



**The  
Canadian  
Society of  
Presbyterian History**

**Papers 2006**



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**Edited by Elizabeth J. Millar**

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## Message from the President

Once again the Society has to note the death of one of its most distinguished members. John Webster Grant died late in 2006. Dr Grant was in his time one of Canada's leading church historians, a prolific author and for many of us both a good friend and a mentor in the writing of church history.

As noted in an earlier letter the Society received a small bequest from the estate of T. Melville Bailey. At its 2006 meeting it was agreed to use the bequest to encourage the development of up and coming scholars. A research grant of \$400 and an honorarium of \$100 will be made available to assist in the preparation of a paper on Presbyterian history to be given at a regular meeting of the society and called the T. M. Bailey Lecture.

The website [www.csph.ca](http://www.csph.ca) is up and running and contains the initial papers chosen for publication in this way. It is out of date already and will need additional thought when the 2005 and 2006 papers are available.

Perhaps the biggest event of the year was the appearance of John Vissers' *The Neo Orthodox Theology of W. W. Bryden*. Bryden was on the staff of Knox College from 1927 to 1945, and Principal from 1945 until his death in 1952. As the leading faculty member of the church's leading theological institution he managed to give the Presbyterian Church a creative theological direction in the lean years from 1925 to 1950.

As it turns out 2009 is the five-hundredth anniversary of Calvin's birth and the 100th anniversary of Bryden's ordination. At the suggestion of Stuart Coles, one of the diminishing band of Bryden's students, the Society decided that the meeting that year should be devoted to Calvin and to Bryden. Since Bryden lived on for another generation through the work of his students who succeeded him at Knox we are looking for papers on Bryden and his students as well as Calvin.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2007 at the Presbyterian Museum. We still have space for another paper, so if anyone has a project in hand be sure to let me know at the address below.

Geoff Johnston,  
President  
649 Sandy Bay Rd.,  
Dunnville ON, N1A 2W6  
[marylou.geoff@sympatico.ca](mailto:marylou.geoff@sympatico.ca)

## Biographical Notes on Contributors

**Peter Bush** is a Teaching Elder in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, serving St. Andrew's, Flin Flon, Manitoba (1989-1996) and Knox, Mitchell, Ontario (1996-present). The author of *Western Challenge* (2000), he has written a number of articles on Canadian church history. Together with Christine O'Reilly he wrote *Where 20 or 30 Are Gathered* (Alban, 2006). Peter is married to Debbie and they have a son.

**Stuart Macdonald** teaches history of Christianity courses at Knox College where he is Associate Professor of Church and Society. The current focus of his research is the church in Canada in the post-World-War-II era, including the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Previous research interests have focused on seventeenth-century Scotland, from which came his book on witch-hunting *The Witches of Fife* (2002).

**John Alexander Johnston** founded congregations in Prince George, British Columbia, Ottawa, and Nigeria, and was the senior minister of MacNab Street Presbyterian Church in Hamilton for more than two decades. He was also the convener of the General Assembly's Committee on History for many years, and was the founding chair of the National Presbyterian Museum. Dr. Johnston passed away in January 2008.

## Princeton Theological Seminary and The Presbyterian Church In Canada, 1820-1929

Peter Bush

In June 1894 George Leslie Mackay, the black-bearded barbarian of Formosa, was on furlough in Canada. In recognition of his twenty-two years as a missionary, Mackay was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In June 1895, a no less bearded and no less influential mission figure was elected Moderator of the church. James Robertson had been Superintendent of Mission for the West since 1881, and had put his own mark on the church. These two dominant personalities, symbolizing The Presbyterian Church in Canada's commitment to mission, both foreign and home, shared a common educational heritage: they had both attended Princeton Theological Seminary.

The impact of Princeton Theological Seminary on Canada and in particular the Canadian Presbyterian Church can be measured in a variety of ways. One way is simply to continue the thinking of the opening paragraph, asking: What would the history of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be like without George Leslie Mackay, Joseph Annand, Kenneth James Grant, the Chambers brothers, James Robertson, James Ballantyne, Frederick McCurdy and E. H. Johnson, all graduates of Princeton? A similar question could be asked: How many former Princeton students have become moderator of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada? The answer is ten. A second way to reflect on the influence of Princeton on Canadian Presbyterianism is to ask, as Richard Vaudry has done, What intellectual impact has Princeton exercised on theological faculties across Canada?<sup>1</sup> That there has been a significant influence is not surprising; as Peter Wallace and Mark Noll have noted, Princeton through to the interwar years was far and away the largest Presbyterian theological college in North America and the influence of its faculty was felt well beyond the walls of the seminary through their writing and guest lecturing.<sup>2</sup> Intellectual impact and ecclesiological influence, however, may not have been the most significant ways in which Princeton affected Canadian Presbyterianism. It is no accident that at least half the names which come to mind when asked to name Canadian Presbyterians who attended Princeton served as missionaries on either the foreign field or in home missions. Princeton helped shape the mission vision of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard W. Vaudry, "Canadian Presbyterians and Princeton Seminary, 1850-1900," *The Burning Bush and A Few Acres of Snow*, ed. William Klempa, Carleton Library Series (Ottawa: Carleton UP, 1994) 219-237.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Wallace and Mark Noll, "The Students of Princeton Seminary, 1812-1929: A Research Note," *American Presbyterians*, 72.3 (1994): 203-215. They write: "The place of the seminary as a major factor in the history of American theology is secure" (203).

This paper explores the influence of Princeton Theological Seminary on Canada through its graduates. The term “graduates” is used loosely. Anyone attending Princeton between 1812 and 1929 who had a Canadian connection is included. 1929 is chosen as an end point for this study for two reasons. First, a quantum shift took place at Princeton in 1929. This year marks the departure of Gresham Machen and a number of students from Princeton to form Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia. This timing fits well with Mark Noll’s contention that 1921 marks the end of what has been called the Princeton Theology.<sup>3</sup> Further, for Canadian Presbyterians 1929 is a convenient end point as the intentional help Princeton sent to The Presbyterian Church in Canada following Church Union had wound down by that time. A new relationship between Canada and Princeton was about to arise during the 1930s as the names of Deane Johnston, E. H. Johnson, and Robert Lennox appeared on the student lists at Princeton.

In his 1994 article Vaudry wrote,

While it is clear that increasing numbers of Canadians attended Princeton Seminary in the last third of the nineteenth century, establishing precise figures and drawing a composite profile are problematic. [. . .] It is also difficult to generalize about the careers of those Canadians who attended Princeton.<sup>4</sup>

Princeton has given an enormous gift to researchers seeking to track its graduates by publishing biographical catalogues of its students. These catalogues include the date and place of birth, undergraduate school attended, theological schools attended, thumbnail sketch of working life, honorary degrees, and place and date of death for each person who enrolled at Princeton for one or more academic years. Therefore it is possible to determine exactly how many Canadians attended Princeton with a great deal of accuracy, and what they did following their time at the seminary. Two catalogues, the first published in 1933 and covering students from 1812 to 1932 and a second published in 1977 and covering students from 1900 to 1976, are the primary sources upon which this paper rests.<sup>5</sup> The potential challenge of leaning heavily on these sources is the information they contain is gathered from what graduates themselves sent into the college’s alumni office. The graduates would have best known where they had served, but they may have left out information they thought unimportant or irrelevant which would have been valuable to researchers.

Between 1812 and 1929, 277 men (all the students this paper looks at were men) born in Canada attended Princeton. Two provinces dominate as the place of birth for

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<sup>3</sup> Mark A. Noll, ed., *The Princeton Theology, 1812-1921: Scripture, Science, and Theological Method from Alexander Archibald to Benjamin Warfield* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Vaudry 227, 228.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Howell Roberts, *Biographical Catalogue of Princeton Theological Seminary, 1815-1932*, (Princeton, NJ: Trustees of The Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, 1933); Arthur M. Byers, comp., *Biographical Catalogue of Princeton Theological Seminary, Biographies of Alumni: 1900-1976* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Theological Seminary, 1977). Instead of footnoting every reference to these two sources, the date in brackets following the name of a student indicates which year a student would have “graduated” from Princeton had they taken their entire degree there. The date is the way to track the information about a given student.

these students: 80 were born in Nova Scotia and 118 in Ontario. Thirty-four others born outside Canada who spent some or many of their growing-up years in Canada and attended university in Canada, studied at Princeton. For the purpose of this paper these individuals are also considered Canadians, making a total of 311 Canadians who attended Princeton. A third group of students had a Canadian connection, born and educated outside of Canada, attended Princeton, and at some point in their careers served in Canada. While these students are not Canadian their stories are part of the history of the Canadian church and they will appear in this paper as well. Ninety-three non-Canadians with a Princeton connection served the church in Canada. Further it must be said that while the vast majority of Canadian students attending Princeton were Presbyterians, some were not. Through the 1920s in particular, students with roots in various branches of the Reformed Church made up a portion of the Canadians making tracks for Princeton.

The first Canadians to attend Princeton demonstrated little attachment to Canada. The first, Samuel Taylor, attended Princeton for a year, 1823-24, was ordained in the United States and never returned to Canada to serve the church. The next two Canadians were brothers, John (1829-30) and Ebenezer (1831-33) McDowall, from Fredericksburg, Ontario. They too did not serve the church in Canada, instead being called to ministries in New York City. Of the eighteen Canadians who attended Princeton between 1823 and 1860, ten remained in the United States following the completion of their education.<sup>6</sup>

The flow of Canadian students going to Princeton grew dramatically after 1860. Over the next four decades 228 Canadians attended Princeton. Nearly three-quarters of the Canadians who attended Princeton over the century under discussion did so in this forty-year period. There were ebbs and flows in the number of Canadians attending Princeton in any given year; however, in only three academic years between 1861 and 1900 were there fewer than seven Canadians studying on campus. There were two peaks. The first occurred from 1868 to 1873 when an average of eighteen Canadians were on campus each year, making up just over 10% of the students enrolled. A second, higher peak occurred between 1887 and 1890 as the average reached twenty-three per academic year, or 13% of the students on campus.<sup>7</sup> At these times in particular the Canadian presence at Princeton would have been unavoidable, and the students would have exerted an influence on the school. Issues like the challenge of home missions which faced the Canadian church in a different way than it faced the American church would have been discussed over meals and in the residence rooms. Theological debates taking place in the Canadian church, like the relationship between Scripture and the Westminster Confession of Faith regarding the marriage of a widower to the sister of his deceased wife would have appeared in classroom discussions.<sup>8</sup> Further work on how Canadian students influenced the school would deepen our understanding of both the Canadian church and of Princeton.

Comparing the number of Canadians at Princeton to the number of students at Canadian Presbyterian theological colleges indicates that the student body at Princeton

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<sup>6</sup> This finding challenges Vaudry's suggestion: "it appears that no Canadians went south to study at Princeton before the 1860s." Vaudry 226.

<sup>7</sup> Wallace and Noll 205.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Bush, "Debating Marriage: Marrying the Sister of a Deceased Wife and The Presbyterian Church in Canada," unpublished paper, 2006.

was at times second only to Knox College as the largest “Canadian” Presbyterian seminary. On the Church of Scotland side, in 1866-67, there were fifteen students at Queen’s Theological College and three at Morrin College in Quebec City; there were sixteen Canadians at Princeton. On the Free Church side, during the 1867-68 school year Knox College had twenty theological students; Presbyterian College, Montreal had ten. That year there were eighteen Canadians at Princeton. The late 1880s and the 1890s were a high point for theological education in the Canadian Presbyterian church, with faculty members like William Caven, D. H. MacVicar, George Grant, John Edgar McFadyen, and William McLaren. During the school year 1888-89, sixty-three theological students were enrolled at Knox College, thirty each at Presbyterian College in Montreal and at Pine Hill in Halifax, twenty-four were at Queen’s, and nine were attending Morrin College.<sup>9</sup> That same year saw twenty-five Canadians at Princeton. Although it had a “Canadian” enrolment significantly smaller than Knox College’s, Princeton was competitive in its “Canadian content” with the other theological schools of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

During the last third of the nineteenth century there was a subtle shift in how Canadians perceived Princeton as an educational institution. Through the 1860s, the majority of Canadians attending Princeton had done some theological training at a Canadian institution before traveling south for their “finishing year.” In 1865-66 three students from Queen’s Theological College took their final year at Princeton, and all three returned to serve Canadian congregations. The following year six students from Knox College did their third year of theological training at Princeton. While there were individual students who made the journey from Canada to Princeton, it appears that many students went to Princeton as part of a cluster. Clearly the six students from Knox would have talked with each other about whether to go to Princeton or not, and those who had decided to attend the school to the south would have encouraged the others to think about attending. Charles Gordon (Ralph Connor) in his biography of James Robertson suggests things were not as good as they could have been at Knox College during the late 1860s and that Robertson headed south because of dissatisfaction with the education he was receiving at Knox.<sup>10</sup> If this is an accurate reflection of not only Robertson’s thinking but that of other students as well, a final year at Princeton was more than just a finishing year—it was a shoring up of the theological framework which students would need for their life of ministry.

Canadians were less likely to see Princeton as a finishing school during the 1870s and 1880s. A majority of the Canadians attending Princeton during these decades did their entire theological training at Princeton. As transportation networks improved and as the financial resources available to families to spend in educating their children increased, the thought of attending an American school for three years was less daunting. While there were more resources available to students the challenges of attending an educational institution thousands of miles from home remained high. William Close Herdman did his second year of theological training at Princeton in 1875-76 having

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<sup>9</sup> *Acts and Proceedings of the Fifteenth General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada*, (1889), app. 7, ii; app. 8, i; app. 9, ii; app. 10, i; app. 11, i.

<sup>10</sup> Charles W. Gordon, *The Life of James Robertson: Missionary Superintendent in Western Canada* (Toronto: Westminster, 1908) 44-45.

graduated with an arts degree from Dalhousie University. He returned to Nova Scotia for the last year of his theological training. One can speculate about what drew him back to Nova Scotia, but it is not hard to imagine distance and finances playing a role.

After 1900 the number of Canadians at Princeton fell dramatically. During the 1920s only ten Canadian students made their way to New Jersey, the same number of Canadians who had made the trek in the 1850s.

