than

¹ These and subsequent figures are from the *Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly* (A and P).

² Jean Claude Robert in *The Historical Atlas of Canada*, vol. 2, pages 77-79.

came in, and at the same time fertility rates tended to drop. Nevertheless the church grew from 89,228 members in 1875-1876 to 183,979 in 1896. In the next thirty years, when times were good, the church continued to grow, reaching 379,155 in 1924.

However there were significant regional shifts. In addition to large numbers of European and American immigrants the Canadian population joined in the settlement of the prairies. Many of these people were Presbyterians. By 1875 Atlantic Canada, which had seen its golden age in the days of wood, wind and water was falling behind. Central Canada was already almost settled and the west awaited the National Policy.

In 1875 the Maritimes accounted for 25% of the church's membership. The proportion fell to 22% in 1896, and to 14% in 1924. A comparable decline can be seen in Quebec, although not as dramatic because of the importance of Montreal. South Western Ontario, one of the main heartlands of Presbyterianism peaked at 37% of the church's membership in 1886, dropped to 35% ten years later, and fell off to 24% in 1924. By contrast, the Presbyterians west of Ontario, who constituted a mere 0.5% of the membership, mainly around Winnipeg, in 1875, grew to just under 10% in 1896, and then 25% by 1924, overtaking the old Presbyterian regions in south western Ontario and the Maritimes.

Contributions to the central funds show a similar pattern. In 1875 Maritimers contributed 22% of the "schemes of the church." In 1896 their share had fallen to just under 20% and by 1924 it was only 13%. Quebec's share was halved over the period, from 18% to 9.15%. South western Ontario peaked at 29.71% in 1885-1886 and then fell somewhat irregularly to 22.76 % in 1924. By contrast the west rose from a mere 0.40% in 1875 to 23.48% in 1924 more than south western Ontario, the Maritimes, and even central Ontario, which included the city of Toronto.

In other words contributions moved with the population. Support for foreign missions was a popular cause, not an enthusiasm of the well-to-do. For a number of years the FMC published in its annual report lists of designated contributions. We may take the report for 1905 as a fairly typical example. The designated contributions amount to just under \$32,000 out of a total receipts of \$170,100. The largest ones, in the \$1200-\$1500 range are for the salaries of individual missionaries and came from well-established urban congregations in Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton. Only two contributions of over \$1000 are attached to individuals, David Yuille, of Montreal, a regular, gave \$1200 to cover the stipend of Murdock MacKenzie in Honan and an anonymous donor, also from Montreal, gave \$1500 to the support of A.W. Lohead, also of Honan. Even these large contributions were in support of established work. They do not seem to reflect an elite shaping of mission policy.³ Similarly "donations," contributions from individuals apart from congregations were never a large part of the Committee's income.

But there were donations and donations, some of which may not have passed through the church's books. In 1880, while on furlough in southern Ontario George Leslie MacKay received two generous donations. The people of Oxford County, Ontario, from which MacKay had come, gave \$6215 which went to the building of Oxford College, in Taiwan, the first theological college of the North Formosa mission. On the same trip he received some \$3000 from a woman in Detroit, who was also named MacKay, which went to the first Mackay Memorial hospital, named after the donor's

³ A and P, 1906, pp. 233-234. Missionary stipends were a living allowance rather than payment for services rendered. They varied from place to place, but generally were in the \$1200-\$1500 range

husband.⁴ In 1891, John Wilkie, of the India mission was on a fund raiser in Ontario and netted some \$10,000 for Indore College.⁵

The bulk of the money for overseas missions thus came from small donations, sometimes literally nickels and dimes. The money that came through the congregational treasurers was collected on Sunday morning. That which went to the support of the WMS came in large part from offerings at the monthly meetings of the Auxiliaries, the local gatherings of women who contributed to mission work largely, but not exclusively among women and girls.

The practice of regular donations at the monthly meetings was so well established that it was rarely discussed. There are occasional references to the practice in the annual reports, sometimes with the recommendation that auxiliaries, that is the local meetings encourage the use of envelopes, rather in the way that charities today urge us to join their plan of systematic giving, usually with a provision of automatic withdrawal from our bank accounts. A century ago the banks did not provide such services. In 1912 the *Foreign Missionary Tidings*, the magazine of the WMS WD published one of the few descriptions of how funds were raised.

Even then the subject did not take much space. The article in question is quite long, and mostly concerned with recruiting new members and running proper meetings. A good deal of time is devoted to the study materials the society was producing, either on its own or with other organizations. Finally, towards the end of the article we find four paragraphs on fund raising.

It seems that there were four principal methods, membership fees, which varied with the auxiliary, honorary membership fees, twice the regular membership fee, plate offerings at the meetings, offerings at the annual thank offering meeting, which could include donations from people who were not regular members of the auxiliary and the largest of all, the monthly envelopes⁶

Systematic giving was not just efficient, for some it was virtuous. An article directed at leaders of mission bands insisted

But above all let all the offerings be *voluntary* and of the members own earnings, and not raised by bazaars and other outside agencies. The giving should be as systematic as the study and should be done entirely from principle and not from impulse.⁷

In those days mission bands could consist of people from five to sixteen, and certainly the older ones could well have been in the workforce. Not until the period of

⁴ G.L. MacKay, *From Far Formosa*, (Toronto: 1895), pp. 292 and 316.

⁵ John McNab, *They Went Forth* (Toronto: 1933), pp. 109-110. McNab does not say so, but it is likely that a significant part of this sum came from the Bronson family in Ottawa. McNab mentions an invitation to speak in Ottawa, and the convocation room at Indore College is called Bronson Hall.

⁶ "Conclusions regarding Auxiliary Work", by Mrs G Russell of Belleville, *Foreign Missionary Tidings*, July-August 1912, p. 42.

⁷ *Foreign Missionary Tidings*, July-August 1903, p. 70.

the First World War did the Society begin to divide its work among younger people into age groups. Despite their youth the members of the mission bands contributed significant amounts of money. In 1912-1913 for example the Western Division took in just under \$100,000, of which almost \$15,000 came from the mission bands.⁸

Although overseas missions was a popular rather than an elite project, its popularity was limited. A common complaint in the annual reports from the presbyterials is the lack of interest in the cause among the women of the church.