Throughout the period under discussion it remained a challenge to get students to return to Canada to minister. Of the 311 Canadians who attended Princeton, ninety-one stayed in the United States to do ministry, thus 30% of the students sent by Canadians in the hope they would return to minister in Canada did not return. (Students who became cross-cultural missionaries are not included in the ninety-one students who did not return to Canada.) This theological "brain drain" was somewhat ameliorated by an almost equal number of non-Canadians who served the church in Canada. Some of these non-Canadians were in Canada only briefly while others served the Canadian church over an extended period of time. William Cochrane (1860) is an excellent example of a non-Canadian who came to Canada to stay. Born in Scotland and educated in the United States, Cochrane served a congregation in New Jersey before moving to Zion Church, Brantford, Ontario in 1862. He remained the minister there until his death in 1898, having a thirty-six year ministry. Cochrane was the Moderator of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1882.

A review of the thumbnail sketches in the biographical catalogues indicates how easily students and clergy traveled across the country and across the border. All 311 students who are the major focus of this study left Canada to travel to Princeton. For many of them that was not the end of their moving geographically. For example, John Fraser Dustan (1883) spent three years at Princeton following undergraduate training at Dalhousie. He was ordained in 1884 by the Truro Presbytery and served as the called minister at St. Paul's, Truro. Following a three-year ministry, he moved to Knox, Brandon in 1887 only to return to Nova Scotia, this time Bridgewater, a year later. Following two years at St. John's Church, Bridgewater he moved to Grove Church, Halifax where he had a decade-long ministry. Paul Franklin Langhill (1885) was even more peripatetic. Born in Pictou, Nova Scotia he did his undergraduate and first year of theology at Queen's in Kingston before attending Princeton for his last two years of theology. Ordained by the Presbytery of Saint John, New Brunswick in 1885, Langhill served short ministries in Hampton, New Brunswick; Winnipeg; and Qu'Appelle Station, Northwest Territories (Saskatchewan) before settling down in 1890 to a five-year ministry in Vernon, British Columbia. This was followed by twenty-three years in Ontario during which time he served congregations in Bridgeburg, Martintown, Vars, Carp, and Fingal. He then took a charge in Manitoba, where he served three more congregations before his retirement. In total, twelve congregations in forty-five years of ministry. Clergy moved easily not just across the breadth of Canada, they also moved north and south across the international border. Fenwick Williams Fraser (1890) was born in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. He did his undergraduate degree at St. Francis Xavier College, an interesting choice given the Catholic roots of the school. He attended Princeton for three years and was ordained by the Presbytery of North Philadelphia in 1890. He was called to a congregation in Indiana where he served for four years, before

moving to the Presbyterian Church in Morris, Manitoba in 1897. From there he moved to congregations in Minnesota, Michigan, and Ohio.

That some clergy were highly mobile, moving with seeming ease across provinces and into the United States, does not mean all Princeton graduates moved frequently. William Moore (1865) was ordained by the Presbytery of Ottawa in 1866 and inducted into the Bank St. Church, a congregation he served for the next thirty-six years. Matthew Witherspoon Maclean (1866) had two brief ministries before settling in as minister at St. Andrew's Church, Belleville, Ontario for thirty-one years, 1873-1904. George Colborne Heine (1876) returned to Canada after studying for a year each at the University of Edinburgh and the Sorbonne, taking up the pastorate at Chalmers Church, Montreal. He held this post for twenty-eight years, 1881-1909. St. John's Church in Medicine Hat, Alberta was served by James William Morrow (1894) from 1896 to 1918, twenty-two years. No list of Princeton graduates with long-term ministries in Canada would be complete without mention of Michael Fesenko (1929). Fesenko was born in 1900 in the Turkish Empire, served in the Cossack Army from 1918-19 and did undergraduate training in the Ukrainian Polytechnic University before attending Princeton. In 1929 he was inducted into the Ukrainian Presbyterian Church, a congregation he served for forty-seven years, until 1976.

While some Princeton graduates served a series of congregations over their ministerial career and others served a single congregation for most or all of their ministry, still others dropped out of ministry altogether. John Jones (1865) served three congregations in the nine years following his graduation from Princeton and then left ministry to begin a business career in Montreal. William Homer Hunt (1882) served for a year as the missionary in the Carlow and Mayo charge in Ontario and then did supply for a year before settling into a teaching career in the Niagara Peninsula. Not surprisingly a number of other Princeton graduates who dropped out of active ministry went into teaching. Humphrey Gilbert Gratz (1896) did ten years of ministry in the Maritimes before moving to Alberta as a missionary. By 1911, he was farming full time and doing occasional pulpit supply. One of the most interesting Princeton graduates to drop out of ministry was James Moffat Douglas (1867). After two pastoral ministries in Ontario and six years as a missionary in India, Douglas moved to Brandon, Manitoba where he served as a minister for four years (1883-87). He left ministry to farm with his sons in Saskatchewan and served the Moosomin charge on a supply basis. In 1896 Douglas was elected to the House of Commons, serving for six years. He was named to the Senate in 1904. Ministry was challenging and some graduates of Princeton found teaching, business, farming, and even politics more to their liking.

There is no easily discernable pattern that would make it possible to predict if clergy would stay a long time or leave after a brief ministry. What is evident is that clergy dropping out of pastoral ministry, which is presently receiving a great deal of attention, is not a new phenomenon.<sup>11</sup> It took a great deal of effort for Canadians to get to Princeton to study theology and a significant number of them did not stay in their calling very long.

A seminary is a place of theological thought and therefore it is worth exploring the intellectual connections between Princeton and the Canadian church. Vaudry explores

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<sup>11</sup> See for example Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition: Why Clergy Leave Local Church Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

the impact the writings of Princeton faculty had on the classrooms of Canadian theological colleges. He also notes that two Princeton graduates served on the faculty at Knox College: James Ballantyne (1883) who succeeded William Gregg as Professor of Apologetics and Church History, a position Ballantyne held from 1896 to 1921, and George Livingstone Robinson (1893) who taught Old Testament (1896-98) before going to McCormick Seminary. Two other Princeton graduates, while not teaching on a theological faculty, had an enormous impact on the academic formation of Canadian Presbyterian clergy. For twenty-eight years each, James Frederick McCurdy (1871) taught Orientals at University College, Toronto (1886-1914); and Alexander Beaumont Nicholson (1871) taught Sanskrit and Orientals at Queen's University (1878-1906). Undergraduates who were considering entering theological studies were taught Hebrew by these professors and were exposed, often for a first time, to both lower and higher critical discussions of the Old Testament. Three other Princeton graduates taught Canadian theological students briefly: Samuel Henry Kellogg (1864) taught Old Testament at Knox College (1892-93); Louis Henry Jordan (1879) taught Church Polity at Presbyterian College, Montreal (1887-89);<sup>12</sup> and Duncan Oliver Mackay (1894) taught theology in Halifax (1922-27).

The intellectual indebtedness was not one-sided. Vaudry provides a fascinating discussion of Princeton's (University and Seminary) active courting of William Dawson, Professor of Geology at McGill University, Montreal; seeking to have him join the faculty in New Jersey. Two Canadians did serve in teaching roles at Princeton: James Frederick McCurdy and Kerr Duncan Macmillan (1897). McCurdy was Tutor in Hebrew and Assistant Librarian from 1873 to 1877 and Instructor on Hebrew and other Oriental Languages from 1877 to 1882. McCurdy, then moved to University College, University of Toronto, where he had a distinguished career. Macmillan was born in Mount Forest, Ontario in 1871, doing his undergraduate studies at the University of Toronto from which he graduated in 1894. He would have studied under McCurdy, who most likely encouraged him to go to Princeton. Following three years of study at Princeton, Macmillan graduated with his Bachelor of Divinity and was promptly hired by Princeton Seminary as an instructor in Old Testament, a role he fulfilled for three years. Ordained by the Presbytery of Lindsay in The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1899, Macmillan spent three years at the University of Berlin. Returning to North America he was rehired by Princeton in 1903, this time as an instructor in Semitic Philology. In 1907 he was given a new role, instructor in Church History. Hired as the President of Wells College in Aurora, New York, Macmillan left Princeton in 1913.

An apparent tangent from the major thrust of this paper must be discussed: the role of Princeton in the wake of Church Union. With the formation of The United Church of Canada on 10 June 1925, Canadian Presbyterian clergy had to decide if they were joining the United Church or were remaining part of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. While approximately two-thirds of Presbyterian congregations went into church union, close to three-quarters of the Presbyterian clergy went. From the biographical catalogues it is possible to determine the decisions made by forty-three graduates of Princeton Seminary. Two-thirds (29) of the graduates serving the Canadian church remained

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<sup>12</sup> In one of those ironic twists of history, Samuel Kellogg left St. James Square Church in Toronto to teach at Knox College, and Louis Henry Johnson was the next minister St. James Square called, giving them two Princeton graduates in a row.

Presbyterians. This is in marked contrast to the clergy who had not attended Princeton. The reformed confessional commitment of the Princeton Theology almost certainly played a role in Princeton graduates choosing to remain part of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As well, their understanding of religious experience would have been in tension with the Methodist understanding.<sup>13</sup>

With the enormous exodus of clergy from The Presbyterian Church in Canada following church union, there was a desperate need for ministers to fill the pulpits. Some Canadians, like William McCulloch Thomson (1891) who was working at Princeton at the time, returned from the United States to serve congregations in Canada. Further help came to the Canadian church as non-Canadian Princeton students took up summer charges in Canada in the second half of the 1920s. Some of these students took time off from their studies to fill pulpits for a year to sixteen months. A total of seventeen students came to Canada between 1926 and 1929. Among these was Everett Falconer Harrison (1927) who served in River John, Nova Scotia during 1927-28. Harrison was eventually to become Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary from 1947-72. In later years, Harrison spoke fondly of his time in River John.<sup>14</sup> Harry Michael Coulter (1928), born in Philadelphia, came to Canada to help serve in Neepawa, Manitoba where he stayed five years. He remained in Canada until 1952 serving congregations in Brampton and St. Catharines. Princeton students with no direct links to the Canadian church were encouraged by their professors to respond to the need of the Canadian church. These students heard the call to a mission adventure in a foreign country serving in many cases congregations that had been part of the home mission effort of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Nearly one in every ten students who went to Princeton from Canada served as a cross-cultural missionary at some point during his ministry (that is, 27 of 311 Canadians). Students who later served in overseas missions were drawn fairly evenly from among the years of Canadian graduates from 1860 through 1900. No theological school in Canada had that kind of impact on its students. Canadian theological colleges did see an enormous rise in the number of students volunteering for foreign missions after the 1886 Northfield Convention and the birth of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions. At Princeton the call to mission was a central part of the life of the college before the mission explosion in the last decade and a half of the nineteenth century. Princeton was a hotbed of missionary interest from its very beginning. The stories of Charles Hodge spending entire nights in the Princeton chapel praying for missionaries and the conversion of the world were widely known.<sup>15</sup> In such an environment it is not surprising that students heard the call to overseas missions.

Some of the Canadians went with The Presbyterian Church in Canada and its predecessors. Joseph Annand (1872) spent thirty-nine years in the New Hebrides;

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<sup>13</sup> For further discussion of these issues see Noll, *The Princeton Theology*, 25-40 and N. K. Clifford, "The Interpreters of the United Church of Canada," *Church History* 46.2 (1977): 203-214.

<sup>14</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Don MacLeod for this information. Harrison wrote a letter to Don MacLeod's father, Alexander MacLeod (1928), also a Princeton student who came north to help after Church Union, reminiscing about his time in River John.

<sup>15</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Ian Rennie for this information which he provided during a conversation of the missiological similarities between George Leslie Mackay and James Robertson.

Kenneth James Grant (1862) spent thirty-seven years in Trinidad; Fulton Johnson Coffin (1890) served for twenty-four years as the Principal of Presbyterian Theological College, San Fernando, Trinidad. There were also tragic stories. Samuel Fulton Johnston (1858) went to Tanna, New Hebrides with the Canadian Presbyterian mission and was dead in eighteen months. James Adam Johnson (1890) went to Demarara, British Guiana also with the Canadian Presbyterian mission in 1888 and died in November of that year. A list of Canadian Presbyterian missionaries connected to Princeton would be incomplete without reference to George Leslie Mackay who graduated from Princeton in 1870 and in April 1872 arrived in northern Taiwan. Others went with other mission agencies but remained connected to the Canadian church, Robert (1870) and William (1879) Chambers went to Turkey with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, but worked hard at maintaining their Canadian connections as their writing appeared regularly in the *Presbyterian Record*. During the Armenian Genocide they lobbied the Canadian government to respond to the crisis. Still others served with American mission boards and have disappeared from the memory of the Canadian church: Arthur Wodehouse Marling (1881) went with the American Presbyterians to Gabon, West Africa serving from 1880 until his death there in 1896; Andrew Fulton Johnson (1890) was missionary to the Sioux on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota for thirty-six years. Just as the number of Canadians attending Princeton dropped significantly after 1900, the number of Canadian missionaries coming out of Princeton after 1900 also dropped.

To gain a complete picture of how Princeton impacted the mission vision of The Presbyterian Church in Canada it is necessary to include those graduates who played a significant role on the home mission front. James Robertson, Superintendent of Mission for the West, 1881-1902, stands out in this list. While Robertson was the man of action, William Cochrane (1860), from his desk in Brantford kept the administrative pieces in place for the ever-expanding mission endeavour in the West. Robertson was succeeded by John A. Carmichael who had graduated from Princeton in 1875. Carmichael built on the foundation laid by Robertson, and oversaw the incredibly rapid expansion of the church during the Laurier era. Colin Campbell (1899) served as a Superintendent of Mission for Alberta from 1912-16, a time of creative mission as the church sought to effectively reach the newly arrived settlers in the Peace River Country. To these names should be added those graduates who served as the founding ministers of the dozens of new congregations being started across the Canadian West. These men may not have needed to learn a new language, but they certainly had stepped outside their comfort zone to carry the gospel to people eager for good news.

Students at Princeton were exposed to a mission focus, some of the students, including some Canadians, were at Princeton because they wanted to have their mission commitment deepened, others were confronted with the call of missions in a new way and responded. Princeton's influence on the Canadian church can be seen in a building interest in mission both overseas and at home during the last four decades of the nineteenth century.