In 1913, for example, there were 79,623 Presbyterians in south western Ontario. Let us assume that half of them, 39,811 were women. The WMS only claimed 8093 adult members, or approximately 20% of its potential. This is a very rough figure. Probably more than half the Presbyterians were women, and some of the older members of the mission bands, not counted in the 8093 would have been old enough to count as communicant members. It would be safe to say that the WMS accounted for not more than 20% of the women in the church, and probably less. On the other hand, women who were not part of the Society did contribute at the annual thank offering meeting. Still, a maximum of 20% is probably a reasonable figure for support of some kind among the women.⁹

Despite the tremendous increase in their incomes the two FMCs were plagued with deficits. (They were sometimes called FMBs, but I will stay with FMC for simplicity's sake) The Eastern committee had its ups and downs, but after 1912, things went from bad to worse. By 1915 they were ready to throw in the towel and combine with the FMC west. The principal reason was the rapid rise in the cost of the mission in north eastern Korea. The Western committee, although much larger, was still something of a weak reed. In 1910-1911 it showed a deficit of \$5000, the year the Eastern Committee was \$3600 to the good. For the next ten years the western committee was chronically in deficit. They made regular transfers from their legacy fund but the deficits would not go away. In 1921 expenditures peaked at just under \$550,000, and their deficit that year was \$166,661.89. It seems likely that at that point the bean counters in the Toronto office began twisting arms. In 1924, for the first time in years, the FMC was in the black.

The FMC's troubles were not all of its own making. Contributions to the central funds of the church dropped steadily during the twenties, possibly because the church union controversy was coming to a head, and the Toronto office was staunchly unionist. The dissenters, the argument goes, were less and less willing to support its schemes. Of more significance for overseas missions, however, were changes in the global economy. Costs were rising everywhere; even those items paid in Canadian dollars, like transportation and freight, doubled in the aftermath of the First War. Still more serious was the depreciation of the Canadian dollar against the yuan and the rupee. In China wages, calculated in Canadian dollars, were two and a half times what they had been before the war. In India they were fifty percent higher. These were by far and away the

⁸ *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Western División, 1912-1913*, p. 80.

⁹ Figures for the rest of central and western Canada are comparable except for British Columbia, which in 1913 had only a small WMS. By 1923, however, it had caught up with the rest of the country.

largest of the overseas fields. In the third major field, the Japanese empire, costs had only risen by about five percent.¹⁰

The WMS, however, managed to stay afloat. The Western Division had extensive work in Canada as well as overseas. It suffered from the general inflation as did the FMC, but not as much from exchange fluctuations because a large part of its work was within Canada. In 1923, when the men were still racking up deficits, the women ended the year with a credit balance of just over \$2,000.¹¹

The schism of 1925 was devastating for the Presbyterian Church. Membership fell from 379,155 in 1924 to 163,374 in 1926. Similarly, givings to the Budget, the central funds from which the overseas operation was financed fell from over two million to less than half a million. Although membership rose steadily until the 1960s, givings fell during the depression and did not reach the 1926 level until after the Second World War.

The west was particularly had hit. Membership west of the lakes fell from 96,349 in 1924 to 18,123 in 1926. Similarly givings to the central funds dropped from \$496,812 to \$33,456, and followed the general trend downwards during the 1930s. The three prairie provinces, which depended heavily on the export of cereals were hit, not just with the Great Depression, but with several years of drought. The organization of relief supplies became a major factor in the work of the superintendents of mission in the west.

The WMS WD was similarly devastated. In 1923 they reported a total membership in auxiliaries of 95,931.¹² In 1926 the total was 19,786. In the west membership in auxiliaries fell from 11,623 to 2,316.¹³ In the same period income from contributions fell from \$366,626.94 to \$163,861.27.

Although the numbers are much smaller there is a measure of continuity in the relative levels of support. In 1875-1876, the money contributed to the central funds, the schemes of the church was 9.52% of the amount raised for all congregational purposes. The percentage rose steadily over the first fifty years of the church's life reaching 24% in 1924. A decade later in the middle of the depression, the percentage given to the central funds was back down below 10%, 9.55%, more or less where it had been sixty years before. Only after the Second World War did the percentage improve reaching 14% in the heady boom years of the mid sixties, and falling back to 11% in 1975. It seems people are more thoughtful of others when times are good.

Again, these are very rough figures. After 1922 it is impossible to say how much of the money available for "missions" was given for missions, and how much for the work of the national church in general. But, on the not unreasonable assumption that mission propaganda, whether for home or overseas was the most appealing aspect of the propaganda for the central funds, it rarely garnered more than 20% of the church's givings and after 1925 was more likely to have to settle for 10%.

The picture for the WMS including both Eastern and Western Divisions is somewhat different. Using the same rough calculation, the percentage of women supporting the WMS in 1926, the year after the schism was 41%. It declined steadily

¹⁰ *Acts and Proceedings*, 1920, p. 75.

¹¹ *Tenth Annual Report of the Women's Missionary Society*, (WD) p. 20.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

¹³ *Ibid.*, and the annual report for 1926.

thereafter, but did not reach levels comparable to those reported before the First World War until the 1970s. For 1975 the same calculation, WMS members as a percentage of an estimated number of women in the church gives 22.46%.

As far as givings are concerned. The WMS was clearly pulling more than its weight. In 1926 its revenue was equal to about 44% of the national budget. Ten years later it was over half, and then it began to fall off. In 1946 it was still over 47% but then it declined to less than 20% in 1976.¹⁴ It is something, but not much of an exaggeration to say that in the lean years of the thirties and forties the women kept the overseas programme afloat.¹⁵

As noted earlier this money came from offerings on Sunday mornings or at the monthly meetings. For years the church used a "duplex envelope" one side printed in red and the other in black. The red side was for the central funds and the black side for local expenses. Within the voluntary tradition systematic and sacrificial giving appears as a late blooming version of Protestant asceticism. Giving is good for the soul. Certainly this was orthodoxy in the WMS. We have noted a few examples from early in the twentieth century. In 1940 Laura Pelton returned to the same theme.

First let us have planned giving. "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him." In St Paul's admonition we find a principle which has perpetual meaning for the Christian in his or her giving to the Church, the principle of forethought, or of definite planning.¹⁶

We plan our households, she went on, why should we not plan our givings to the church? The analogy perhaps suggests more than Pelton intended. It suggests a woman sitting down at the kitchen table when everybody else has left to plan the month's meals in peace and quiet. It suggests a solitary exercise, a form of spiritual discipline, the soul wrestling with God.

Laura Pelton is a good representative of mid-twentieth-century mission orthodoxy. She worked for the WMS WD for some thirty years, ending up as its general secretary and one of the more important Canadian missionary figures of her time. Her opinion is to be taken seriously.