## **Divining the Entrails: One Challenge in Studying How the Presbyterian Church in Canada Looked at Itself and Its Future, 1945-2000**

Stuart Macdonald

In 1996 the Long Range Planning Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada identified nineteen different reports from the previous thirty years which had looked at the state of the denomination.<sup>1</sup> The Long Range Planning Committee noted these reports and studied their findings as part of their own work at thinking about the future of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. The listing of the various reports, from the LAMP report of 1969 through to the 1996 Think Tank presentation to that year's General Assembly, was representative of the self-reflection that the Presbyterian Church became involved in within this period. Is this list complete and definitive? Unfortunately, no. No such inventory currently exists, nor would it be easy to assemble one. The Long Range Planning Committee's list is a helpful place to start, as it not only notes various studies but also illustrates the problem in compiling such a list. For example, one can disagree with the way in which the Long Range Planning Committee counted the number of reports that had been prepared. The Think Tank process takes up items 16 through 19 on the Committee's list. One might, instead, group these or count them as one process. At the same time, notable reports are missing from this list, including significant omissions such as 1969's Ross Report, and the first report on the denomination's numerical decline made in 1971. While no comprehensive list exists, what is clear is that the Presbyterian Church in Canada spent a significant amount of time in these thirty years looking at itself and trying to understand what it was doing or should be doing.

Long term planning, vision reports, think tanks—all of these suggest that the focus of concern was on the future. To an extent, this is true. Humans have always been interested in the future and have become involved in various methods of trying to predict what the next year or years will hold. Today this is through modern sophisticated computer projections, while in the ancient world various methods went from drawing lots to more ritualized processes, including one involving the examination of the insides of ritually killed poultry in order to understand the will of the gods. While it is true there is a concern for the future, most of the time human beings are just as concerned, if not more concerned, to discover what is going on in the present. Rituals were done in ancient times when crops failed or floods devastated the land in the hopes of determining if the gods

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the Long Range Planning Committee, 15 Oct. 1996: 3. Author's possession. Thanks to Terrie Lee Hamilton for information on this committee. Also, my gratitude goes to the archivists at the Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives and Records Office (PCCARO), Kim Arnold and Bob Anger, for their assistance in the research of this paper.

were angry, or why they were angry, or who was to blame, and what to do to resolve the crisis. We “divine the entrails” in the hopes of figuring out what is happening now and what to do about it. Similarly, I would argue much of the focus of the self-studies done in this period had less to do with the future, and more to do with trying to determine exactly what was occurring in the Presbyterian Church in Canada itself. What was happening? What were we to do about it?

This paper represents an initial look at one crucial aspect of these reports and self-studies. As already noted, no comprehensive and mutually agreed upon list of these studies and reports exists. This is one problem. An even more complicated one, however, involves how we will study these reports in order to get an accurate understanding of the state of the church in Canada following World War II. The focus of this paper is thus the problem of how to understand and read these reports given that many of them are written in a specific form, wherein they identify a crisis (often in strong terms) and then propose a solution. In a study on American writings, to which we will turn in a moment, James Hudnut-Beumler has referred to these writings as “suburban jeremiads.”<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this paper will be to explore this category and see how it is useful to us as we begin to work with many of these crucial reports which were published in the postwar period. My concern is not so much to prove that a particular report was a jeremiad by fitting it into a clear category but instead to use the idea of the language expressed in jeremiads as a way of better understanding the challenge of these reports. One of my suggestions will be that these reports tell us more about what people thought was going on rather than giving us an accurate depiction of the reality of the church in much of this period. To do this, I want to begin by exploring the category of the jeremiad. After this brief discussion, the idea of the language of the jeremiad will be applied to two of the reports from this period, the Report on Declining Church Membership (1971) and the Ross Report (1969).

There are significant challenges in studying reports looking at the state of the church, or membership decline, or what long-range planning ventures should be undertaken. These difficulties can be summarized as the inter-related problems of language, particularly the language of jeremiads, and data. The language of the jeremiad has a long history, not only in Scripture, but in the life of the church. The term jeremiad refers to the gloomy declarations of what had gone wrong which were normally associated with the Biblical prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah’s example, whether used correctly or incorrectly, has led preachers and clerical bodies down through the ages to assert that sin is on the increase, that the nation has turned away from God, and thus, the nation deserves whatever punishments are being experienced (or soon will be). While we might think that such gloomy declarations fit most readily into post-Reformation Scotland (where, for example, the General Assembly complained in 1595 that reform of such popular past-times as the celebration of Christmas (Yule) and the profanation of the Sabbath continued 35 years after the reformation) or Puritan New England,<sup>3</sup> they have a much more contemporary legacy. Historian Hudnut-Beumler has effectively used the term “suburban jeremiad” to refer to the critiques of the changes in American society and religion which

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<sup>2</sup> James Hudnut-Beumler, *Looking for God in the Suburbs: The Religion of the American Dream and Its Critics, 1945-1965* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> The 1595 General Assembly’s comments are quoted in Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2002) 185.

emerged in post-World-War-II America.<sup>4</sup> He notes that these writings were intended to “accomplish the twin purposes of conviction and correction.”<sup>5</sup> He continues:

They first sought, at length, to convince their reader that the author’s worldview was correct and that the culture or religion—or some combination of the two—was headed for disaster if things kept on in the direction they had been going. The corrective portion of the jeremiad then showed that there was a way out of the decline if only the people would return to their God (or alternatively, depending on the writer, seek autonomy, practice individualism, develop class consciousness, or reject middlebrow culture). For every problem, therefore, there was a means of salvation.<sup>6</sup>

In Canada we might consider whether Pierre Berton’s famous (and secular) *The Comfortable Pew* and denominational writings such as Joseph McLelland’s *Why Our Pond is Lukewarm* fit within this tradition of the suburban jeremiad.<sup>7</sup> These works are pessimistic—they point out what is wrong and what the consequences have been. The consequences in these modern jeremiads tend not to be the wrath of God visited in terms of earthquakes or pestilence, but in human responses—people are leaving the churches, or young people consider the church as irrelevant, or there is a crisis in vocations. The language of the jeremiad is present in many self-examinations of the church.

This leads naturally to the problem of data. In the modern jeremiad, the author claims that there has been a response to the failure of the church to do, well, whatever it was that the author believed the church should do. There are jeremiads from a variety of theological positions: those which claim the church is destroying itself by holding on to unintelligible and outdated theological ideas, and those which claim the church is destroying itself by abandoning central elements of the faith in order to be relevant; those that blame the church for a failure to evangelize, and those that claim evangelical techniques are turning people off; and, a host of other polarities. The response to the failure is normally expressed with great certainty. What often is missing is any concrete data, any proof, that the problem being reported by the author is actually going on, or that there is a causal link between the problem being decried and the supposed response. Let me choose a rather bizarre example to illustrate the point. Youth, it is claimed, are leaving the church. They are leaving because the church has abandoned organ music for guitars and folk songs. But the proclaimer of the jeremiad rarely has any data that either young people are, indeed, leaving the church, or that the reason for this is directly related to the failure to sing traditional hymns with the organ. Instead, both the leaving of youth and the reason for this are presented as self-evident or as truisms. Data is sometimes present within the jeremiad, but often it is neither conclusive nor does it necessarily relate

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<sup>4</sup> Hudnut-Beulmer.

<sup>5</sup> Hudnut-Beulmer 205.

<sup>6</sup> Hudnut-Beulmer 205-206.

<sup>7</sup> Pierre Berton, *The Comfortable Pew* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965); Joseph McLelland, “Why Our Pond is Lukewarm or, Forty Years in the Wilderness,” Synod of Toronto and Kingston, Oct. 1965.

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to the argument being presented. What the data tells us is often not what *is* happening, but rather what the preacher of the jeremiad *believes* is happening. The assumptions choose the conclusions. They are more a mirror than a window.

One of the problems for historians in dealing with jeremiads or writings which share this kind of approach is that we have to be extremely cautious with our sources and view them with greater caution than we normally might. Too often we have read the jeremiad as a reflection of reality. If, for example, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland declares that drunkenness has suddenly reached epidemic proportions, historians at times have taken this at face value and dutifully reported that drunkenness was an increasingly significant social problem in this period. But do we know this to be true? All we know is that the church *said* drunkenness was increasing. It might be true but we need to make sure we find other sources which confirm the church's declaration. Similarly, we need to be careful when arguments go one step further and not only tell us drunkenness is increasing, but give us the reason. We need to read such declarations with great caution. Similar kinds of declarations were made in church reports and self-studies written in post-World-War-II Canada. How are we to understand them? To further explore this problem, I want to turn to two such reports, beginning with the Report on Declining Church Membership and then turning, at greater length, to the Ross Report.

One example of this problem of the use of the language of the jeremiad can be found in the report made to the 1971 General Assembly on declining church membership. The report is, on the whole, brief. It takes up only about a dozen pages in the *Acts and Proceedings*.<sup>8</sup> These twelve pages are filled, however, with four graphs, one statistical table and multiple explanations of what was occurring. Certainty was a feature of the report. To use Hudnut-Beumler's phrases, the intent was both to convict and to correct. The report argued that the decline:

has been taking place for many years. The rate of Church membership has never increased proportionately with population growth since World War II. The graphs shown in this report should be studied carefully *for they indicate a continuing decline in many significant areas*. The burden of this report is to analyse why the decline has come about and what will check the decline and reverse the trend [italics in original].<sup>9</sup>

Interestingly none of the four graphs actually shows the main point made in the text above, that Presbyterians membership had declined in relation to the Canadian population.<sup>10</sup> Instead the four graphs—on number of baptisms, communicant members, number of households and church school enrolment—show how recently all of these

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<sup>8</sup> Declining Church Membership, *Acts and Proceedings of the Ninety-Seventh General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (1971)*: 289-301.

<sup>9</sup> Declining Church Membership 290.

<sup>10</sup> This statement was (and remains) factually accurate. At the same time, it was (and remains) easy to misinterpret. The reason for this had less to do with anything the Presbyterian Church in Canada, or indeed its natural constituents, had done or had not done and more to do with changing immigration trends which saw an increase in immigrants arriving in Canada from Roman Catholic countries. It was at this moment in time that Roman Catholics caught up with Protestants in the overall Canadian population.

factors had changed. The short span covered by the graphs (just twelve years, starting in 1956 and ending in 1968) distorted the reality that these statistics had only started to decline in the last decade, with, for example, membership beginning to decline starting in 1965 while baptisms had begun a downward trend in 1959.<sup>11</sup> An important change, yes. But does this support the statement that this had "been taking place for many years"? A different conviction about the duration of the problem might have been possible had the graphs illustrated the trends in the entire postwar period.<sup>12</sup> Having determined that the problem was long-term in its origins, the report proceeded to propose a litany of reasons for the decline, reasons such as an "Ignorance of Christianity", "Affluence and Mobility", "Erosion of Belief", and "Negativism." Beyond such generalities, the Committee became more precise, complaining about failures of conviction, of evangelism, to challenge people, to preach and teach Biblically, and various other faults of Canadian Presbyterians.

Dutifully convicted, the report moved on to offer corrections. These corrections came throughout the report as natural opposites to what had supposedly gone wrong. If the church hadn't been committed to evangelism, then the obvious remedy was to become committed to evangelism and to practical remedies. If the barrier to effective preaching had been "bad delivery: pulpit tone, poor grammar and a patronizing attitude"<sup>13</sup> the solutions clearly lay in correcting those faults. Two failures received particular attention and correction. One was the perceived failure in Christian education. The failure wasn't just the decline in Sunday school enrolment as the report's graphs illustrated. The failure had also been in "the effectiveness of Christian education program and curricula."<sup>14</sup> While numbers might demonstrate the decline in Sunday school enrolment, no evidence was presented in the report that there had been a failure in this regard. The fact that some were unhappy was presented as evidence enough: "Many of our people deplore what they regard as a decline of emphasis on Scripture."<sup>15</sup> If education came in for harsh criticism, so too, in the original report, did the way in which the denomination had done church extension:

It has been stated that our Church Extension policy has not been true to the New Testament pattern of starting in the homes of the people with a group of believers. Instead elders have been suborned from other congregations and we have established charges of twenty to sixty people. New elders and managers were elected who were barely or not Christians; buildings were erected and people were saddled with large debts. The net results were congregations who had to learn what it meant to be a community of faith and as the financial burdens became greater, focus was upon maintenance

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<sup>11</sup> Declining Church Membership 290-292.

<sup>12</sup> Declining Church Membership 290-292. The graphs cover a time-frame that catches the switch from growth to decline, but does not adequately reflect the long-term growth in the post-World-War-Two period. The scale of the graphs also highlights the dramatic decline (as well as some of the growth that preceded it).

<sup>13</sup> Declining Church Membership 297.

<sup>14</sup> Declining Church Membership 300.

<sup>15</sup> Declining Church Membership 300.

and not Christian mission. The turning inward meant an inevitable shrinkage in numbers.<sup>16</sup>

Such a critique clearly leads to an imagined solution—a different way of doing church extension. While included in the original report, this part was not accepted by the General Assembly, and as a result of a motion on the report, was not included in the *Acts and Proceedings*. Instead, there is a blank space.<sup>17</sup> The fact that this portion of the report was not accepted by the General Assembly is interesting. What it shares in common with many of the accepted features is that no evidence was presented to support these very stark conclusions. They are presented as truisms. They are presented as obvious. What such comments, both those accepted by the General Assembly and those rejected, tell us is what some at the time believed were the causes of church decline. But, given both the lack of supporting data<sup>18</sup> and the language of the jeremiad, we need to be cautious never to assume without other corroboration that any of these factors did indeed cause the church to decline.

A second example of a report from this period which makes use of the language of the jeremiad is the report *The Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada*, more commonly known as the Ross Report.<sup>19</sup> The origins of this report went back to the 1965 General Assembly. The direct link to what became the Ross Report can be found in the Report of the Committee on Recruitment for Full-Time Service, yet at the same time, we must recognize that there were broader concerns that year which went far beyond those of just the Committee on Recruitment. It was also at the 1965 General Assembly that the Administrative Council moved a recommendation, Number 10, which was the origin of the Life and Mission agency report, the LAMP Report, produced later in the decade. The *Presbyterian Record* noted this decision:

A thorough study will be made of the vocation, work and mission of the Presbyterian Church in the life of Canada and other nations, and of the resources of the church, to be reported with recommendations to the 1967 general assembly.<sup>20</sup>

As already noted, that same year the Committee on Recruitment raised similar concerns. The terms in which the committee put the issues are fascinating. It reported that there was on the part of many denominations, including Presbyterians, “an apparently increasing

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<sup>16</sup> Quoted from *Presbyterian Comment* Jan. 1972: 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Acts and Proceeding* (1971): 301.