But, as Lydia Ross Alexander pointed out, in this room, at a meeting of this society, in connection with a WMS group in Toronto,

¹⁴ Figures from WMS WD and *The Acts and Proceedings*.

¹⁵ This argument does not take into account the contributions on the field. Missionaries were always pressing local people to "shoulder more of the burden." To some extent they did. An interesting but unusual variation on sources of financing is the Goforth Evangelistic Fund. It was originally a by-product of Goforth's success as a revivalist, and in the thirties it was carrying most if not all of the costs of the Chinese staff in the Manchurian mission.

¹⁶ Laura K. Pelton "How Do We Give?" in *The Glad Tidings*, January 1940, p. 21. *The Glad Tidings* was, and still is the magazine of the WMS WD.

All successful fund raising activities contain a strong social element, and this was evident when members opened their homes for picnics, meetings and teas.¹⁷

In 1935 a group of six young women, members of Knox Presbyterian Church in Dunnville, Ontario, formed the Dr. Margaret Strang Auxiliary of the Women's Missionary Society. The group was never large, twenty at the most, and it was a junior society. There already was an auxiliary of older women in the congregation. The Margaret Strang Auxiliary was extremely participatory. They met in each other's houses, and had pot luck suppers on the beach where one of the women had a cottage. They planned their activities, the making of layettes for Indian children, and their studies of mission work, usually but not necessarily of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. They all took part in worship, leading in prayer or singing or reading the Bible. And they gave, initially in very small amounts. A monthly offering from eight people might amount to \$1.20. The membership fee was 25 cents a year. They supplemented these small offerings with the odd tea, or table at the church bazaar, but especially with two special thank offerings, one at Easter and one in the Fall. Giving was almost incidental to their main purpose, fellowship, study and worship. Their initial allocation was twenty dollars a year, but before long it had quadrupled.¹⁸ They never had any trouble meeting it. Their giving was in a very strong social context.

The official orthodoxy, whether among the women or in the church at large simply never seems to have understood the social context of giving. For the leaders it was simply another form of spiritual discipline. Everyone must do their own believing, said Luther, just as we all must do our own dying. For Presbyterians, giving for missions was in the same category. At least, that was official orthodoxy; the reality seems to have been quite different.

As I have said this paper is a work in progress. The bare numbers of members and givings are readily available in the archives of the national church, and they raise as many questions as they answer. More seriously, the human face, the dynamics of the auxiliaries, the organizations devoted exclusively to missions remains largely unexplored. Only extensive research will determine if Jardine and Margaret Strang the two auxiliaries to which I have referred are typical of the church as a whole.

¹⁷ Lydia Ross Alexander, "The Jardine Auxiliary of Wychwood St. Columba Presbyterian Church: A Skeletal Reconstruction" in *The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers*, 2002, p.9.

¹⁸ *Minutes and Ledger of the Margaret Strang Auxiliary*, in the possession of Knox Presbyterian Church, Dunnville.

OUT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CLOSET:

Alliance of the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System, Fifth General Council, Toronto, ON, September 21-30, 1892

by

John Alexander Johnston

The year was 1892 when Canadian Presbyterianism emerged in the Reformed family as a force with which to be reckoned. On the ecclesiastical map of the world, no longer was the denomination merely a byproduct or offshoot of Free, Secession or Kirk churches in Scotland. Rather, on the ecumenical scene it came to be recognized as a powerhouse in its own right. As a result of the meetings of the Fifth Assembly of the Alliance of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System, September 21-30, 1892, being held in Toronto, the Presbyterian Church in Canada in no small way led the Reformed charge in seeking to meet the ills of the world. Dr. William Caven, Principal of Knox College, spoke of the Toronto meeting as “the greatest ecclesiastical and religious event in the history of Toronto and Canada.”¹

After the accolades accorded his leadership had been duly recorded, the General Secretary of the Alliance, Dr. George Matthews, who had earlier served in Canada, responded by saying that the Toronto gathering was one of the most important that has ever been held in the history of the church. He waxed eloquent, stating that the Council “represented the greatest and grandest manifestation of Christian Union the world has ever seen and even out-vies a council like Nice [Nicea] a hundred fold.”² For more than four weeks prior to the opening of the Council, the Toronto *Globe* published daily articles on Presbyterianism in general and on the various thrusts of the Council agenda in particular, extolling the virtues of the Reformed faith.

Dr. W. Gordon Blaikie of New College, Edinburgh, president of the Alliance, added that the Assembly would go down in history as a newspaper man’s dream due to the interest of the public and the outstanding cordiality manifested by other denominations.³ As for the geographical site, he said that “Toronto the Good was a queen upon her throne, sitting by the side of her pure lake of limpid

¹ *Presbyterian Record*, September, 1892, p, 287.

² *Presbyterian Witness and Evangelical Advocate*, 1 October 1892, p. 313.

³ *Minutes*, Alliance of The Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System (Toronto: Hart & Riddell, 1892), p.419. Hereafter cited as *Minutes*.

blue, with her magnificent streets, her public buildings and residences, her peaceful Sabbaths and her warm-hearted citizens.”⁴

The Alliance of the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System [or World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) as it is known in 2004], was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1876 as the Pan Presbyterian Alliance, just a year after the formation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Meeting every four years, the Alliance gathered in Philadelphia in 1880, Belfast in 1884, and London in 1888, prior to the Toronto Council in 1892.

The invitation to hold the Fifth Council in Toronto had been extended initially by a group of influential Canadian ministers and laymen, who offered the support of Toronto congregations to sponsor the Assembly, arrange the programme, provide many of the speakers, line up billets, provide meals to delegates in the Horticulture Pavillion, devise such social diversions as a garden party and trip to Niagara Falls, and of course, underwrite the expenses of the gathering. The General Assembly of the Canadian Church in 1888 “learned with pleasure of this action” by this *ad hoc* committee.

Cooke’s Church, with its newly opened sanctuary and recognized over the years as the congregation of choice by the Irish in Toronto, provided the main venue enabling over three thousand people to participate in the evening meetings. Morning and afternoon presentations took place in St. James Square Church, its interim moderator being Principal Caven. Overflow facilities, needed to accommodate the public in the evenings, were provided by Knox and St. James Square buildings. Although not listed on the official Alliance agenda, St. Andrew’s, through its minister D.J. Macdonnell, offered to provide a Sunday afternoon communion service.⁵ On Sunday morning, seventy-five congregations in the greater Toronto area welcomed Assembly divines to their pulpits. Biographies of the most notable churchmen were described in detail in the *Toronto Globe*.⁶

The Presbyterian Record, the organ of The Canada Presbyterian Church, publicized the proceedings of the Fifth Council at great length, heaping almost idolatrous praise upon the organizers, participants, quality of the subjects addressed, and the resulting debates. Those delegated to attend, stated its editor in the September 1892 issue, which had been published prior to the arrival of the participants in Toronto, were characterized as “strong in thought, deep earnest faith and wide experience ... the Imperial Guard, valiant for truth.”⁷

A suggested list of twenty delegates and their twenty alternates was approved by the General Assembly. The majority of the delegates from The Presbyterian Church in Canada had already served between four and eight years on the council and executive, thus providing men of ability and experience for leadership roles at the Toronto meetings. Not a single alternate commission was activated, so keen were the original delegates to attend. Unlike many member denominations of the Alliance, which only accredited Teaching Elders, fully half the official delegates appointed by the General Assembly were, in true Presbyterian fashion, Ruling Elders. Of the latter, forty per cent were members of the judiciary or parliament.

Less representative was the geographical distribution of these Ruling Elders with seven of the ten claiming Toronto as their home. Montreal, the one-time heart of Presbyterian leadership, by 1892 had fallen far behind with only David Morrice from that city elected by the church. Geographically the choice of Teaching Elders from the Presbyterian Church in Canada provided wider representation. Two came from the Prairies, two from the Maritimes, one from Quebec and one each from Guelph

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.429.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁶ *Canadian Presbyterian*, 21 September 1892, p. 628; *Toronto Globe*, 26 September 1892.

⁷ *Presbyterian Record*, September 1892, p. 227.

and Kingston, while only three hailed from Toronto.

A further sign of the importance of Canadian Presbyterianism in the Alliance was the appointment of such divines as Caven, MacVicar, Grant, Macdonnell and Gordon to the executive of the Western Section of the Alliance, composing forty per cent of its membership, far exceeding proportional representation based on the statistics. In addition to this Western Section, a corresponding Eastern Section existed composed of twenty Europeans, while the Fifth Council planned to establish a Southern Section comprising Australia and the South Pacific. The Executive Committee was similarly overly represented by Canadian Presbyterians, for from the eighty bodies comprising the Alliance, fully one-sixth of the Business Committee was drawn from the Canadian church.⁸

Principal Caven, newly elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, was chosen to have the prestigious honour of delivering the sermon at the Opening of the Council. It was later printed verbatim in various publications.⁹ Caven was also chosen to chair the important Committee on Business. His many motions on the floor of Assembly attested to his diligence and influence. Dr. Cochrane of Brantford won the praise of the Council for his well-developed and timely address on the importance of Sabbath Schools. The Principal of Presbyterian College, Montreal, Dr. Harvey MacVicar, who chaired a Friday evening session, in his address on "The Biblical Idea of the Ministry" offered his traditional and conservative position which was received without comment by the Council. Later when Dr. Thomas Wardrope of Guelph presented his paper on the Second Advent, Dr. MacVicar suggested that the Alliance must not dwell on "vague and uncertain speculations."¹⁰

Dr. John Laing of Dundas examined both the strengths and weakness of the Roman Catholic Church in his paper, "Romanism in Canada." "Popish prejudices" were aired.¹¹ Dr. W. Burns of Knox Church, Toronto, contributed a further paper on the same subject. Much interest was aroused by the proposed disposition of the Clergy Reserves and Jesuit Estates. The fear was expressed by some delegates that the Pope might inherit part of Canada. Interestingly, the 1893 *Minutes* of the Presbyterian General Assembly state that James Croil, well-known author and father of the Kirk establishment, presided at a Foreign Missions evening and also delivered a paper on the Eldership. However, he is not listed anywhere as a delegate and there is no record of his name in the official minutes of the Alliance where are listed all the chairpersons, lecturers, and participants.

According to the Hamilton *Herald* newspaper, one of the few areas of controversy erupted when the Scottish Church was accused of modernism, resulting in a thoughtful and well-accepted response. When Principal Grant of Queens stated that if Lower Criticism is applied to the text and Higher Criticism is applied to the literary, historical and linguistic, as well as personal circumstances, then "higher criticism is just as legitimate a branch of learning as the lower criticism."¹² The Church must not be afraid of learning and the Alliance should not make any of her people feel, concluded Dr. Grant, that she was afraid of scholarship or investigation. When representatives of the conservative southern American church raised objections, it was feared that inflamed emotions might turn nasty

⁸ *Minutes*, p.33.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.2-3, 4, 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.248; *Canadian Presbyterian*, 5 October 1892, p.630.

¹¹ *Canadian Presbyterian*, 5 October 1892; *Minutes*, pp.398-399; *Presbyterian Record*, November 1892, p.286.

¹² *Minutes*, p.321.

but the chair declared that adjournment was in order.

Dr. William Cochrane of Brantford chaired the final morning meeting having been a close second to the Principal of Knox College in moving forward the business of the Council. Dr. James Robertson of Winnipeg delivered a paper on "Church Life and Work in Canada." He spoke most eloquently, according to various reporters, asserting "in public affairs, in trade, economies, and manufactures, in educational and professional life, her sons take first rank. And what they have, they hold with a tenacious grip, and hunger for more."¹³

The Rev. W. Burns of Knox Church, Toronto, was commended by the Council for his "untiring services and indefatigable labours" in supervising all the local arrangements. A ruling elder, William Mortimer Clark of Toronto, one time vice-president of the anti-Romanist Equal Rights Association and Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, chaired the first Thursday evening public gathering. One could admit with some truth that the Canadian voice was heard so loudly only because the meetings were held in Canada, but the fact remains that The Presbyterian Church in Canada exercised an inordinate degree of influence at the Assembly, in comparison to its size.

This Council also recognized the needs of the small Reformed churches in Eastern Europe and their representatives were given opportunity to share their needs and dreams as *diaspora* bodies. Reports from persecuted and struggling churches of the *diaspora* were heard. Delegates were told of the needs of the Spanish Christian Church (no marrying rights), Evangelical Church of Italy, Reformed Church of Moravia, Reformed Church of Bohemia, Reformed Churches of Lemberg, as well as the six or seven bodies in Austria-Hungary which were represented at the Council by the Reformed Church of the Helvetic Confession. In Turkey the Council was told mission work was being greatly curtailed and Christian schools had been banned. Signor Philippo Grilli explained the Waldensian position, outlining their suffering generation after generation, but now free to serve and engage in missionary activities in South America.