<sup>18</sup> The report does mention the Ross Report in some of its commentary; however, features such as causes of failure of church extension or Christian education were not really explored by the Ross Report itself.

<sup>19</sup> The official title was the Ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Canada but this title is almost never used. The name Ross Report comes from the company responsible for writing the report. John Moir gives a summary of the Ross Report in *Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1975) 268-269. No other historical study of the Ross Report has been published prior to or since *Enduring Witness*.

<sup>20</sup> *Presbyterian Record* July-Aug. 1965: 14.

reluctance of men to enter the congregational ministry, as distinct from other vocations within the Church.”<sup>21</sup> The committee report continues, framing the issue in very broad terms:

At the same time the Church is being invited by both her friends and her critics to consider serious amendment of its structure. Such an invitation, if implemented, would involve changes in the role of the minister as we traditionally know it. Hence your committee has been faced with a most difficult question “for what are we recruiting young people?” Aside from any question of the continuance of our Church, “for what kind of ministry are we recruiting? What kind of training should be given? What kind of work will they do?”<sup>22</sup>

The committee proposed a two-pronged approach: to continue its traditional function of encouraging “young people” to consider full-time service; and, secondly, “to begin an examination of the role of the minister in present-day life.”<sup>23</sup> It is this second interest which led eventually to what became known as the Ross Report.

I have quoted the initial phrasing of the issue at some length because it indicates how these issues were being considered and shaped. The concern for providing enough ministers (and deaconesses) for the denomination was an understandable concern. But this does not seem to be a unique problem of the mid-1960s. Earlier, exploratory research has indicated that there had long been a concern in the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the postwar period for the need for more “men”—i.e. more clergy.<sup>24</sup> Notice, however, that the issue is not framed merely in terms of the number of men willing to enter ministry, but willing to enter “congregational ministry.” The 1965 Committee on Recruitment report also quickly refers to calls by many to consider its structures. The concern has thus rapidly moved beyond getting enough bodies to serve in congregations, to a challenge to how ministry is being done. That challenge references a broad questioning of the church, from inside and outside, and one can’t help but see this as a reference to the kinds of critique coming from Pierre Berton’s *The Comfortable Pew* and others.<sup>25</sup> At the same time it is interesting to note that this critique is assumed to be broad-based and accurate: accurate enough that ministry needs to be re-imagined in light of the critique. But no evidence was given, statistical or otherwise, to confirm this view. Nevertheless, the committee moved forward with its study.

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<sup>21</sup> *Acts and Proceedings of the Ninety-First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (1965)*: 375.

<sup>22</sup> *Acts and Proceedings (1965)*: 375.

<sup>23</sup> *Acts and Proceedings (1965)*: 375.

<sup>24</sup> Initial comments on this were made in Stuart Macdonald, “The Presbyterian Church in Canada and Extension Work, 1945-1985: Initial Findings,” *The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers (2003)*: 34-48. Tracing whether this concern was continuous or had been resolved at sometime in the late 1950s and early 1960s and now was re-emerging in the mid-1960s is the subject of another study. For the moment, we need to note that this was not a new concern.

<sup>25</sup> It is notable that Berton’s *Comfortable Pew* was published early in 1965. The book sold well and created a great deal of discussion and commentary.

Not only did the committee frame the issues in this way, but they had, as well as carrying out their traditional mandate in terms of recruitment, already done some initial research. One of the things which the committee had been involved in doing in 1965 was setting the terms of reference for the future committee, in terms of name, membership, and tasks. These were also motions put to the General Assembly that year. They included fairly standard ones related to encouraging recruitment; however, they continued that one of the tasks the committee be involved in was to share in "the ongoing research into the Church's changing role in contemporary society as a basis for helping creative forms of ministry to emerge" and to be a "channel for communicating the fruits of relevant research" to the church.<sup>26</sup> (The committee also recommended a change of name, and subsequently became the "Committee on Recruitment and Vocation.")

The year 1965 was thus a key year in terms of the origins of the concerns which led the Committee on Recruitment to what would become the Ross Report. The committee approached the consulting firm of P. S. Ross and Partners in the autumn of 1967. As a result of this consultation, a motion was presented to the 1968 General Assembly that the committee engage an outside consultant to prepare a report. This was done within the framework of looking at the "changing context of the Presbyterian Church in Canada."<sup>27</sup> It was also believed an outside consultant would be helpful. The Committee on Recruitment, chaired by Ferguson J. Barr, continued to be a crucial part of the process. P. S. Ross and Company began their work with the Presbyterian Church in Canada in October 1968. The cost of this work would eventually be \$38,500.<sup>28</sup> The process involved data collection, an interim report (completed in May 1969) and a final report (completed in October 1969). The data collection was done with four distinct groups: ministers, members and adherents in congregations, women working in the church, and ministers who had left for secular employment. The first two groups, ministers, and members and adherents in congregations, were scientifically sampled and a questionnaire was developed for each of these groups.<sup>29</sup> The ministers' questionnaire had 93 questions which asked for short answers and which were subsequently tabulated by computer. Longer written responses to fifteen additional questions were also received. The questions and computer print-outs of the responses are housed in the Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives and Records Office. The longer, written responses are not in the archives.<sup>30</sup> In a similar fashion, members and adherents of congregations were asked

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<sup>26</sup> *Acts and Proceedings (1965)*: 378.

<sup>27</sup> *Acts and Proceedings of the Ninety-Fourth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (1968)*: 294.

<sup>28</sup> "The Ross Report Delivers a Moment of Truth," *Presbyterian Record*, Feb. 1970: 7. Another company, Price Waterhouse Associates, was approached in the fall of 1968 to provide a bid on this project, but had very little lead time (one working week) to provide a proposal. This proposal and information related to it can be found in PCCARO 1973-1025-1-2.

<sup>29</sup> The details on this surveying can be found in the Interim Ross Report (May): 4-11, PCCARO 1973-1025-1-4. In terms of members and adherents of congregations, 4,500 questionnaires were sent out. These individuals came out of 99 congregations in 74 charges.

<sup>30</sup> The computer reports can be found in the PCCARO. The print-outs of the responses of the ministers are found in files 1973-1025-1-8 and 1973-1025-1-9. The data on the congregational responses are found in file 1973-1025-1-11. Note is made of the interviews in the Interim Report of fifteen questions where "free expression of opinion" was allowed (Interim Ross Report (May): 5). Some of these opinions are clearly

80 questions which could be tabulated by computer. The final two groups, women working for the church, and ministers who had left for secular employment, were much smaller and no attempt was made to use computers to study them. Instead, written responses to a questionnaire were received. A report on the responses to the questionnaire by those who had moved to secular employment, offers invaluable raw data.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, the archives do not contain a similar report on the responses by women working in the church. Another invaluable source we have is the Interim Report (completed in May 1969) which compiled, but did not analyze, the basic responses from the four distinct groups surveyed. The final report of the committee is thus several steps removed from the initial responses. An additional body of information which fed into the final report were other interviews which took place after the original replies were received.<sup>32</sup> We have a list of which groups the consultants hoped to contact (this is noted in the Interim Report), but not any data from the interviews themselves. We also should recognize the ongoing input of the Committee on Recruitment into the process. Most significantly, however, the Final Report shifted its method of organization. Rather than reporting the responses of each distinct group, as in the Interim Report, the Final Report was topical. Specific themes were addressed and data from some or all of the different groups was selected to amplify the discussion. For example, when the value of church courts was discussed, responses from each of the groups were used to discuss the need for change within the organizational structures of the church. The recommendations of this final report were the subject of several major articles and much commentary in the denominational magazine prior to the various motions of the committee being presented to the 1970 General Assembly.<sup>33</sup> The final version of the Ross Report received wide publicity and seems to have sold in great numbers. Of the 1,860 copies printed, 1,200 were reportedly sold by the end of February 1970 and plans were made to reprint additional copies, as well as have mimeographed copies available for the General Assembly.<sup>34</sup>

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part of the Interim Report, but we do not have the original responses to compare to what appears in the Interim Report.

<sup>31</sup> Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada Now in Secular Employment, PCCARO 1973-1025-1-3.

<sup>32</sup> Interim Ross Report (May); Final Ross Report (Oct.), PCCARO 1973-1025-1-5. A reference to the interviews, over 125 of which were conducted, can be found in the final report (p. iii).

<sup>33</sup> Articles in the *Presbyterian Record* dealing with the Ross Report process leading up to the 1970 General Assembly as well as the Final Report itself include: F. J. Barr, "What's Happening in Our Churches?" Feb. 1969: 2-3; "The Ross Report Delivers a Moment of Truth," Feb. 1970: 7-10; editorial, Mar. 1970: 3; Stuart Coles, "New Shapes and Styles," Mar. 1970: 10-12; Harry J. Vander Molen, "A Vocal Minority," May 1970: 5; J. C. Cooper, "Why Personnel Services for the Church?" May 1970: 16-17. A different approach appeared after the General Assembly: Gordon W. C. Brett, "Our Church Has Too Many Clerics," July-Aug. 1970: 18-19. At the same time the Ross Report process was moving forward, the church was also dealing with the LAMP report. Concerns about the church and various opinions on what was occurring are features in the *Presbyterian Record* in these years. The Report was presented to the 1970 General Assembly, *Acts and Proceedings* (1970): 374-383.

<sup>34</sup> Minutes of the Committee on Recruitment and Vocations, 26 Feb. 1970 and 17 Apr. 1970, PCCARO 1973-1025-1-1.

As a result of the work of the Ross Report, twenty recommendations were taken to the 1970 General Assembly. Each of these recommendations was related to various proposals made by the Committee on Recruitment, based upon the Final Report. Many of the recommendations were adopted, but the majority, the heart of the report, was not passed by the General Assembly as such, but rather forwarded to various committees of the church for implementation. The simple question: was the Ross Report accepted?, thus becomes difficult to answer. Certainly the convenor of the committee, F. J. Barr, did not believe they had received a positive response or achieved the desired results:

It was obvious that the Assembly was not prepared for our report, despite all our efforts to this end. Emotional reaction was much to the fore. It was disappointing to hear innuendo and exaggeration from some speakers. Also it was disappointing to see a certain lack of courage on the part of those who favoured the report. Our responsibility for this kind of report, our administrative capacities, and our theological acumen were all questioned, without any rebuttal from the floor.<sup>35</sup>

The disappointment is clear, despite the fact that recommendations passed and others were referred to various Boards for implementation. The Committee on Recruitment and Vocations was disbanded at the Assembly.<sup>36</sup>

There is a wealth of data in the Ross Report and we can learn a great deal about the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the late 1960s from them. The problem remains, however, as to how we are to approach the data. As suggested earlier in this paper, this is a very serious issue. How accurate are the descriptions of the problems in the Presbyterian Church in Canada that were presented in the Ross Report's final version? Should we take the statements about frustrations in the church as accurate descriptions of concrete realities? For example, were youth leaving in such numbers? Were ministers, particularly young ministers, abandoning the ship because of a lack of relevance and no opportunity for new forms of ministry? Was there great dissatisfaction? We could answer to all of these questions with a clear "yes" were we to rely only on the final Ross Report or on the commentary on the Ross Report found in the *Presbyterian Record*. It is here that the idea of the language of the jeremiad needs to be applied. There is enough of the language of the jeremiad in the Ross Report, both conviction and correction, that we should be cautious and not take all of these statements to be true, but rather to be what the committee and the consultants *believed to be true*. This is an important distinction. The abundance of data that we have on the Ross Report allows us to check the conclusions reached by the authors of the report with the data itself. To summarize, we have not only

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<sup>35</sup> F. J. Barr, letter to committee members, 24 June 1970, PCCARO 1973-1025-1-1.

<sup>36</sup> The disbandment of the committee was part of a larger change in administrative structures. The committee had indicated in a memo (undated) to the LAMP committee prior to the Assembly that this was not an issue "provided there is some continuing agency to take over the results of and continuing tasks of research" (Memo re: Lamp committee recommendation 24 and its involvement with the research project of the R & V Committee, PCCARO 1992-1107). The work, it was believed, would carry on through other committees (F. J. Barr, letter to committee members). Too much should thus not be read into the timing of the committee's end and the reception of the Ross Report.

the Ross Report (October 1969) and the Interim Report (May 1969), but also data from three of the four groups initially surveyed as part of the process. We have the computer tabulated responses from ministers, the computer based tabulated responses from members and adherents of congregations, as well as a report entitled Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada Now in Secular Employment which lists the answers provided by those who were surveyed because they were deemed to have moved to secular employment. What we are missing in terms of the data on which the Final Report was written is material from one group (unfortunately, women serving the church), the written responses (as opposed to the computer tabulated responses) of the ministers, and any of the data from the follow-up interviews which were to have happened between the Interim Report (May 1969) and the final version of the Ross Report (October 1969). We also have the minutes of the committee, as well as various articles on the Ross Report which appeared in the *Presbyterian Record*. Based on this data, it is possible to look at how the Ross Report understood specific problems in the church in the late 1960s, and see the extent to which the positions advocated, which used the language of the jeremiad, came out of the data itself or arose more from the convictions of those responsible for the report. The issue is not always the accuracy of the reporting, but the interpretation, the way in which numbers were used to convince and convict. To ensure that this discussion is as clear as possible, I will refer to the final version of the Ross Report as the Ross Report (Oct.), to the Interim Report as the Interim Report (May) and will distinguish the other sources of data. While all are part of the Ross Report process, these distinctions are necessary if we are to see how the process generated the conclusions it did.