A special category titled "Corresponding Member," approved by a previous Council, and composed of foreign missionaries or conveners who had been invited to deliver missionary papers but without a vote, was again authorized in 1892. Fully one-quarter of these missionary doctors and ministers claimed Canada as their home. One afternoon was devoted to examining the special situation facing minority churches.¹⁴ In Russia, for instance, it was reported that ninety-two Protestant ministers were in jail for allowing persons who had been baptized in the Orthodox faith to attend worship services.

The *Presbyterian Record* waxed eloquently over the Fifth Council, stating that "the world never saw concentrated in one gathering more of power. It was a sample of the world's ablest thought, animated by high and holy purpose, grappling with the great themes."¹⁵ What were these great themes which engaged the energies of the Reformed Churches throughout the world in 1892?

First and foremost was the theme of Missions, a word that usually was preceded by the word Foreign. The 1892 period witnessed an explosion of missionary activities outside traditional geographical boundaries. Missionary spirit pervaded the Toronto meetings, reported the *Canada Presbyterian* magazine.¹⁶ Whole days of the Council were devoted to the study of mission endeavours. Theological colleges like *Knox*, Toronto, and *Presbyterian College*, Montreal, were

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.208.

¹⁴ *Presbyterian Record*, November 1892, p.283.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.282.

¹⁶ *Canadian Presbyterian*, 28 September 1892, p.631.

reported as sending money and graduates overseas, to the West and Quebec at an unprecedented rate.¹⁷ French Evangelization in Canada by Presbyterians was warmly supported by the membership nationally and statistics confirm it to be the most, or nearly so, financially successful schemes of the church, year after year.¹⁸

The Alliance was urged to encourage the establishment of a chair of Missionary Education in every theological college. *The Presbyterian Witness and Evangelical Advocate* of Halifax crowed that one-quarter of all Protestant missionary work in the world was contributed by Presbyterians.¹⁹ Four critiques of independent missionary societies were presented, comparing their work with that of the churches, and drawing the conclusion that no missionary societies are really needed as the Church itself has become a great Missionary Society.²⁰

Thousands gathered to hear Dr. John G. Paton, the world-renowned missionary of the New Hebrides Mission. Other overseas missionaries from China, Japan, India and Africa addressed the Council.²¹ A missionary from Calabar told how "instead of one tribe just waiting to spring at the throat of the other, they are now sending Christian men of one tribe in amongst the heathen of another tribe to bless them and do them good."²² The Rev. A.B. Winchester was singled out for work among the several thousand Chinese in British Columbia. Missionaries to North American Indians living on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel addressed the Alliance. Dr. Charles Grant of Dundee, Scotland, urged that a minimum of Europeanism be evident on the mission field. Native preachers should not have to agree to teachings that are uniquely Scottish, etc. Disappointment was expressed about the low level of financial support raised by the indigenous people themselves and the realization that many trained local workers were prone to resign in order to accept more highly remunerated positions in the secular world.

The plea for workers to meet the needs of immigrants settling the Canadian West and North West Territories was raised. A challenge was issued to denominations whose members were emigrating to the Americas to provide financial support and above all missionaries for the receiving churches in order that their departing members might continue to be provided with the ordinances of the Reformed Faith.²³

A second theme, that of Unity or Church Union, sometimes entitled Organic Union, was closely related to missions, and either implicitly or explicitly permeated the discussions of the Council. The very first journal of the Alliance was called *The Catholic Presbyterian*, thus seeking to emphasize that the Reformed Churches belonged to the Holy Catholic and Universal Church. The Fifth Council was told that it must be "more than ready to enter into as close relations as possible with all who are truly loyal to our common Lord and Saviour."²⁴ In an article on the Council in the *Presbyterian Record*, this news magazine reported that the theme of the Fifth Council was "that they

¹⁷ *Minutes*, p.40.

¹⁸ John A. Johnston, "The Presbyterian College, Montreal," unpublished M.A thesis, McGill University, 1951, p.71.

¹⁹ *Presbyterian Witness and Evangelical Advocate*, 1 October, 1892, page 313.

²⁰ *Minutes*, p.255-271.

²¹ *Canadian Presbyterian*, 28 September 1892, p.617; *Minutes*, pp.141-156.

²² *Minutes*, p.114.

²³ *Ibid.*, p.416.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.84.

all may be one, accompanied by the great Commission to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”²⁵ The president of the Alliance, Dr. Blaikie, concluded that the Alliance was never formed to trumpet the glory of Presbyterianism. He believed “if the World Alliance has made us more Presbyterian, it has made us more Catholic too.”²⁶ As an example of Organic Church Union, the Presbyterian Church in Canada was upheld as an excellent example of Presbyterian Churches successfully uniting, but for most delegates organic union was limited to a uniting of churches with similar confessions of faith.

Reference was made to world Methodist and Congregationalist unions, both of which held meetings the previous year and for which the Alliance, as the first denominational body to unite, was ready to accept some credit for their actions. With a sense of pride, it was reported that these denominations, unlike Presbyterians, were unable to agree to a common confession for their unions. Dr. James McCosh of Princeton, NJ, was commended by the Alliance for working for a “federal relation ... among evangelical churches, more especially with reference to mission work among the heathen.”²⁷

As an ideal, and as a future goal, church union was enthusiastically advocated on the floor of Council. but spokespersons were not ready to apply the concept to their own structures. Few denominations evolving from the Reformation or as a result of subsequent divisions were prepared to discuss union at home, but union on the foreign field was a different matter. All agreed Western Churches must work cooperatively overseas. Where several member churches shared the same foreign field, the formation of one organization was imperative. A success story trumpeted at the Toronto meeting was the newly formed Church of Christ in Japan which embraced the missions of the Presbyterian Church US, Cumberland, Reformed and United Presbyterian Church of Scotland.²⁸ In India, sixteen different Presbyterian Churches supported missions, with their eventual union as the goal, for “in union is strength.” The comment of the chair of the Western Section of the Foreign Mission Committee that “co-operation in mission [is] well nigh complete”²⁹ might in retrospect be considered premature, rather a case of looking through rose-coloured glasses.

Where mission was about to be undertaken in new geographical areas, churches were urged to enter into a comity arrangement so there would be no competition. Reference was made by several speakers to the Comity agreement worked out at the Shanghai General Conference of 1890 by which (a) all missions had the right to occupy all great capitals, etc; (b) preoccupation of small cities is to be respected and (c) the next conference would include all Protestant organizations.³⁰ The Council approved the motion to plan for organic union whenever a new foreign mission field is established.