One of the key themes of the Ross Report (Oct.) was that there was a crisis in ministry. This crisis was understood and discussed in a variety of ways, but it was assumed that there was a general dissatisfaction with congregational ministry which was leading to the related problems of a significant number of ministers leaving the church, and a problem in gaining new recruits to the ministry. We see this reflected a year after the Ross Report's release as the *Presbyterian Record* summarized the findings of the Report:

We heard disturbing facts such as these: more and more ministers are leaving church employment; the church machinery is in drastic need of updating; we're losing people, especially youth; we are suffering from a lack of a personnel policy for full-time workers.<sup>37</sup>

In the graphic accompanying the article were various newspaper headlines which appeared at the release of the Ross Report, including: "Presbyterians aren't with it"; "Presbyterians Called 'Rigid And Inflexible'"; "Presbyterians told they face extinction"; and, " 'We're Stodgy, Too Slow to Change,' Says Report."<sup>38</sup> Such headlines reflected the media's interpretation of some of the issues raised by the Ross Report. It is worth quoting the Ross Report's (Oct.) own summary of one of these issues at some length: the issue of ministers leaving for secular employment:

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<sup>37</sup> Valerie M. Dunn, "Whatever Happened to the Ross Report?," *Presbyterian Record* Feb. 1971: 2.

<sup>38</sup> Dunn 2-3.

While mission and organization are essential, the key factor in ministry must be its human resources. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is extremely fortunate to have many capable, dedicated ministers. It also has a wealth of talent among the laity. The pastoral ministry has lost in the vicinity of 80 men to secular employment during the past 30 years. While this is by no means an exodus, it has certainly represented a loss to the church's ministry, particularly when one considers that those going into secular work have a level of educational attainment well above the average minister. Our survey suggests that the danger of pastoral ministers leaving the formal ministry of the church is very great at the present time. Findings indicate that 88 pastoral ministers, 52 of them under 40 years of age, are actually seriously considering leaving the pastoral ministry for secular employment. Many ministers (58%) who have gone into secular work believe that there are ministries far more relevant outside the formal church than within it.<sup>39</sup>

Various crises faced the church, according to the Ross Report, but the loss of ministers, and the threat that more would be leaving, was one which was stressed.

An important aside is necessary at this point. Given the nature of the problems identified by the investigators, it is somewhat strange that a seemingly obvious solution was not advanced—recruiting women more aggressively to serve in the church. The church had made the decision in 1966 to ordain women, including to the role of ordained clergy. Given that the Ross Report (Oct.) was deeply concerned about the shortage of ministers, it is strange that women and the recent decision to allow them to fill these roles were not seen as a solution to the problem. Women are almost invisible in the report. They show up as ministers' wives whose dissatisfaction (reported by their husbands) may lead their husband to leave ministry, but otherwise play a minor role. They certainly are not, given their new possible status as ministers, seen as a solution to the supposed crisis. Instead, the report focused on the crisis, on the problems of recruitment and dissatisfaction.<sup>40</sup>

Several of the findings of the Ross Report relate to the state of ministry, and the report concludes that serious issues need to be addressed. The report notes that approximately 80 men had been lost to "secular employment" over the last thirty years, and while this wasn't "an exodus" it was still a loss that needed be taken seriously. Indeed the report warns that there was a further "danger of pastoral ministers leaving the formal ministry." Eighty-eight individuals, "52 of them under 40 years of age, are seriously considering leaving the pastoral ministry for secular employment" the report states.<sup>41</sup> After some comments regarding laity concerns, the Ross Report (Oct.) returns to the issue of the state of congregational ministers:

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<sup>39</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): x-xi.

<sup>40</sup> This finding is consistent with the results in an unpublished paper by Susan Shaffer which looked at the coverage of issues around ministry in the 1960s in the *Presbyterian Record*. My appreciation to Susan for sharing her paper with me.

<sup>41</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): x and xi.

The church will find it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain ministers unless there are ministries that are relevant. At this time the church is in a period of danger and crisis, but such a time is also one of great opportunity.<sup>42</sup>

Given these strong comments, one would anticipate that all of the data in the report related to congregational ministers would reflect this discontent and support this finding. It is here we can use the data we have (noted above) to test to what extent the final version of the Ross Report, as well as the commentary in the *Presbyterian Record*, reflected its findings and to what extent the language of a jeremiad was operational here.

Clearly, one of the concerns was with those leaving ministry for secular employment and those considering leaving. As noted above, eighty had left and another eighty-eight (largely young) were reported as considering leaving. This does seem to indicate a crisis. However the number is less precise than one would hope of a scientific survey. Indeed, one of the places where the survey had the greatest difficulties was in correctly identifying those who had left ministry for other employment in order to send them questionnaires. The preliminary report entitled "Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada Now in Secular Employment" detailed some of the methodological problems encountered as the P. S. Ross firm attempted to gain data from this group. One hundred and seven questionnaires were mailed out for this group.<sup>43</sup> Only 26 of the 35 surveys returned could be used in tabulating data: "Nine additional questionnaires were not tabulated as profession was not stated and there was no indication that the individuals concerned were ordained but in secular employment; this possibility arose through an error in mailing which sent the questionnaire to a large number of individuals who could in no way be considered to be in secular employment."<sup>44</sup> Put simply, there was no clear definition of what "secular employment" meant, nor an accurate number or list of those who had left ministry.

The perception that many had left—and that this was a crisis—bordered on being an operational principle. In an article in the February 1969 *Presbyterian Record* the chairman of the Committee on Recruitment and Vocation, F. J. Barr addressed this issue in his second paragraph:

At the Congress of Concern it was stated that 15% of our ministers have left for secular employment. Analysis shows 61 have left the parish in the past 33 years, a larger proportion of these however in the last 10 years.<sup>45</sup>

Barr may have been attempting to temper the more extravagant claim made at the Congress of Concern, but the fact remains that whether 61 or 80, the issue was considered to be a crucial one and remained so to the final Ross Report—even though no

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<sup>42</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): xi.

<sup>43</sup> Interim Ross Report (May): 56. In contrast, earlier it was noted that the questionnaire was mailed to 109 people (p. 11).

<sup>44</sup> Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers 1.

<sup>45</sup> F. J. Barr, "What's Happening" 2.

precise number could be determined, and the research report itself indicates problems in the definition of the question and the group being surveyed.

Other problems also emerged in studying those who it was believed had left the ministry for secular employment. It became clear that they had not left for any one reason. For example, while there are some common threads to the twenty quoted answers to the question "What was the major frustration of your period in the pastorate?", the diversity of responses is notable. Where one complaint was of "small stipend" a very different complaint noted the "Selfishness of well-to-do suburbs accepting General Board of Missions' aid" and another complained of "Individual congregations not interested in one another."<sup>46</sup> Other questions also received very diverse answers. To Question 44, "What is the greatest weakness of the Presbyterian Church in Canada?" the research report listed the following answers:

"Our lack of initiative to re-form in terms of specialized ministries to a world beyond the church doors of most of our congregations."

"Isolationism."

"Traditionalism and conservatism."

"Its susceptibility to the ways of the world."

"Its unwillingness to evacuate empty buildings and to rebuild on a mission-oriented basis."

"Congregationalism."

"Slowness to change and an inability to minister effectively to present-day social unrest."

"The inability or refusal to see that theological considerations must become integrated into the crushing social problems of our time."

"Her departure from the written word of God via the deceptions of Barth and more recent neo-Barthians and existentialists."

"The ministry."

"The tendency toward very conservative theology that separates the church from the world, and the resultant concern for self-preservation."

"Unconcerned members."

"Lack of leadership."

"Ministry and government; church government is run by a system designed in rural agricultural setting; now courts are infested with old elders (the only ones who can afford to go) and they are a sure balance against moves for change."

"Its inefficient courts."

"It is trapped inside outdated structures; costly edifices; fixed legalistic definitions of itself, particularly in ministry, which prevent it from

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<sup>46</sup> Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers 12-13. There are some complaints about relevance and church court structures here but it is difficult to know how to group these.

having the flexibility and responsiveness required in a mobile, fast-changing time.”

“Lack of identification with problems of non-church people.”<sup>47</sup>

There are certainly some common themes within this litany of dissatisfaction. One does see, as the Ross Report noted, a concern for relevance and a frustration with church courts. At the same time there are other themes which did not get much attention, including frustrations that the church had become too relevant and had been swayed by the world and by recent theological developments. The difficulty in trying to write a report based upon such diverse data needs to be appreciated. At the same time, it was clear that no one theme explained why individuals had left the church. Indeed, they left for rather contradictory reasons. Any attempt to placate one group would certainly have not prevented the alienation of the other or others.

The problem becomes even more apparent when we compare the Ross Report (Oct.) with the “Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada Now in Secular Employment” in terms of the responses to one specific, and very important question, Question 41. The Ross Report (Oct.) noted this question revealed the “key factors that tipped the scales in favour of leaving the pastorate.” Ten responses were included: “Sheer disgust with the disloyalty and spitefulness within most congregations”, “Session and Board”, “To enter a larger area of ministry”, “Lack of support”, “An opportunity arose for which I do not attempt to justify or apologize for”, “I was not using my training and talents”, “Personal distrust of some ministers”, “I needed a new challenge—one which would use my training and give me a chance to experiment”, “The church’s failure to use, and lack of concern for, education, talents and interest for a specialized ministry” and “The call of God”.<sup>48</sup> Only three responses to this question were omitted from the final Ross Report (Oct.): “Health”, “A feeling of my own inadequacy”, and “The ordination of women.”<sup>49</sup> There are certainly mixed responses within those selected for the final Ross Report (Oct.), but the omission of these particular three does raise some questions. If nothing else, they broaden the issues of why individuals were leaving ministry in some important ways and challenge the suggestion that it all related to the church being too rigid, inflexible, and lacking relevancy. The Ross Report reflected more concern for those who left because they believed the church had not changed enough, rather than for those who left because they believed the church had changed too much.

Three important questions concerning the situation in congregational ministry were part of the survey of the ministers of the denomination. These questions asked if people had considered dropping out while in theological studies, would choose ministry again, or were considering leaving now. The conviction that there was a crisis led the authors of the Ross Report (Oct.) to ignore a high level of satisfaction which was discovered among the ministers surveyed. We see this clearly in the Interim Report

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<sup>47</sup> Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers 16-17.

<sup>48</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): 86. The original question was “What was the key factor that tipped the scales in favour of your leaving the pastoral ministry for secular employment.”

<sup>49</sup> All of the questions, including the three omitted can be found in Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers 13-14.

(May) where, as already noted, the data was presented based upon the findings related to each of the groups: ministers, congregations, women, and those who had left for secular employment. The survey found 78% of the ministers asked would choose ministry again, while 19% were undecided and 8% said "no." The focus of the discussion, however, becomes the 8% who had indicated "no." They are described as younger, less theologically conservative, and "less conventional in pastoral approach."<sup>50</sup> While these were categories which the study defined in order to do cross-tabulations, it is interesting to watch how they are used. The wording here would seem to indicate that there needed to be a concern for this group, despite their relatively small size, because of who they were. Similarly the Interim Report (May) notes:

40% of the respondents agreed, and 27% disagreed, with the statement that the church theological colleges inhibited the development of new types of ministry (Q40). Disagreement tended to be expressed by older respondents (Q1-40) and those more conservative (Q19-40) and conventional in approach (Q20-40).<sup>51</sup>

Note the way this discussion is constructed. Throughout the ministers' questionnaire we have statements (often provocative) with which one can agree or disagree and the question is thus a fair question. What is notable, however, is in the Interim Report (May) there is a consistent emphasis, displayed above, which is sympathetic to those who are younger, more theologically liberal, and less satisfied with traditional models of congregational ministry. In the example above, I would argue the finding is constructed in a way to indicate that those opposed to the idea that the theological colleges are obstructionist, are in some ways wrong. Another question was asked, Question 24, regarding whether one had ever considered dropping out of theological training. The concern again was with the 13% who had almost dropped out, who it is also noted were younger, less conservative, and less conventional.<sup>52</sup>

Given the perception of a crisis in ministry, one vital question was the question of whether one was considering leaving the ministry. Indeed the Interim Report notes that one of the reasons they were approached was due to concern over the "number of ministers leaving the pastoral ministry and their reasons for doing so."<sup>53</sup> This was Question 93 of the survey. Eighty-seven per cent said "no" to the question of whether they were "seriously considering leaving" but the focus became on the 13% who

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<sup>50</sup> Interim Ross Report (May): 20.

<sup>51</sup> Interim Ross Report (May): 26

<sup>52</sup> Interim Ross Report (May): 22. In terms of theology, the original survey of ministers gave three options: conservative, middle of the road, and liberal. The results were 63 conservative, 106 middle-of-the-road, and 25 liberal. That only 13% self-identified as liberal is interesting to consider in reading the report. Computer printout on ministers' responses, PCCARO 1973-1025-1-8, taken from the cross tabulations in the responses to question 68. Even among those who were deemed to have left ministry for secular employment, those who saw themselves as liberal were a minority. The responses indicated that 31% referred to themselves as conservative, 46% as middle-of-the-road, and 19% as liberal. In terms of attitude to ministry (conventional / unconventional / in-between), only 8% indicated unconventional (Analysis of the Questionnaire for Ordained Ministers: data on questions 14 and 15, 4-5).

<sup>53</sup> Interim Ross Report (May): 1.

answered "yes." In many ways this was understandable but in another way we see what I am suggesting is the text of the jeremiad, the real concern and assumptions, reflected in this. The Interim Report (May) added the fact that of those aged under 39, the percentage considering leaving went up to 26%.<sup>54</sup> The Ross Report (Oct.) made the crisis clear in several places, including this section from the summary on pastoral ministry:

Some of the findings of this study may, at first glance, be reassuring. The majority of pastoral ministers, for example, do find their ministries generally satisfying. Closer examination, however, reveals that a much smaller percentage agree strongly that their ministries are satisfying compared to the percentage who simply agree. There is also a disturbing number of ministers who are undecided or disagree outright. More disturbing still is the fact that the percentage of those who are undecided or do not find their ministries satisfying is larger in the younger group.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, despite a generally high level of satisfaction with ministry a sense of crisis was affirmed. This crisis was particularly related to the fear that young ministers were leaving, and not just any young ministers, but, as we've seen at various points in our text, the more liberal theologically, and more innovative in terms of their approach to ministry. Even among the young this group was to be catered to in order to keep them in the church, far more it would seem than one would be concerned about those who were theologically middle of the road, or theologically conservative, or those with more traditional understandings of ministry.

There was also a privileging of the opinions of a group referred to as the "Reformers" within the Ross Report (Oct.). We see this structurally. In the section looking at ministry there are six sections. Most of the data in the first four sections comes from those surveyed and are topical, dealing with opinions on the "Formal Structures of the Church", "Congregational Functions", "Youth" and "Women." The final two sections are different: "Minister's Wives" and "Reformers." The Reformers were not a surveyed group, other than in the sense that their opinions were part of the scientific sampling of the survey. At this stage of the report, however, they received a separate and strong voice and place. They were the only group whose comments, made outside of the process of the survey or interview groups received such prominent coverage.<sup>56</sup> The section begins by noting that within the generally traditional Presbyterian Church in Canada there was a different group:

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<sup>54</sup> Interim Ross Report (May): 13.

<sup>55</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): 89.

<sup>56</sup> The ministers' wives were separated out as a key category, mainly it seems because of the fear that their dissatisfaction might lead to their husbands leaving the church. Most of the data, however, came out of the report itself—namely through the ministers' survey. Wives were not surveyed directly, but their husbands' response on the satisfaction of their wives was what was reported in the survey section. It is possible that wives may have been part of some of the later interview groups. The crucial distinction that needs to be made is that the data provided on the Reformers in this section of the Report came from sources largely outside of the process undertaken by the Ross Report. As noted in the text, comments made during the Congress of Concern were reported in such a way as to give them similar validity to those discovered through careful sampling techniques.

There is today, however, a dedicated minority that sincerely believes that the reforming process within the Presbyterian Church in Canada has virtually ceased. These members believe that the church is stagnating, has become irrelevant, and will surely die unless the church "gets with it" and becomes relevant again.<sup>57</sup>

On the whole the group is depicted as younger, and the 1968 Congress of Concern, an informal gathering held outside of the church courts or the bureaucratic structures, was seen as a vital place where the concerns of this group were expressed. Indeed twenty-three comments from the Congress are included in the report, including: "The church has put safety first"; "No real concern for others"; "No sense of priorities—e.g. stained-glass windows over social involvement"; "Blocks of ice as elders"; and, "Order of service good if it is emanating from something meaningful."<sup>58</sup> After listing these comments, in a format similar to the way that earlier comments gained through the survey had been listed, the report commented approvingly of the general questioning, noting that these were issues that "have been said or thought by many people."<sup>59</sup> The Report went further, citing a large section from the conclusion of a 1968 article in the *Presbyterian Record*, which it again noted as illustrating the "views of reform-minded persons." The selection was taken from the article "Crisis = Danger + Opportunity" by Stuart B. Coles, who was also a member of the Recruitment and Vocations Committee.<sup>60</sup> Within the report the Reformers were used as a contrast to the traditional and the static, as voices of wisdom. They were given a special voice even, in the section where externally produced data was melded into the Final Report. The point is made succinctly in the final sentence of this section:

The Presbyterian Church, because of its conservatism and traditions, is not likely to accept the views of these reformers in their entirety, but if one thing is certain, it is that the church needs reformers and will be a more vital institutional because of them.<sup>61</sup>

If the Report uses the language of the jeremiad, it also has identified which voices are those of the prophets and which are not. It is the "Reformers" who fill this role, and it is their voices, and a concern to keep them in the church, that shaped much of the final version of the Ross Report (Oct.).

In its presentation of a crisis of ministry, in its downplaying of the general satisfaction of the majority in ministry, and in its privileging of the "Reformers" the language of the jeremiad can be seen in the Ross Report (Oct.). Despite all of the data,

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<sup>57</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): 68.

<sup>58</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): 68-69.

<sup>59</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): 69.

<sup>60</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): 70-71; Stuart B. Coles, "Crisis = Danger + Opportunity," *Presbyterian Record* May 1968: 10-11.

<sup>61</sup> Final Ross Report (Oct.): 71.

much of it invaluable, interpretations emerged which were not necessarily grounded in that very data. My concern is not to criticize the authors of the Ross Report but rather to illustrate the problem which we find in various self-studies of denominations. We see the same problems in the report Declining Church Membership presented to the 1971 General Assembly. I have, following the work of Hudnut-Beumler on the suburban jeremiads in the same general period in the United States, characterized this problem as the problem of the language of the jeremiad. In the attempt to convince and convict, the authors of these reports often tell us more about themselves and their view of reality than about reality itself. What is significant about the Ross Report process, for example, is the conviction that there *was* a crisis in ministry. Whether such a crisis existed or not is one issue; but we should not ignore the reality that the church commissioned and paid for a report that claimed that there was such a crisis. We need to take this perception of crisis seriously, without automatically assuming it was an accurate reflection of reality. Similarly, we can learn a great deal about the church by looking at what it *thought* had caused membership decline but we should not automatically assume that any of these factors *did* cause membership decline. The church's focus was generally on internal issues, not on the larger external factors far beyond the control of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Our problem as we begin the essential task of studying the various reports in the period following World War II, many of which found problems in the church and made use of the language of the jeremiad, is to begin to make this distinction between the reports as reflections of what people assumed or believed was true, and what, indeed, may have been going on. This is a vital distinction we need to make.

## St. Andrew's: A Cut Above

John Alexander Johnston

**A**ncedotal and official records of unique congregations in important centres across the country give lustre to the rich history of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. None more so than the life and witness of St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, founded in 1830 through the good offices of The Hon. William Morris, successful merchant and leading member of the Assembly. The story is told in one history of Toronto how Morris was on his way to worship at the Church of England one Sunday when he viewed the ruins of the Legislative Assembly and thought what a fine site for a Scottish Kirk in Toronto. Then he heard the 118th psalm read that morning: "Here will be built my house and it is good." Feeling this was an omen from heaven, he called together some of his Scottish friends to discuss the possibility of a Presbyterian Church in Toronto. Morris prevailed upon the government to get a portion of the Clergy Reserves allocated to the Kirk and along with the assistance of such leading citizens as William Lyon Mackenzie, one-time mayor of York, focal point of the 1837 Rebellion, and opponent of the self-serving Family Compact, funds were collected. Supporters included the Hon. William Allan, the first postmaster of York; Chief Justices William Campbell and Archibald McLean; the famous Jesse Ketchum; William Proudfoot, President of the Bank of Upper Canada; and even John Brant, General Superintendent and Chief of the Six Nations. One thing I found most curious was that John Strachan, at that time an Archdeacon, later Bishop of the Church of England and the chief opponent of Morris in the Clergy Reserves question, gave a donation.

On its imposing site on the corner of Church and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets a building was erected in 1831 to hold nine hundred when the population of York at the time was only three thousand. St. Andrew's did not think small, even in those days. The cornerstone was laid by Thomas Carfrae, one of the most successful merchants of York who acted as treasurer of St. Andrew's. Carfrae was instrumental in forming the first fire department in York, the first public cemetery, as well as the predecessor of the Board of Trade.

This newly organized congregation in its recently completed building issued a Call to The Rev. William Rintoul, fresh from Scotland, who arrived in 1831 in time for the dedication. He had been sent by what became the Glasgow Colonial Society, acting upon the petition of William Morris, his stipend secure through the Clergy Reserves. Rintoul was recommended by the Scottish Kirk as "a person of superior qualifications in preaching, learning, piety and manners." Within four years, however, congregational support was divided between the trustees and the session of St. Andrew's with the minister caught in the middle. Rintoul resigned, leaving a legacy of having strongly supported the work of the Glasgow Colonial Society in the colonies and the organization of the first synod in which he helped to write the constitution. He also acted as the first Clerk of the Presbytery of York in 1831, Moderator of Synod in 1836, and its Clerk in

1837. In 1840 he was a key figure in the establishment of Queen's College in Kingston. In 1844 he left the Kirk and became the Clerk of the newly formed Presbyterian Church of Canada (Free), editor of its *Missionary Record*, and finally professor of Hebrew and Biblical Criticism at Knox College, Toronto.

William Turnbull Leach was the second minister of St. Andrew's, arriving in 1835 after a vacancy of one year, to find insufficient elders to form a session due to the troubles in the congregation. After a ministry of seven years he resigned in 1842 when the congregation refused to provide him with an assistant. During his ministry, he also served as treasurer of the Bible Society of Toronto (the name changed in 1834) and chaplain to the St. Andrew's Society, later becoming a Professor at McGill and, horror of horrors, an Anglican and Dean of Montreal Diocese.

The third minister was the Rev. John Barclay, a young Scot from Ayr, who no sooner arrived when the visit of Robert Burns took place supporting the Free cause and splitting the congregation. Barclay was left with a building and a decimated following. However, men like Sir Oliver Mowat took charge of the financial matters as the congregation was heavily in debt, with the minister's stipend in months of arrears. More presbytery visitations were over money—the East Gwillimbury Glebe Lands were providing no returns and building repairs had put the church in debt.

Thus the first minister of the congregation left to form the Free Church and the second minister joined the Anglicans. The third minister went through the disruption of 1844, a bitter organ controversy around 1860, and was dogged by financial problems throughout his entire ministry. The sixth minister was an Irishman who accepted an anything but unanimous call and only stayed a few months. Probably the most influential and certainly the most colourful of the St. Andrew's ministers was Daniel James Macdonnell, the fourth incumbent with a ministry of twenty-six years, whose heresy trial proved the most far-reaching step forward in support of freedom of thought and expression in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Macdonnell was one of the leading ministers in Canada and when the Fifth Assembly of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System met in Toronto in 1892, it was at St. Andrew's that the delegates gathered for communion. In no small way, St. Andrew's contributed much to this world event which Principal William Caven of Knox College called the greatest ecclesiastical and religious event in the history of Toronto and Canada.

Macdonnell not only was the catalyst for a less dogmatic interpretation of the Westminster Standards by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, but due to his personal efforts, ministers on minimum stipends began to be assisted financially from denominational funds. As a member of the Mission Committee, Macdonnell saw first hand the monetary difficulties faced by many ministers whose stipends were often less than those of day labourers. He worked tirelessly to persuade the General Assembly to inaugurate an Augmentation Fund and then became its first convener. This was probably not a priority item for many in the church but thousands of ministers in subsequent years were the grateful beneficiaries of the labours of this minister of St. Andrew's. Under his cutting-edge leadership the church attracted hundreds of new members and played a very significant part in the new dominion. Professor R. A. Morrison believed that with Macdonnell's coming St. Andrew's truly established itself.

Time and space will not allow a listing of the attainments and struggles of all the ministers of St. Andrew's. However I will refer to two more, Thomas Eakin who was

called from the pulpit of St. Andrew's by the national church to serve on the faculty of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and later was appointed principal of Knox College, Toronto, while continuing as an active member of this congregation. St. Andrew's also owes much to Stuart C. Parker called from Scotland and inducted in 1923. In 1924 he appeared before the Private Bills Committee of Parliament with the famous anti-unionist Brown of Red Deer. Chosen by the continuing Presbyterians to travel to Scotland to present their side of the union controversy, Parker hosted the Pre-Assembly Congress in St. Andrew's in 1925, which was attended by leaders gathered from coast to coast in opposition to union. Through Parker's support of the cause for the continuing Presbyterian Church, many congregations were influenced to take a similar stand. The vote in St. Andrew's was 752 opposed to union with only 19 in support, one of the most lopsided decisions in Canada. One is reminded of the number of St. Andrew's ministers who were honoured by their peers by being elected Moderators of the General Assembly. Virtually all have been recognized by their contributions to The Presbyterian Church in Canada and to Christianity in general by the bestowal of the degree of Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*, the notable exception being the somewhat controversial James Daniel Macdonnell with his advanced theological views.

After forty years, the St. Andrew's fabric on Church Street required extensive repairs and the congregation decided, forced by success, to quote a contemporary, to move to its present location at King and Simcoe Streets, a property which had been allocated to the congregation from the Clergy Reserves. Again controversy. A sizeable majority wanted to repair the old building. When the decision was made to build on the new site, many refused. They would not leave the building but continued to worship there, later moving to Jarvis Street under the appellation of "Old St. Andrew's" to the consternation of the majority.

To examine the male communicant membership of this congregation is to note celebrities such as Sir Oliver Mowat, already referred to, and Senator Donald Macdonald. One's interest is piqued by the mention of the parents of Mackenzie King whose sister was very active in St. Andrew's all her long life. As well, there were ruling Elders such as Chief Justice Sir Adam Wilson, Archibald McLean and James MacLennan, the latter elected to Parliament in 1874, a Justice of the Supreme Court, and who served on Session for thirty-nine years. Dr. Murray is but one of many drawn from the faculty of the University of Toronto. Contemporary names known far beyond Toronto would include the latter day Hamilton Cassels and Andrew Adair. Countless professionals joined business tycoons of their day to guide the flagship St. Andrew's as an influence for good amidst the political and commercial storms of the city and nation.

By examining the many memorials that grace the walls of St. Andrew's, one might conclude that members of the Board of Managers carried greater weight and influence over the affairs of the congregation than did those who served on Session. Perhaps the former managers represented a wealthier segment of the congregation, as most of the church's memorials were paid for by the families of the individuals so honoured.

To the Senate of Knox College and the Councils and committees of General Assembly, St. Andrew's has provided valued leadership. To mention Bessie McMurchy, a former president of the national Women's Foreign Missionary Society would be to single out one woman among many of the church who attained national and international

significance. Deaconesses who served the congregation with distinction and dedication include Georgina Wylie and her seventeen-year ministry 1905-1922.

In ecclesiastical circles, it is significant to note that the General Assembly, the highest court of our denomination, met regularly in St. Andrew's, the *Cathedral* Church of Presbyterianism as Douglas Stewart, a former minister of the church, was fond of saying (incorrectly: there are no cathedrals in the Presbyterian family). In the years prior to the formation of the General Assembly the Kirk Synod quite naturally also gravitated to St. Andrew's for its meetings. Between 1833 and 1875 commissioners meeting in St. Andrew's met for Synod on an average of every four years due to its being situated in the commercial centre of Upper Canada near hotels, and its proximity to the railway station. Meetings of the Presbytery of Toronto and its committees which were held in the church are legion.