In the report of the Foreign Missions Committee of Council, respect for native tongues was upheld and European missions should not expect the natives to learn the language of the Mother Church. The Alliance circulated four principles approved by all its members: (1) Mission churches should become independent and self-supporting as quickly as possible, not subservient to founding churches (2) Presbyteries be organized for all the various Presbyterian Churches in the area, (3)

²⁵ *Presbyterian Record*, November 1892, p.284.

²⁶ *Minutes*, pp.29-30.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.30.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Foreign Missions Report, Appendix, p.90.

²⁹ Foreign Missions Report, Appendix, p.98.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.90-94.

Missionaries be associated with such courts and act as advocates or advisers. (4) Foreign church courts will not have representation in church courts at home.³¹

Various proposals for social justice were generally widely supported and referred to the Executive Committee of Council. Once more Canadians were on the cutting edge. Dr. Cochrane condemned the inhuman and cruel way the Chinese were being received on their arrival in Canada. Principal Grant presented a widely circulated paper on labour which in the words of Professor Randall, expressed a "tone of hearty sympathy for the labouring class."³²

Rev. D.J. Macdonnell noted that all churches disapproved of drunkenness. To abstain from drinking for the sake of others was commendable, but he stated at the same time that drinking was not a sin.³³ Considerable discussion took place over the dissipation of drink among native peoples in America and the South Seas. The United States was condemned for not joining Britain and France in preventing foreigners from buying land or selling liquor in the New Hebrides.³⁴ Speakers savaged the Belgian government for its lenient stand in the Congo on slavery as well as "the reckless distribution of fire arms and of alcoholic drink among the native races of Africa."³⁵ Australian delegates referred to appalling conditions suffered by slave labor in the sugar plantations of Queensland.

Protecting the Christian Sabbath ranked high on the agenda of the Council. Opposition to Sunday newspapers, postal delivery, commerce and transportation was condemned at length. What rejoicing then, when a strongly worded letter was sent to the government of the United States and resulted in the prompt receipt of a telegram stating that the gates of the Columbian Exposition would be closed on Sunday as requested.³⁶ The sanctity of marriage was upheld, but divorce was deemed acceptable when granted on Scriptural grounds .

Of much weightier importance to the historian in the twenty-first century was the information that two years prior to the Opium War, Dr. Cochrane of Branford and Principal John King of Winnipeg were raising their voices in opposition to the opium laws being enforced by the Great Powers in China.³⁷ While a Scottish voice was heard upholding the Opium Trade by the United States and England, as the alcohol trade was allowed by these counties, it was pointed out that the Indian government was officially manufacturing and distributing the drug.³⁸ In every situation, it was argued that the Alliance should influence governments to arbitrate rather than take up arms to settle disputes, and thereby save money and lives.

The Reformed emphasis on both an educated ministry and laity was raised repeatedly, with voices lamenting the weakening role of the Bible in the schools. Interestingly, only in the *Hamilton Spectator* was reported a comment of Dr. Cochrane, the Sabbath School Convener, who condemned the use of Sunday School helps which he felt were "warping the spirituality of the teachers and

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.87.

³² *Minutes*, pp.351ff.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.381.

³⁴ *Presbyterian Witness*, 1 October 1892, p.313; *Minutes*, Appendix, p.82.

³⁵ *Minutes*, pp.81 and 83.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.39.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.201, 363, 382-383.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.203ff.

causing a disuse of the Bible.”³⁹ It was urged vigorously that translations of the Bible into native languages must proceed vigorously. More missionary literature must be produced and distributed in order to interest pew holders in supporting missionary enterprises. A delegate from India insisted on the importance of education of the local populace, concluding that even if people who were taught to read the Bible did not become Christians, they at least left school “friendly to Christianity.”⁴⁰ The importance of Sabbath Schools and Young Peoples Societies was brought to the attention of the Council, and the recent formation of Home Mission Societies among the young on a Synodical and Presbyterial level was praised.⁴¹

Although the wives of many Council members accompanied their husbands to Toronto, no mention was recorded of their presence except at the official garden party, the outing at Niagara Falls and the meeting of the Women’s Missionary Society, attended by the delegates’ wives and their Toronto hostesses. The Alliance was informed that women now composed one-quarter to one-third of the foreign mission staff, apart from wives.⁴² Fears were raised that the cost of sending so many missionaries (especially women) drained away money that could better be spent in the training of a native ministry. Obviously, pressures from women ready to undertake leadership and responsibilities in the structure of the church were being felt, with the Council belatedly recognizing the potential of this human resource. Canada with its strong women’s home and foreign missionary societies would be most supportive of change on the level of the Alliance. Thus at the 1892 meetings, the formation of an international union of women’s missionary societies was effected, connected with the World Alliance. Another major step forward taken by the Fifth General Council! The establishment of this global women’s religious network, affectionately became known as “A Girdle Around the Earth.”⁴³

At the worship services and various meetings of the 1892 Alliance, music was an important factor, but what kind of music did the delegates find acceptable? Not for these Fathers of the Faith were hymns to be sung. “Hymns were excluded more rigidly than are the Chinese from America,” stated the *Presbyterian Record*.⁴⁴ Only paraphrases of the Psalms of David and appropriate Scriptural passages, sung to the old familiar tunes of Geneva and Britain, were the order of the day. As late as 1892, some of the member churches of the Alliance still did not sing hymns, much less choruses, and it was agreed that the Fifth Council, for the sake of those opposed to non-Scriptural texts, would limit all singing to the inspired Word of God as found in Holy Writ. The *Presbyterian Record*, for its part saw the development of a common hymnal for use by members of the Alliance as a worthy goal of the Council.⁴⁵

Among the hundreds of delegates to the 1892 Assembly was one black face, the president of Biddle University, Charlotte, North Carolina, This token “man of color,” Dr. Daniel Saunders, a delegate of The Presbyterian Church in the USA, read a paper “The American Churches and their Work,” a presentation which was followed by an absence of any discussion. When the Alliance was

³⁹ *Hamilton Herald*, 29 September 1892.

⁴⁰ *Minutes*, p.104.

⁴¹ *Acts and Proceedings*, Appendix, 1891, p.18.

⁴² *Minutes*, p.132.

⁴³ *Bulletin*, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 2004, p.7.

⁴⁴ *Presbyterian Record*, Nov. 1892, p.283.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

brought to a close, Dr. Saunders was asked to pronounce the benediction.⁴⁶ It is not unexpected that the Alliance was entirely composed, at the end of the nineteenth century, as was the case during the four previous gatherings, of occidentals, primarily grey-haired ordained ministers, who were acknowledged church leaders in their various denominations, recognized for their many years of faithful service. Corresponding members attending from mission fields in Africa and Asia were virtually without exception representatives of the white race. Canadian Presbyterianism, one must also conclude, saw little reason for a role for its own First Nation and immigrant communicants.

The Council concluded with a tumultuous gathering in Cooke's Church although a considerable number of the delegates had already departed for their home countries. Countless Presbyterians who had traveled by train and boat from across the Dominion as observers of this once-in-a-lifetime phenomena, more than filled the available seats. Periodicals such as the *Canada Presbyterian* and the *Presbyterian Record* devoted column after column to the meetings, the former going so far as to print Dr. Caven's entire sermon for the edification of its readers.⁴⁷ Similarly the secular press like the *Toronto Globe* was most generous in its coverage. Although the Anglican Provincial Synod defeated a motion to appoint a delegation "to convey our greetings and the expression of our good will to the Moderator," the excitement and pride among Canadian Presbyterians, lay and clerical, engendered by the meetings, contributed in no small way to the maturing of the church.⁴⁸ Outstripping the growth of other Protestant denominations in Canada, Dr. Robertson boasted that one in four men in the West was now Presbyterian. Principal Caven announced that the Canadian Church, now larger than the population of England in Elizabethan times, should not be underestimated because Canada had been a colony.⁴⁹ Ecclesiastical confidence and enthusiasm was expressed by Canadians everywhere. It was the *Presbyterian Witness and Evangelical Advocate* of Halifax which swallowed its envy of Toronto to state "Who would have dreamed 40 years ago, or even 20 years ago that Canada should have in one of her fine cities so remarkable an assembly?"⁵⁰ That the Canadian church would become "an influence for good among the nations of the world," found in the 1892 meetings a prophecy being richly fulfilled.

⁴⁶ *Minutes*, p.436; *Canadian Presbyterian*, 5 October 1892, p.628.

⁴⁷ *Canadian Presbyterian*, 28 Sept. 1892, p.613.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Minutes*, p.209.

⁵⁰ *Presbyterian Witness and Evangelical Advocate*, 8 October 1892, p 325.

THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY:

Minutes of the Annual Meeting 25 September 2004:

The meeting was Called to Order by the President, Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Johnston at 1:35pm. The Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Michael Millar, acted as Secretary for the meeting. Twenty members were present.

The President opened the meeting by welcoming all who were present.

Regrets and best wishes for a successful meeting from Mrs. Lydia Alexander, Ms. Kim Arnold, Rev. Peter Bush, Dr. Gwen Davies, Rev. Dr. Zander Dunn, Rev. Dr. W. J. S. Farris, Rev. Dr. William Klempa, Dr. Paul Laverdure, Rev. Dr. Sheldon MacKenzie, Rev. Stephen Mills, Rev. Dr. Donald Smith, Rev. Angus Sutherland, Dr. Marilyn Whiteley, and Rev. Dr. Jack Whytock were noted as being received by the Secretary-Treasurer. A note from Dr. Smith regarding the new edition Oxford Dictionary of National Biography – the first since the 19th century - was shared with the meeting. He has contributed four biographies for this massive sixty volume work, containing 50,000 biographies, 10,000 contributors and 10,000 illustrations, that will cost £7500 per set.

The agenda was presented. No additions or deletions were made. On motion of Rev. Dr. Eldon Hay, seconded by Rev. Calvin Brown, the agenda as presented was the agenda for the meeting.

On motion of the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Dr. John Moir, the Minutes of the 2003 Annual Meeting, as printed in the 2003 Papers, were approved, no errors or omissions having been noted.

Business Arising from the Minutes:

(1) The Best of the Society Papers proposal was discussed. The President gave a report on what has happened since the 2003 meeting. Essentially the project in its original proposed form is dead, because funding could not be obtained. He also informed the meeting that Dr. Laverdure has withdrawn from the sub-committee set up at the 2003 meeting to prosecute the project. A number of suggestions were made with a view to continuing the project in some form other than an expensive book type publication. These included making the publication available on CD and to put it up on a website linked to The Presbyterian Church in Canada website. Moved by Dr. John Johnston, seconded by the Rev. Calvin Brown "That the committee be empowered to proceed and to publish via the Internet." Carried. Moved by Dr. John Johnston, seconded by the Rev. Calvin Brown "That the project be re-styled as 'Selected Papers of The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History.'" Carried. A replacement on the sub-committee vice Dr. Laverdure was discussed. Dr. MacLeod indicated a willingness to be added. Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Mr. Clarkson "That the Rev. Dr. A. D. MacLeod be added to the sub-committee." Carried. The sub-committee now consists of the President, the Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston and the Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod.

(2) The Secretary-Treasurer reported that the micro-filming of the Society's Papers from 1987 to 2002, authorised by the 2003 Annual General Meeting, had been completed well under the allocated amount. Mr. Bob Anger, Assistant Archivist of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, had looked after all of the necessary arrangements. Mr. Anger, who was present, was thanked with a round of applause. Mr. Clarkson wondered if the Papers would now be micro-filmed on an annual basis. Following discussion it was agreed that this would not be feasible, but that doing the filming on ten-year intervals would be more cost effective.

(3) Our advertisement in the Presbyterian Record was discussed. The Secretary-Treasurer informed the meeting that the ad. – in the May issue as agreed at the 2003 Annual Meeting – had resulted in no enquiries. Following discussion, during which additional advertising venues were explored, the following three motions were brought on:- Moved by Dr. Elliott, seconded by Ms. Anstice "That we discontinue the advertisement in the Presbyterian Record." Carried. Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Dr.

Anderson "That we place an insert in the Spring issue of PC-Pak." Carried. Moved by Mr. Clarkson, seconded by Mr. Anger "That Mr. Keith Knight be contacted with a view to placing our information on the PC-Connect website." Carried.

The President then gave his report indicating that he had the offer so far of two papers for 2005, but that more papers would be welcome.

The Editor gave his report. He explained the reason for the late circulation of the 2003 Papers was because of waiting for Dr. Davies to send in her paper and that when it was received he had difficulties with some of the formatting and the footnotes. These difficulties have now been resolved and Dr. Davies' Paper will be printed with the 2004 papers. The Editor was commended for the work that he has done with the Papers with a round of applause.

The Secretary-Treasurer gave his report.