In Toronto, civic functions also naturally turned to St. Andrew's as their locale, partly due to the available facilities, partly to the influence and civic connections of its various members and no doubt partly due to its location on that street corner where, it was often stated, Legislation, Education, and Damnation met Salvation. When celebrations and commemorations such as visits of royalty, civic recognitions, or deaths of the rich and famous were planned, St. Andrew's was considered a suitable choice of venue. Here were held, for instance, the Opening of the Courts, and meetings of the Grand Priory of Canada and the Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem. Today, Upper Canada College and Government House have long fled the street corner, and the hotel has moved down the block but in their place the church has welcomed exciting new neighbours Roy Thomson Hall, a plethora of theatres, media facilities, and centres of the arts.

Over the years organizations have come into being in order to meet special needs. In 1904 a Hospital Circle was founded in support of the rapidly expanding network of Presbyterian health services among the settlers in Western Canada. In 1902 the Willing Workers' Club was established to feed hungry children in Toronto. The Home for Incurable Children on Avenue Road became a beneficiary of the church's largesse. A branch of the Women's Patriotic League was hastily organized in 1914 to support the war effort. At a time when young working women occupied the lowest rungs of business, the Career Girls project provided good food at a good price in good surroundings. A decidedly ethnic organization, The Clans and Scottish Society of Canada made St. Andrew's its home. Through the decades, the Elizabeth Chapter of the Daughters of the Empire also met in the church. I am sure Mrs. Angus MacMurchy of WMS fame was applauded when she spoke to her sisters of the glories and firepower of the new British battleship *Dominion*.

For the communicant members of St. Andrew's who have sat contentedly week by week under their preachers of distinction, awareness of theological nuances which distinguished the sermons delivered from the high pulpit of St. Andrew's from other congregations may have passed unnoticed. However, from a denominational point of view, this congregation stood in contrast to other leading churches in the city such as Knox or Cook's. What do I mean? Perhaps I can use the word mainline or even a little left-of-centre in describing the theological position held by many ministers of St. Andrew's. Take for example Cook's Church, which attracted a congregation to which many Irish immigrants belonged. It was known for its Orange Order sympathizers, anti-

Roman Catholicism, and a reputation for a very conservative theology. Knox Church on Spadina also attracted a large following of people from all walks of life. They were also considered to have a theologically conservative bent. Theirs was a passion for winning the world for Christ and rather curiously dabbled on occasion in the intricacies of pre-millennialism and the vagaries of prophecy.

Not for St. Andrew's were the prognostications of the Book of Daniel or the vision of the Apocalypse. If I could describe in another way the theology of the typical ministers of this congregation, I would suggest they were inheritors of the traditional, rather liberal, Scottish Kirk theology of the times, which was represented by those who in the 1843 Disruption remained within the Kirk when the more evangelical and mission minded Knox Church represented the minority Free church tradition in Scotland. The story is told how a stranger found his way into St. Andrew's on a twentieth-century Sunday. He must have liked what he heard for he kept responding to the minister with a loud "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!" When this individual returned a subsequent Sunday with the same ejaculations, the minister button-holed him after the service saying, "We don't praise the Lord in this church." In Canada, it was the Free Church body, the inheritors of the zeal of the Glasgow Colonial Society, and other missionary programmes which quickly overshadowed the Kirk body as it grew exponentially, while the Kirk organization languished.

Thus, following the Union of 1875 when the Kirk joined with the larger united Free and Secession Canada Presbyterian Church to form the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Kirk with St. Andrew's as its flagship in Ontario was a minority. The Kirk party which had a reputation for being more liberal in its theology (and often Conservative in its politics) with consternation immediately faced the heresy trial of one of its most important ministers, to whom I referred earlier, charged by Free Church sympathizers in church courts now controlled by former non-Kirk members.

St. Andrew's became a *cause célèbre*, not only in Presbyterian circles, but in the secular press across the country. In spite of demands from such luminaries as the principal of the former Free Church College in Montreal to defrock Macdonnell, the case dragged on, ostensibly over the doctrine of eternal punishment. At a subsequent General Assembly, it was recognized that liberty of conscience was to be accepted by the denomination. Macdonnell was acquitted and all charges dismissed. This was probably the greatest battle won by St. Andrew's for the Canadian Church with the recognition that freedom of interpretation of the Subordinate Standards is allowable.

Through the years, the St. Andrew's pulpit has exemplified a middle of the road theological position—not liberal, not conservative, what I would entitle A Cutting Edge Presbyterianism-of-the-Day Theology. Dr. Parker, the minister of St. Andrew's from 1923 and no disciple of Karl Barth, crossed swords with Principal Bryden of Knox College, when the latter wrote that humankind cannot know God unless He is mediated, unlike all pagan religions which approach the supreme being directly. Bryden spoke of faith alone, while Parker saw value in an ecclesiastical episcopacy. Dr Parker was reflecting the typical theological positions of his time which looked to Scottish orthodoxy rather than what some would call the neo-orthodoxy of the Barthian theology that Knox College and various American and continental seats of learning were espousing at that time.

One must be careful when making a generalization about theological positions of clergy. I would suggest that solid Biblical preaching combined with exceptional music and a faithful adaptation of historic liturgical forms continue to define this congregation. Some can remember the ministry of Dr. Douglas Stewart, who was called from Knox Church, Ottawa. It was inferred, for instance, that this Call was extended, less for Dr. Stewart's academic and preaching abilities than for his liturgical gifts, honed under the outstanding musical leadership of Lillian Forsyth. St. Andrew's knew what it wanted. In many ways, the congregation exemplified to Ontario what St. Andrew and St. Paul in Montreal offered to Quebec—both Presbyterian churches in the forefront of liturgical revival, to be emulated in greater or lesser degree in time by congregations across Canada.

This was especially true in the world of church music. When most churches limited their singing to the use of the Psalter and a few favourite tunes (it is recorded that six tunes composed the entire repertoire of some congregations), St. Andrew's experimented early with new lyrics and melodies. It is recorded that St. Andrew's was the first Presbyterian congregation in Canada, and even earlier than any in the Church of Scotland according to Stuart Parker, to introduce an organ into Sabbath worship. In 1852 the precentor, the man hired to lead congregational singing, was replaced in St. Andrew's by an harmonium. To dismiss the precentor in exchange for installing an organ as early as 1852 was considered heresy by the rest of the denomination. This move to a mechanical instrument was not made without controversy and came to a head in 1859 when a larger melodium was installed. An appeal to Synod opposing the St. Andrew's organ in 1860 was placed before the Court.

When the Synod forbade St. Andrew's the use of its kist o' whistles, as it was known by its detractors, the Session ignored the edict of the higher Court and merrily continued its use. Yet how quickly the Presbyterian Church followed the lead of St. Andrew's, and in a short matter of years an organ was considered integral to worship everywhere. Musical preludes and postludes became the norm. Today, Sunday after-service, evening, and midweek organ recitals draw appreciative audiences from all walks of life.

Taking the lead in forming and gowning a choir was another early innovation for St. Andrew's. The first adult choir was organized by John Barclay, who ministered at the time of the 1844 Disruption in the Kirk Synod. In most congregations, unlike St. Andrew's, choirs were unheard of until many years had passed, relying on the precentor to lead the singing and in some cases to line the psalm. Sixty years later, in 1907, the Session issued an edict that all choir members must be dressed in black robes with white blouses worn by the women and white vests by the men. A radical decision at the time! The church provided the gowns, and one member donated caps of uniform design for the women. Gone were the waving ostrich feathers, ostentatious gowns, and other finery. Very quickly congregations across Canada followed the lead of St. Andrew's. (I hope to discover some day a photo of the choir in their new apparel to see if the mortar boards which became so popular bedecking the heads of the lady choristers in the twenties, thirties, and forties were what the session minutes recorded as caps.)

Another initiative which took much longer to be emulated by other congregations across Canada was the redesign of the chancel area of the sanctuary. At the time that the St. Andrew's sanctuary was first constructed, stairs were built on two sides of an

imposing high pulpit, jutting out from the south wall of the sanctuary, by which the minister climbed and descended. The entire service was conducted from the pulpit—prayers, scripture readings, sermon, etc., with the exception of the precentor's leadership in music, offered from his desk directly below the high pulpit (visit St. Andrew's, Niagara-on-the-Lake, where the high central pulpit still stands). Later extensive renovations produced the chancel arrangement existing today in St. Andrew's, and which has been followed by virtually every new church building constructed in Canada, to greater or lesser degree, with many older renovated structures doing likewise.

Innovations of St. Andrew's which have not been taken up by other congregations include the installation of a prayer desk with a kneeling bench for use during prayers. In 1912 processional and recessional hymns were introduced in St. Andrew's, and this also has not yet become the norm across Canada.

Today, weekly Offering Envelopes are as Canadian as maple syrup, having replaced the renting of pews as the principal source of congregational revenue. Again, St. Andrew's was the pace setter in the introduction of such envelopes for weekly congregational use as early as 1870. This concept did not capture the imagination of the wider church for many years and it was only by the turn of the century, for instance, that the Rollins System of Records and innovative Duplex Envelopes were introduced.

Another first for St. Andrew's! To be able to read the Bible had under girded the Scottish goal of universal education from post-Reformation times. Education was not to be limited to the clergy or the economically privileged. Thus did St. Andrew's develop an educational programme for those whose opportunities for schooling were otherwise virtually nonexistent, beginning with the Dorset Street School initiated by a member of the congregation, and later the Nelson Street Institute of which more will be discussed later. The well-known schoolmaster, Archibald MacMurchy, a member of Session, is but one of the many educators who shared their expertise in furthering the educational opportunities for church members and the community.

St. Andrew's at the same time followed the Scottish principle of a university-educated ministry at a time when higher theological education was unavailable in Canada. The church demanded that its pulpit be filled with divines with university training. As a result, its ministers were brought from overseas, no such training being available at the time in British North America. Realizing that most Canadian young men who felt a Call to the ministry of the Kirk had little chance of travelling to Scotland, St. Andrew's led the movement for a Presbyterian university in the Canadas. When a delegation travelled to Scotland to raise funds for the projected Queen's College, the Synod chose the minister of St. Andrew's as one of its two delegates.

What about the mission of the Church? One of the founders of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society in 1875, Mrs. McMurchy, was the wife of Angus, a St. Andrew's Ruling Elder, and has been honoured by a brass tablet hanging in the sanctuary. When the Klondike Mission was organized by Lady Aberdeen and the WMS, St. Andrew's provided much leadership, nurses, and money. In 1898 a Bible Reader was employed by the congregation with headquarters in the Nelson Institute. She recorded 1,300 visits over a twelve-month period. St. Andrew's was instrumental in founding the St. Mark's congregation in 1889 and similarly assisted with establishing Rosedale Church. However, it is pointed out that as in most congregations and groups, the St. Andrew's ladies organized themselves into a society in 1843, their purpose both

benevolent and spiritual and their projects were local in nature. Home missions with their social gospel responsibilities predominated. For instance, when the present sanctuary was constructed in 1875 (the beautiful silver trowel used for the cornerstone laying is on display in the National Presbyterian Museum), the women paid for the pulpit and the carpeting. The latter must have been of the highest quality for it was still on the floor at least sixty years later. In addition, the ladies lent the church money at seven per cent interest in order for the Managers to complete the construction. The Women's Association in 1890 had an annual membership fee of one pound, the money used to feed the poor, along with regular collections of food for distribution to the needy. From the statistical reports of General Assembly, comes the acknowledgement that this congregation annually supported the schemes of the church. Unlike Knox Church, Home Mission rather than Foreign Mission was the area in which St. Andrew's displayed a unique example to the city and the Canadian Church.

By 1890, St. Andrew's recorded three congregations as offshoots of the mother body. While Knox Church's Home Mission efforts included evening street corner services in downtown areas of the city (Knox's portable pump organ is on display in the National Presbyterian Museum), St. Andrew's directed much of its resources to ministering to the social needs of the community. The Nelson Street Institute, opened in 1890, was the result. It was unquestionably an unprecedented action within the denomination. In 1912, a new building, erected at a cost of \$64,000 on the same site, was recognized as a pace setter for the whole city.

Rather extensive records of the Institute are to be found in the National Presbyterian Archives and will prove a boon to social scientists in the years ahead. In addition to the two hundred and ten children and thirty-one teachers in the Sunday School (1905), the Night School for adults (in reality composed of young men studying the three Rs and subjects for self-improvement) at one time recorded a staff of nineteen teachers plus seventy students. There were gym classes attended by fifty boys where fencing, basketball, and gymnastics were taught and checker tournaments supervised.

A Girls Club with attendance of thirty-five taught cooking and homemaking with articles sewn for the Grenfell Mission. A Bowling Club listed seventy members. A kindergarten provided for the little ones, and there was a Mothers Sewing Class with fourteen leaders and seventy women who learned to sew and provided help to needy Gallacians. The house newspaper, *The Institute Reporter*, noted that the Boys Club of twenty youth had gone camping in tents as part of its programme. A Holiday House was established where mothers and children could exchange fresh air and relaxation for the problems they faced daily in the city.

The Rev. R. J. MacDonald was appointed by Session with responsibility for the running of the Institute. Operated by the St. Andrew's Men's Club, some seventy individuals contributed financially for the support of what I would call this early downtown social agency. The Institute was not unmindful of the spiritual needs of its neighbours (interestingly, I was not able to find any reference to a Prayer Meeting or Bible Study unlike most congregations of the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries), but St. Andrew's recognized in a unique way for the times that ministering to the social needs of the less fortunate must be of primary concern for the church.

One of the most effective social programmes of St. Andrew's was the establishment of the Penny Bank, incorporated in 1903 and opened in 1905 with such

well-known dignitaries on the Board of Directors as Hamilton Cassels, K.C., serving as president, E. R. Osler, the Member of Parliament as vice-president, and Professor B. E. Walker of the University of Toronto, and Z. A. Lang, K.C. No wonder the Penny Bank flourished, unlike so many banks of the period which were regularly failing. This Penny Bank of St. Andrew's was open every Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a minimum deposit accepted of two cents. Interest was paid at the rate of three per cent annually. Branches were opened in city public schools.

To examine lists of participants in the various programmes of the Nelson Institute is to discover a litany of Anglo-Saxon names. Wealthy and influential members of the congregation recognized their responsibility to help their less fortunate kin. Only one name, Heinonen, in the Boys Club was not of British origin. Wealthy professionals regularly addressed meetings of groups in the Institute.

As early as 1845 the congregation recognized the lack of wholesome reading material available to children of the church and established the St. Andrew's Lending Library in connection with the Sunday School. Boys and girls were able to sign out books of a high moral character after worship and Sunday School and thus were encouraged to read at home whenever leisure time was available. Long before the establishment of municipal or Andrew Carnegie libraries, St. Andrew's recognized the importance of an educated laity, both young and old.

Much has been written about the 48th Highlanders and its close association with St. Andrew's Church. Visitors from around the world daily tour the unique Museum in the basement of St. Andrew's. In my part of the province, no regiment is held in higher esteem than the one which calls St. Andrew's its home. One realizes that the congregation was already sixty years old before the 48th came into existence. Officers of the 71st Highland Regiment in 1830 were partially instrumental in founding the congregation.

Periodically attempts had been made to establish a Scottish Regiment in Toronto, including the 1856 organization of the Company of Highland Rifles. It was attached to the Queen's Own Rifles, and had strong ties with St. Andrew's when its members became its first officers. When the government finally gave permission to form a Scottish regiment in 1891, the commanding officer was Lieutenant-Colonel John I. Davidson who along with virtually all the other senior officers was a member of St. Andrew's, with its minister serving as chaplain. This tradition continues to the present day. In this paper there is no need to list the pageantry of the church parades (I was able to find records for dozens of them), the formal mess dinners, or to remind one of the bravery, tragedies, and victories in which the 48th has participated. The plaques on the sanctuary walls themselves speak eloquently of the exploits of the men of St. Andrew's in their service for Queen and country.

In concluding this examination of St. Andrew's in the light of its role in Canada and in the life and mission of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, one must not get the impression that all was a bed of roses. The antithesis is virtually true in many ways, for this extraordinary congregation has faced more difficulties and major eruptions than most run-of-the-mill churches. Whether it was the infighting with its first minister over money, the devastating effects of 1844 when most of the session and congregation left to form Knox Church, or the hurt felt when a minority refused to support the move of St. Andrew's to its present location and remained to purchase the old site, worship in the old

building, and use the name Old St Andrew's, to the dismay of the King Street congregation.

The years encompassing World Wars I and II were very difficult for the families of St. Andrew's as the plaques on the sanctuary walls bear witness. Probably the greatest challenge of all, with the possible exception of the Disruption of 1844, was the twentieth-century transformation of downtown Toronto, from the Depression years and deteriorations, through the downtown redevelopment and erection of office towers, to the flight of families to the suburbs, when Dr. Stewart informed the Toronto Star in 1972 that the congregation numbered only sixty-three members. The church faced escalating costs, deteriorating facilities, and inadequate revenues.

Yet St. Andrew's stands today, a faithful witness to her Lord and Saviour, led by an able ministerial team and surrounded by most capable and dedicated laity. Bolstered by the financial advantages of its air space agreement, the subway station at the door, and a downtown population explosion, St. Andrew's continues to minister to the widest possible cross-section of humanity. From the homeless through the Out of the Cold and other programmes, to meeting the needs of the many apartment and condo-dwellers, and others in the upper brackets of society who have chosen to become part of the St. Andrew's family in the twenty-first century.

**In Memoriam: John Webster Grant, MA, DPhil, DD**  
**27 June 1919 - 16 December 2006**

John Moir

**B**orn in Truro, Nova Scotia, John Webster Grant, internationally recognized as dean of Canadian Church History, was educated at historic Pictou Academy and Dalhousie University where he graduated in 1938 *magna cum distinctione*. After studying politics at Princeton University for one year on a junior fellowship he returned to Dalhousie and to Pine Hill Divinity Hall. By 1943 he had completed his MA and theological studies, winning a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford, which was postponed because of the war. In 1943 he was ordained a minister of the United Church of Canada at West Bay, NS. That same year he joined the Wartime Information Board in Ottawa as Director of Information to Non-Roman Catholic churches and became a chaplain in the Royal Canadian Navy, remaining in the naval reserve until 1959.

In 1944 John married Gwen and immediately after the war they moved to Oxford where he completed the degree Doctor of Philosophy. His thesis was published in London in 1955, and was soon followed by *World Church: Achievement or Hope?* published in Canada by Ryerson Press in 1956. John and Gwen returned to Canada in 1949 and John began his teaching career as professor of church history at Union College, British Columbia. He filled this post for a decade, except for the 1957-58 academic year which he spent teaching in the United Theological College in Bangalore, an experience that inspired his third publication, *God's People in India*. In 1959 John joined the Ryerson Press, a year later he became its Editor-in-Chief and subsequently author of *The Ship Under the Cross* (1960) and *George Pidgeon: A Biography* (1962). In 1963 John returned to teaching as professor of church history at Emmanuel College, Toronto. There, in the next score of years before his retirement, John produced four more monographs including *The Canadian Experience of Church Union* (1967), *The Church in the Canadian Era* (1972), and *Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries and Indians of Canada in Encounter Since 1534* (1984). In retirement John produced two more books: *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Ontario Until 1900*, and a personal reflection on the impact of church union, which was going to the press at the time of his death.<sup>62</sup> In addition to these monographs John published more than forty articles and contributed chapters.

In addition to his regular teaching duties at Emmanuel College, John offered advanced degree courses and supervised theses of graduate students in the Toronto School of Theology and was a member of the University of Toronto's Department of Religious Studies. After being cross-appointed to the School of Graduate Studies in the

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<sup>62</sup> This work, entitled *Divided Heritage: The Presbyterian Contribution to the United Church of Canada* is available from Laverdure & Associates, 194 Second Avenue North, Yorkton, SK, S3N 1G7.

University, he became one of the original faculty members of the University's Graduate Centre for Religious Studies in 1977. John also served various posts in Victoria University and the United Church of Canada. He was a member and office-holder in several historical societies, including the Canadian Society of Church History, the Canadian Historical Association, the Canadian Methodist Historical Society, and the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History.

Two of the papers that John presented to the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History are available on the Society's website at [www.csph.ca](http://www.csph.ca). They are: "Presbyterian Women and the Indians" given in 1978, and "Brands From the Blazing Heather: Canadian Religious Revival in the Highland Tradition" given in 1991.

## THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY:

### Minutes of the Annual Meeting 30 September 2006, held at the National Presbyterian Museum, St. John's Presbyterian Church, 415 Broadview Avenue, Toronto:

The meeting was Called to Order by the President, Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Johnston at 1:00pm. The Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Michael Millar, acted as Secretary for the meeting. Seventeen members were in attendance.

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

The President called for regrets. Regrets from Mr. Bob Anger, Rev. Dr. James Armour, Ms. Kim Arnold, Rev. Dr. Zander Dunn, Rev. Dr. Eldon Hay, Dr. John Moir, Rev. Ritchie Robinson, Rev. Dr. Donald Smith, Rev. Angus Sutherland, Dr. Marilyn Whiteley, and Rev. Dr. Jack Whytock were noted as being received by the Secretary-Treasurer.

The agenda was presented. It was agreed to add a presentation by Rev. Stuart Coles under "New Business." On motion of the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Mr. Al Clarkson, the agenda as presented, with the addition, was the agenda for the meeting.

On motion of the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Ms. Olive Anstice, the Minutes of the 2005 Annual Meeting, as circulated prior to the meeting, were approved, no errors or omissions having been noted.

#### Business Arising from the Minutes:

(1) The Secretary-Treasurer gave a report on the establishment of the Society website at [www.csph.ca](http://www.csph.ca). He informed the meeting that the Webmaster for The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Mr. Ian MacCready, had been responsible for setting up the website for a very nominal fee. Mr. MacCready has very graciously accepted our invitation to become our Webmaster. Notice of this meeting had been placed on the website as well as fifteen (15) Papers from previous years. The Papers are in downloadable format. No remuneration for Mr. MacCready has been discussed. Moved by the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Mr. Chris Redmond "That the matter of remuneration for Mr. MacCready be left in the hands of the Executive." Carried.

(2) The President addressed the meeting on the bequest from the Estate of the late Rev. Dr. T. M. Bailey. This now amounts to three thousand seven hundred dollars (\$3700.00), with a final payment still to come. This last amount is not expected to be very large. The first payment, received last year, of two thousand dollars (\$2000.00) was invested in a Guaranteed Income Certificate (G.I.C.) with the Bank of Montreal that will mature on the 24th of October 2006. To the second instalment of seventeen hundred dollars (\$1700.00) we added three hundred dollars (\$300.00) and took out another two thousand dollars (\$2000.00) G.I.C. with the Bank of Montreal that will mature on the 31st of May 2007. At the Executive meeting, held at 50 Wynford Drive on the 6th of September, a number

of ideas as to how best to use Dr. Bailey's bequest were discussed. It was agreed to present the following proposal to the Annual Meeting, that a research grant of up to four hundred dollars (\$400.00) be given to support a student research project with the Paper to be read to the Society. Following discussion it was Moved by Rev. Calvin Brown, seconded by Mr. Ross Lamb "That the grant be four hundred dollars (\$400.00) plus a one hundred dollars (\$100.00) honorarium." Carried. Following discussion on the Terms of Reference it was Moved by Rev. Calvin Brown, seconded by the Secretary-Treasurer "That the issue be referred back to the Executive to set the Terms of Reference." Carried.

(3) The Secretary-Treasurer gave a report on "Halifax '05." He indicated that it had been a most successful event and that the hospitality of The Presbyterian Church of Saint David had been exemplary and very much appreciated.

#### President's Report.

The President then gave his report. He noted that he did have two Papers promised for next year, but that more would be required.

#### Editor's Report.

The Secretary-Treasurer read the Editor's Report. Miss Millar is still working on the 2005 Papers and is waiting for two of the authors to send her their final corrections. She has drafted a series of guidelines for presenters, that were approved by the Executive at the meeting on the 6th of September. Dr. Anderson asked if a deadline for the submission of Papers to the Editor was included in the guidelines. When informed that no deadline was included, he Moved, seconded by Rev. Calvin Brown "That the deadline for submission of Papers to the Editor be the end of the calendar year in which the Paper is delivered." Carried. This is to be added to the guidelines.

#### Secretary-Treasurer's 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 Professor Macdonald. The matter of re-investment of the G.I.Cs. when they mature was discussed. The Secretary-Treasurer informed the meeting that both G.I.Cs. are redeemable at any time plus accumulated interest after thirty (30) days following taking them out. He Moved, seconded by Professor Macdonald "That the G.I.Cs be left invested until the money is required." Carried.

#### New Business:

(1) At the invitation of the President, Rev. Stuart Coles addressed the meeting. 2009 will mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin and the 100th anniversary of the ordination of W. W. Bryden. He noted that both Dr. Anderson and himself had been students of Principal Bryden. Mr. Coles informed the meeting that the Canadian Society of Church History will be holding a "Calvin - Bryden" conference in June 2009, venue to

be determined and invited our Society to participate. He encouraged the members to read Principal John Vissers' recently published work on Principal Bryden. He also told the meeting that he had set out pertinent material on the back table and encouraged the members to take it home for further study. Following discussion it was Moved by Professor Macdonald, seconded by Dr. John Johnston "That the focus for the 2009 meeting of this Society be on John Calvin and W. W. Bryden." It was agreed that we will put this information up on the website, we will inform the Presbyterian Record of our plan, and it was further agreed that the Executive will work out the details.

(2) The venue for the 2007 meeting was discussed. It was agreed that we will meet at St. John's and the National Presbyterian Museum if this can be arranged.

(3) The matter of a donation to St. John's had been discussed by the Executive at its meeting on the 6th of September. The Executive is recommending a donation of one hundred dollars (\$100.00). On Motion of the Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Rev. Calvin Brown, this recommendation was approved.

#### Election of Officers:

The President, Editor and Secretary-Treasurer have indicated a willingness to continue in office for 2006 - 2007. The President stated that he had now been in the position for five years and would only serve for one more year. Moved by Dr. John Johnston, seconded by the Secretary-Treasurer "That the present Executive continue in office for 2006 - 2007 and that a Nominating Committee be formed." Carried.

#### Adjournment:

The 2006 Annual General Meeting was adjourned at 1:50pm on Motion of Mr. Clarkson, duly seconded 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 - 28 September 2006**

Item:	Income:	Expenses:	Balance:
<b>Balance forward 24 September 2005:</b>			<b>3927.90</b>
Memberships 2005.	480.00		
Memberships 2006 paid in advance	240.00		
Memberships 2007, 2008 paid in advance	80.00		
Corporate memberships 2004.	15.00		
Corporate memberships 2005.	20.00		
Sale of papers.	59.00		
Donations.	50.00		
Bank Interest.	1.40		
Halifax '05 Registrations	600.00		
Rev. Dr. John Johnston dinner	1,650.00		
Committee on History re above	100.00		
Bequest, Estate of the late T. M. Bailey. (1)	1,700.00		
<b>Total Income.</b>	<b>4,995.40</b>		<b>4,995.40</b>
<b>Sub-total.</b>			<b>8,923.30</b>
Refreshments - 2005 meeting		27.65	
Donation - St. John's Presbyterian Church, Toronto		50.00	
Refreshments - Halifax 05		206.98	
Donation - The Presbyterian Church of Saint David, Halifax		100.00	
Office supplies - Editor.		49.17	
Postage		128.67	
Photocopying - Secretary-Treasurer		9.10	
Office Supplies - Secretary-Treasurer		15.35	
University of Toronto Faculty Club - Johnston dinner		1,742.04	
Donation - National Presbyterian Museum		7.96	
Website setup - Doteasy Technology		53.50	
Website setup - Ian MacCready		100.00	
Website - Domain Name renewal 2006 - 2007		53.00	
G. I. C. 9078920 BR - maturing 24 October 2006		2,000.00	
G. I. C. 9078867 BR - maturing 31 May 2007		2,000.00	
<b>Total Expenses.</b>		<b>6,543.42</b>	<b>6,543.42</b>
<b>Balance Forward 28 September 2006:</b>			<b>2,379.88</b>
<b>Notes:</b>			
1. Dr. Bailey very generously included the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History in his Will. The amount shown is the second interim payment with a final payment to come.			
Michael Millar, FRPSC. Secretary-Treasurer.			