(1) The financial statement was circulated and discussed. Following amplification of certain items in the statement, the financial statement was approved on motion of the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Dr. John Johnston.

(2) The G. I. C. presently held by the Bank of Montreal, due to mature on the 4th of November 2004, was discussed. The Secretary-Treasurer read a report that he had sent to the President outlining the steps that he had taken in investigating an investment in an institution other than the Bank of Montreal, as suggested at the 2003 meeting. All other venues would have involved travel and setting up new accounts and he expressed the opinion that for an additional three dollars (\$3.00) in interest, it was not worth it. He stated that because of the low state of our bank account he did not think it would be possible to re-invest the whole one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) in another G. I. C. this year when the current G. I. C. matures. He felt that in order to cover current expenses, such as printing the 2004 papers, he would require something in the area of eight hundred dollars (\$800.00) in the bank account. He therefore moved, seconded by Dr. John Johnston "That the Secretary-Treasurer be given the discretion to re-invest up to one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) when the present G. I. C. matures." Carried.

New Business:

(1) The venue for the 2005 meeting was discussed. Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Dr. Eldon Hay "That the 2005 regular meeting be held at Knox College on Saturday the 24th of September or at the National Presbyterian Museum, if this could be arranged by Dr. John Johnston." Carried.

(2) A discussion on the current dues structure took place. The Secretary-Treasurer noted that our dues had remained at fifteen dollars (\$15.00) for at least ten years that he was aware of and in that time our expenses, especially for postage, had greatly increased. He presented a proposal for discussion that would have the Canadian subscriptions rise to twenty dollars (\$20.00); United States subscriptions rise to twenty dollars in U. S. funds or twenty-five dollars in Canadian Funds (US\$20.00 or CDN\$25.00); and foreign subscriptions rise to twenty-five dollars in U. S. funds or thirty dollars in Canadian funds (US\$25.00 or CDN\$30.00). Moved by Dr. MacLeod, seconded by Margaret Stephenson "That the proposed subscription structure as presented by the Secretary-Treasurer be adopted, and to be effective with the 1st of January 2005." Carried..

(3) The Society has received an invitation from the Presbyterian Church of Saint David, Halifax, Nova Scotia to hold an extra meeting in their facility in the Autumn of 2005. The Secretary-Treasurer informed the meeting that 2005 marks Saint David's 80th anniversary, that it came into being by gathering in all the continuing Presbyterians in the Halifax area following Church Union. Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Dr. Hay "That the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History accept the kind invitation from the Presbyterian Church of Saint David, Halifax, Nova Scotia to hold an extra meeting there in the Autumn of 2005. The President, Secretary-Treasurer and representatives of Saint David's to make the necessary arrangements." Carried.

Election of Officers:

All of the current Committee members have indicated a willingness to continue in office for 2005.

Moved by Dr. John Johnston, seconded by Dr. Moir, "That the Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Johnston be continued as President for 2005." Carried.

Moved by the Rev. Calvin Brown, seconded by Ms. Olive Anstice "That Dr. David Elliott , be continued as Editor for 2005." Carried.

Moved by the Dr. Moir, seconded by Professor Stuart Macdonald, "That Mr. Michael Millar be continued as Secretary-Treasurer, for 2005." Carried.

Any Other Business:

The date of the next regular was set for Saturday the 24th of September 2005 at either Knox College or the National Presbyterian Museum at 9:30am.

Dr. John Moir informed the meeting that this year, 2004, was really the thirtieth anniversary of the Society, even though it did officially commence operations in 1975. That he and a number of his colleagues had met in 1974 to plan the formation of a Presbyterian Church History Society, based on the lines of the Methodist Church History Society. The plans came together in 1975 with the inaugural meeting of what is now the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History.

Adjournment:

The 2004 Annual General Meeting was adjourned at 2:40pm on the declaration of the President, and the regular business of the Society resumed.

Geoffrey Johnston, BA, BD, M.Th, Th.D.
President.

Michael Millar, FRPSC.
Secretary-Treasurer.

THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY:

FINANCIAL REPORT - 25 September 2004:

<u>Item:</u>	<u>Income:</u>	<u>Expenses:</u>	<u>Balance:</u>
Brought forward 26 September 2003:			1421.91
Memberships 2002 and 2003.	405.00		
Memberships 2004.	168.00		
Memberships 2005 paid in advance	30.00		
Corporate memberships 2003.	75.00		
Corporate memberships 2004.	15.00		
Sale of papers.	150.00		
Donations.	70.00		
Bank Interest.	0.65		
G. I. C. matured	1,000.00		
G. I. C. Interest	14.93		
Pictou '03 Registrations	168.00		
Other Income. (2)	1.05		
Commission - Laverdure & Associates	6.00		
<u>Total Income.</u>	<u>2,103.63</u>		2,103.63
<u>Sub-total.</u>			<u>3,525.54</u>
G.I.C. maturing 4 November 2004. (1)	1,000.00		
Knox College Catering, 2003 meeting.	150.63		
Printing costs - 2003 papers.	618.70		
Office supplies - Editor.	82.35		
Editor honourarium re extra work with 2003 Papers	250.00		
Women's Club, First Presbyterian Church Pictou - catering.	400.00		
Donation - First Presbyterian Church Pictou.	100.00		
Mileage - Editor.	74.90		
Postage	255.77		
Photocopying - Secretary-Treasurer	6.10		
Office Supplies - Secretary-Treasurer	37.36		
Bus Parcel Charges - 2003 Papers	35.95		
GST refund - Swets-Blackwell. (2)	2.10		
Advertising - Presbyterian Record. (3)	235.40		
Microfilming the Society Papers 1987 - 2002. (4)	189.51		
<u>Total Expenses.</u>	<u>3,438.77</u>		<u>3,438.77</u>
<u>Balance Forward 25 September 2004:</u>			<u>86.77</u>
<u>ASSET:</u> G.I.C. maturing 4 November 2004.			1,000.00
<u>Total - Bank balance plus GIC.</u>			<u>\$1,086.77</u>

Notes:

1. GIC is with the Bank of Montreal, Barrie. Interest is at 1.7%.
2. Swets-Blackwell included GST with the University of Western Ontario subscription for 2003 and 2004. A refund cheque issued in November 2003 was never cashed. See Other Income.
3. The meeting last year agreed to spend up to \$250.00 on an advertisement in the Record. The advertisement ran in the May 2004 issue.
4. The meeting last year agreed to spend up to \$225.00 to microfilm the Society's Papers from 1987 - 2002.

Michael Millar, FRPSC.
Secretary-Treasurer.